



Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program Policy and Process: Participation and Compliance



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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

CPD is a lifelong learning activity for all registered practitioners. The purpose of CPD is to ensure that medical specialists maintain, enhance or develop skills and knowledge to ensure the highest standards of practice through a commitment to a continuum of learning in the specialist discipline.

Employers and regulatory authorities require proof of CPD participation and compliance, from 1 January 2023 continuing medical registration will rely on being CPD compliant.

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) Standards state: Registered medical practitioners who are engaged in any form of practice are required to participate regularly in CPD that is relevant to their scope of practice to maintain professional currency, and support them to maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal and professional qualities required throughout their professional lives.

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you don't meet this standard, including that:

- the Board can impose a condition or conditions on your registration or can refuse your application for registration or renewal of registration, if you don't meet a requirement in an approved registration standard for the profession (sections 82, 83 and 112 of the National Law)
- a failure to undertake the CPD required by this standard is not an offence but may be behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be taken by the Board (section 128 of the National Law), and
- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against you as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for health professionals (section 41 of the National Law).

The CPD Committee is responsible to the Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) Board of Directors for providing the policy and framework to ensure maintenance and development of knowledge, skills and performance so that members are equipped to deliver appropriate and safe medical health care over their working life.

This Policy applies from 1 January 2026 onwards.

1.1 Abbreviations

AHPRA	Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
AMC	Australian Medical Council
AOA	Australian Orthopaedic Association
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
MBA	Medical Board of Australia
RACS	Royal Australasian College of Surgeons

1.2 Associated AOA documents

- i. Guide to CPD for Orthopaedic Surgeons

Up to date policies and forms can be downloaded from the AOA website at www.aoa.org.au

AOA Policy and Process documents are developed with consideration for relevant RACS Policy, which is available at www.surgeons.org

2. POLICY

2.1 Participation

Under the National Law, which governs the operations of the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), all practitioners with specialist registration must participate in a CPD program that is accredited by the AMC through a CPD Home, and meet the CPD standard set by their College. For orthopaedic surgery in Australia this standard may be met by completion of either the AOA or the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) CPD program, or a program provided by an alternative accredited CPD Home

- 2.1.1 All Active AOA members must comply with the minimum annual CPD requirements outlined at item 2.2, regardless of practice type.
- 2.1.2 Members that are working in a full-time or part-time capacity are required to comply with the minimum annual CPD requirements outlined at item 2.2. There is no reduction in CPD requirements for part-time surgeons as the standard of practice is the same.
- 2.1.3 Members that are working overseas and who retain Australian medical registration are required to meet the Australian CPD Registration Standard by participating in either the AOA CPD program, the RACS CPD program, or a program provided by an alternative accredited CPD Home
- 2.1.4 New Fellows are automatically enrolled in the CPD program.
New members must participate in CPD in their first year of active practice (greater than six months of the calendar year).
- 2.1.5 Trainees in the Transition to Practice stage of training will be granted access to a targeted version of the CPD program to document their Training Program Requirements.

2.2 Minimum Annual Requirement

2.2.1 From January 2025 the 3-Step AOA CPD requirements are as follows:

Step 1 – Develop a Professional Development Learning Plan at the beginning of each year.

Step 2 – Complete 50 hours of CPD activities during the year

Activities should be relevant to the scope of practice and individual professional development needs.

The 50 hours must include:

- a. A minimum of 25 hours **Reviewing performance and measuring outcomes** (including a minimum of 5 hours in each of these two categories.) This includes mandatory:
 - i. Completion of all surgical case forms sent to a surgeon by the Australia & New Zealand Audits of Surgical Mortality (ANZASM) for operating surgeon.
 - ii. Review of individual National Joint Replacement Registry (AOANJRR) data (where relevant).
- b. A minimum of 12.5 hours of **Educational Activities**
- c. A Minimum of one activity in each of the following categories (“CAPE” activities):
 - i. Culturally Safe Practice,
 - ii. Addressing Health Inequities,
 - iii. Professionalism and
 - iv. Ethical Practice
- d. Your choice of activities to make up the remainder of the required hours.

