

Accreditation of Osteopathic Education: A view from Australia

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Outline

- The Australian context
 - The regulatory environment
 - The osteopathic workforce
 - Accreditation standards and programs
 - Accreditation processes
- Key Issues facing osteopathic education in Australia

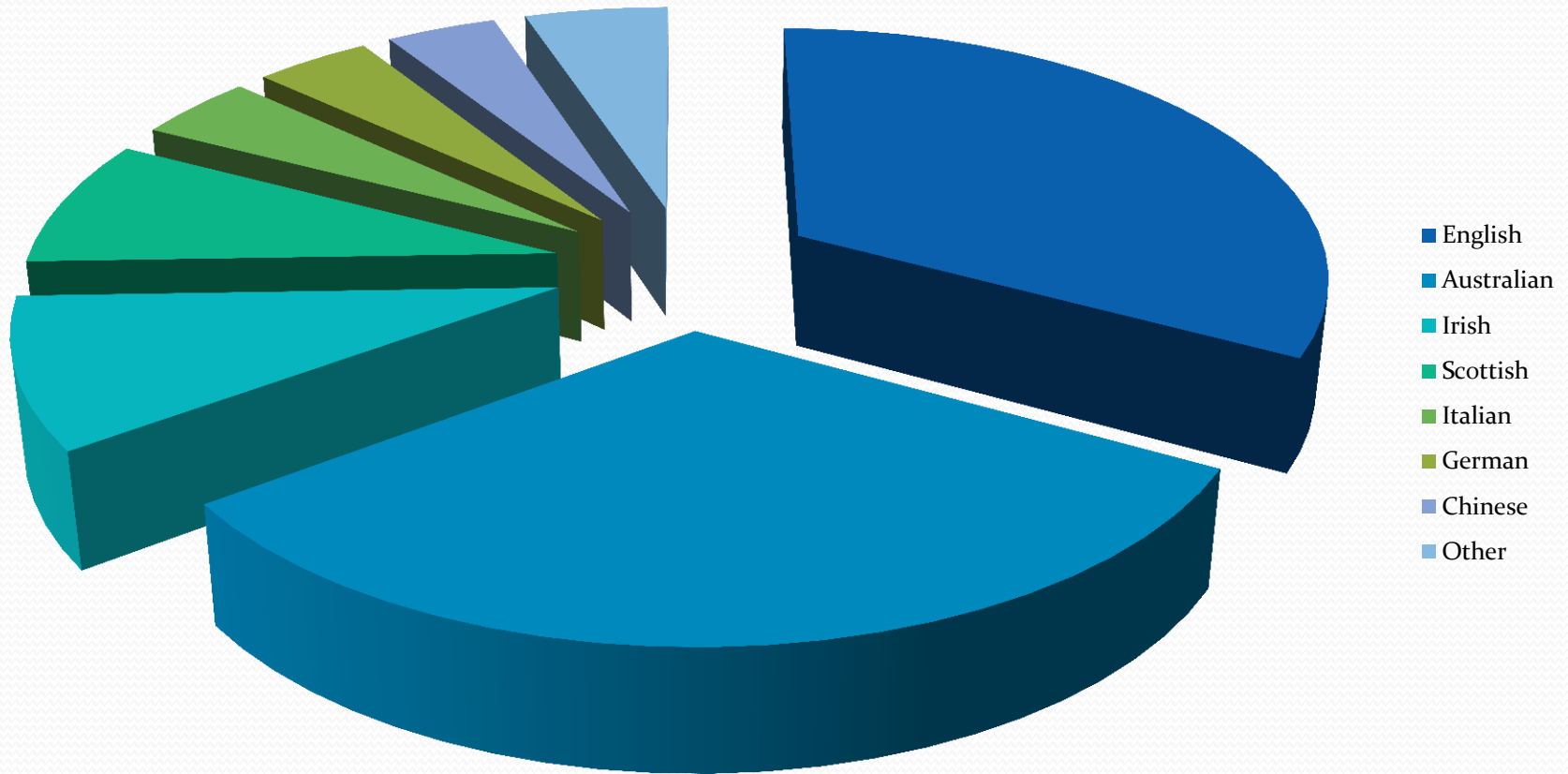
Australia

- Australia is a country and continent surrounded by the Indian and Pacific oceans.
- 8 States and Territories
- Major cities – Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide – are coastal. Its capital, Canberra, is inland.
- Population 24 million
- Australian dollar (\$1 AUD = \$0.75 USD)
- 5th highest country for per capita income
- 6th biggest country by landmass
- 52nd highest populated (high urbanisation)

The context



Australian population by race





The Australasian Osteopathic Council

- AOAC is small independent company, registered under the Corporations Act 2001.
- AOAC oversees osteopathic education in Australia by
 - Developing, reviewing and maintaining accreditation standards and processes to assess osteopathic programs.
 - Assessing education programs leading to eligibility for registration as an osteopath and accrediting them
 - Assessing overseas authorities for equivalence
- AOAC also assesses the suitability of overseas-trained osteopaths to practise in Australia, and conducts competency assessments of Australian osteopaths.

