

Selection to the AOA 21 Training Program in Orthopaedic Surgery for 2025 intake

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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i. CV

1. How many points will I be awarded for particular activities on my CV?

You can find the weighting of points for each section of the CV detailed in the [Regulations](#). If you have an activity or achievement that meets the criteria outlined in the [Regulations](#) you should include it in your application for assessment.

2. Does the CV score contribute to the combined score?

No. Applicants must meet a minimum score of 6 on the CV and achieve a Situational Judgement Test (SJT) score better than 1 standard deviation below the mean to be eligible for an invitation to interview.

3. I have completed a Master's degree; how will I know if it is eligible for points?

Each Master's degree that is included on an application for Selection will be assessed at the time on its relevance to orthopaedic surgery. Master's degrees will be accepted both by coursework and by research, provided they are relevant to the practice of orthopaedic surgery. It is recommended that applicants undertake a Master's degree only if they wish to do so for professional reasons and not purely for the purposes of selection.

4. Which Radiation Safety Courses will be recognised by AOA?

The only requirement for the Radiation Safety Course is that the course is licensed by the appropriate state licensing body (e.g. the Environment Protection Authority). Your hospital should be able to advise you on the courses available in your area. There is no currency requirement with regard to when the course is completed.

5. How many attempts can I make at selection into orthopaedic training?

AOA has removed the maximum number of attempts at Selection into training from 2024.

However, whilst eligible applicants may apply at their discretion, after a third unsuccessful attempt a comprehensive review of the applicant's performance will be conducted. The applicant will be invited to a counselling session with a member of the AOA Selection Committee (or delegate) to discuss their performance in the context of a further attempt.

6. What are the components that add to my CV score?

Candidates must achieve a minimum score of six (6) points on the CV in order to progress to the next stage of Selection. The components scored are:

Surgical and Medical Experience (Maximum 4 points)

Skills Courses (Maximum 3 points)

Higher Education Qualifications (Maximum 3 points)

Research Presentation (Maximum 2 points)

Research Publications (Maximum 4 points)

7. I have completed research that is currently pending publication. Can I include this under Research Publication on my CV?

Only research that has been published may be counted on the CV. Pending publications will not be accepted.

8. I have been acknowledged and/or listed as a collaborator on a research publication, but am not a listed author. Can I include this publication under Research Publication on my CV?

Only research where an applicant is an officially listed author may be counted on the CV. Publications where an applicant is only acknowledged and/or listed as a collaborator will not be eligible for points.

9. The research impact factors have changed since my research was published. Can I claim my research under the impact factors that applied when it was originally published?

Research publications will be measured according to the current impact factors, unless an applicant can provide evidence of the impact factor that applied to their research when it was originally published, in which case AOA will accept the research under the impact factor that applied at the date of original publication.

10. I completed my undergraduate medical training overseas. How can I join the AOA 21 Training program?

If you are a graduate of an overseas medical school seeking entry to the AOA 21 Training Program, you will need to contact the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in the first instance. Frequently asked questions relating to International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and the selection process can be found on the RACS website:

<http://www.surgeons.org/becoming-a-surgeon/international-medical-graduates>.

Please note that you must be an Australian citizen or have permanent resident status in Australia for the full duration of the program, and hold unconditional registration as a medical practitioner in Australia.

ii. SJT

11. What is the Situational Judgement Test (SJT)?

The SJT is an online test that includes scenario-based questions which describe situations that are likely to be encountered as a specialist trainee/orthopaedic registrar. Applicants select from a range of possible responses based on their spontaneous evaluation of the situation.

The SJT has been designed to assess the suitability of applicants for the AOA 21 Training Program against the following competencies:

- Teamwork and Conflict Management
- Communication
- Advocacy
- Leadership and Organisational Skills
- Professionalism

Applicants must register and complete the SJT scheduled on the 26th March 2024 which will be delivered remotely by an external provider employed by RACS.

Applicants should familiarise themselves with the SJT information available on the [RACS website](#). A practice session will be offered on 20 March.

12. Where can I sit the SJT?

The SJT will be administered online using remote proctoring under secure test conditions. Applicants will be able to sit the test from a location of their choice that satisfies the test conditions. Further information will be provided following registration.

