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IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND
INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION CIRCULAR NO: 10/18

To:	Immigration New Zealand, all Managers	Date: 30 November 2010
	Immigration New Zealand, all Staff	

Assessing the comparability of qualifications in terms of Note 1 of the Long Term Skills Shortage List

Please read this information and ensure all staff members who may be affected are aware of what is required of them. This Internal Administration Circular (IAC) replaces IAC 07/22.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this IAC is to:
 - a) clarify the meaning of the requirement at Note 1 of the Long Term Skills Shortage List (LTSSL) that *'qualifications must be comparable to the standard of the New Zealand qualification listed'*, and
 - b) outline the process for assessing the comparability of **overseas qualifications**, and
 - c) outline the process for assessing the comparability of **New Zealand qualifications** that are not specifically listed on the LTSSL.

Note: A check sheet to assist with these comparability assessments is included in **Appendix A**.

Background

2. In November 2007, IAC 07/22 outlined the process by which a qualification would be assessed for its comparability to a qualification listed on the LTSSL in order to gain bonus points under the Skilled Migrant Category (for both overseas **and** New Zealand gained qualifications).
3. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) will no longer determine the comparability of New Zealand qualifications to qualifications listed on the LTSSL.
4. **New Zealand qualifications must not be sent to NZQA for comparability assessments.**

Meaning of the requirement at Note 1

5. Note 1 of the LTSSL states that qualifications must be comparable to the standard of the New Zealand qualification listed.
6. Comparability does not mean equivalence. However, for two qualifications to be considered comparable they must be at the same level on the New Zealand

Qualifications Framework (NZQF) (e.g. level 7) and be the same type of qualification (e.g. Bachelor or National Diploma). The qualifications must also have a comparable subject matter.

7. Where the LTSSL states that a specific type and level of qualification is required, the applicant must hold a qualification of that specific type and level on the NZQF. For example, an NZQF level 9 Masters qualification is not comparable to an NZQF level 7 Bachelor qualification.
8. If a specific subject matter – the discipline and major - is required on the LTSSL then the discipline and major of the applicant's qualification must be comparable to that of the listed qualification.

Note:

“discipline” refers to the field studied within a type of qualification

“major” refers to the primary topic of an applicant's study

For example, a requirement that an applicant hold a “National Certificate in Hospitality (Professional Cookery)” requires a National Certificate within the discipline of Hospitality, majoring in Professional Cookery.

9. Any specified work experience requirements must also be met. If the applicant holds a qualification, but does not have the required work experience as specified on the LTSSL, then they do not meet the requirements of the list regardless of the comparability of the qualification.

Process for Overseas Qualifications

10. All overseas qualifications require an International Qualifications Assessment (IQA) or a Qualification Assessment Report (QAR)¹ at application stage unless the qualification:
 - a. is included on the List of Qualifications Exempt from Assessment (LQEA), or
 - b. is included on the List of Qualifications Recognised as an Exception (LQRE), or
 - c. is recognised through registration.
11. When an applicant requires a comparability assessment of their overseas qualification he or she should provide a completed “NZQA Qualification Comparability Assessment” request form to NZQA, along with their application for an IQA. This request form is included in **Appendix B**.
12. A qualification assessment letter from the NZQA accompanies the IQA. Officers should request a copy of this letter as it contains useful information. If Immigration officers (officers) or technical advisors (TAs) have any questions about an NZQA assessment, they may contact the qualification evaluator of that assessment. The evaluator's name and contact details are listed at the bottom of the IQA or QAR, and the letter.
13. The NZQA will assess the comparability of overseas qualifications to New Zealand qualifications listed on the NZQF, including those on the LTSSL. However, they may not be able to determine more than the level of the qualification and usually will not be able to assess comparability of major subjects.
14. Therefore TAs may need to undertake the final step of the comparability assessments for overseas qualifications, especially in cases where major subject requirements are listed on the LTSSL. If there is no TA to complete

¹ Reports known as IQAs were introduced from the second half of 2008. Prior to this time the reports were known as QARs

this assessment, a manager with Schedule 2 delegated powers may determine the comparability of the subject matter.

