

# COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY REGISTRATION AUTHORITIES Inc.

Incorporation No. A0049268P  
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Ms Bronwyn Nardi  
Chair  
Practitioner Regulation Subcommittee  
Health Workforce Principal Committee

## ACCREDITATION ARRANGEMENTS SUBMISSION

This submission is being furnished on behalf of the Council of Optometry Registration Authorities Inc (CORA).

CORA supports all of the proposals contained within the consultation paper.

Presently, the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ):

- assesses, for the purpose of granting accreditation, Australian and New Zealand optometry schools and the courses/programs conducted by those schools that lead to eligibility for registration as an optometrist in Australia and New Zealand;
- assesses, for the purpose of granting accreditation, Australian and New Zealand postgraduate courses of study in ocular therapeutic drugs;
- assesses, by way of examination, the competence of overseas-trained optometrists seeking registration in Australia and New Zealand;
- assesses, by way of examination, the therapeutic competence of optometrists registered in Australia or New Zealand who have completed a non-accredited course of study in ocular therapeutic drugs.

OCANZ does not receive government subsidies or contributions. In the main, it is funded from grants provided by the nine Australasian optometry registration boards, as well as the New Zealand registration board, and from the imposition of examination fees. Universities do not pay a fee to OCANZ for the accreditation of their schools or their programs of study. The Ministerial Council and the national agency therefore, will need to be aware that because of its limited resources, OCANZ has relied to a large extent on the goodwill of and pro bono services offered by its executive and its small pool of assessors.

With that in mind, it is noted from the IGA that accreditation bodies will assess accrediting authorities in other countries to determine whether the courses of study that they accredit are comparable to the Australian courses. It is also noted that boards will be able to delegate other assessment-like functions to accreditation bodies. Whilst the merits of this are conceptually sound, CORA submits that OCANZ will need a substantial injection of additional funds if it is to undertake these extra tasks in a meaningful way.

**President**  
**Dr Mark Feltham**

**Executive Officer**  
**Mr Geoff Leunig**

International convention dictates that the reconstituted accreditation bodies will need to provide for community input. As members of the governing bodies, councillors and assessors will in all probability be entitled to an honorarium or sitting fee, it is vital that the community representatives should be appointed on the basis that they possess relevant qualifications and or experience that will enable them to contribute to the process.

Yours faithfully

Mark Feltham  
**President**