13. What if I cannot attend the SJT?

Applicants must make themselves available at the time the SJT is scheduled. If an applicant does not complete the SJT, the applicant will be automatically withdrawn from the Selection process and their application will not be considered further.

14. How will the SJT determine the progress of my Selection application?

Applicants will be ranked according to their SJT score and invited to interview based on Regional Preferences and the interview capacity in each region with consideration for applicants identified in section 6.3 in the [Regulations](#).

iii. Selection application Initiatives in 2024

15. What are the AOA Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives?

In order to promote diversity within the training program and address the workforce needs of rural communities, the Selection Committee has implemented selection initiatives as follows:

- a. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants
- b. Female applicants
- c. Applicants from a rural origin

These initiatives are designed to provide these applicants with the best opportunity to be assessed for the training program throughout the Selection process. More information can be found in the [Regulations](#) (section 6.3).

16. I am an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) applicant, how will the Selection Initiatives affect my application?

As an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, if you have:

- a. satisfied the minimum eligibility criteria detailed in section 4.2 of the [Regulations](#), and
- b. achieved at least 6 points on your CV

you will automatically progress through the SJT, Interview, and Referee Report stages of the Selection process regardless of your score or rank.

Please refer to Section 12 in the [Regulations](#) to learn about how offers will be extended to ATSI applicants.

17. I am a female applicant; how will the Selection Initiatives affect my application?

As a female applicant, if you have:

- a. satisfied the minimum eligibility criteria detailed in section 4.2 of the [Regulations](#),
- b. achieved at least 6 points on your CV, and
- c. achieved the minimum standard of SJT performance,

you will progress to the Interview regardless of your score or rank. Following Interview, you will progress to Referee Reporting if your combined score falls within 2 deciles below the progression decile in each region.

Please refer to Section 12 in the [Regulations](#) to learn about how offers will be extended.

18. I am a rural applicant; how will the Selection Initiatives affect my application?

As a rural applicant, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate if you meet the criteria for “rurality”. If you:

- a. meet the rurality eligibility requirements
- b. have satisfied the minimum eligibility criteria detailed in section 4.2 of the [Regulations](#).
- c. achieved at least 6 points on your CV and
- d. achieved the minimum standard of SJT performance,

you will progress through the Interview and Referee Report stages of the Selection process regardless of your score or rank.

Please refer to Section 12 in the [Regulations](#) to learn about how offers will be extended.

19. I am a rural applicant; how can I demonstrate my rurality?

In order to meet the eligibility requirements for rurality applicants must have:

- Completed the entirety of primary, **and** secondary schooling in a rural area categorised as MM3* or above, and
- Undertaken some undergraduate or clinical education in a rural area categorised as MM3 or above.

*When referring to a rural area for this purpose, the [Modified Monash Model \(MMM\)](#) will be used. MMM is used to define whether a location is a city, rural, remote or very remote.

Along with details confirming the rural area as MM3 or above, applicants will be required to provide the following documentary evidence:

RURALITY COMPONENTS	
Requirement	Documentary Evidence
Primary and secondary schooling	An official academic transcript or an official letter from the school including details of rural schooling
Undergraduate or clinical education	An official academic transcript including details of rural tertiary education

20. What is the Modified Monash Model?

The Modified Monash Model (MMM) is how we define whether a location is a city, rural, remote or very remote.

The model measures remoteness and population size on a scale of Modified Monash (MM) category MM 1 to MM 7. MM 1 is a major city and MM 7 is very remote.

Understanding the MMM classifications helps us distribute the health workforce better in rural and remote areas.

MMM classifications are based on the [Australian Statistical Geography Standard - Remoteness Areas](#) (ASGS-RA) framework.

Who manages the MMM?

Our analysts review and update the MMM after each Census. The [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) (ABS) conducts the national Census every 5 years.

What is the MMM used for?

The MMM tells us about an area according to geographical remoteness and town size.

People living in remote areas can find it harder to get medical help. Accessing doctors can take longer and cost more.

The [Distribution Priority Area](#) classification uses MMM boundaries.

How to find current areas under the MMM

You can find 2015 and 2019 MMM classifications on the [Health Workforce Locator](#).

