



THE AUSTRALIAN
ORTHOTIC PROSTHETIC
ASSOCIATION

AOPA Membership Application Guidelines (Non-Accredited)

Revised October 2024



Orthotics and Prosthetics in Australia

Orthotist/prosthetists assess the physical and functional limitations of people resulting from disease, illness, trauma and disability, including limb amputation, diabetes, arthritis and neuromuscular conditions, such as stroke. Orthotic and prosthetic services may involve the provision of orthoses and prostheses to restore function, prevent deterioration, and improve quality of life. Orthotist/prosthetists are commonly employed in Australian hospitals, private clinics, research institutions as well as rural and remote regions, working independently and as part of multidisciplinary healthcare teams to support the Australian community.

Orthotist/prosthetists are tertiary qualified allied health professionals. An Australian Qualification Framework level 7 is required to practice as an orthotist/prosthetist in Australia, consistent with education standards for other allied health professions. Orthotic/prosthetic students complete training alongside physiotherapy, podiatry and occupational therapy students.

The Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association (AOPA) is the peak professional body for orthotist/prosthetists in Australia, with certified practitioners comprising 80% of the practicing profession. AOPA is responsible for regulating the profession and is a founding member of the National Alliance of Self Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP) in partnership with other professional organisations, including Speech Pathology Australia, the Australian Association of Social Workers and Exercise and Sports Science Australia. AOPA is recognised by the Commonwealth Government as the assessing authority responsible for conducting migration skill assessments for orthotist/prosthetists.

Contact

The Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association
P.O. Box 1132 Hartwell, Victoria 3124
(03) 9816 4620 | www.aopa.org.au

Jessica Landers – Chief Executive Officer
jessica.landiers@aopa.org.au

Contents

About this guide	4
The role of AOPA	5
AOPA Certified Practitioners	5
Employment as an orthotist/prosthetist in Australia	6
Types of applications	7
The application process	9
1. Stage 1: Assessment of Eligibility	9
2. How to submit a Stage 1 application	12
3. How to submit your application to AOPA	14
4. Stage 1 assessment process:	15
5. Stage 2: Portfolio of evidence	16
6. Portfolio requirements	17
7. Overview of the Stage 2 assessment process	22
Appendix 1 - Evidence List	24
Appendix 2 - Evidence Cover Sheet	25
Appendix 3 – Performance Indicator Checklist	26
Appendix 4 – Portfolio document checklist	30
Appendix 5 – Assessment Rubric	31
Appendix 6 - Declaration of Authenticity	32
Appendix 7 - Consent form example	33
Appendix 8 - Appeals Information	34
Appendix 9 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about non-accredited applications	36

About this guide

The Australian Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (AOPA) welcomes orthotists and prosthetists with international qualifications who seek to become members. This document outlines the guidelines and necessary steps for applying for AOPA membership for those holding non-accredited international qualifications

This Guide explains the role of the Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association (AOPA) in the assessment of your application to practice as an orthotist/prosthetist in Australia including:

- The two types of applications for internationally qualified orthotist/prosthetists
- The stages of application assessment, including the Assessment of Eligibility and the Portfolio of Evidence
- How to apply
- How your application will be assessed

This guide is designed to be used alongside the following resources;

- [The AOPA website](#)
- [AOPA Entry Level Competency Standards for Australian Orthotist/Prosthetists](#)
- [Application Guide for Full Membership of the Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association](#)

For information about the guiding principles by which all applications are assessed applicants should view the [AOPA Constitution](#) and By-Laws:

By Law 1 - Membership criteria: describes eligibility criteria for each membership class.

By Law 2 - Recency of Practice: describes AOPAs Recency of Practice policy relating to membership eligibility and the Resumption of Practice Program.

By Law 3 - Assessment of Membership Applications: describes the process for assessing full membership applicants with an Accredited and Non-Accredited tertiary qualification.

For information about the ongoing requirements of AOPA Certified practitioners, applicants should view the AOPA By-laws:

By Law 4 - CPD: describes AOPAs Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program

which is a mandatory requirement for members to receive annual certification.

By Law 5 - Ethics: outlines the AOPA Ethical Code and Professional Conduct standard which all members are required to uphold.

You may also like to refer to the [AOPA Scope of Practice](#) documents.

The role of AOPA

The Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association (AOPA) is the peak professional body for orthotist/prosthetists in Australia, with certified practitioners comprising 80% of the practicing profession.

AOPA is responsible for regulating the profession and is a founding member of the National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP) in partnership with other professional organisations, such as Speech Pathology Australia, the Australian Association of Social Workers and Exercise & Sports Science Australia.

AOPA:

- sets the professional standards for the practice of orthotist/prosthetists in Australia;
- accredits the university courses which educate orthotist/prosthetists in Australia;
- is the assessing authority for orthotist/prosthetists applying for skilled migration to Australia.
- assesses applications from any person with an overseas orthotic/prosthetic qualification (non-accredited qualification) who wishes to practice in Australia.

AOPA has been appointed by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training as the Skills Assessing Authority for the profession of Orthotist/Prosthetist (251912). AOPA is responsible for undertaking skills assessments for migration purposes and **is not** an employment agency. AOPA **will not** reply to requests for job placement and cannot provide advice on the likely success of your visa application or ability to secure employment in Australia.

AOPA Certified Practitioners

Certified orthotist/prosthetists voluntarily commit to upholding the professional standards set by AOPA and can use the title 'Certified Orthotist/Prosthetist', the credential 'cOP-AOPA' and the certified logo.

AOPA self-regulates the O&P profession nationally through the establishment of minimum professional standards and codes that are upheld by certified practitioners. These professional standards and codes provide assurance to consumers, employers, referrers and practitioners about the expectations of an orthotist/prosthetist in Australia. AOPA is a Full member of the National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP).

The professional standards and codes upheld by AOPA certified practitioners include:

Code of conduct

The AOPA Ethical Code and Professional Conduct document is outlined in By-Law 5 of the Association. It is reviewed regularly and outlines the professional ethics and conduct expected of an Australian orthotist/prosthetist.

Competency Standards

The AOPA Competency Standards define the minimum entry level requirements to practice the profession in Australia.

The AOPA Entry Level Competency Standards for Australian Orthotist/Prosthetists document describes the attributes an orthotist/prosthetist is expected to have for entry into the Australian workforce. These Standards form the basis of AOPA membership eligibility.

Competency Standards are important as they protect and promote the public's health by ensuring orthotist/prosthetists have the ability to transfer and apply their skills and knowledge to new situations and environments, whilst integrating essential components such as values and attitudes.

Scope of Practice

The AOPA Scope of Practice reflects the scope of the profession in Australia and clearly articulates the core activities of the profession.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirement

As well as upholding standards relating to ethics, competency and scope of practice, certified AOPA members are required to meet annual CPD requirements. The CPD requirements are a mandatory component of membership renewal and ensure that all AOPA members commit to ongoing education and professional development.

Employment as an orthotist/prosthetist in Australia

Many employers in Australia will require you to be eligible for Certified membership of AOPA. However, achieving eligibility for Certified AOPA membership does not automatically entitle you to employment and is not a job offer.

Eligibility for Certified AOPA membership does not ensure that your application to migrate to Australia will be successful. Approval for migration is the responsibility of the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.

If your application for AOPA membership is approved, you will remain eligible for membership for three (3) years from the date of approval. During that time, you can use the assessment for the purposes of applying for migration, and/or to join AOPA.