Step 3 – Reflect on the Professional Development Learning Plan in preparation for the next CPD year.

2.2.2 CPD activity may only be claimed in the calendar year in which it was undertaken. No hours may be carried over to the following year.

2.2.3 *The Guide to CPD for Orthopaedic Surgeons* provides further information of activities, including an indication of the number of hours applicable to each activity.

2.3 Compliance

The CPD program must be completed on an annual basis (1 January – 31 December) to coincide with annual medical registration.

2.3.1 Members must record participation in the AOA CPD program by entering their CPD activity through AOA CPD Online.

2.3.2 Once CPD requirements are met, the member will be eligible for a certificate that can be used for re-registration, re-appointment and re-credentialing purposes.

- 2.3.3 Members who do not submit a record of their CPD activities annually by 31 January of the following year, or who do not successfully verify their CPD activity when selected for audit, will be considered non-compliant.
- 2.3.4 All participants who fail to comply with this CPD Participation and Compliance Policy will be informed of non-compliance in the following manner:
- i. A reminder email one week after the published deadline
 - ii. A reminder email three weeks after the published deadline
 - iii. A phone call one month after the published deadline
 - iv. A formal letter from the AOA President and the Chair of Professional Development and Standards advising of non-compliance two months after the published deadline
- 2.3.5 Non-compliance in CPD is a breach of the AOA Code of Conduct. Every effort will be made to advise and support members in meeting CPD reporting requirements, however persistent non-participation or non-compliance may result in loss of AOA membership.
- 2.3.6 AOA will report compliance of AOA CPD Program participants to the MBA in accordance with their stipulated timelines.

2.4 Audit and Verification

As a means of meeting AMC accreditation obligations, AOA conducts an annual random audit of 5% of participants of the AOA CPD program.

- 2.4.1 Members selected will be notified in writing by no later than April of the following year in which they are being audited.
- 2.4.2 Members must verify their CPD activity up to the minimum annual requirement by providing documentation as evidence of the activities recorded through CPD Online.

2.5 Special Consideration

Under extenuating circumstances, members who have joined the AOA CPD Home, are registered for the AOA CPD Program and who are unable to meet the CPD requirements may be granted an exemption for a given year.

- 2.5.1 Extenuating circumstance warranting special consideration may include:
- i. Serious Illness
 - ii. Parental Leave
 - iii. Leave of Absence from professional duties
 - iv. Cultural Responsibilities

v. Personal Circumstances.

2.5.2 The following reasons do not constitute grounds for an exemption from CPD:

- i. Fellows residing overseas who retain Australian medical registration are required to meet the Australian CPD Registration Standard by participating in the AOA CPD Program, the RACS CPD program, or a program provided by an alternative accredited CPD Home.
- ii. Fellows undertaking sub-specialty training or post-Fellowship training (PFET)
- iii. Fellows who are retired but maintain registration where there is a regulatory requirement to participate in CPD

2.5.3 Applications for special consideration are to be made within the Learning Plan in CPD Online and will only be considered on the grounds outlined above.

2.5.4 Applications will be processed according to the Special Consideration process.

2.5.5 Members may be granted either a total exemption from the full annual CPD requirements, or a partial exemption (either exemption for a specific category or activity, or pro rata requirements depending on circumstances.)

2.6 Transfer

In cases where a CPD participant elects not to maintain membership of AOA, they may request access to their historic CPD data. If membership has lapsed at the time of the request, a processing fee will be payable. Requests will be managed according to the CPD Data Request process.

2.7 Reconsideration, Reviews and Appeals

Decisions relating to this policy may be reconsidered, reviewed or appealed in accordance with AOA's *Reconsideration, Review and Appeals* policy.