



Report on the assessment of overseas-trained osteopaths

The Australian Osteopathic Accreditation Council (AOAC) examines graduates of overseas osteopathic programs for the purposes of skills recognition for migration and/or registration as an osteopath in Australia.

The assessment involves a desk-top assessment of the applicant's English language skills and qualification (to ensure the qualification is equivalent to a Bachelors' degree in Australia) and for standard assessment pathway candidates, a written and clinical examination.

The subject matter of the examination covers a wide spectrum of conditions, which might be encountered in osteopathic practice including non-specific pain, peripheral and axial conditions, neurological presentations, trauma and presentations that require urgent referral for medical attention.

To date candidates have generally held qualifications gained in the United Kingdom with a minority holding qualifications gained at European education providers. Candidates have demonstrated varying levels of competence. Analysis of the performance of these candidates has identified emerging themes, which the AOAC wishes to disseminate to interested parties such as overseas accrediting, educational and regulating authorities.

The themes that have emerged include:

- Candidates display an emphasis on the biomechanical aspects in their evaluation and manual therapy in treatment with an under-utilisation of active forms of management and cognitive behavioural approaches. The majority of candidates have been unable to:
 - recognise non-specific pain and demonstrate an understanding of mechanisms, evaluation techniques and EB management;
 - recognise tendonosis nor apply appropriate management;
 - detail sacroiliac pain provocation tests nor appropriate management;
 - recognise somatic referred pain (confusing it with radicular pain);
 - recognise the need to gain consent particularly when treating a minor
 - give evidence based advice about exercise for example during pregnancy
 - when presented with specific pathologies that require urgent medical referral, the candidates generally recognise the need for referral but were often unable to identify the particular pathology.