You must also commence practice in Australia as an orthotist/prosthetist during this time to continue to meet the Recency of Practice Requirement. Your eligibility for Certified membership will expire at the end of the three-year period unless you are able to provide additional evidence to show that you should remain eligible to practice.

Types of applications

There are **two** types of applications for the non-accredited qualification pathway, for applicants with an international qualification. These are the International Health Practitioner pathway, and the Skilled Migration pathway. Successful outcomes for both pathways deem that the applicant is *eligible* for AOPA membership. Payment of the membership fee is then required to become a Certified AOPA member.

Please ensure you select the most appropriate option at the time of completing the application form via the AOPA website.

1) The International Health Practitioner (IHP) pathway;

Apply via this pathway if you require Certified AOPA membership, yet do not require a skills assessment for migration purposes.

e.g., If you already have a visa to live in Australia, yet require membership of AOPA as part of your employment.

2) Skilled Migration pathway;

Apply via this pathway if you require a Skills Assessment for Migration (visa) purposes and would also like to be eligible for AOPA membership.

- The profession of Orthotist/Prosthetist was added to the Skilled Occupations list in July 2016. This means that you can nominate the occupation of Orthotist/Prosthetist for temporary or permanent skilled migration under a range of migration programs.
- Further details regarding the range of migration options are available at <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/working-in-australia>.

The difference between the two pathways

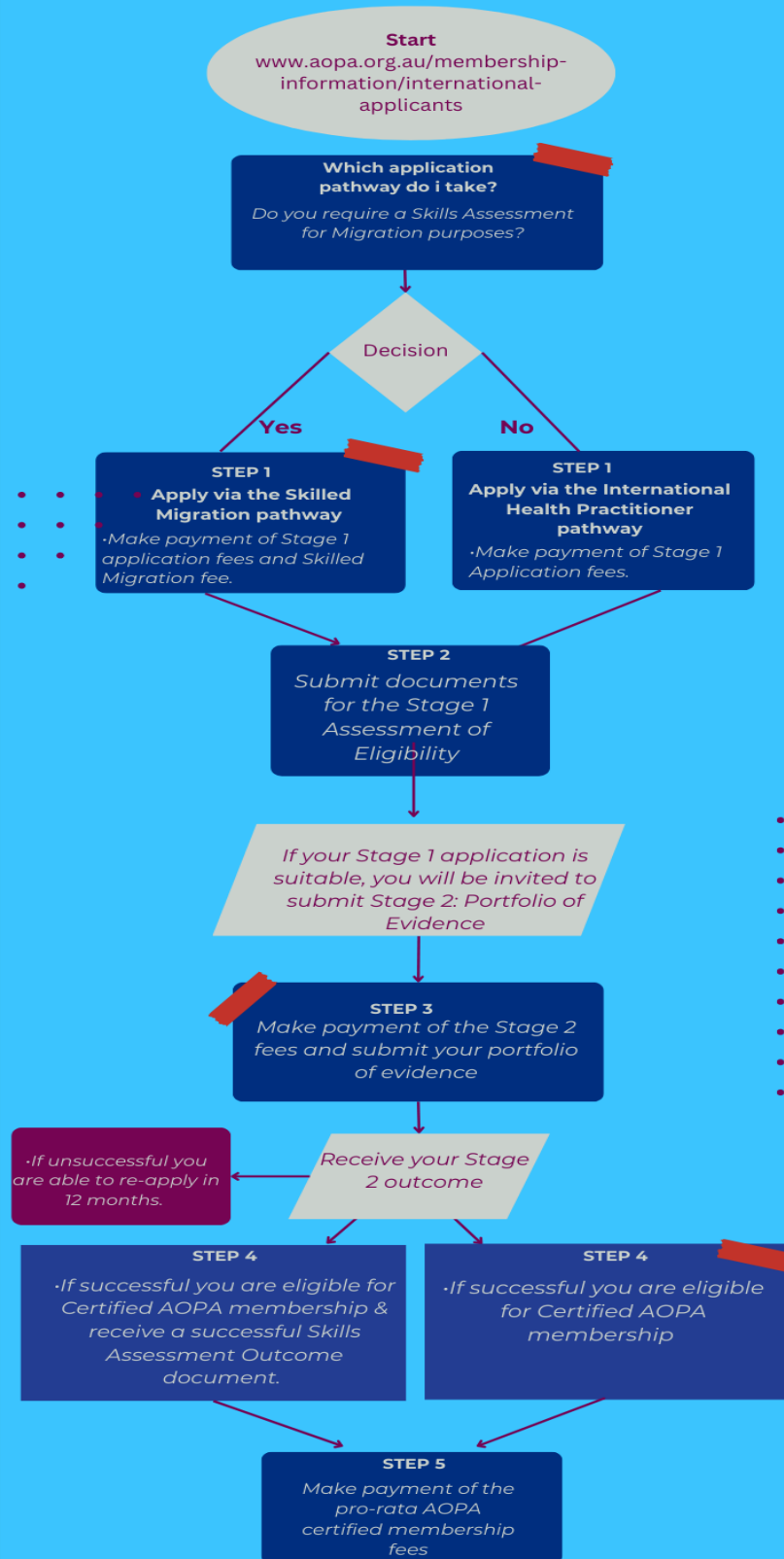
The process for the two pathways is similar.

In the case of applying for a Skilled Migration Pathway, a Skills Assessment outcome report will be produced at the completion of the application assessment, as well as a successful letter of outcome (eligibility). This will incur an additional Skills Assessment Fee at the beginning of the application pathway (see Flowchart 1, p.8).

Why AOPA undertake assessment of competence?

AOPA assesses all applicants who gained their qualification from an international, non-accredited program, against AOPA's minimum standards. This acts as a measure of public protection by ensuring that all AOPA Certified orthotist/prosthetists meet AOPA's Competency Standards and can provide safe and effective orthotic/prosthetic practice to the Australian community.

Choosing the right application pathway for O&Ps with an international qualification



Flowchart 1. The two pathways for non-accredited qualification applicants.

The application process

The application process is comprised of **two** stages:

Stage 1: Assessment of Eligibility AND

Stage 2: Assessment of Competence using a Portfolio of Evidence

1. Stage 1: Assessment of Eligibility

To ensure that only suitably qualified practitioners are invited to submit a portfolio of evidence in stage 2, a desktop review takes place to determine eligibility for each stage 1 application.

