

Program Accreditation Appeals - Request for review of OCANZ decision by education providers

An education provider may seek a review of recommendations and decisions made by OCANZ concerning the accreditation of an optometry program of study.

OCANZ provides notice of its recommendations and decisions through the provision of a written accreditation report.

As education providers are routinely sent the draft accreditation report by OCANZ and invited to correct errors of fact should they be present, it is not anticipated that a dispute may arise over the facts that then may lead to a dispute over the decision.

In most instances queries or concerns about a decision by OCANZ may be resolved by discussing the matter with the OCANZ Executive Officer. This is the most convenient, efficient, cost neutral method of any resolving potential conflicts.

The grounds for requesting a formal review are that, on the basis of the available evidence, a recommendation or decision was unjustified or unreasonable, or that there was a breach of the process leading to that decision such that the process was procedurally unfair.

Within 30 days of receipt of the final written accreditation report approved by the OCANZ Board, the education provider may seek review of some or all of recommendations and decisions concerning accreditation in writing, on either or both of the above grounds. The review application must be accompanied by a statement of the issues to be reviewed, and the payment of an appeal fee set by OCANZ to recover the costs of the review.

The OCANZ Executive Officer will manage the review in line with the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness.

The Executive Officer will establish a Review Panel to conduct the review, where possible in agreement with the provider. The Panel will comprise up to three members and must include at least one optometrist with experience of OCANZ accreditation processes and one person from another health profession with significant experience in accreditation. The members of the Review Panel must not have been involved in the accreditation of the program that is the subject of the review. Each member will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

The Review Panel will review the provider's submission, relevant reports and documentation. It will have the discretion to request additional information from and/or interview OCANZ and education provider representatives and other relevant people, and to inspect facilities, where it concludes that such actions are necessary for it to make an informed judgment.

A report prepared by the Review Panel will be forwarded to both the education provider and OCANZ. The provider will be given the opportunity to respond to any issues raised in the report,

before the OCANZ Board makes a final decision on the program accreditation status and/or conditions which is not then subject to further review.

OCANZ will endeavour to complete a review within 90 days of a review being sought.

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