AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL LIMITED
(“ANZOC”)

STANDARDS FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF OSTEOPATHIC COURSES IN AUSTRALIA

AUGUST 2010
(Revised June 2012)

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STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION OF OSTEOPATHIC COURSES

This document describes the requirements of the ANZOC for the accreditation of courses intended to qualify graduates for registration for the practice of osteopathy.

It also provides guidance on the documentation that should be submitted by the provider educational Institution seeking accreditation of an osteopathic course. The application/submission should be structured to address each of the 22 standards for accreditation in turn.

The suggested documentation is for guidance. It is for the Institution applying for accreditation to show that each standard is met and to decide on the information to be included in the main text of the application and the supporting documents necessary to do this. However, if the assessment team believes the documentation is inadequate a revised submission may be requested and accreditation will not proceed until suitable documentation is received. Documentation that does not bear directly on a standard or provides excessive detail should not be included. The sources of copies of supporting documents must be clearly identified.

It is expected that the documentation will be provided in a ring binder with page numbers, index separators and a contents page to assist the assessment team find information quickly. Long supporting documents (such as staff curriculum vitae and subject/unit guides) should be in appendices or a separate folder. Booklets and brochures should be in a pocket attached to the ring folder if they are not suitable for ring binding.

Section 1: Standards relating to the institution and its policies and procedures

Standard 1.1 The course is provided by a recognised tertiary educational Institution, preferably a University established under State or Commonwealth legislation, which can provide the resources and the scholarly context that will ensure effective learning.

Suggested documentation

A statement of –

- the name of the provider Institution,
- the name of the course for which accreditation is sought and the qualification or qualifications granted on successful completion of the course,
- the name of the Faculty or Division responsible for the course and the title, name and qualifications of the Dean or Head of that Faculty or Division,
- the name of the academic unit directly responsible for the teaching of the course and the title, name and qualifications of the Head of that unit,
- the campus or campuses on which the course is provided,
- the postal and email addresses and telephone numbers of the Dean and Head,
- A short description of the provider Institution giving an account of its origins, its present nature, its governance and the size and scope of its operation,
- The annual report of the provider Institution and/or other appropriate publications that provide information on the nature, resources and standing of the provider Institution.

Standard 1.2 The course is taught in the institutional context of sustained scholarship, which informs teaching and learning in Osteopathy and ensures that students understand the process of research and the importance of evidence to inform theory and practice and are able to critique and evaluate new and established ideas and concepts.
Suggested documentation

- A short statement demonstrating that the provider Institution undertakes research that leads to the creation of new knowledge and original creative endeavour (at least in those fields in which Research Masters and PhD’s or equivalent Research Doctorates are offered). This should be supported by documents such as the provider Institution’s most recent annual research report. The documentation should indicate any involvement with, or impact on, students from within the Osteopathic course.

- A list of the current research projects (giving the names of the principal researchers and an explanatory title of each project) being pursued by staff and higher research degree students in the academic unit that has primary responsibility for teaching the osteopathic course. Include a brief description of any osteopathic student involvement in projects.

- A list of sources and amounts of research funding over the last 3 years to staff in the academic unit that has primary responsibility for teaching the osteopathic course.

- A list of books and publications in professional and scientific journals for the last 6 years written by the academic staff of the academic unit that has primary responsibility for teaching the osteopathic course.

- For new courses, documents demonstrating that the institution is committed to ensuring that the osteopathic unit will have a capacity for significant research and scholarly enquiry should be submitted. These might include policy statements and position descriptions and advertisements for staff.

- A short statement describing the learning outcomes related to critical analysis of scientific research and how they are evaluated.

Standard 1.3  The philosophy and objectives of the course are clearly stated and are consistent with those ANZOC believe should guide and underpin a course intended to provide the necessary knowledge and skills for the safe and effective practice of osteopathy.

The statement of the goals of the course is made known to students and teaching staff by its publication in course handbooks and guides that are read by students.

Suggested documentation

- The statement of philosophy and objectives of the course
- A statement about how students are made aware of the philosophy and objectives of the course and how staff are reminded of them, including a list of the official publications, student guides and Internet sites in which it appears.

Standard 1.4  The academic governance of the responsible academic unit and the osteopathic course is clearly defined and is appropriate to providing good management and promoting academic excellence.