The four eligibility requirements that must be met to successfully pass Stage 1 are:

- I. Qualification assessment
- II. English language proficiency
- III. Professional registration/recognition
- IV. Recency of Practice (RoP)

The requirements to confirm your eligibility are outlined in the table below:

Stage	Requirement	How is this Assessed?
1. Qualification assessment	<p>Your orthotist/prosthetist qualification must be comparable to those of orthotist/prosthetists trained in Australia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The applicant must hold a <u>dual</u> Prosthetics & Orthotics qualification.• The applicant's qualification must be comparable to the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) Level 7.	<p>1: We check the qualification</p> <p>AOPA utilises the Australian Government's Country Education Profiles (CEP) online system to determine the AQF level of an individual's qualification.</p> <p>AOPA checks the qualification within the education system in which it was gained. We try to establish that the qualification was formally issued by a recognised awarding body.</p> <p>2: Evaluating the qualification</p> <p>We compare the qualification to an Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) Level 7.</p>
2. English language proficiency	<p>Applicants must* prove their English language proficiency by satisfactorily completing either the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), OR Pearson's Test of English (PTE) as defined below.</p> <p>Test results from either of the following English language tests are accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• International English Testing System (IELTS)- Academic	<p>Many languages other than English are used in Australia. AOPA acknowledges that it is important to increase the number of languages in which competent clinical practice is available, but this does not replace or remove the requirement for competent professional use of English.</p> <p>Orthotist/Prosthetists in Australia need to work with English as the vehicle of communication and as the focus of assessment and treatment.</p>

	<p>Applicants must score a minimum of 7 in each of the four components of the IELTS academic module (listening, reading, writing and speaking).</p> <p>If you score less than 7 in one component of the IELTS, we accept submissions of IELTS One Skill Retake outcomes.</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pearson's Test of English (PTE) - Academic <p>Applicants must score 65 in all 4 domains and an overall score of 65.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Applicants are required to provide a certified copy of test results OR arrange for the results to be sent to AOPA directly from the test administrator.</p> <p>*Exemptions: Applicants that hold an <u>entry level</u> orthotic/prosthetic qualification conducted in English, from a university in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the United Kingdom Canada United States of America <p>are exempt from providing evidence of English language proficiency.</p> <p><i>Please refer to the <u>AOPA English Language Requirements</u> for further details.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must achieve the IELTS/PTE requirements before submitting your application. You will be responsible for meeting the cost of sitting the IELTS/PTE. If any aspect of your application raises concerns about your English language competence, you will be asked for additional information about your competence in English or directed to complete English language testing, even if you indicated that your dominant language is English. <p>Further information regarding the IELTS: https://ielts.com.au/australia</p> <p>Further Information regarding PTE: https://www.pearsonpte.com/destination-australia</p>
3. Professional registration/recognition	<p>Applicants must demonstrate unrestricted registration/licence to practice in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the country in which they received their qualification, AND the country in which they are currently working, AND any other country in which they have conducted orthotic and prosthetic practice. 	<p>Acceptable evidence could take the form of a letter from the relevant authority to AOPA outlining the period of time you have been or are able to practice in the area of orthotics/prosthetics without restrictions, and that there has been no withdrawal of registration/licence at any time, and that there is currently no pending disciplinary action.</p> <p>Where the relevant country does not have a registration or licensing body, a legal statement of explanation witnessed by an official Notary Officer or Justice of the Peace must be provided.</p>
4. Recency of practice requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants must demonstrate via their Curriculum Vitae (CV) that they meet the <i>Definition of Recent</i>, as outlined in <u>The AOPA Resumption of Practice Program</u> (p.4) Provide a complete CV according to the AOPA <u>CV template</u>. Your CV must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Role titles 	<p>Recency refers to a practitioner that has maintained activities that meet the definition of <i>practice</i> since qualifying as an orthotist/prosthetist.</p> <p>The recency of practice threshold varies according to the number of years since graduation and the number of years practicing.</p> <p>All applicants to AOPA for Full (Certified) Membership must meet Recency of Practice (RoP) requirements.</p>

	<input type="checkbox"/> Hours of employment in each role <input type="checkbox"/> Details of two referees who can confirm Recency of Practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Signed declaration	<p>Practitioners who have not worked in the orthotic/prosthetic field for a certain period of time and therefore do not meet the RoP requirements, must undertake mandatory professional development in order to be eligible for Full Membership. This mandatory professional development is known as a Resumption of Practice Program (RoPP).</p> <p>If you are not recent to practice but wish to apply through the non-accredited pathway for AOPA Certification, please make this clear in your application. For information about how AOPA processes applications from those who are not recent, please read the AOPA Resumption of Practice Guidelines.</p>
--	---	---

1.1 Fraudulent activity

Any evidence of fraudulent representation will result in the refusal to process the documents and failure of your application. If you are successful in your application but are later found to have provided misleading or untruthful information within your application, your membership will be revoked. Application fees will not be refunded, and all future applications will be rejected.

1.2 Incomplete applications

AOPA will not accept incomplete applications for membership. An incomplete application will not be forwarded to the Accreditation Committee or assessed in any manner. If your application is incomplete the National Office will contact, you and you will have 30 days in which to supply the necessary paperwork. If the required paperwork is not submitted within 30 days, your application will not be accepted.

1.3 Payment of a non-refundable application fee

The fees applicable for both Stage 1 & 2 of the application process are non-refundable.

Applicable fees are available on the [AOPA website](#).

2. How to submit a Stage 1 application

Commence the application process by gathering all necessary documentation.

2.1 Document checklist:

Document	Details
<input type="checkbox"/> <u>Certified</u> copy of qualification	Include a certified copy of the original AND a certified copy of an English translated version if in a language other than English (see guidelines for document certification).
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified copy of academic transcript	Include a certified copy of the original AND a certified copy of an English translated version if in a language other than English (both sides).
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified evidence of change of name (if applicable)	If your name is different from the name on your qualification, you must include a certified copy of documents such as marriage certificate, deed poll etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified proof of identity	Include a certified copy of the original AND a certified copy of an English translated version if in a language other than English, of one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your passport OR • drivers' licence OR • birth certificate
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed AOPA CV	Provide a complete CV according to the CV template . Your CV must include details of two referees who can confirm Recency of Practice.
<input type="checkbox"/> English language proficiency test results (certified or sent directly to AOPA from test centre)	<p>You must achieve the IELTS/PTE requirements before submitting your application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test results will be accepted if they were obtained within two years before the date you lodge your application. • IELTS/PTE results must be available through the IELTS/PTE verification websites on the date of your application. • Test results must be achieved in one test sitting; or combined scores from two testing sittings within a six-month period; or from an IELTS One Skill Retake test. • Your application will not be accepted if you have NOT achieved the required IELTS/PTE results. <p>Please refer to the AOPA English Language Requirements</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of professional registration/ recognition	<p>Acceptable evidence could take the form of a letter from the relevant authority to AOPA outlining the period you have been able to practice in the area of orthotics/prosthetics without restrictions, and that there has been no withdrawal of registration/license at any time and that there is currently no pending disciplinary action.</p> <p>Where the relevant country does not have a registration or licensing body, a legal statement of explanation witnessed by an official Notary Officer or Justice of the Peace must be provided by the applicant.</p>
---	---

2.2 Certify applicable documents

All materials which are copies of original documents, such as your qualification, transcript, or marriage certificate, must be certified as a true and accurate copy of the original by being sighted and signed by a Justice of the Peace or another person who has legal authority. The official title and address of the person sighting the documents must be clearly visible alongside their signature.

☐ Please refer to the following list of those who can certify documents, whether you are located in Australia, or outside of Australia, here: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Certifying-Documents.aspx>

What does an authorised officer need to do to certify your documents?

- ☐ Certify that each document is a true copy of the original
- ☐ Certify that the photograph of the photographic documentation is a true likeness of the applicant
- ☐ Witness the signature of the applicant

Certified documents must:

- ☐ Be initialed on every page by the Authorised Officer
- ☐ Be annotated on the last page as appropriate e.g. "I have sighted the original document and certify this to be a true copy of the original" and signed by the Authorised Officer
- ☐ List the name, date of certification, contact phone number and position number of the authorised officer and have the stamp or seal of the Authorised Officer applied.

