

**HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA  
THE PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

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| <b>SUBJECT</b>             | PROCEDURE FOR THE FACILITATION OF REGISTRATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFIED OPTOMETRISTS AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS | <b>DOC NO:</b>        | SOP001      |
| <b>COMPILED BY:</b>        | EDUCATION COMMITTEE   | <b>REVISION NO:</b>   | 01          |
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**PROFESSIONAL BOARD  
FOR  
OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

**GUIDELINES THE REGISTRATION OF  
FOREIGN QUALIFIED OPTOMETRISTS AND  
DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

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## **1. DEFINITIONS**

Unless the context otherwise indicates

- 1.1 **“Act”** means the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974);
- 1.2 **“Board”** means the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians;
- 1.3 **“Board Manager”** means the Board Manager for the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians;
- 1.4 **“Foreign qualifications”** means Qualifications obtained in countries other than South Africa.

## **2. PURPOSE**

2.1 These guidelines are intended to assist an applicant who wishes to register as an Optometrist and/or Dispensing Optician with the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians of the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

2.2 To outline the process to be followed by both the applicant and the Board for consideration of applications mentioned above.

2.3 To identify and guide the responsibilities of those involved in the application process.

## **3. SCOPE**

These guidelines apply to foreign qualified Optometrists and/or Dispensing Opticians who wish to register in terms of the Act.

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#### 4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- In order to avoid delays in the processing of applications, **correctly certified** documents as per the requirements of the Board should be submitted **in one batch** (refer to item 7 below, SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS TO THE HPCSA)
- Applications submitted by **facsimile (fax)** will not be accepted.
- All documentation required by the Board should be submitted in English. Where applicable, only original translations of the required documents done by a sworn translator and duly sealed and notarized will be accepted. In addition to such English translations, legible copies of the original documents, certified and duly sealed by a Notary Public should be submitted.
- Notification within one month of receipt of the application will be made regarding any further documentation that may be required prior to processing the application.

#### 5. PREREQUISITES/ PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- An applicant must hold a qualification equivalent to the recognized South African qualification.
- To comply with the requirements above, applicants are currently required to have all the academic qualifications evaluated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), in order to determine their status in relation to recognized qualifications. A request for an evaluation should be submitted to SAQA. For more details on the submission process, applicants are advised to visit SAQA's website - [www.saqa.org.za](http://www.saqa.org.za) or contact SAQA directly.

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## 6. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS TO THE HPCSA.

The following documentation shall be submitted to the HPCSA:

- The application Form 176 ODO duly completed.
- The following documents certified by an attorney in his/ her capacity as Notary Public and bearing the official stamp. Copies certified by a Commissioner of Oaths **will not be accepted.**
  - a) Copies of all degree/diploma certificates or similar academic qualifications, including the relevant practical training requirements.
  - b) Original transcripts of academic record issued by your educational Institution indicating course content of each qualification referred to above.
  - c) A Certificate of Evaluation of academic qualifications issued by SAQA.
  - d) A clear photocopy of a valid Passport or Identity Document as proof of current citizenship.
- A recent original Certificate of Status (Certificate of Good Standing), indicating that the applicant is in good standing, issued by the foreign registration authority where the applicant is currently registered, which has **been issued within the preceding three months.**
  - a. letter of endorsement issued by the national Department of Health for a registration in terms of [regulation 2](#)(1), (2), (3) or (4), confirming the employability or placement of the applicant, or a letter of endorsement issued by the prospective employer for a registration in terms of [regulation 2](#)(5), (7) or (8), or confirmation of enrolment for postgraduate studies issued by the educational institution concerned for registration in terms of [regulation 2](#)(6);
- Foreign Qualified Health Practitioners who obtained their qualifications in any other language except in English are to submit their certificate from International English Language Testing System (IELTS) demonstrating their English Proficiency at overall **Band score 6**, with the exception of the 'Speaking' section, where a score of a

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minimum of 7 must be obtained, before the application can be considered. The IELTS band 6 indicates that fairly complex language particularly in familiar situations, can be used and understood.

- An up to date Curriculum Vitae clearly detailing the applicant's work experience or employment history.
- In addition to the above minimum requirements, applicants may further be required to submit any other document that may assist the Board to objectively review the application.

**Submission of applications/Enquiries:**

Duly completed application forms and supporting documents or written enquiries may be sent to:

The Registrar  
HPCSA  
P O Box 205  
PRETORIA  
0001

**7. PROCEDURE FOR THE EVALUATION/ ASSESSMENT OF DOCUMENTS SUPPLIED BY APPLICANTS.**

- All applications will be forwarded for the attention of the Board Manager:
- The Board Manager will review the application for completeness and accuracy in accordance with the requirements stipulated in item 7 of this document.
- The Board Manager will, in line with the status of the application, recommend in writing one of these actions:

For applicants who;

- a) Are required to write the examination, duly inform the applicant and the appointed examiners of the outcome and supply the applicants with an examination guide.