Suggested documentation

- Describe the lines of accountability in the Institution and the defined responsibilities of management at each level. This should include subject/unit, course and clinic coordinators, the Head and Dean and the lines of reporting of the Head and Dean. Make clear the procedures that are followed for approval of changes to the course. Where appropriate include copies of supporting official documents.
Standard 1.5 There are clear and effective mechanisms for the evaluation of the performance of the staff and an organisational structure that encourages and rewards good performance.

**Suggested documentation**

- Describe the measures used to evaluate the teaching, research and administrative performance of academic staff (e.g., student feedback of teaching, publications, research grants) and how those measures are analysed and used to appraise and enhance the performance of staff.
- Describe the organisational structure that provides a career path for staff and the opportunities for personal development (e.g., study and conference leave, limits on teaching load to enable research or further study, periodic appraisals of plans for personal development). Describe the criteria for promotion of academic staff.

Standard 1.6 There are a sufficient number of classrooms, laboratories, staff offices and study space for students to provide a physical environment conducive to learning and research.

**Suggested documentation**

- Describe the accommodation allocated to the academic unit responsible for the course and the shared facilities available for teaching the course or for use by students of the course.
- For new courses, describe the accommodation that has been reserved for the osteopathic academic unit and/or describe the building program that is planned or underway to provide that accommodation. If accommodation is to be built or under construction, enclose architectural plans and the timetable for completion of the building.

Standard 1.7 Students have ready access to a well-maintained and catalogued library that has holdings of books, journals and other media that are current and sufficient in number and breadth to support the diversity of subject/units studied in the course.

**Suggested documentation**

- Describe the library used by osteopathic students giving its location, hours of opening, the scope and number of its holdings, the number of librarians and the name of the librarian who liaises with the osteopathic academic unit.
- List the osteopathic journals subscribed to by the library.
- Any other information that demonstrates that the library supports osteopathic staff and students well. (e.g., list of osteopathic monograph titles purchased in the last year)

Standard 1.8 Entry into the course is non-discriminatory and is based solely on selecting students who are most likely to succeed in studying the course.

**Suggested documentation**

- Enclose copies of the selection policy of the provider Institution and any special rules for entry into the osteopathic course.
Standard 1.9  Students have ready access to services that will facilitate successful completion of their course including counselling, health, language instruction, housing assistance and financial aid.

Suggested documentation

• Describe the student support services available, their hours of operation and their location. Provide Internet addresses to further information about these services.

Standard 1.10  The provider Institution has clearly stated policies and well-established practices with respect to occupational health and safety, sexual harassment and disability.

Suggested documentation

• Provide copies of official policies or Internet addresses for information about them.

Standard 1.11  There are clear and comprehensive policies for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the course and for continuing review of its content, the methods of teaching and the methods of assessment.

Suggested documentation

• Describe the policies and the measures used to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and the quality of teaching in the course and how those measures are reviewed and acted on.
• Describe the mechanisms by which student evaluations and comment are obtained. Enclose copies of any pro forma student questionnaires used. Provide data from recent student evaluations of the course and/or individual subject/units.
• Describe the mechanisms (eg regular staff meetings, annual course review) by which the academic staff contribute to the development of the course and teaching quality.
• Describe the mechanisms by which practising osteopaths including part time clinical instructors contribute to the development of the course and teaching quality.

Input measures
The ANZOC is aware of the benefits of flexibility in course design and prerequisites and the concomitant opportunities for increasing diversity among the population of students and practitioners of osteopathy. Consequently, the ANZOC wishes to encourage recognition of prior learning and a variety of entry points to osteopathy degree programs. To facilitate this philosophy the ANZOC intends to support the profession in the definition of national competency standards against which graduates of degree programs can be assessed. In the interim, however, the accreditation standards will continue to specify standards in relation to course length and pre-requisites for entry to the course.
Section 2: Standards relating to the department or organisational unit responsible for delivering the osteopathic course or program

Standard 2.1 There is sufficient equipment for effective teaching and the equipment is well maintained.

Suggested documentation
- Provide information to show this standard is met including the usual annual budget for equipment purchase and the forward budget plan for equipment purchase. Describe how needs are identified and the equipment requirements are processed.
- Provide information to show that students have adequate exposure to, and experience of, new technology being used in healthcare settings in general, and in the osteopathic field in particular. Documentation should describe how the Institution provides for this.