2.3 Translations (if applicable)

Any documents in a language other than English must be submitted with a certified translation into English by a professional translator. The official title, address and signature of the certified translator must be clearly visible on the documents.

2.4 Make copies of your application

Two (2) copies of the complete application are required to be submitted to AOPA, one of which should be a hard copy, one electronic. One copy must contain the copies of documents that have been certified, and the second copy may be a photocopied/scanned version. Please make a third copy and retain your own records.

2.5 Complete the correct online application form and make payment for the correct pathway (IHP or Skilled Migration).

You may upload your digital documents whilst completing the online form, so please have your documents ready at this time for a streamlined application process.

3. How to submit your application to AOPA

It is the responsibility of the applicant to prepare the documentation comprising a complete application to AOPA. Please take the time to read this guide carefully and provide all documentation as required, in an easy to read and clearly understood format.

3.1 Overview of the submission process:



3.2 Final Checklist before submission:

- ☐ You must provide your consent for Stage 1 assessment within the Mandatory Declarations section of the online application form.
- ☐ You will be provided with a receipt of your payment upon processing. A copy of your receipt must be included in your application. See AOPA [website](#) for current fee structure.
- ☐ Ensure all documents that must be certified are appropriately certified and translated as required.
- ☐ Provide two copies of all documents to AOPA
- ☐ Make a third copy and keep for your own records.

3.3 Address and post your application to:

Accreditation & Certification Manager

The Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association PO BOX 1132

Hartwell Victoria 3124 AUSTRALIA

4. Stage 1 assessment process:

4.1 Assessment outcomes

There are three potential outcomes following processing of the application by the AOPA Accreditation Committee; The application is classified;

- I. incomplete
- II. successful
- III. unsuccessful

- If the application is incomplete, the applicant will be notified in writing and provided 30 days to submit the outstanding documentation.
- If the application is successful, the applicant will be invited to submit a portfolio of evidence and provided 16 weeks to do so.
- If the application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be notified in writing and provided the option to appeal the decision. (See Appendix 8 for further Appeals Information)

4.2 Disputes and appeals

- Any questions regarding the membership application and assessment process should be lodged with the AOPA National Office.
- If the Accreditation Committee determines to reject an application for Membership, the National Office will provide the applicant with a notice in writing of this decision, and the reasons for the decision
- The appeal process, which applies in the event of an application being rejected (in Stage 1 and/or 2), is set out in the AOPA Constitution (clauses 9.2 to 9.5).
- Applicants who receive an unsuccessful outcome will be provided with information about the appeals process when they receive outcome notification. Further detail about the process of Appeal can be found in Appendix 8 of this document.

4.3 Stage 1 timelines



5. Stage 2: Portfolio of evidence

5.1 What is a portfolio of evidence?

Purpose of Portfolio: The portfolio of evidence demonstrates your professional competence as an orthotist/prosthetist according to AOPA Competency Standards.

A portfolio is a collection of evidence prepared for the purpose of providing proof of learning, achievement, and accomplishment. This portfolio of evidence is being used to establish an applicant's competence in relation to the AOPA Entry Level Competency Standards 2014.

The AOPA Entry-Level Competency Standards describe the minimum competencies an entry level orthotist/prosthetist must be able to demonstrate to conduct safe and effective practice in the Australian context. Applicants can draw on all relevant clinical experience and training including but not limited to their current employment setting, previous clinical placements and professional development activities to formulate their evidence.

The portfolio should include clinical evidence, visual recordings, and written justifications aligning with specific performance indicators

5.2 Authenticity of the Evidence

Applicants must submit a portfolio that is credible and defensible, comprised of their independent effort and should not be prepared with assistance of another person. It is advised that applicants make a copy of their portfolio for their records in case of any missing or damaged materials in the delivery process. Original documents that cannot be easily replaced should not be sent.

5.3 Confidentiality

Any breaches of client confidentiality within the portfolio provided by the applicant will be treated seriously and may affect the processing of your portfolio.

Any visual or audio recordings submitted will only be made available to the assessors directly involved in the application and all documents and recordings will be securely stored.

The following confidentiality requirements should be adhered to when submitting your portfolio:

- If any of the evidence in the portfolio contains personal details of a client (name, address, telephone number), it must be deleted, or de-identified before submission.
- Any visual or audio recordings should be accompanied by informed consent from the client consenting both to participation in the recording and the future use of the recording (see Appendix 7).

5.5 Example of obtaining informed patient consent

An example of how you might obtain patient consent for the purposes of providing evidence for this portfolio can be found in Appendix 7. Having completed this form and submitted it within your portfolio, demonstrates that you understand the importance of patient confidentiality and consent.

6. Portfolio requirements

To ensure ease of processing applicants must present a clear, well organised portfolio, adhering to requirements in the following table:

Form	Description
1. Declaration of Authenticity	Applicants must sign a declaration of authenticity pertaining to the entire portfolio.
2. Certified copies	Photocopies of documents must be certified by a Justice of the Peace or other person with legal authority, and must include their details (title, name and address) and signature. For more information on the Australian requirements of certified documents, click here .
3. Certified translation	Documents that are not English must be translated by a registered translator and must include their details (title, name, and address), signature and then be certified. Recordings not in English must be transcribed and accompanied by a certified translation. It would also be helpful for the applicant to provide a recording of themselves translating what occurred in the video, to demonstrate their English Language proficiency.
4. At least one visual recording of the applicant	A video recording where the applicant can be clearly viewed undertaking a clinical or technical task must be provided as part of the portfolio of evidence. Visual and audio recordings should be of sufficient quality to enable assessors to clearly view the applicant and client, and to clearly hear all conversation.
5. Evidence of informed consent (Appendix 7)	All evidence containing visual and/or audio recording of a client must be accompanied by written OR audio-visual consent.
6. List of evidence (Appendix 1)	A record of all pieces of evidence in the portfolio indicating the evidence number, title, date when the evidence was collected, format, performance indicators being addressed and location and/or description.
7. Labelled evidence	Each piece of evidence should be clearly labelled with the applicant's details (name, address and contact details)
8. Coversheet (Appendix 2)	Must be attached to each individual piece of evidence indicating the evidence number, title, format, number of pages, performance indicators being addressed and an indication that the justification is attached.
9. Written justification	All pieces of evidence must be accompanied by a written justification specifying which performance

	indicators that are addressed and how the evidence demonstrates competence.
10. Performance indicator checklist (Appendix 3)	A list of all the performance indicators. Applicants should list which piece of evidence relates to each of the 68 performance indicators.
11. Portfolio document checklist (Appendix 4)	You should use this list to ensure all requirements are within your portfolio, before submitting. This list should be completed and submitted with your portfolio.

Note: All forms required are available in the Appendices of this document and will be provided upon successful completion of Stage

1

6.1 How to submit a Portfolio of Evidence

- There are 68 performance indicators in the AOPA Entry-Level Competency Standards and applicants will need to provide multiple pieces of evidence which collectively demonstrate competency across all performance indicators.
- Each piece of evidence must be accompanied with a corresponding piece of written justification that shows how the evidence demonstrates competence in relation to specific performance indicators. Providing multiple pieces of evidence and justification against performance indicators, particularly for more detailed performance indicators, can be helpful in demonstrating competency.
- To demonstrate the breadth of their clinical skills, it is strongly encouraged that applicants use a range of evidence types that demonstrate their competence across more than one clinical area. Successful portfolio are well planned and usually contain 25-30 pieces of evidence (please use this figure as an indication only).

