Guidelines, Policies and Statements

E5

Position Statement on
Recognition of Training and Qualifications

Disclaimer and Copyright
The ASUM Standards of Practice Board have made every effort to ensure that this Guideline/Policy/Statement is accurate and reflects best practice at the time at which they are issued. The information provided in this document is of a general nature only and is not intended as a substitute for medical or legal advice. The Society, employees and members do not accept any liability for the consequences of any inaccurate or misleading data/opinions or statements issued by ASUM. Approved Guidelines may be distributed freely with the permission of ASUM asum@asum.com.au.
1. **Preamble**

The DMU is the only professionally based qualification accredited by the Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry (ASAR) for the qualification of Sonographers to practice in Australia and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for the qualification of Sonographers to practice in New Zealand. The other qualifications accredited by these bodies are post-graduate academic qualifications.

2. **Definitions**

2.1. **Accredited Program** means an ultrasound program accredited by the ASAR or NZMRTB which qualifies the holder to accreditation or registration as a Sonographer.

2.2. **Medical degree** means a degree issued by a University which entitles the holder to registration as a medical practitioner.

2.3. **Degree** means

   2.3.1. a Bachelors degree awarded by an Australian or New Zealand University or the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA); or

   2.3.2. a foreign degree that is recognised by the NZQA (in New Zealand) or AEI NOOSR (in Australia) as equivalent to a 3-year degree in the relevant jurisdiction.

2.4. **Higher degree** means a Masters degree or Doctorate awarded by an Australian or New Zealand University or the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA).

3. **Recognition of prior learning**

3.1. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) may be available to candidates who fulfil all of the published entry requirements for the DMU and have undertaken formal education programs in Medical Ultrasound.

3.2. RPL is not awarded for experience or practical training.

3.3. RPL may be granted to candidates, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, subject to the following constraints:

   3.3.1. **Accredited programs**

      3.3.1.1. Except where specific articulation agreements exist, candidates who, within a period of 10 years prior to application, have completed an accredited program will be awarded credit for the Part 1 DMU examinations and Part 2 written examination in the same modality.
3.3.1.2. Except where specific articulation agreements exist, candidates who, within a period of 5 years prior to application, have completed part of an accredited program may, at the discretion of the DMU Board of Examiners, be awarded exemption from some elements of the Part 1 Examinations.

3.3.2. Non-accredited ultrasound programs

3.3.2.1. Except where specific articulation agreements exist, there will be no credit given to candidates who have completed, or partially completed a non-accredited ultrasound program.

3.3.3. Medical degrees

3.3.3.1. Candidates who hold an Australian or New Zealand medical degree will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 DMU Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology & Embryology examination.

3.3.3.2. Candidates who hold an overseas medical degree and are registered to practice as a medical practitioner in Australia or New Zealand will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 DMU Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology & Embryology examination.

3.3.3.3. Candidates who hold an overseas medical degree but are not registered to practice as a medical practitioner in Australia or New Zealand will be awarded no credit towards DMU examinations.

3.3.4. ARDMS

3.3.4.1. In order to enrol in the DMU, applicants who hold an ARDMS qualification must satisfy all of the entry requirements specified in the DMU regulations. These include:

- Residential requirements as specified in section 1.1 of the DMU regulations.
- Qualifications requirements as specified in section 2.3 of the DMU regulations.
- Any other requirements specified or implicit within the DMU regulations.

3.3.4.2. Candidates who, within a period of 5 years prior to application, have achieved a pass in the ARDMS Physics Examination will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Physics and Instrumentation Examination.

3.3.4.3. Candidates for the DMU(Cardiac) who, within a period of 5 years prior to application, have achieved a pass in the ARDMS Echocardiography Examination will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology & Embryology examination.
3.3.4.4. Candidates for the DMU(Obstetric) who, within a period of 5 years prior to application, have achieved a pass in the ARDMS Obstetrics and Gynaecology Examination will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology & Embryology examination.

3.3.4.5. Candidates for the DMU(Vascular) who, within a period of 5 years prior to application, have achieved a pass in the ARDMS Vascular Examination will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology & Embryology examination.

3.3.4.6. Candidates for the DMU(General) who, within a period of 5 years prior to application, have achieved passes in the ARDMS Abdominal, Obstetric & Gynaecology, Vascular and Musculoskeletal Examinations will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology & Embryology examination.