Standard 2.2 The academic unit responsible for the course has a sufficient number of full time and fractional full time academic staff in relation to the number of students in the course to enable good teaching and good pastoral care of students.

Suggested documentation
- **Number of academic staff** - A table giving the number of full time, fractional full time and casual teaching staff in the responsible academic unit. Express these numbers also in terms of equivalent full time staff in the Table. Show the total number of equivalent full time academic staff in the responsible academic unit. Exclude academic staff from other academic units that teach subject/units in the course.
  
  Comment on any currently vacant academic posts and any plans to either increase or decrease the number of academic staff in the near future.

  For new courses state the planned staffing structure for the osteopathic academic unit and the timetable for appointment of staff.

- **Student load** - A table giving the number of graduates from the course in the past 5 years.
  
  A table giving the number of current students in each year of the course and the number of students enrolled for a higher degree (except staff enrolled for a higher degree).

  A table giving the number of equivalent full time students in the course for the current year in each of the years of the course in the academic unit responsible for the course (that is excluding student load assigned to other academic units teaching some subject/units of the course).

  For new courses state the planned student load for the osteopathic academic unit and how student load will be distributed between that unit and other academic units in the Institution.

- **Staff student ratio** - Give the ratio of equivalent full time academic staff to equivalent full time students in the academic unit responsible for the course.

- **Teaching clinicians** - State the usual ratio of teaching clinicians to students in teaching clinics giving details as to how this varies depending on the year level of students, the time of day and the time of year.

  For new courses describe the planned staffing for clinical teaching.
Standard 2.3 The academic staff (including sessional staff) have qualifications, expertise and experience suitable to the subject/units they are assigned to teach. Academic staff are actively engaged in scholarship and/or professional practice relevant to the fields in which they teach and at an appropriate level, reflecting their seniority and responsibilities.

Suggested documentation
- List the full time and fractional full time academic staff of the academic unit responsible for the course, in order of rank, giving their rank, fraction of full time, qualifications (including awarding University), and principal teaching responsibilities.
- The curriculum vitae of each full time and fractional full time staff in the responsible academic unit.
- A list of the coordinators of subject/units taught by academic units other than the unit responsible for the course, giving the name of the subject/unit, the name of the provider academic unit and the rank, fraction of full time and qualifications of the coordinator.
- List the current casual teaching staff giving their qualifications, their teaching responsibility and their expected total hours of teaching in the current year.
- Indicate how the Institution ensures that teaching is normally carried out by academics with relevant qualifications at least one AQF qualification level higher that the level of the course being taught.
- Provide confirmation that there are appropriately experienced academic staff available and clearly identified to provide leadership for key academic tasks such as course development, course co-ordination and course review.
- Indicate the Institution’s strategies for enhancing teaching quality and other aspects of staff performance, for example, staff development and professional development opportunities (including those offered to sessional or part time staff).
- Provide examples of advertisements for staff recruitment, both domestic and international.

Standard 2.4 The academic staff members are accessible to students and have sufficient time to provide them with pastoral care

Suggested documentation
- Describe how support for students with study or personal problems is provided.
- List the support staff and their duties to whom academic staff can devolve administrative and technical tasks to free time for pastoral care and research.

Section 3: Standards relating to the osteopathy curriculum

Standard 3.1 The course consists of a program or combined program of study at bachelors level or higher (level 7 or higher in the Australian Qualifications Framework) of at least 4 years full time or its equivalent.

In practice this allows for recognition of prior learning to be applied from a previous degree program to a shortened program of study in the osteopathy program, provided the total length of study is equivalent to at least 4 years full time.
Suggested documentation

- The official handbook of the provider institution that includes details of the osteopathic course, including optional pathways.

- A copy of the official policy of the provider institution as it applies to the osteopathic course for granting credit for recognised prior learning and which may reduce the period of study.

- An explanatory statement of the credit that may be given for those who enter the course having completed, for example, a degree course in biomedical science or a course in physiotherapy or related professional discipline.

- A brief explanatory statement outlining optional pathways, for example graduate entry, and how the osteopathic components of the course will be covered.

- A clear statement of the minimum number of years of study required, after granting of credit for prior learning, in order to be awarded the qualification or qualifications normally given on successful completion of the osteopathic course.