Level and type of the qualification

15. Where only a level and type of qualification is listed on the LTSSL, and the applicant has a qualification from an education provider that **is** on the LQEA or LOQRE, no QAR or IQA is required. If the LQEA or LOQRE show that the applicant's qualification is the same level and type as the listed New Zealand qualification, the applicant's qualification is comparable.
16. Where the applicant has a qualification from an education provider that **is not** on the LQEA or LOQRE, the applicant must obtain an IQA. If the IQA shows that the applicant's qualification is the same level and type as the listed New Zealand qualification, the applicant's qualification is comparable.

Subject matter of the qualification

17. In some cases, the LTSSL specifies not only the level and type of the New Zealand qualification, but also a discipline and/or major subject. An example of this is a National Diploma in Engineering (Level 6) qualification majoring in Electronics.
18. The NZQA will assess the applicant's qualification to the greatest level of detail possible, but may not be able to comment on the comparability of disciplines and/or major subjects. If the applicant's qualification does not have exactly the same title as that listed on the LTSSL, TAs must determine whether the subject matter of the applicant's qualification is comparable to that of the LTSSL qualification.
19. Officers should request an academic transcript and, if necessary, ask the applicant to provide further information from their educational provider. Applicants should also provide comment from the relevant industry on the comparability of their qualification to that listed on the LTSSL. A list of industry bodies that applicants could approach is included in **Appendix C**. TAs must consider information from industries in their comparability assessments.
20. When assessing comparability TAs should compare the information in the applicant's academic transcript to the requirements for the New Zealand qualification on the LTSSL by:
 - a. looking at the description of the listed New Zealand qualification on the NZQF,
 - b. comparing the courses studied with those required to complete the listed New Zealand qualification.
21. Where more than one New Zealand education provider offers the listed qualification TAs can consider the different requirements of each of the qualifications offered.
22. Whether the applicant's qualification is comparable to that listed on the LTSSL will depend on the specific courses the applicant completed as part of their qualification. TAs should pay particular attention to compulsory components of the listed qualification and if the applicant met those requirements during the course of their studies.
23. For the subject matter to be comparable the applicant must have completed the equivalent of any/all compulsory requirements of the LTSSL qualification. It must also show a clear progression of courses teaching the LTSSL required subject matter – from foundation level to final year.

Process for New Zealand Qualifications

24. All qualifications must be recognised New Zealand qualifications. This can be established by searching for the qualification on the NZQF.
25. Officers will determine the comparability of the level and type of an applicant's qualification to qualifications on the LTSSL.
26. TAs will determine the comparability of the subject matter of New Zealand gained qualifications to that of qualifications listed on the LTSSL. If there is no TA to complete this assessment a manager with Schedule 2 delegated powers may determine the comparability of the subject matter.

Level and type of the qualification

27. If the LTSSL lists a level and type of qualification, such as a Diploma (level 6) or Masters (level 9), then the applicant's New Zealand qualification must be of both of that level and type to be comparable. Note that a Certificate is not comparable to a National Certificate and a Diploma is not comparable to a National Diploma.

Subject matter of the qualification

28. New Zealand qualifications that have a comparable subject matter may have different titles, depending on which education provider issued the qualification.
29. Where the qualification titles do not match exactly, TAs must establish whether the applicant's qualification has a comparable subject matter. This assessment should only be necessary on rare occasions.
30. Officers should request an academic transcript, course overview and any other detailed course information required to assist the TA in making a decision. Applicants should also provide comment from the relevant industry on the comparability of their qualification to that listed on the LTSSL.
31. TAs will then use the same process as described for overseas qualifications above to determine if the subject matter of the applicant's qualification is comparable to that of the qualification on the LTSSL. TAs should also refer to the New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) for guidance (www.educationcounts.gov.nz/technical_info/code_sets/new_zealand_standard_classification_of_education_nzsced).