3.3.5. Degrees in Physics

3.3.5.1. Candidates who have a Bachelors degree with a Physics major or a higher degree in Physics will, on application and payment of the prescribed fee, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Physics and Instrumentation Examination.

3.3.5.2. Candidates who hold degrees with substantial Physics components may, at the discretion of the DMU Board of Examiners, be awarded credit for the Part 1 Physics and Instrumentation Examination.

4. Articulation agreements

4.1. Articulation agreements may be negotiated with other providers to provide alternative pathways to qualification as a Sonographer.

4.2. Articulation agreements provide a mechanism by which students may attain:

4.2.1. The award of both an academic qualification and a professional qualification through an integrated course of study.

4.2.2. The award of a professional qualification with credit from a completed academic qualification or completed elements of an academic program.

4.2.3. The award of an academic qualification with credit from their completed professional qualification or completed elements of their professional training program.

4.2.4. The award of an accredited qualification through an alternative pathway.

4.3. Articulation agreements will involve benchmarks to ensure that the relevant requirements of the award(s) to be achieved are met. The benchmark events include those described in the documentation supplied to ASAR and NZQA for accreditation of the DMU.
4.4. Each articulation agreement will specify the credit that will be awarded to candidates who are covered by that agreement. In negotiating these agreements the following stipulations apply:

4.4.1. Articulation with accredited programs There is no theoretical limit to the extent that credits toward a DMU may be attained through another accredited course provided that all benchmark assessments are completed. However:

4.4.1.1. credit will not be awarded for the practical assessment if it has not involved a practical assessment equivalent to the DMU practical examinations. This practical assessment must have been conducted by assessors who are independent of the candidate and have not been involved in the instruction or supervision of the candidate.

4.4.1.2. articulating students will always be required to pass the DMU Oral Examinations.

4.4.2. Articulation with non-accredited programs. Credit towards a DMU from a non-accredited course will generally only be available for theoretical components. However where a non-accredited course is offered by an accredited provider, some elements of the practical assessment may be credited.

4.5. Assessing Programs for Articulation

4.5.1. Accredited Programs Articulation between the DMU and other accredited programs is by direct negotiation. Each provider is responsible for assuring itself, and the relevant accreditation authorities, that the curriculum objectives are being met. Each provider will bear its own costs.

4.5.2. Non-accredited programs

4.5.2.1. It is incumbent upon the provider of the non-accredited course to demonstrate that the course that they provide meets all of the relevant DMU curriculum requirements.

4.5.2.2. The DMU Board of Examiners will nominate an independent assessor to determine this.

4.5.2.3. The provider of the non-accredited will meet all costs of the assessment of their course including payment of the independent assessor.
**Addendum 1: Theoretical Vs Practical Assessment**

It is perceived that the Academic providers have particular expertise in the delivery and assessment of theoretical content and that ASUM has particular expertise in the delivery and assessment of practical skills as exhibited in the workplace.

The assessment methodologies currently employed by the DMU Board of Examiners for assessment of theoretical content are:

- Part 1 MCQ Examination
- Part 1 Short Answer Examination
- Part 2 MCQ Examination
- Part 2 Short Answer Examination
- Part 2 Free response Examination

The assessment methodologies currently employed by the DMU Board of Examiners for assessment of Practical skills are:

- Case-based assignments
- Supervisor assessment (formative assessment)
- Oral examinations
- Practical Examinations

**Addendum 2: Benchmarking other qualifications**

**Benchmarking**

Establishing benchmarks provides a mechanism by which it can be ascertained that common standards exist between programs and that there is a demonstrable congruence in the assessment outcomes.

The following benchmarks are recognised by the DMU Board of Examiners as appropriate for benchmarking other qualifications against the DMU:

1. Part 1 short answer 60 questions. (Domain: Cognitive learning) If a common pool of questions is used, the annual cohort can be compared with the marks of the cohorts of three years DMU general candidates (120 – 150 candidates) providing a statistical measure of comparability.

2. Reporting. (Domains: Cognition and Psychomotor) The use of common criteria for the submission and assessment of case-based assignments would facilitate the establishment of common practical competence standards.


4. Part 2 written short answers (Domain: Cognition) If a common pool of questions is used, the annual cohort can be compared with the marks of the cohorts of three years DMU general candidates (120 – 150 candidates) providing a statistical measure of comparability.