**Standard 3.2**

The academic pre-requisites and other criteria for entry into the course (at various entry points) are clearly stated and are compatible with the academic requirements of the course.

Suggested documentation

- A statement of requirements for entry into the course, including pre-requisite subjects which must be passed in an approved university entrance program etc., and reference to the publication in which these pre-requisite requirements are legally defined or officially stated.

- A copy of the official policy on entry into the course when the pre-requisite subjects may not have been studied or passed.

- A description of graduate entry pathways into the course and the requirements for graduate entry, indicating where these are published.

**NOTE:** The ANZOC has no objection to the granting of credit for successful prior studies of biological and biomedical subject/units that are equivalent to subject/units in the osteopathic course on the proviso that there has been strict adherence to all of the institution’s own recognition of prior learning policies. However, such students should be required to complete all the osteopathic subject/units and clinical practicum components of the course.

Students who have completed part of an osteopathic course at another institution may be granted credit for osteopathic subject/units as well as biological and biomedical subject/units provided they are equivalent to those of the course to which they are applying.

**Standard 3.3**

The curriculum is designed to achieve the competencies expected of entry-level graduates by the professional registration body (*). Emphasis is placed upon these competencies rather than defining a prescribed content however it would be expected that the course would include instruction in:

(a) the basic sciences of biology, chemistry and physics to the extent necessary to lay foundations for proper understanding at an advanced level of the human and clinical sciences taught later in the course

(b) the life sciences of anatomy, histology, embryology, physiology, biomechanics, biochemistry, microbiology and psychology
(c) pathology, pharmacology and general medicine, especially those aspects of general medicine most important to osteopathic diagnosis and management, including especially the musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders and the neurologic disorders

(d) critical analysis, problem solving, research methodology and biomedical statistics

(e) osteopathic science and the skills of osteopathic examination, diagnosis and treatment including the assessment and management of chronic disability and pain and how human behaviour, attitudes and lifestyle can contribute to illness and be factors in its amelioration

(f) the clinical skills of diagnosis, oral and written communication and counselling and the development of clinical judgment in deciding appropriate treatment and/or referral

(g) Clinical risk management.

(h) professional awareness including the history of osteopathy, ethics and the law as it relates to health care in general and osteopathy in particular, health care delivery systems in Australia and elsewhere, the means of and barriers to inter-professional cooperation, practice management and the means of ensuring continuing personal professional development throughout a career life.

* NOTE: The ANZOC has adopted the “Capabilities for Osteopathic Practice” formulated by a University of Technology Sydney research team in 2009. There is a current project to adapt this framework specifically to various contexts of osteopathic practice, for example, “entry level” graduates, overseas graduate assessment and lifelong learning. This document provides guidance on the competencies expected of a registered osteopath and will be circulated when completed and adopted by the Osteopathy Board of Australia. The national competency standards against which graduates of degree programs can be assessed will be based on these.

Suggested documentation

- The official handbook of the provider institution that includes details of the osteopathic course.

- A tabular summary of all the subject/units of the course in chronological order giving the:
  - number of the subject/unit,
  - name of the subject/unit,
  - academic unit providing the subject/unit and the name of the subject/unit coordinator,
  - duration of the subject/unit (one semester or two semesters),
  - average number of hours per week of lectures, tutorials and practical classes (including clinics) or other learning activities,
  - list the units (or parts of units) taught in interdisciplinary settings,
  - list the units (or parts of units) taught outside of the osteopathic unit.

- A statement or grid of the competencies expected of graduates.

- A brief description of how these competencies will be achieved. This should include any hurdle requirements or graduate entry competency assessment.

- A brief mapping of the learning outcomes for each subject/unit to describe how the graduate competencies will be achieved.
**Standard 3.4**  Each subject/unit has specific learning objectives/outcomes and a detailed teaching plan that is made available to students at the commencement of each subject/unit.

**Suggested documentation**

- A copy of subject/unit outlines (in standardised template format) that are provided to students and set out the name of the subject/unit, the name of the subject/unit coordinator, the objectives/outcomes of the course, the lecture, practical class schedule including any other learning activities, the assignments, the prescribed text books and key references that students are expected to consult and the methods of assessment.
- Indicate how the outcome measures used are both suitable and rigorous.
- Briefly describe any interactive and/or online learning, or distance learning opportunities. Provide some examples of these.

