



# Advancement: Senior Medical Specialists to Eminent (MO3) and Pre-Eminent (MO4) Specialist Status

## Human Resources Policy

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## **1 PURPOSE**

To outline the eligibility, application, assessment and appointment processes for Eminent Medical Officer (MO) 3 (MO3) and Pre-eminent (MO4) status as provided for in clauses 2.5.2(m) and 2.5.2(n) of the Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 1) 2005.

## **2 APPLICATION**

This policy applies to Staff Specialists – Senior Status (MO2-1 to MO2-3) employed or eligible to be employed under the District Health Services – Senior Medical Officers' and Resident Medical Officers' Award – State 2003 (the Award) and will continue to apply if individuals change their employment status within the Award (i.e. fulltime or part-time).

## **3 GUIDELINES**

Guidelines may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. The guidelines must be consistent with this policy.

## **4 DELEGATION**

The "delegate" is as listed in the Queensland Health Human Resource Delegations Manual as amended from time to time.

## **5 REFERENCES**

- *Oaths Act 1867*
- Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 1) 2005
- District Health Services – Senior Medical Officers' and Resident Medical Officers' Award – State 2003

## **6 SUPERSEDES**

- IRM 4.4-15 Advancement: Senior Medical Specialists to Eminent (MO3) and Pre-Eminent (MO4) Specialist Status.

## **7 POLICY**

### **7.1 MO3/MO4 Assessment Panel**

An MO3/MO4 Assessment Panel (the Panel) is established to consider all applications and make recommendations to the Director-General. The Director-General is to review the appointment of the Chair of the Panel prior to each annual round.

The Panel comprises of a representative or delegate from each of the following:

- Salaried Doctors Queensland (SDQ) - representative to be medically qualified;
- AMA Queensland State-based College Chairs Committee;
- Queensland Public Sector Union (QPSU) – representative to be medically qualified;

- Queensland-based university nominee from the Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand (MDANZ);
- Human Resources Branch;
- Directors of Medical Services Advisory Committee (DOMSAC) – Medical Superintendent/EDMS;
- Area Health Services (Northern, Southern, Central) - Area General Managers to nominate a medically qualified representative;
- Medically qualified representative for Executive Director of Clinical and State-wide Services; and
- Medical Workforce Advice and Coordination.

## **7.2 Eligibility for Assessment as Eminent or Pre-eminent Specialist**

Applicants must be eligible for registration as a specialist (including as a deemed specialist as defined by the Medical Board of Queensland) in Australia and have seven or more years of satisfactory performance as a specialist.

The Panel is to determine whether a deemed specialist has the equivalent of more than seven years experience comparable with a specialist in Queensland. This is to ensure that all applicants are treated in a manner equitable to Australian registered specialists of comparable professional standing.

Applicants do not need to be at the top pay-point of their substantive classification level (MO2) before submitting an application for assessment for Eminent or Pre-eminent status.

### **7.2.1 External Applicants/New Employees**

Senior Specialists, who have been recently appointed and have commenced or are due to commence employment, may apply for Eminent or Pre-eminent status through the following process:

- The District Manager or Clinical CEO is to forward a request to the Director-General through the applicable General Manager, Area Health Service to seek approval for an *ad hoc* assessment to be undertaken.
- *Ad hoc* assessments can only be considered if lodged within the first month after the date of commencement with Queensland Health. Applicants seeking assessment after that period will only be considered during the annual application round.
- *Ad hoc* assessments may be requested for potential appointees considered to meet the status of Eminent or Pre-eminent prior to engagement. Offers of employment at the MO3 or MO4 level can only be given if the *ad hoc* assessment process has been completed and approval for such appointment is granted by the Director-General.
- Assessment of the application and documentary evidence will follow the same process and be subject to the same conditions as internal applicants.
- Successful applicants will be granted appointment to MO3 or MO4 level dependent upon approval of registration as a specialist or deemed specialist by the Medical Board of Queensland.

- The Panel will complete the assessment process within 30 days of receipt of the Director-General endorsed application. This timeframe may be amended if the Panel requests additional information to assess *ad hoc* applications.

### **7.3 Eminent or Pre-eminent Specialists Roles are not Advertised**

A role cannot be established or advertised at either MO3 or MO4 level. The MO3 and MO4 levels are personal classifications that can only be attained through assessment by the Panel and with the endorsement of the Director-General. Once achieved, Eminent and Pre-eminent status must be maintained by ongoing commitment and sustained merit.

A successful applicant's classification may be higher than their manager's classification.

### **7.4 Performance Review for Appointed MO3/MO4**

A review mechanism is to ensure that successful applicants maintain their commitment to these levels of performance and is linked to an individual's Performance and Development Plan. Should the Clinical CEO or District Manager (or delegate) have concerns about the individual's continued performance at the MO3 or MO4 level, these concerns are to be raised in the first instance with the medical officer who will be given time to respond, either in writing or through a Panel interview and, if necessary, be given a specified time period in which to attain the required standard.