6.2 Submission Requirements

- **File Format:** You must submit one digital, and one hard copy of your portfolio.

It is preferable that you organise the submission by evidence type (e.g., Evidence Cover Sheet, Evidence, Justification).

- **Consistency:** Ensure all visual media are clearly visible, with good sound quality for any audio.

6.3 Examples of Evidence

To assist applicants in preparing their portfolio, the following section provides some examples of evidence that may be appropriate for demonstrating competence against the AOPA Entry Level Competency Standards.

The purpose of these examples is to assist applicants by generating ideas of how different performance indicators may be addressed. It is appropriate and likely that some pieces of evidence will address multiple performance indicators across a range of domains. It is the applicant's responsibility to identify what evidence they can produce and how this might satisfy the different performance indicators. The list tabled below is not exhaustive.

- Clinical Notes: De-identified notes from patient assessments, with accompanying policies if available.
- Patient Interactions: Video recording of a client assessment, supported by written case notes.
- Certifications: Certificates from training or professional development events, with reflection on relevance.
- Fabrication Techniques: Video of prosthesis/orthosis fabrication process, or photos with descriptions.
- Documentation: Referral letters, case management plans, funding applications
- A photocopy of manufacturer guidelines with a written reflection on what you do to comply with manufacturer guidelines
- A report of a critical incident resulting from a professional working outside of their scope of practice and the outcomes
- A reference from an employer stating that an applicant can complete a task
- A case report and reflection on the literature regarding best practice for the client's pathology/profile
- Technical handover documents including all details required for fabrication
- A copy of applicants' workplace caseload with statistical entries and applicant strategies for managing and/or prioritising the case load
- A quality project the applicant has designed or participated in
- Proof of contributions on committees, shown by meeting minutes, invitations, and thank you letters or a reference from committee head
- Published/unpublished research

6.4 Examples of Justification

What is a Justification? A brief explanation connecting your evidence to specific AOPA competencies.

Structure: Each justification should answer:

- What *skill or knowledge* the evidence demonstrates.
- *Why* it is relevant to the performance indicator.
- *How* it applies to the context of orthotic/prosthetic practice.

The evidence itself serves as proof that an activity occurred, whereas the justification is about showing that the activity is reasonable, necessary and relates to the performance indicator being assessed.

TIP 1: When one piece of evidence demonstrates competence across multiple performance indicators, the justification must refer to each performance indicator.

For example, a video recording of you, the applicant, completing an entire patient assessment may include evidence for performance indicators such as:

1. 1.4 Obtains informed consent from the client and/or carer prior to the provision of care;
- 2.3.3 Discusses treatment options with the client and/or carer to support client centered care and informed choice; and
- 2.4.4 Discusses short- and long-term treatment goals with the client and/or carer.

TIP 2: If this video were accompanied by case notes, referral letters, and/or reflective writing then numerous other performance indicators across other domains could also be satisfied. The justification must explicitly state how each of these performance indicators is being addressed.

Another example is providing a certificate of attendance at a training course or seminar could be used as a piece of evidence for the performance indicators:

- 6.1.3 Participates in health professional training and research as opportunities arise and
- 4.3.1 Recognises service gaps and inefficiencies and works collaboratively to identify solutions.

Providing a certificate of attendance at a training course alone is **not** sufficient evidence of competency against any of the performance indicators, as it only shows that the course was attended but not why you attended, how or when you are going to use the information learned in the training thus showing competence.

A written reflection contextualising why the training was attended and the outcomes of the participation would serve as appropriate justification. This reflection should be accurate and suitably detailed. The following justifications are provided as examples of what would be a suitable level of detail.

Prosthetic Example-

Justification accompanying evidence in the form of a certificate of training

On the 3/5/2015 I attended the Scottish Prosthetics and Orthotics advanced training in Marlow Anatomical Sockets (MAS). I have been treating transfemoral amputees for 10 years and the MAS Socket is becoming more widely prescribed. I have seen a few which were fabricated elsewhere, and patients were reporting that the sockets were comfortable. I did some research into MAS sockets and their benefits in comparison to traditional ischial containment and quadrilateral sockets, I read about the increases in range of motion, the cosmetic trim-lines, and the positive suspension possible.

I could clearly see how this would benefit many of my clients, especially the highly active and young. I discussed with my manager the identified gap in our service (4.3.1) **(these statements contextualise the training, showing WHY it was necessary)**.

I also went to my manager with a proposal that I attend the relevant training **(this statement shows HOW the applicant went about adding this style brace to their skill set)**. With my manager's support I attended the training which was fantastic. Since completing the training, I have been prescribing and fitting MAS sockets (approximately 1 per week) with enormous success. Having attended this training has extended my skill set and allowed our practice to offer the optimal treatment to suitable patients (6.1.3) **(these statements show WHEN the training is used and integrated into clinical practice)**.

Orthotic Example-

Justification accompanying evidence in the form of a certificate of training

The orthotics and prosthetics clinic at Sunnyville Hospital traditionally provided one traditional Boston style orthosis in the management of scoliosis, which was not suitable for all the patients, especially patients who require a brace that is easily and quickly donned as some patients are unable to don the Boston brace independently due to the straps being posterior. This left us with a gap in our service (4.3.1) **(this statement contextualises the training, showing WHY it was necessary)**.

During my independent research and discussions with other allied health professionals, I became aware of the emerging brace design in Europe, the Rigo Cheneau scoliosis brace (6.2.5). I was interested in expanding both my clinical knowledge and the services we could provide at Sunnyville hospital, so I discussed the training with my manager, and we decided that I would attend the training (6.1.3) **(these statements show HOW the applicant went about acquiring this type of orthosis to their skillset)**.

I attended the training on the 25/5/14 and am now certified to prescribe the Rigo Cheneau brace and am now able to offer this option to our patients (6.2.4).

Since completing the training, I have been able to treat patients who were previously difficult to manage and non-compliant, successfully with the Rigo Cheneau orthosis, they report that the ability to don the orthosis themselves allows them greater freedom and less need for assistance (6.2.3) **(this statement shows WHEN the training was is used and integrated into clinical practice)**.

TIP 3: At least one visual recording is required in the portfolio. The accompanying justification must specify the exact timing when each performance indicator is being addressed, and how it is being addressed.

For example, "At minute 3.32 I explained the treatment details to the patient and then asked if they consented to treatment (1.1.4)."

7. Overview of the Stage 2 assessment process

7.1 Assessment of the portfolio:

Each of the 68 performance indicators of the AOPA Entry Level Competency Standards must be addressed by the portfolio of evidence and demonstrate competence in each.

- Each portfolio will be independently assessed by two assessors. The assessors are experienced orthotists/prosthetists who, as part of the AOPA Pool of Competency Assessors and are trained in portfolio assessment.
- Assessors will check the evidence, ensuring that it is clear, comprehensive and related to the performance indicator stated by the applicant. The accompanying justification will be assessed for accuracy and detail. Both the evidence and justification will be considered according to the rubric in Appendix 5. All 68 performance indicators must be assessed as 'met', for a successful outcome.
- After completing individual assessments, the Assessor team will meet for a consensus meeting and complete a final assessment.
- In cases where there is disagreement in outcome between two assessors, remediation will take place. If no agreement comes from remediation between the two assessors, a third assessor will be engaged to assess the portfolio and will make the final decision.