**Standard 3.5** The course provides students with extensive clinical experience in screening, diagnosis, treatment and health management for a diversity of patients and clinical conditions under the supervision of experienced osteopathic and other health care practitioners. The expected outcome is graduates who are able to independently practise osteopathy safely and competently and recognise when referral to other practitioners is necessary. The course should provide exposure to the practice of other health workers including mental health professionals to allow students to understand their respective roles.

**Suggested documentation**

- A brief description of the clinical facilities within which students obtain clinical experience under supervision, how those facilities work and how clinical teaching is carried out. (There may be some overlap with Standard 16, in which case you may reference this documentation when addressing that standard.)
- A brief description of the activities undertaken by the Institution and the osteopathic unit to recruit new patients, with diverse presentations, to any of the clinical facilities used. (There may be some overlap with Standard 16, in which case you may reference this documentation when addressing that standard.)
- A description of any externship arrangements by which all or some students can broaden their clinical experience by observation or direct provision of care in clinical settings not operated by the provider institution. The ANZOC recognises that periods of workplace experience in external clinical settings can be beneficial to a student’s clinical learning. If such placements are not available to all students indicate the number of students who are allocated or find external placement. Give the frequency and duration of external placements, the protocols used to select and monitor the experience, and the kind of experience provided to students by these placements.
- A description of the means by which the number and diversity of patients seen by each student is monitored and how students who are seeing too few patients are given opportunities to increase the number and diversity of patients they see. (See also Data Collection in Standard 16; there may be overlap and you may reference this documentation when addressing that standard.)
- A description of any clinical experience in addition to “live” patient experience. Reference should be made to whether these experiences are used by all students, or are used in a supplementary way for those lacking in experience; and how this experience is designed and monitored.
• A sample of student log books and student evaluation forms and any other data or tools used to monitor and enhance the student’s clinical experience.

• A brief statement of how quality assurance of the selection process and performance of clinical staff is ensured.

• A brief description of the outcome measures relating to clinical education and how they are assessed, for example clinical practicum examination criteria, if used.

**Standard 3.6** The clinical facility/ies is/are adequate in size for the number of patients attending and the number of students rostered and is/are well organised and equipped and able to draw on a patient group with physical and mental health status equivalent to the general population. The facility/ies enable innovative educational approaches through a variety of supervision and assessment strategies and/or by engaging students in a variety of multi-disciplinary healthcare settings.

**Suggested documentation**
• Describe the clinical facility/ies in terms of location, equipment, the number of treatment rooms and space for reception, waiting patients, student locker room and rooms for confidential consultation between teaching staff and students (though such descriptions may not apply to all settings).

• Describe, for each clinical facility, the parameters of the clinical teaching and the outcomes expected of each facility.

• Describe the facilities that are multidisciplinary and how the osteopathic students engage in these settings.

• Describe how the supervision of the facility/ies is audited by the provider Institution.

• State the hours of opening (if relevant) and the hours students are rostered to the clinic/s.

• State the number of patients presenting for a new course of treatment in a year and the total number of patient visits in a year (if relevant).

• For new courses, describe the plans for providing a teaching clinic, or variety of clinical settings, and how the clinic or other facilities will set about attracting sufficient patients with the profile required.

**Standard 3.7** The outcomes of teaching, especially clinical competence are rigorously assessed by a range of assessment methods.

**Suggested documentation**
• Tabulate by subject/unit all the forms of assessment used for each subject/unit stating the form or type of assessment when it is given and its percentage contribution to the final mark in the subject/unit

• Describe in full the assessment of the clinical competence of students, describing in particular any ‘hurdle’ requirements each student must meet before proceeding to a subsequent stage of clinical learning or before being deemed to have completed the course

• Describe the process by which assessments are prepared and given and how the results of assessments are modulated to ensure fairness and rigour (e.g. by an examination board, by monitoring statistical measures of assessment performance)
• State the usual failure and discontinuation rates in each year of the course
• Provide information on the rules of progression in the course for students who have failed one or more subject/units in a year.
• Outline processes to assist in managing students who fail, or show inappropriate attitudes to work within the health care sector
• State the options open for students of the course who fail the clinical subject/units (or hurdle requirements) of the final clinical years (e.g., supplementary examination, repeated supplementary examination until a pass is achieved, repeat failed subject/units, repeat whole year including subject/units passed, suspension from course) and which options are usual.