Modified Monash Model classifications table

Modified Monash category	Inclusions
MM 1	All areas categorised ASGS-RA1.
MM 2	Areas categorised ASGS-RA 2 and ASGS-RA 3 that are in, or within 20km road distance, of a town with a population greater than 50,000.
MM 3	Areas categorised ASGS-RA 2 and ASGS-RA 3 that are not in MM 2 and are in, or within 15km road distance, of a town with a population between 15,000 and 50,000.

MM 4	Areas categorised ASGS-RA 2 and ASGS-RA 3 that are not in MM 2 or MM 3 and are in, or within 10km road distance, of a town with a population between 5,000 and 15,000.
MM 5	All other areas in ASGS-RA 2 and 3.
MM 6	All areas categorised ASGS-RA 4 that are not on a populated island that is separated from the mainland in the ABS geography and is more than 5km offshore. Islands that have an MM 5 classification with a population of less than 1,000 (2019 Modified Monash Model classification only).
MM 7	All other areas; that being ASGS-RA 5 and areas on a populated island that is separated from the mainland in the ABS geography and is more than 5km offshore.

iv. Ranking and Offers

21. In which instances during Selection are applicants ranked?

Applicants are ranked nationally throughout the Selection process:

1. When applicants meet the minimum CV score and achieve an SJT score better than 1 standard deviation below the mean they are ranked nationally according to their SJT score. Applicants will be invited to interview based on the ranking of their SJT score.
2. When applicants attend a Selection Interview they are also scored. Applicants will be ranked nationally based on their combined SJT and Interview Score. AOA will collect Referee Reports at a minimum ratio of two applicants to each expected available post in each region.
3. Following Referee Reports, applicants are ranked on their overall score when being considered for an offer. The overall score is comprised of the SJT score (30%), the interview score (40%) and the referee report score (30%).

v. Regional preferences

22. How many regions can I preference on my application?

Applicants are asked to nominate a first and second regional preference. Applicants will only be considered for interviews and offers in the regions of preference on their application.

vi. Referee Reports

23. How will AOA collect my referee reports?

Following the Interview, applicants will be ranked based on their combined SJT and Interview Score.

AOA will collect Referee Reports at a minimum ratio of two applicants to each expected available post in each region. AOA will collect a minimum of 3 referee reports for each of these applicants.

Referee Reports are collected to obtain information, in confidence, regarding the observed work performance, character, and abilities of the applicant.

24. How will I list my referees?

As part of their application, applicants must list each site at which they have worked during the previous two clinical years (since the start of 2022 and including any current post), and provide the name and contact details of the Head of the Orthopaedic Department (or equivalent) and every orthopaedic surgeon with whom they have worked at each site. Applicants must provide contact details including a valid e-mail address for every surgeon.

25. Which referees are considered suitable for listing in my application?

You must list every orthopaedic surgeon you have worked with in the last 2 years. You will be required to detail the extent of your interaction with each surgeon by completing the following matrix upon application:

Orthopaedic Surgeon	Supervised and / or Observed Applicant	Setting	Frequency	Duration (continuous)
Dr xx	Yes / No	Theatre, Clinic, On-call, Ward Rounds	Daily, Weekly, Monthly, rarely	< 10 Weeks > 10 Weeks > 26 Weeks > 50 Weeks

26. Can I select which consultants will be contacted as my preferred referees?

Applicants will have the opportunity to highlight two (2) referees as those they consider best able to provide an assessment of their performance. Referees must be FRACS qualified orthopaedic surgeons and be able to comment on all aspects of the Applicant's workplace performance. However, there is no guarantee that the highlighted referees will participate or be invited to provide a referee report. Referees will be selected at the discretion of the Selection Committee.

27. I am on parental leave; do I have to list a current post?

Applicants who are on a period of extended leave at the time of application (e.g., parental leave) are not required to list a current post.

28. I work in a rural setting I might not be able to list 3 referees within the last 2 years; what should I do?

Applicants who believe they may have insufficient referees within the nominated period due to a period of extended leave or rural location should email selection@aoa.org.au for advice.

vii. Other

29. My question is not listed here. Whom can I contact?

Applicants requiring further information about AOA applications must submit their enquiry to selection@aoa.org.au. Once the enquiry is received, an AOA staff member will contact the applicant as soon as possible to provide further appropriate information.

Phone enquiries will not be accepted.