7.2 Assessment outcomes

There are three potential outcomes following assessment by the Assessor team.

The application is classified:

- I. Incomplete: if all 68 performance indicators are not assessed as 'met'
 - II. Successful: if all 68 performance indicators are assessed as 'met'
 - III. Unsuccessful: if, after re-submission, all 68 performance indicators are not 'met'.
- If the application is incomplete, the applicant will be notified in writing and provided 16 weeks to address the unmet performance indicators in a re-submission. **Applicants are provided with one opportunity to re-submit.**
 - If the application is successful, the applicant will be invited to submit a portfolio of evidence and provided 16 weeks to do so.
 - If the application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be notified in writing, provided an explanation and provided with the option to appeal the decision (Appendix 8).

7.3 Stage 2 timelines



Appendix 1 - Evidence List

Instructions: Use this Evidence List to keep a record of the evidence you have provided. Note the Title, Date, Format, Performance Indicators addressed and any defining features of the evidence, so it is easy to locate by Assessors. It must be submitted with your application.

Evidence number	Evidence Title & Date	Format	Performance indicator(s) addressed	Location/description
<i>E.g., 1</i>	<i>DVD of patient assessment</i>	<i>DVD</i>	<i>1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.1.7, 1.1.8, 1.2.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.4, 5.1.2, 5.3.2</i>	<i>DVD marked 'patient assessment'</i>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				

Appendix 2 - Evidence Cover Sheet

Instructions: Use this Cover Sheet with each individual piece of evidence in your portfolio.

One cover sheet for each piece of evidence must be submitted with your application.

Applicant Name	
Evidence Number	
Evidence Title	
Format of evidence	
Performance indicators addressed	
Justification attached?	

Appendix 3 – Performance Indicator Checklist

Instructions: Use this checklist to match each piece of evidence with relevant indicators. List each performance indicator number in your justification and on the evidence cover sheet.

	Performance Indicator	Evidence number
Domain 1: Collaborative practice		
<i>Communicates and establishes rapport in order to deliver client-centred care</i>		
1.1.1	Ensures all interactions with the client and/or carer demonstrate respect, honesty, empathy and dignity and are conducted in a culturally appropriate manner	
1.1.2	Ensures the client is the focus of the care pathway	
1.1.3	Ensures the client and/or carer is aware of their rights and responsibilities	
1.1.4	Obtains informed consent from the client and/or carer prior to the provision of care	
1.1.5	Listens effectively to the client and/or carer	
1.1.6	Encourages the client and/or carer to participate and provide feedback	
1.1.7	Provides prompt, accurate and comprehensive information in clear terms to enable the client and/or carer to make an informed decision	
1.1.8	Uses all available resources to enhance communication	
1.2.1	Receives and develops client referrals, professional handovers, health professional team reports and care plans	
1.2.2	Respects, acknowledges and utilises the expertise of other health professionals	
1.2.3	Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with other health professionals to enhance collaborative practice and client access to care	
1.2.4	Actively participates within the health professional team and seeks opportunities to demonstrate professional excellence	
1.3.1	Provides clinical justification for prescribed orthotic/prosthetic client treatment	
1.3.2	Provides relevant information in order to facilitate client access to care	
Domain 2: Provision of clinical care:		
<i>Develops and manages a client centred care plan</i>		
2.1.1	Identifies subjective and objective information to enable development of an appropriate orthotic/prosthetic care plan	

2.1.2	Selects assessment techniques, outcome measures and other tools/instruments based on evidence, which are relevant to the client's presentation	
2.1.3	Performs assessment professionally, safely and effectively	
2.2.1	Accesses and utilises evidence to guide clinical decisions	
2.3.1	Facilitates client and/or carer to establish personal goals	
2.3.2	Considers the information obtained, the client and/or carer's goals and evidence when formulating treatment options	
2.3.3	Discusses treatment options with the client and/or carer to support client centred care and informed choice	
2.3.4	Discusses short- and long-term treatment goals with the client and/or carer	
2.3.5	Identifies clients who require collaborative care and liaises with the health professional team to ensure integrated care planning	
2.3.6	Determines and justifies the design details of the orthosis/prosthesis prescription	
2.3.7	Identifies client, carer and/or health professional team education and follow-up when planning treatment	
2.3.8	Selects appropriate outcome measures	
2.4.1	Considers all relevant characteristics of the client during orthosis/prosthesis fitting and review processes	
2.4.2	Uses appropriate techniques to ensure optimal fit and function of the orthosis/prosthesis	
2.4.3	Reviews the client at appropriate intervals to evaluate fit, function, quality and safety of the orthosis/prosthesis	
2.4.4	Evaluates and monitors treatment outcomes using patient feedback and/or outcome measures	
2.4.5	Modifies treatment to ensure best possible outcomes are maintained	
2.4.6	Discusses progress toward goals with the client and/or carer	
2.5.1	Adheres to legislative and organisational requirements for all documentation	
2.5.2	Maintains legible, concise and accurate documentation using contemporary methods	
2.5.3	Safely and securely stores information and acts to maintain confidentiality whilst ensuring availability of information to other health professionals involved in the care pathway	

Domain 3: Provision of orthoses and prostheses

Ensures the safe manufacture of orthoses and prostheses as part of the care plan

3.1.1	Utilises appropriate casting, measuring and/or cast modification techniques to facilitate fabrication	
3.1.2	Fabricates and/or coordinates the optimal fabrication of orthoses/prostheses	
3.1.3	Performs and/or coordinates required modifications of orthoses/prostheses	
3.2.1	Assesses the orthosis/prosthesis for structural safety at appropriate intervals	

3.2.2	Ensures the orthosis/prosthesis is compliant with manufacturer guidelines and standards	
Domain 4: Service management and improvement		
<i>Contributes to the delivery of safe, quality and effective services</i>		
4.1.1	Facilitates appropriate completion of treatment	
4.1.2	Demonstrates an ability to triage individual client case load within broader facility requirements for client care	
4.1.3	Facilitates appropriate completion of all supportive activities	
4.2.1	Determines available funding for prescribed care plan	
4.2.2	Prepares and/or coordinates submission of client funding documentation as required	
4.2.3	Prescribes and designs orthosis/prosthesis to achieve optimal outcomes within the approved budget for client treatment	
4.2.4	Understands and conforms to funding arrangements, budget allocations, statistical reporting and financial transaction requirements relevant to the workplace	
4.3.1	Recognises service gaps or inefficiencies and works collaboratively to identify solutions	
4.3.2	Participates in audit processes and quality improvement initiatives	
Domain 5: Professional values and behaviours		
<i>Practices in accordance with professional, ethical and legislative standards</i>		
5.1.1	Adheres to legislation and workplace guidelines relating to safety	
5.1.2	Identifies workplace hazards and acts to eliminate or reduce risks	
5.2.1	Recognises the responsibility to do no harm	
5.2.2	Complies with relevant laws, regulations, policies and guidelines	
5.2.3	Abides by applicable codes of ethics and conduct	
5.2.4	Recognises and responds appropriately if client is at risk	
5.3.1	Works within professional scope of practice, consent of client and/or carer and authority of employer	
5.3.2	Seeks assistance or refers on when beyond own level of competence	
5.3.3	Recognises where further training is required to conduct competent practice	
Domain 6: Life-long learning and reflective practice		
<i>Maintains and extends professional competence and contributes to the learning and development of others</i>		
6.1.1	Undertakes independent learning to further own knowledge and skills on a continuous basis	

6.1.2	Shares skills and knowledge with health professional colleagues and students	
6.1.3	Participates in health professional training and research as opportunities arise	
6.1.4	Seeks out leaders within the profession for advice and mentoring	
6.1.5	Offers constructive feedback and assistance to other health professionals	
6.2.1	Assesses and critically analyses sources of evidence	
6.2.2	Demonstrates a systematic approach to analysis and decision making	
6.2.3	Integrates evidence and new learning into practice to improve health outcomes for clients	
6.2.4	Demonstrates knowledge of new techniques and technology relevant to orthotics/prosthetics	
6.2.5	Critically and continuously evaluates practice	

Appendix 4 – Portfolio document checklist

Instructions for use: Use this check list as a tool to check that you have correctly formulated your portfolio, and that you have included all necessary documentation. It must be submitted with your application.