Registration and Qualifications

32. Where a qualification has been recognised through registration, **and** the registration involves an assessment that the applicant's overseas qualification(s) is comparable with a New Zealand qualification that is included on the LQEA as per SM14.5(d), the applicant's qualification is deemed comparable to the qualification listed on the LTSSL.
33. If it is unclear whether registration involved a comparability assessment of the applicant's qualification then the applicant must approach the relevant registration board for clarification.
34. The NZQA does not compare overseas qualifications against specific New Zealand qualifications for occupations that require registration, (see SM19.5). However, where possible NZQA will assess the following:
 - Electrician,
 - Electrical Service Technician,
 - Line Mechanic,
 - Plumber, gasfitter and drain layer, and
 - Teacher.

35. If this IAC is inconsistent with any previous IAC, the instructions contained here prevail.

Simon Smith

Manager – Operations Support

Visa Services

Appendix A

Comparability assessment of qualifications		
<i>Work experience requirement – assessed by IO</i>		
• Applicant meets any/all work experience requirements		
<i>Level and type of qualification – assessed by IO or NZQA</i>		
• Qualification is recognised by virtue of LOEA or LOQRE; or • Applicant has provided an IQA or QAR and a qualification assessment letter; or • Applicant has a recognised New Zealand qualification.		
• Qualification is at the same level as the LTSSL Qualification		
• Qualification is the same type as the LTSSL Qualification		
<i>Subject matter of qualification – assessed by TA</i>		
• Academic transcript shows that the courses the applicant studied provide the same focus and cover the same material as the LTSSL qualification.		
• Academic transcript shows a clear progression of papers/courses on the subject matter of the LTSSL qualification – from foundation level to final year.		
• Academic transcript shows that the applicant completed the equivalent of any/all compulsory requirements of the LTSSL qualification.		
Also consider:		
Has the applicant provided favourable comment from the relevant industry group?		
Does the New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) indicate that the qualifications are comparable?		
Has the applicant provided any other evidence to support their claim that the qualifications are comparable? List this below:		
•		
•		
•		
Conclusion		
Is the applicant's qualification comparable to that listed on the LTSSL? Yes / No		

Appendix B

NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY QUALIFICATION COMPARABILITY ASSESSMENT REQUEST

This request must be sent to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) along with all the documents NZQA lists as required if you wish to have your **overseas qualification** assessed for comparability to a specific New Zealand qualification listed on the Long Term Skills Shortage List (LTSSL).

Name:

Date of birth:

I am intending to apply for bonus points for having a qualification in an area of absolute skills shortage.

I would appreciate an assessment considering whether my qualification(s) is/are comparable to the qualification(s) specified on the current LTSSL under:

(state the specific occupation as listed on the LTSSL)

Note: If the qualification(s) required on the LTSSL for the occupation you noted above have changed since your application was accepted, then you must provide a copy of the LTSSL that was current when your application was accepted.

Appendix C

Agriculture and Forestry

Agriculture ITO
Competenz
Dairy NZ
Deer Industry New Zealand
Egg Producers Federation
Horticulture New Zealand
HORTITO
HortNZ
Meat and Wool New New Zealand
Meat Industry Association
National Beekeepers Association of NZ
New Zealand Deer Farmers Association
New Zealand Forest Owners Association Inc
New Zealand Grain and Seed Trade Association
New Zealand Grape Growers Council
New Zealand Pork Industry Board (NZPIB)
New Zealand Seafood Industry
New Zealand Timber Industry Federation Inc
Nursery & Garden Industry Association NZ
NZ Equine ITO
NZ Horticulture ITO
NZ Kiwifruit Growers Inc
NZ Pork Industry Board
NZ Winegrowers (Trade and Regulatory Affairs)
NZIFST (Food and Crop Tech)
Pine Manufacturers Association
Poultry Industry Association of NZ
Retail Meat ITO
The Poultry Industry Association of New Zealand
Thoroughbred Racing Association
Wood Processors Association