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- b) do not meet the minimum requirements, reject the application.
- c) have provided incomplete applications or when clarity or additional information is required to objectively review the application, refer the application back to the applicant.

## **8. BOARD EXAMINATION**

- An Examiner will be allocated (As appointed by the Board) upon receipt of the recommendation for an examination from the Board Manager, communicate through the Board to arrange the logistics with the candidate to sit for the Board Examination.
- An examination fee is payable prior to taking the Board examination. Reference may be made to the latest fees payable as published.
- The Examiner will arrange for the appointment of a Moderator and conduct the Board Examination in line with the **BOARD EXAMINATION GUIDELINES**.
- The Examiner together with the Moderator will complete the **EXAMINATION REPORT** after the examination and provide a report on the outcome of the examination and then forward such Examination report to the Board Manager for further processing.
- Upon receipt of the Examination Report, the Board Manager must I inform the applicant in writing about the outcome of the examination.
- A successful candidate must be recommended for registration as an Independent Practitioner or to practice under temporary supervision as deemed necessary.

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## 9. REGISTRATION

- Successful applicants will be required to submit to the registrations department of the HPCSA a copy of the letter issued to them by the Board with recommended registration category, a formal offer of employment, the prescribed registration fee as well as the documentation outlined in the letter as may be necessary.
- In addition to the registration fee, applicants are required to pay a **pro-rata annual fee (Refer to the latest published fees of the HPCSA)**.
- The registration certificate will be issued by the CPD, Registrations and Records Department after the submission of all requested documentation and payment of required fees.

## 10. FEES

- All fees payable to the HPCSA for the administration of applications are non-refundable irrespective of the outcome of the application and examination process.

## 11. RECORDS

- All records generated during the execution of duties prescribed by this document, shall be submitted to the Board Manager for keeping in line with the policies of the HPCSA.

## 12. SUBMISSION OF REGISTRATION RECORDS TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD

- The Board Manager shall submit all records of processed applications by foreign qualified practitioners for the period preceding the meeting of the Education Committee to the Education Committee and the Board for noting.

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**ANNEXURE A: CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATION OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY FOREIGN QUALIFIED APPLICANTS**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. GENERAL**

| <b>Item</b>      | <b>Available.</b> | <b>Not available.</b> |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proof of payment |                   |                       |

**2. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REQUIRED**

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Submitted: Y or N</b> | <b>Acceptance Criteria</b>   | <b>Acceptable (complete, accurate, legible etc.): Y or N</b> |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| Completed Form 176 ODO   |                          | Complete and signed by applicant.  |  |
| Copies of all degree/diploma certificates or similar academic qualifications.  |                          | Certified by an attorney in his/her capacity as <u>notary public</u> and bearing the official stamp. |  |
| <u>Original transcripts of record</u> issued by your educational institution indicating course content of each qualification |                          |  |  |
| Evidence of completion of practical training.  |                          |  |  |
| <u>A certificate of Evaluation</u> issued by SAQA.   |                          |  |  |
| A valid <u>Passport or Identity Document</u> as proof of current citizenship.  |                          |  |  |
| <u>A Certificate of Status</u> (Certificate of Good Standing)  |                          | -<br>- Not older than 3 Months.  |  |
| <u>A letter of endorsement</u> by the <u>Foreign Workforce Management Programme (FWMP)</u>                                   |                          |  |  |
| <u>Evidence of competence in English</u> e.g. TOEFL, GCE etc.  |                          |  |  |
| CV with detailed work experience or employment history up to date, with references   |                          |  |  |



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**3. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**3.1. BACHELOR OF OPTOMETRY**

Four years qualification: **Y**  or **N**

Describe the qualification period/ structure if you ticked No above:

| <b>Course Required</b> | <b>Course content and minimum skill requirements</b> | <b>Course part of the Foreign qualification: Y or N</b> | <b>Content meets the minimum requirements: Y or N</b> | <b>the SA</b> |
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**3.2. NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN OPTICAL DISPENSING**

Three years qualification: **Y**  or **N**

Describe the qualification period/ structure if you ticked No above:

| <b>Course Required</b> | <b>Course content and minimum requirements</b> | <b>Course part of the Foreign qualification: Y or N</b> | <b>Content meets the minimum requirements: Y or N</b> | <b>the SA</b> |
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**4. RECOMMENDATION: (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| a) Applicant recommended to sit for a Board Exam  |  |
| b) Application rejected- applicant does not meet minimum requirements   |  |
| c) Referred back to applicant- Incomplete/more information required.  |  |
| d) Application of origin not previously submitted or relatively unknown. Referred to Education Committee for consideration. |  |

**Note: Supply details/reasons for b and c.**

Comments by Evaluator:

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**Evaluated by: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**