Consider the following	Please tick
Declaration of authenticity is signed and attached (Appendix 6)	
Certified copies of all relevant photocopied documents are attached	
Certified translations of any document not in English are attached	
Confidentiality is maintained and all evidence is de-identified	
All pieces of evidence are clearly labelled with the applicant's name and contact details	
Recordings and video footage are clear and easy to see/hear	
Consent forms for clients involved in any footage/recording are attached (Appendix 7)	
All pieces of evidence are accompanied by a justification	
All pieces of evidence have a coversheet (Appendix 2)	
The evidence list is filled and attached (Appendix 1)	
The performance indicator checklist is filled in and attached to the application (Appendix 3)	
One hard copy and one digital copy have been submitted to AOPA. A third copy has been retained for your own records.	

Appendix 5 – Assessment Rubric

		JUSTIFICATION QUALITY		
EVIDENCE QUALITY		Strong	Weak	Unsatisfactory
	High	Evidence was clear, comprehensive and directly related to the performance indicators. The accompanying justification was accurate and suitably detailed.	Evidence was clear, comprehensive and directly related to the performance indicators. The accompanying justification was partially accurate and/or may be missing some detail.	The evidence was clear, comprehensive and directly related to the performance indicators. The accompanying justification was inaccurate and/or incomplete.
	Low	Evidence lacked clarity and/or comprehensiveness and may not be directly related to the performance indicators. The accompanying justification was accurate and suitably detailed.	Evidence lacked clarity and/or comprehensiveness and may not be directly related to the performance indicators. The accompanying justification was partially accurate and/or missing some detail.	Evidence lacked clarity and/or comprehensiveness and may not be directly related to the performance indicators. The accompanying justification was inaccurate and/or incomplete.
	Insufficient	The evidence was grossly insufficient and/or did not relate to the performance indicators.		
	Concern	The evidence and/or justification indicates below entry level competence.		
	Acceptable classifications of evidence		Unacceptable classifications of evidence	
	SH Evidence approved		Any evidence classified as insufficient or unsatisfactory must be resubmitted	
	SL, WH Evidence approved subject to assessor judgement*		Any evidence classified as concern Resubmission with explanation	

Notes on rubric:

**Assessor judgement: In situations where the evidence is lacking clarity, or the justification is partially accurate and/or missing some detail, the assessor will use their expert judgement to guide their decision to accept or reject the evidence or justification*

Appendix 6 - Declaration of Authenticity

Declaration of Authenticity

I, _____ declare that this Portfolio of Evidence is comprised of my independent effort.

All written and recorded content has been formulated through my own effort.

I understand that making a false declaration may deem my portfolio ineligible.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 7 - Consent form example

Applicant Name:

Patient Name:

I _____ consent to being videoed/photographed for the purpose of APPLICANT NAME's portfolio of evidence for submission as part of an application for eligibility of membership to the Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association (AOPA).

I consent to the viewing of these videos/photographs by Assessors, and AOPA staff members as required. I also consent to Accreditation Committee/Admissions Appeals Committee members viewing the videos if required.

I agree to my name being displayed on this consent form, for the purpose of the named applicant demonstrating their understanding of the importance of informed consent.

Patient Name:

Patient's signature:

Date:

Applicant Name:

Applicant Signature:

Date:

Appendix 8 - Appeals Information

Appealing your AOPA Certification Outcome

In the event of an unsuccessful application for AOPA Certification (Membership) an appeal can be made against this decision as per Section 9.4 of the [AOPA Constitution](#).

Before making an appeal

Feedback is available regarding your application following an unsuccessful result for AOPA Certification (Membership). AOPA strongly suggests you take advantage of this option to ensure you have understood the assessment process and the reason why your application was not successful.

Which parts of the application outcome can be appealed?

Appeals can relate to both Stage 1 (Desktop Review) and Stage 2 (Portfolio of Evidence) of the assessment process. An Appeal cannot be used in place of a complete application for AOPA Certification (Membership).

The process of an appeal does not reverse or change the original assessment outcome but does allow for a second assessment to be undertaken. The appeal process also does not allow you to skip any components of the assessment process, such as requesting waiving of a requirement or credit for a component addressed through a previous application.

The appeal process is **not** designed to:

- Dispute the standards set by AOPA by which your applicant was assessed; or
- Dispute the assessment processes established by AOPA.

What information should an appeal contain?

Appeals must clearly state the ground on which the appeal is made. This means that you should clearly state why you believe the decision was incorrect. Appeals should include any supporting information or evidence that address these grounds.

Examples of grounds for making an appeal:

- The assessment procedures in the applicant guidebook have not been implemented and adhered to.
- There is proof of unfairness, prejudice or bias exhibited by the assessor/s.
- Documents have become available that would significantly alter the outcome that were not available at the time the application was submitted.

Any additional information you have that you feel would assist the Admission Appeals Committee in understanding your position should be included in an appeal. This may include information not provided in your original application. This can be done in writing or orally.

What is the process once my appeal is lodged?

Your appeal is managed pursuant to the AOPA constitution by the Admission Appeals Committee, specifically outlined in Section 9.3 and 9.4.

The Committee will meet to discuss your case and then provide you with the opportunity to attend an Admission Appeal Committee meeting to explain your case. This can either be done in person, by teleconference or you may choose to submit your case in writing. You are permitted to bring any support person or legal representative to the Admission Appeals Committee meeting. If you are bringing a legally qualified representative, you will need to notify the committee at least 5 days before the meeting. Following the Meeting, the Committee members will vote to uphold or reject your original Membership assessment outcome, and you will be notified of this final outcome in writing.

What are the possible outcomes of making an appeal?

There are 2 possible outcomes of the appeals process, being;

1. The appeal is rejected, and the original decision that the application is unsuccessful is upheld, or
2. The appeal is upheld and the original decision that the application is unsuccessful is overturned.

The Committee may arrive at one of these outcomes by any of the following processes:

- Setting aside the original assessment outcome and implementing a new assessment process on the disputed aspect of the assessment; or
- Assigning a new assessor to review the case considering new information available and determine the result or;
- Rejection of the appeal on the grounds that the circumstances for the appeal have not been clearly established.

Therefore, it is important that the grounds for your appeal are clearly explained and supporting evidence provided to ensure that your appeal is correctly heard and addressed.

What are your responsibilities in an appeal?

It is your responsibility to describe the grounds of your appeal and provide adequate evidence to allow your case to be appropriately considered. It is not the responsibility of the Admission Appeal Committee to seek additional evidence relating to your claim.

