

MEDICAL STUDENTS EXCEL IN REGISTRATION EXAMINATION

A report released by the Australian Medical Council confirms that Australian final year medical students have performed well in the registration examinations for overseas trained doctors.

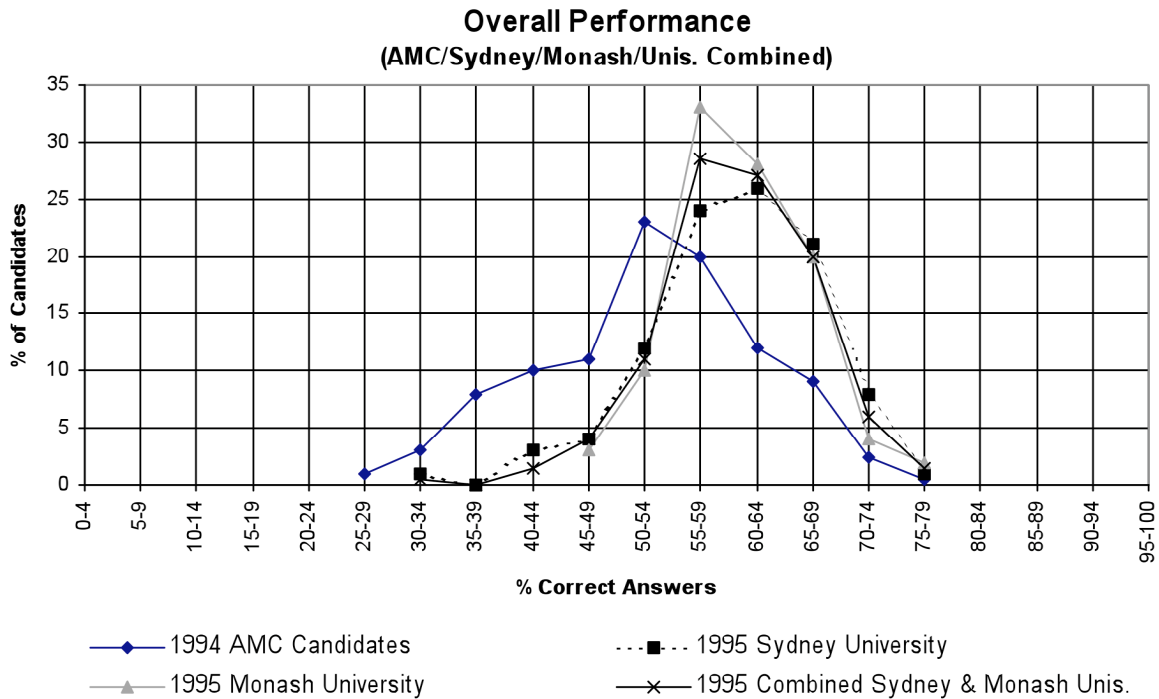
The Australian Medical Council sets the standards for basic medical education in Australia.

“Each Medical School in Australia and New Zealand is subject to formal assessment and accreditation by the AMC. This accreditation provides an assurance to the community that the graduates of these Medical Schools have achieved the standards of medical knowledge and clinical skills required for registration”, the President of the AMC, Professor John Horvath explained. “The AMC examination provides the same assurance in the case of doctors trained in non-accredited Medical Schools.”

The AMC examination is set at the level of final year medical courses in Australia. The examination is a comprehensive test of medical knowledge in the fields of adult and childrens' medicine, obstetrics, and gynaecology, surgery, psychiatry and behavioural disorders.

Professor Horvath indicated that great care was taken to ensure that the standard of the AMC examination was appropriate. This included periodic testing of question items against groups of medical students. The report by the AMC Board of Examiners details the steps taken to monitor the standard of the examination.

In October 1995 a group of 211 volunteer final year students at the University of Sydney and Monash University in Melbourne, sat a complete AMC multiple choice question examination. The same examination papers had been administered to overseas trained doctors in April 1994. The following graph illustrates the comparative performance of AMC candidates and the students at the two participating universities.



“The results of the 1995 test confirm that Australian students have performed well in every section of the AMC examination”, Professor Horvath said. “There have been allegations that Australian medical students performed poorly in the AMC examinations. The published results of these examinations demonstrate that the allegations are false”.

The Board of Examiners Report confirms that AMC candidates experience major difficulties with the subject of internal medicine. The Chairman of the Board, Professor Clark, indicated that the subject medicine required a strong knowledge base and a sound understanding of the principles of the disease process and its management.

“Unfortunately this is an area where many overseas trained doctors are unfamiliar with the standard required for practice within the Australian health care system”, Professor Clark explained. “Without access to bridging and re-training programs this problem is likely to continue”.

“The AMC is currently finalising a major publication which is expected to provide some assistance to overseas trained doctors preparing for the AMC examination”, Professor Clark indicated. “The AMC will publish a selection of questions from its MCQ bank. These will be accompanied by commentaries and notes explaining the correct response and key aspects of medical practice related to the examination question”.

The publication will provide doctors with a useful self-assessment tool and will explain key aspects of medical practice in Australia. The AMC expects the publication to be available later this year.

Contact : Ian Frank
Executive Officer

Telephone : (06) 285 1633