### **7.5 Evaluation of Application Process and Criteria**

An evaluation of the application process and criteria will occur in January 2010, unless otherwise required. The results of the review and recommendations from the Panel will then be submitted to the Medical Interest Based Bargaining group for consideration.

## **8 APPLYING THE POLICY**

### **8.1 Submission of Application**

- 1) Eligible medical officers can submit applications during the annual application round. The round will open on 1 November each year with approved appointments to be effective from 1 January the following year (e.g. applications open 1 November 2008, appointments effective 1 January 2009).

The exception to this is the first round of appointments. Applications will be accepted from 20 February 2008, with successful applicants to be back paid from 1 January 2006 or the date of commencement, whichever is the latter.

- 2) Applications will only be accepted from the medical officer seeking advancement. The exception to this is as defined in Clause 7.2.1, External Applicants/New Employees – *ad hoc* assessments.

- 3) An applicant can only submit one application per round and a point based system is used to determine whether the applicant meets the level for MO3 or MO4.
- 4) Applicants appointed to Eminent (MO3) status will be eligible to apply for Pre-eminent (MO4) status in the next annual application process.

## **8.2 The Application Process**

The application process consists of:

- 1) Self-assessment application
  - Using the on-line application system located at: <http://webapps.sth.health.qld.gov.au>, applicants are required to submit:
    - A completed self-assessment questionnaire to demonstrate their achievements and commitment to Queensland Health or a comparable health system and determine their eligibility to submit an application. An application needs to meet the cut-off score to be considered for assessment by the Panel.
    - Details on any conditions on their full medical registration in any jurisdiction.
    - A copy of the self-assessment application endorsed by the Clinical CEO or District Manager.
- 2) MO3/MO4 Assessment Panel Review
- 3) MO3/MO4 Assessment Panel Audit or Verification (may request additional documentation from the applicant)
- 4) MO3/MO4 Assessment Panel Recommendation
- 5) Approval/or not by the Director-General

## **8.3 Endorsement of Applications**

The Clinical CEO or District Manager are required to endorse internal applications and must note on the application whether or not there has been any substantiated unsatisfactory performance in the last five years.

Applicants who have been employed external to Queensland Health are required to provide documentary evidence regarding their performance for five years prior to the date of their application, including information about any substantiated unsatisfactory performance.

## **8.4 Assessment Criteria**

Applicants are required to demonstrate overall well rounded and significant contributions to the health service and/or profession. For appointment to be considered, points must be attained over all three categories.

- Category 1: Outstanding achievement and performance with advanced clinical/professional knowledge
- Category 2: Professional leadership and significant contribution to the advancement of the health system or profession
- Category 3: Outstanding contribution to clinical/professional research and education relevant to the business of the health service

The Panel takes into consideration all relevant contributions against the criteria over the life of an eligible doctor's career. Applicants should list other achievements not defined in the criteria in the last section of the self-assessment - 'Other Achievements in Health'. Applicants do not have the option to list other exceptional achievements for consideration after or during the assessment process. The Panel may choose to consider exceptional achievements which are not defined in the criteria and record in writing the specific reasons for making an exception.

#### **8.4.1 Self-Assessment Task**

The self-assessment task is to be evaluated against the criteria using a publicly-available points and weighting system. Grading ranges are assigned to criteria relevant to the level of achievement, nature and duration of commitment.

- Points have been allocated to each section, except Principle 9 which is graded by the Panel.
- Unless otherwise specified all criteria under the assessment principles require completion of a one year minimum qualifying period before points are awarded.
- If the achievement is currently not fully attained, partial points cannot be allocated.
- In most instances, examples cannot be claimed twice for attainment of points.

#### **8.4.2 Regional and Rural Weighting**

To improve equity of opportunity for specialists working in non-metropolitan areas, extra weighting is applied for employees applying from regional and remote locations as follows:

- Area 1: Weighting = 1.0 Metropolitan Areas including Health Service Districts in Brisbane, Redcliffe, Caboolture, Ipswich, Logan, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast
- Area 2: Weighting = 1.05 Toowoomba, Cairns and Townsville
- Area 3: Weighting = 1.2 Torres Strait and Northern Peninsular, Cape York and Mt Isa Health Service Districts
- Area 4: Weighting = 1.1 All locations not included in Areas 1, 2 or 3

For the above weighting to apply, applicants require current appointment from either Areas 2, 3 or 4 and continuous or cumulative service of five years of more at that location or at other locations with the same or greater weighting.

If the continuous/cumulative service of five years has occurred over a variety of weighted Areas, the area with the lowest weighting applies.

