Challenges and Solutions Related to Mobility of the Optometry Credential

Erin Brooks, University of Missouri-St. Louis
Jeffrey L. Weaver
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2 authors:

Jeffrey Lance Weaver
University of Missouri - St. Louis
96 PUBLICATIONS · 41 CITATIONS

Erin Marie Brooks
University of Missouri - St. Louis
4 PUBLICATIONS · 0 CITATIONS

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:

AOA Optometric Clinical Practice Guidelines View project

Primary Care Optometry and Ocular Disease View project
Challenges and Solutions Related to Mobility of the Optometry Credential

Jeffrey L. Weaver, OD, MS, FEAAO¹
Erin M. Brooks, OD, MS¹

¹University of Missouri – Saint Louis, College of Optometry
Saint Louis, Missouri, USA
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Abstract
The human population is becoming increasingly mobile. For the profession of optometry to have enough mobility to be a truly global workforce, it is important to have a mechanism to verify the competence of optometrists through an industry recognized credential that can be carried across national borders.
In Europe, the European Diploma in Optometry was developed as an accreditation program with high standards with multiple goals, one of which was to support the free movement of optometrists around Europe. Such a process on an even larger scale would be beneficial if it allowed mobility of optometrists across the globe. I propose such a program based on the ISO/IEC 17024 standard for personnel certification programmes.
In 2012, ISO (the international organization for standardization) released an updated standard to harmonize the various procedures used around the world for certifying the competence of personnel in different occupations or professions. *ISO/IEC 17024:2012 Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons*, provided guidance toward a global benchmark for personnel certification programmes to ensure that they operate in a consistent, comparable and reliable manner worldwide, allowing individuals to have skills that translate across national lines.
Results/Discussion

Optometrists pursue credentials to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the work of the profession. A program accredited under ISO/IEC 17024 should increase the potential for national and international reciprocity of the optometry credential.
Recommendations/Conclusions

To address the growing need for mobility of the optometry credential, the profession should consider a worldwide optometry assessment program based on the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024. The program could be based much on the work already accomplished in the European Diploma in Optometry, but expanded for global purposes.
OK…

Why is an American Giving this Talk?!

- United States?

- 54 U.S. Jurisdictions:
  - 50 States
  - District of Columbia
  - Puerto Rico
  - U.S. Virgin Islands
  - Guam
  - Mariana Islands?
Efforts to Harmonize Optometry

- European Diploma of Optometry
- Council on Endorsed Licensure Mobility for Optometrists (CELMO)
- American Board of Optometry Board Certification
- Others?
U.S. Efforts at Unification

- **Council on Endorsed Licensure Mobility for Optometrists (CELMO)**
  - Doctor of optometry (O.D.) degree
  - Active practice for three of the last four years.
  - Highest level of prescriptive authority in state of practice.
  - Good standing with all licensing boards.
  - Report all disciplinary actions taken by any licensing board.

- **American Board of Optometry Board Certification**
  - Examination designed to assess knowledge and skills beyond entry level, and to confirm ongoing competence.
  - Requires OD plus a residency or equivalent to take exam.
  - Comprehensive exam and process accredited by NCCA.
  - Founding premise that it could become a unifying credential.
European Diploma of Optometry

• Legal scope of practice within the countries of ECOO varies:
  - Assembling spectacles → Management of eye disease
• ECOO established the European Diploma in Optometry as a stimulus to the harmonization of European optometric education and clinical practice.
• Set at the Bachelor level in European Higher Education, at qualification appropriate for Category 3 of WCO model.
• Adopted as “Gold Standard” for European Optometry.
Current Offerings

- **European Diploma in Optometry**
  - 2000
  - WCO Level 3
  - Part A: Optics and Optical Appliances
  - Part B: Clinical Investigation and Management
  - Part C: Biological and Medical Sciences

- **European Qualification in Optics**
  - 2017
  - WCO Level 1
  - References Part A of European Diploma in Optometry
  - Relevance in countries where there is a lower, or no, established standard for optics.
Move from Testing to Accreditation

• All European Optometry/Optics programmes can be compared against an agreed international standard, the European Diploma.

• Forms the basis of a system for offering exemptions from parts, or all, of the European Diploma examinations to graduates of accredited programmes.

• Training Institutions encouraged to match their programmes to all or part of the competency-based European Diploma - this will help harmonize optometry.

• May help training institutions in their national academic accreditation.
ISO/IEC 17024

- Developed with the objective of achieving and promoting a globally accepted benchmark for organizations operating certification of persons.
ISO/IEC 17024

• Confidence in the respective certification schemes for persons is achieved by means of a globally accepted process of assessment and periodic re-assessments of the competence of certified persons.
ISO/IEC 17024

- It can serve as the basis for the recognition of the certification bodies for persons and the certification schemes under which persons are certified, in order to facilitate their acceptance at the national and international levels.
One of the characteristic functions of the certification body for persons is to conduct an examination, which uses objective criteria to measure competence and scoring.
4.1 Legal Requirements
The certification body shall be a legal entity, or a defined part of a legal entity…

4.3 Management of Impartiality
– Conflicts of Interest
– Objective Examination

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
ISO/IEC 17024
Second edition 2012-07-01

Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons
Évaluation de la conformité — Exigences générales pour les organismes de certification procédant à la certification de personnes
ISO/IEC 17024
Structural Requirements

5.2 Structure of the certification body in relation to training

5.2.1 Completion of training may be a specified requirement of a certification scheme.
8.1 There shall be a certification scheme for each category of certification.

8.2 A certification scheme shall contain the following elements:
- scope of certification;
- job and task description;
- required competence;
- abilities (when applicable);
- prerequisites (when applicable);
- code of conduct (when applicable).
WCO Categories of Optometric Services

1. Optical Technology Services
2. Visual Function Services
3. Ocular Diagnostic Services
   a) without drugs   b) with drugs
4. Ocular Therapeutic Services
   dispensing refraction prescription
   Diagnosis and management of eye disease using DPA’s (diagnostics)
   treatment of eye disease using TPA’s (therapeutics)

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# Worldwide Optometry Assessment Program (Proposed Example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 1. Optical Technology Services</th>
<th>Category 2. Visual Function Services</th>
<th>Category 3. Ocular Diagnostic Services</th>
<th>Category 4. Ocular Therapeutic Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisite for Examination</strong></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>-European Diploma in Optometry</td>
<td>-OD Degree from U.S. or Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-European Qualification in Optics</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Other</td>
<td>-UK Diploma in Therapeutics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>-European Diploma in Optometry</td>
<td>-Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Other</td>
<td><strong>Split into 3A and 3B?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>-Other</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>World Certified Dispensing Optician</td>
<td>World Certified Refracting Optician</td>
<td>World Certified Optometrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>World Certified Refracting Optician</td>
<td>World Certified Optometrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World Certified Refracting Optician</td>
<td>World Certified Optometrist</td>
<td>World Certified Optometrist (Therapeutic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Discussion