To support the processing of your appeal in a timely manner you have a responsibility to provide clear and timely information. This includes providing adequate availability to schedule the Appeal Committee Meeting and providing a minimum 5 business days' notice of your intention to bring a support person to the meeting that is legally qualified.

You also have a responsibility to be familiar with the relevant AOPA governance documents, such as the constitution and by-laws under which your appeal will be heard. We also encourage you to be familiar with the suite of standards under which your application has been assessed.

What are the fees associated with making an appeal?

The fees attached to the appeals process vary depending on whether the appeal relates to the outcome of Stage One or Stage Two of the membership assessment process. The fee must be paid at the time of the appeal being submitted to the National Office. Where the fee has not been paid, the appeal will not be submitted to the Admission Appeal Committee. The fees for Stage One and Stage Two appeals are outlined in the AOPA Competency Assessment Fee Structure document that is accessible on the [AOPA website](#).

In the case of an appeal being upheld, the appeal application fee will be refunded to the applicant.

How do I lodge my appeal?

Appeals must be made in writing to the AOPA Admission Appeal Committee within 7 days of notification of an unsuccessful outcome.

They can be lodged directly to the AOPA Office via the following:

- Email: admin@aopa.org.au

Where can I find more information?

Information regarding the AOPA Certification (Membership) or making an appeal can be found on the AOPA Website via the following link: www.aopa.org.au

If after reading this document you are unclear whether you can make an appeal or the Appeals process, you can contact the AOPA Office for advice via email admin@aopa.org.au or telephone +61 3 9816 4620.

Appendix 9 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about non-accredited applications

General Questions about the non-accredited application process:

Q) What does the application process involve?

The application process involves two stages:

Stage 1: An eligibility assessment (desktop review)

If you successfully meet the requirements of stage 1, you will be invited to complete;

Stage 2: An assessment of competence via submission of a portfolio of evidence.

As a starting point, please head to our website and read all of the associated documents to decide which pathway suits your circumstances:

<https://www.aopa.org.au/membership-information/international-applicants>

and the skills assessment pathway, if applicable:

<https://www.aopa.org.au/membership-information/skills-assessment-for-migration>

The portfolio of evidence is a mandatory part of the certification pathway for non-accredited qualification applications. You can read more about the portfolio requirements in the [Application Guidelines for Internationally Qualified Orthotist/Prosthetists](#).

Q) What are the essential documents required for the non-accredited application process, to work as an orthotist/prosthetist in Australia?

Please refer to the [Application Guidelines for Internationally Qualified Orthotist/Prosthetists](#) for a comprehensive list of the documents required.

Q) Where do I send the hard copies of my application documents?

Contact us:

The Accreditation & Certification Manager

PO Box 1132

Hartwell, Vic, 3124

AUSTRALIA

Questions about the English language requirement:

Q) My initial orthotics/prosthetics degree was completed outside of the UK, Canada, New Zealand, USA, Republic of Ireland, however, I studied an additional Master's degree in one of the afore-mentioned countries. Do I still need to provide evidence of English Language proficiency?

Applicants are exempt from providing evidence of English language proficiency if they hold an entry level orthotic/prosthetic qualification conducted in English, from a university in:

- the United Kingdom
- Canada
- New Zealand
- United States of America
- Republic of Ireland

Additional Master's qualifications are not considered *entry-level*, as they are not the initial orthotic/prosthetic qualification. **This means that we only assess your eligibility against your entry-level qualification.**

All other applicants are required to provide a certified copy of your results from the English language test you have taken OR arrange for the results to be sent to AOPA (admin@aopa.org.au) directly from the test administrator.

Q) Which English language test am I able to complete and what score is required?

Test results from either of the following English language tests are accepted:

- International English Testing System (IELTS)- Academic

Applicants must score a minimum of 7 in each of the four components of the IELTS academic module (listening, reading, writing and speaking).

If you score less than 7 in one component of the IELTS, we accept submissions of IELTS One Skill Retake outcome reports.

OR

- Pearson's Test of English (PTE) - Academic

Applicants must score 65 in all 4 domains and an overall score of 65.

Please refer to the [AOPA English Language Requirements for further details](#).

Questions about Professional registration/ recognition:

Q) I am not registered to practice in the country I am currently working because there is no regulating/licensing body. What should I do?

Where the relevant country does not have a registration or licensing body, a legal statement of explanation witnessed by an official Notary Officer or Justice of the Peace must be provided.

Q) I am registered with an international licencing body/certifying entity (e.g., HCPC (UK), HPCSA (South Africa), ISPO). Does that mean I am eligible for certified AOPA membership, or can skip certain requirements?

No. Your eligibility for other certifying entities is different from your eligibility for AOPA certified membership.

Questions about Stage 2, Portfolio of Assessment:

Q) I am not currently working and am planning to immigrate to Australia to work as an orthotist/prosthetist. I have read about Stage 2 of the AOPA application process and am concerned about access to evidence due to my current unemployment. What do you suggest?

The guidelines do not state that the evidence you submit must be real.

You could consider presenting mock examples of evidence and using the justification to state that it is not a true example, and to justify that you know WHAT the performance indicator is, WHY it's important in O&P service provision, and HOW you would perform the task.

Q) Can I request an extension for the submission of Stage 2?

Yes. You can request an extension via the Accreditation & Certification manager of up to one month. Any additional time requires an appeal for discretion via the Accreditation Committee.

Questions about timelines, process & outcomes:

Q) Can I get help with my application?

AOPA is happy to answer questions about the application process for Stage 1 & 2.

For specific portfolio-based questions, AOPA offers a connection with a previous applicant mentor, for applicants who are seeking assistance with Stage 2.

Q) Can I appeal an unsuccessful outcome?

Yes. You may appeal to the Admission Appeal Committee against a resolution of the Accreditation Committee. The appeal process, which applies in the event of an application being rejected, is set out in clauses 9.2 to 9.5 of the AOPA Constitution. There is a fee for the appeals process.

Q) Can I withdraw my application?

You may withdraw your application, however, please note that all fees paid are non-refundable.

Q) How long will the application process take?

This depends on how fast and accurately you are able to compile the required documents and if you submit the correct documents in the correct format.

The following timelines apply to the application process:

Stage 1- Desktop review	Timeline
Complete applications lodged will be acknowledged by the AOPA office.	Within 1 week of submission
Complete applications are assessed, and an outcome provided to the applicant.	Within 6 weeks of submission
Applicants may be contacted to provide clarity or to provide supplementary documentation in some cases, this will alter the standard timeline.	
For applicants who pass Stage 1	
Stage 2 – Portfolio of evidence	Timeline
Time applicant is provided to submit Stage 2 portfolio of evidence	16 weeks
Time AOPA & Assessor team are provided to assess the portfolio of evidence	16 weeks
Some applicants may be required to make a second submission for a portfolio that does not receive a successful initial outcome. In this case, the applicant is provided an additional 16 weeks, and an additional 16 weeks is allocated for assessment.	

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
1.0	Original version.	Accreditation & Certification Manager	2018
2.0	General updates to the Guidelines to improve clarity.	Julia Hibma, Accreditation & Certification Manager	October, 2024



THE AUSTRALIAN
ORTHOTIC PROSTHETIC
ASSOCIATION

The Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association
P.O. Box 1132 Hartwell, Victoria 3124
(03) 9816 4620 | www.aopa.org.au