Construction

Clay Brick and Pavers Association
Crane Association of NZ
New Zealand Institute of Surveyors
NZ Institute of Quantity Surveyors
Road Transport Forum New Zealand
Roading New Zealand
Roofing Association of New Zealand

Education

Conductive Education Southland
Montessori Association of NZ
New Zealand Association of Private Education Providers
NZ Teachers Council
NZ Trainers Association
NZ Vice Chancellors Committee
Teach NZ

Engineering

Australasian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine (ACPSEM)
Centre of Applied Engineering (CAPENZ)
The Association of Consulting Engineers
Society of Petroleum Engineers NZ

Finance / Business

Institute of Internal Auditors NZ
IPENZ (Institute of Professional Engineers NZ)
NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants

Health and Social Services

Ambulance NZ
ANZ Association of Social Workers
Association of Dispensing Opticians of New Zealand (ADONZ)
Audiological Society
Australasian Chapter of Palliative Medicine
Dental Council New Zealand (DCNZ)
Health Alliance
Healthcare Providers NZ
Medical Council of NZ
Medical Radiation Technologists Board
Medsci - Medical Laboratory Science Board
Midwifery Council
New Zealand Medical Association
New Zealand Nurses Association
NZ Anaesthetic Technician's Society Inc
NZ Association of Consulting Labs - BECA Group of Companies
NZ Association of Pathology Practices
NZ Audiological Society
NZ College of Chiropractic
NZ Dental Association
NZ Dental Hygienists Association

NZ Dental Therapists Association
NZ Medical Laboratory Science Board
NZ Nursing Council
NZ Opticians Board
NZ Psychologists Board
NZ Speech Therapists Association
NZ Veterinary Association
NZ Veterinary Council
Occupational Therapists Board
Osteopathic Society
Pharmaceutical Society of NZ Inc
Pharmacy Council
Pharmacy ITO
Physiotherapy Registration Board
Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia
Royal NZ College of General Practitioners
Rural GP Network/NZLocums
Rural GPs Group
Society of Cardiopulmonary Therapists
Society of Obstetric Medicine of Australia and NZ
Sport Fitness and Recreation ITO (SFRITO)
Te Kaiāwhina Ahumahi (The ITO for the Social Services)

ICT, Electronics and Telecommunications

Communication Agencies Association (CAANZ)
Community Support Services ITO (CSSITO)
Electrical Workers Registration Board
Electricity Supply ITO
Electro Technical Association
ElectroTechnology ITO
New Zealand Software Association
NZ Film and Video Technicians Guild

Recreation, Hospitality and Tourism

Hospitality Association of New Zealand
Hospitality Standards Institute
New Zealand Hotel Council
New Zealand Retailers' Association
NZ Hotel Council Inc
NZ Retailers Association
NZ Skydiving School
NZ Sports Turf ITO
Restaurant Association of New Zealand

Retail Industry Training Organisation
Ski Areas Association New Zealand
Tourism Industry Association NZ
Travel Agents Association NZ
The Baking Industry Association

Science

Australasian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine (ACPSEM)

Trades

BIANZ (Building Industry Association)
Building & Construction ITO
Building Officials Institute of NZ
Building Trades Union
Furniture Association of NZ /Business NZ
Furniture Industry Training Organisation
Joinery Industry Training Organisation (JITO)
Master Painters NZ (Also represents brick and blocklayers)
Master Plumbers
Master Plumbers & Gasfitters ITO
Motor ITO
Motor Trade Association (MTA)
New Zealand Building Industry Federation
New Zealand Contractors Federation
New Zealand Flooring Industry Training Association
Plumbers, Gasfitters & Drainlayers Board
PrintNZ
Painting, Signwriting, Masonry ITO
Registered Master Builders Federation

Transport

Aviation Industry Association
Aviation, Tourism & Travel ITO
Boating Industry Training Organisation

Note: Please also refer to the Industry Training Federation, which has a full and updated list of Industry Training Organisations on its website: www.itf.org.nz