Regulatory environment



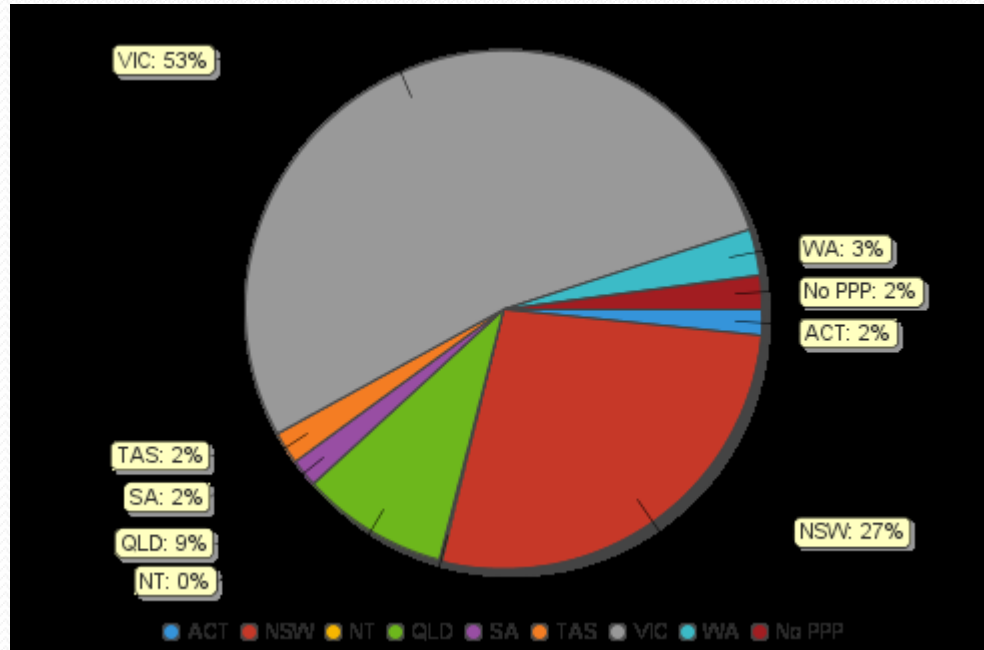
- Osteopaths regulated under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2009
- AHPRA, Osteopathic Board of Australia and AOAC
- Provides for
 - Independent accreditation
 - The registration board to determine whether accreditation is undertaken by external agency (AOAC) or Committee of Board
 - Defines Accreditation functions

