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VQE-bound MDs to take English test

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Foreign medical graduates (FMG) who need to take the Visa Qualifying Examination (VQE) this year have up to Feb. 8, 1978 to file their application for a prerequisite English test, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) announced recently.

The English test will be given on April 8, 1978 while the Visa Qualifying Examination has been tentatively set for September 6-7, 1978. The ECFMG is not expected to administer both tests jointly this year.

The VQE is a special two-day examination which was developed by the National Board of Medical Examiners. It is composed of approximately equal proportions of basic science and clinical science test items. It is the equivalent of the National Board Part I and II examinations for the purpose of the 1976 and 1977 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Under the new law, most foreign medical graduates are required to pass the VQE for purposes of obtaining an

immigrant visa and also for receiving medical training under the EVP.

The law also requires FMGs to be competent in oral and written English. The ECFMG stated in its announcement that in order to be eligible for admission to the VQE, candidates must meet the English requirement not more than two years prior to the deadline for the receipt of VQE application which is May 17, 1978. To qualify for the Sept. 6-7, 1978 VQE, they must have passed an ECFMG English test or demonstrated a performance which is acceptable to the ECFMG on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), no earlier than May 17, 1976 and no later than May 17, 1978.

Foreign medical graduates should consult the ECFMG about the details of the English test and the VQE as early as possible. The ECFMG was very emphatic in announcing that if an FMG does not pass the April 5, 1978 English test and has not otherwise met the English language prerequisite for VQE, he will not be eligible for admission to the 1978 VQE.