### 8.4.3 Minimum Score Requirements

With exception of the first two rounds, an application must attain a score equivalent to or above the cut-off score to be submitted for consideration by the Assessment Panel. The cut-off score is not an indicator of the minimum score required for appointment to either MO3 or MO4 level.

The appointment scores in the first two rounds will be used to establish the MO3 and MO4 cut-off scores for future years.

### 8.5 Requests for Supporting Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence is not generally required to be submitted with an individual's application. An exception to this are applicants who have been employed external to Queensland Health who are required to provide documentary evidence regarding their performance for five years prior to the date of their application, including information about any substantiated unsatisfactory performance.

However, supporting documentation may be requested by the Panel during the assessment process. Documentation may include, but not be limited to:

- relevant job descriptions or supported lists of duties;
- available documentary evidence regarding their performance (including any substantiated unsatisfactory performance);
- publications;
- research results;
- committee minutes or relevant documentation.

If requested, an applicant must provide documentary evidence or other relevant information within fourteen days of the Panel requesting such documentation. If the requested documentation is not provided, the Panel will deem the application unsuccessful.

At the discretion of the Panel, a statutory declaration (taken by an authorised person under the *Oaths Act 1867*) may be accepted when an applicant experiences significant difficulty in sourcing primary documentation as evidence of the claims made.

When required, the applicant is responsible for providing all the necessary documentary evidence to support their application in English or certified English translations.

If an applicant provides insufficient documentary evidence, the Panel is not obliged to request further information.

### 8.6 Appointment to Eminent or Pre-eminent Status

After the Director-General approves recommended applicants to MO3/MO4, the relevant medical officers and Districts will be notified in writing of the approved advancement status.

If the Panel is unable to make a unanimous recommendation in relation to a particular applicant then a report detailing the majority and minority views of the Panel is to be sent to the Director-General for final determination.

## **8.7 Portability of Status**

Eminent and Pre-eminent status is portable within Queensland Health from one role to another providing:

- Employment continues under the District Health Services – Senior Medical Officers' and Resident Medical Officers' Award – State 2003 (the Award);
- Employment status is full-time or part-time.

### **8.7.1 Transfers and Re-appointments**

In the case of an individual appointed to MO3 or MO4 either transferring to a Visiting Medical Officer (VMO) position and later returning to an SMO appointment or resigning from Queensland Health and later re-commencing with a SMO (MO2) appointment, the status of MO3 or MO4 will not be automatically retained.

If the re-appointment to SMO is within two years of the transfer or resignation date, an individual may apply via the District Manager or Clinical CEO for a request to be sent to the Director-General through the General Manager, Area Health Service for an *ad hoc* assessment to be undertaken.

The assessment process will review the last successful application assessed by the Panel or an updated application (if deemed necessary) to demonstrate the applicant's commitment and continued performance at the MO3/MO4 level.

Requests for *ad hoc* assessments will only be considered within the first month after the date of re-appointment to SMO level (MO2).

Individuals with re-appointments exceeding the two year break will only be considered for assessment in the next annual round.

## **8.8 Unsuccessful Applicants and Feedback**

Advice will be forwarded to unsuccessful applicants upon finalisation of the round. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply in the next round. A review to consider the appropriate conditions for unsuccessful applicants re-applying for subsequent rounds will be undertaken after round two.

The Panel is to provide applicant feedback in circumstances when an applicant was unsuccessful for reasons not related to their score (e.g. registration conditions, substantiated performance issues). Feedback is not provided when an applicant does not reach the MO3 or MO4 cut off score.

## 8.9 Grievances

An applicant who believes that the process has not been applied appropriately to their application is entitled to lodge a grievance in accordance with Clause 1.10 of the Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.1) 2005. Before lodging a grievance, applicants must consider feedback provided by the Panel.

An applicant has no entitlement to lodge a promotion appeal as the process does not involve a permanent appointment to a vacant position. Grievances are process based and not merit based. Grievances are not a 'second chance' to provide more information.

## 9 DEFINITIONS

<p><b>Authorised person under the <i>Oaths Act 1867</i></b></p>	<p>An authorised person under the <i>Oaths Act 1867</i> is described in Section 13 of the Act, below:</p> <p><b>13 Who may take declarations</b></p> <p>(1) A person's declaration may be taken by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a justice, commissioner for declarations or notary public under the law of the State, the Commonwealth or another State; or</li> <li>(b) a lawyer; or</li> <li>(c) a conveyancer, or another person authorised to administer an oath, under the law of the State, the Commonwealth or another State.</li> </ul>
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## 10 HISTORY

May 2008	Policy reformatted into HR Policy template.
February 2008	Developed as a result of the requirements of the Medical Officers' (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.1) 2005.