Accreditation Functions

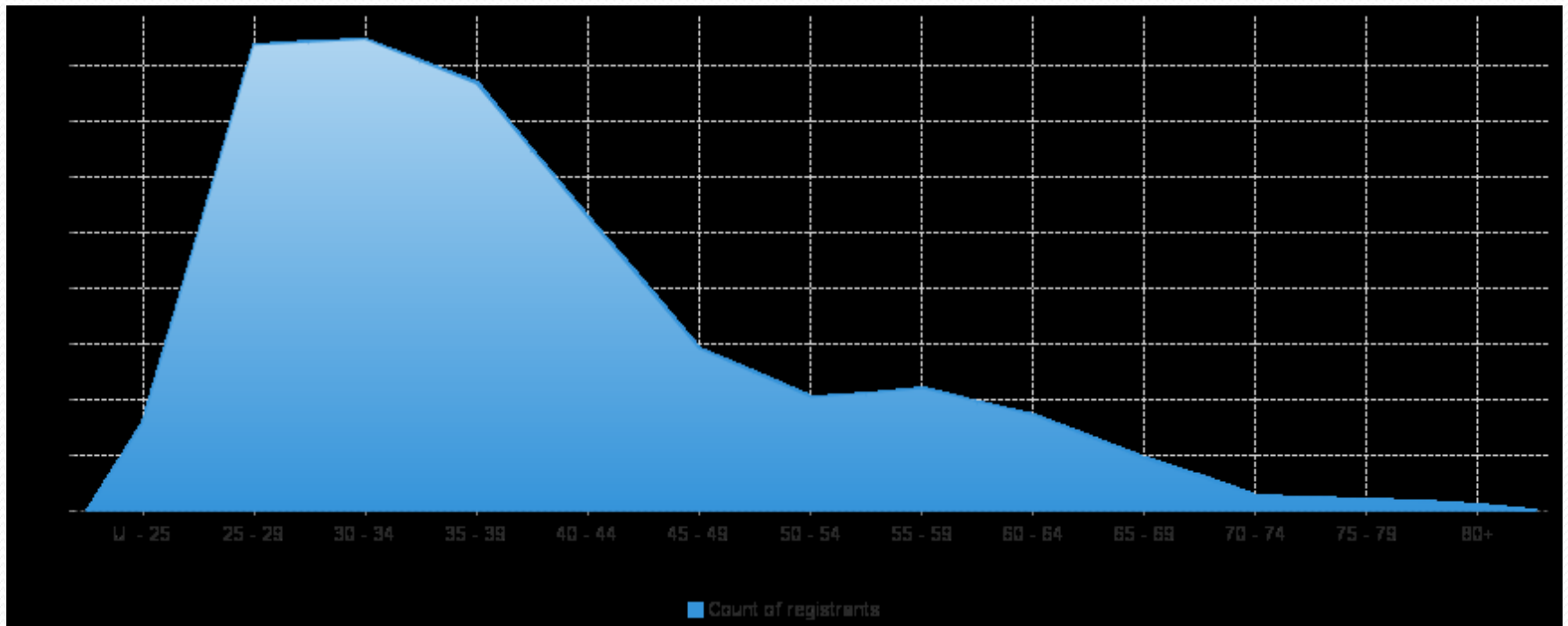


- Developing accreditation standards
- Assessing programs of study and education providers against the standards
- Assessing authorities in other countries to decide equivalence of skills, knowledge and professional attributes
- Overseeing assessment of clinical skills, knowledge and professional attributes of overseas qualified osteopaths seeking registration in Australia
- Making recommendations and providing advice to the Board
- AOAC also assesses capability of individual Australian osteopaths on request.

2088 Osteopaths in Australia



Age profile of osteopaths



Accreditation



Successful accreditation depends upon maintaining robust, respectful and productive relationships between the accrediting authority, education providers and regulators.

Accreditation Standards 2016



- 2015 Review and process
- Contextual – relate to current political, professional and educational environment in Australia
- Compatible with general Australian higher education accreditation standards and processes
- Consistent with international osteopathic education
- Promotion of education environment in which teaching and clinical practice is informed by and engaged with scholarship and research
- Focus on outcomes
 - Allows for flexibility and innovation
 - Trust providers / ongoing monitoring
 - National agreement on direction of osteopathic education

Accreditation Standards



Education provider

- Education provider registration and standing
 - Meets tertiary education standards and provides documentation to AOAC
- Program accreditation
 - Program accreditation by higher education regulator
- Resource allocation
 - Specialised resources
 - Staffing (number and quality)
 - Clinical placements
 - Mechanisms to monitor program delivery

Accreditation Standards

Osteopathic Curriculum

- **Clinical Content**
 - Adequate, appropriate and monitored
 - Well-equipped and well managed clinics
 - Staffed appropriately
 - **Patient group with broad range of health problems**
- **Clinical education**
 - Provides extensive clinical experience in screening, diagnosis, treatment and management for range
 - Develops graduates able to meet the capabilities required for osteopathic practice/registration
 - Highly skilled clinical supervisors

Accreditation Standards

Learning outcomes and curriculum

- Designed to achieve capabilities expected for registration
- Appropriate delivery methods for stage of program
- Evidence of proportion of face-to-face learning and self-directed study etc
- Integration and clear articulation of cultural competence
- Must lead to award of qualification at AQF Level 7 or higher

Accreditation Standards

Assessment

- Range of formative and summative assessment methods with clear mapping of assessments against learning outcomes and capabilities
- Fair, valid and reliable
- Internal and external moderation that benchmarks with other education providers
- Good assessment methodology and appropriate assessors
- Student assessment profiles demonstrate that graduates meet the capabilities required for safe, inter-professional, innovative and evolving osteopathic practice.

Accreditation Standards

Scholarship and Research

- Program Reflects
 - current osteopathic knowledge
 - Study of underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of osteopathy and related fields
 - Informed by recent scholarship and current research
- Learning and teaching is informed by up-to-date evidence
- Students have deep understanding of the importance of using evidence to inform clinical practice and skills to identify, critically evaluate, interpret and integrate evidence into their clinical practice

Education Programs



1. RMIT University

- Bachelor of Health Science/Bachelor of Applied Science (Osteopathy)

2. Southern Cross University

- Bachelor of Clinical Science (Double Major in Osteopathic Studies and Human Structure and Function)/Master of Osteopathic Medicine

3. Victoria University

- Bachelor of Science (Clinical Sciences)/Master of Health Science (Osteopathy)

Key issues



- Regulatory framework – National Law
- Changing paradigms of osteopathic practice and implications for education
 - Traditional ‘craft’: evidence-based/scientific/intellectual
- Shortage of qualified teaching staff
- Access to range of clinical experience
 - 1700 students/ 2088 registered practitioners!
- Resource allocation to program within university
 - Student/staff ratios
 - Investment in skills laboratories etc
- Small number of programs limits external moderation and benchmarking

Key Issues for accreditation



- What should be taught?
 - Generalist versus specialities – scope of practice
- Impacts of small scale
 - Infrequency of accreditation events
 - Access to resources
- Challenge of outcome based standards
 - Increase ongoing monitoring
 - Clear definition of expectations of beginning practitioner
- Flexibility
 - Level and length of program

Conclusions

- Osteopathy practice changing
- Outcome standards
 - More flexibility for programs
 - Encourage innovation
 - Increased need for monitoring
- Changes to education
 - Broad generalists –
 - increasing need for clearer definition of generalist and specialty practice
 - Increase post-graduate specialty education
 - Internship?
 - Graduates need to be exposed to broad range of practice but also more focus on capacity for reflective practice and ability for complex problem-solving.

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