Regulations
for Selection to the AOA 21 Training Program in Orthopaedic Surgery for 2028

AOA
AUSTRALIAN ORTHOPAEDIC ASSOCIATION



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1. Introduction

1.1 Definition of terms and acronyms for the purpose of these Regulations

1.1.1 AHPRA - Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.
1.1.2 AOA - Australian Orthopaedic Association.
1.1.3 Applicant - a person who has submitted an application for the AOA 21 Training Program.
1.1.4 ASC - Annual Scientific Congress.
1.1.5 ASM - Annual Scientific Meeting.
1.1.6 ASSET - Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand Surgical Skills Education and Training Course.
1.1.7 ATLS - Advanced Trauma Life Support Course.
1.1.8 CSET - Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Committee of Surgical Education and Training.
1.1.9 BSS - Basic Surgical Skills Course.
1.1.10 BST - Basic Surgical Training.
1.1.11 CCrISP - Care of the Critically Ill Surgical Patient Course.
1.1.12 COE - Continuing Orthopaedic Education.
1.1.13 College or RACS - The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.
1.1.14 CV or Curriculum Vitae - the scored components of the application for Selection.
1.1.15 DoT - Director of Training
1.1.16 DRR - Departmental Referee Report – referee report collected at a departmental level as part of the Selection process
1.1.17 EMST - Early Management of Severe Trauma Course.
1.1.18. FTC - AOA Federal Training Committee.
1.1.19 GSSE - Generic Surgical Sciences Exam.
1.1.20 Interview - the semi-structured panel interview as conducted as part of the Selection process.
1.1.21 MBBS - Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery.
1.1.22 OMCQ – Orthopaedic Multiple-Choice Question Test
1.1.23 PGY - Post Graduate Year.
1.1.24 Referee - a person who evaluates the applicant's workplace performance.
1.1.25 VRR - Verbal Referee Report - the in-depth Referee Report conducted as part of the Selection process.
1.1.26 Regulations - these Regulations.
1.1.27 RTC - AOA Regional Training Committee.
1.1.28 Selection - the process of being selected into the AOA 21 Training Program.
1.1.29 Trainee - orthopaedic surgical trainee.
1.1.30 A Year - a calendar year (1 January to 31 December), unless otherwise specified.

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1.2 Purpose of these Regulations

1.2.1. These Regulations describe the principles, terms and conditions of the Selection process for the AOA 21 Training Program in orthopaedic surgery for the 2028 intake. This is a public document.

1.3 Administration

1.3.1 The Australian Medical Council, on behalf of the Medical Board of Australia, accredits the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) for the training and education programs for surgeons in Australia.

1.3.2 AOA is the peak professional body in Australia for advancing excellence in orthopaedic practice in the interests of patients and the community and in the training of orthopaedic surgeons to world-class standards.

1.3.3 AOA and the College collaborate in the delivery of the Orthopaedic Surgical Training Program in Australia.

1.3.4 AOA is responsible for the selection, training, supervision and assessment of trainees in Australia.

1.3.5 AOA developed, delivers and reviews the world-recognised AOA 21 Training Program in orthopaedic surgery.

1.3.6 The AOA 21 Training Program is designed to train surgeons as competent, independently practicing specialists in Orthopaedic Surgery.

1.3.7 For further information refer to the AOA website.

1.4 Objective of the AOA21 Training Program

1.4.1 The overall objective of the AOA 21 Training Program is to produce competent, independent specialist surgeons with the experience, knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to provide the communities, health systems and professions they serve with the highest standard of safe, ethical and comprehensive care and leadership.

1.4.2 The AOA 21 Training Program is structured to ensure trainees achieve competencies in:

- Communication
- Teamwork and Conflict Management
- Professionalism
- Leadership and Organisational Skills
- Advocacy
- Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety
- Education and Research
- Medical and Surgical Expertise

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2. Principles of Selection

2.1 The aim of the Selection process is to select trainees of the highest calibre for the AOA 21 Training Program on the basis of merit through a fair, open and accountable process with reference to social and workforce initiatives referenced at Section 6.3.

2.2 The Selection process will be documented, transparent and objective with applicants having access to eligibility criteria, information on the Selection process, general Selection criteria and a Reconsideration and Review Process.

2.3 In accordance with Australian Privacy Principles (APPs), individuals have the right to request access to their personal information. However, under APP 12.3, access may be lawfully withheld in specific circumstances, including where the information constitutes evaluative material used in a decision-making process. Selection assessment data is considered evaluative material. Access to this information is restricted as noted throughout the Regulations to protect the integrity of the selection process and the privacy of those involved.

2.4 The Selection process will be subject to continuous review to ensure its continued validity and objectiveness.

Please note: *The Selection Regulations change on an annual basis. It is imperative that Applicants read these Regulations in detail. Incomplete or incorrect applications may result in ineligibility or failure to progress through the Selection process.*

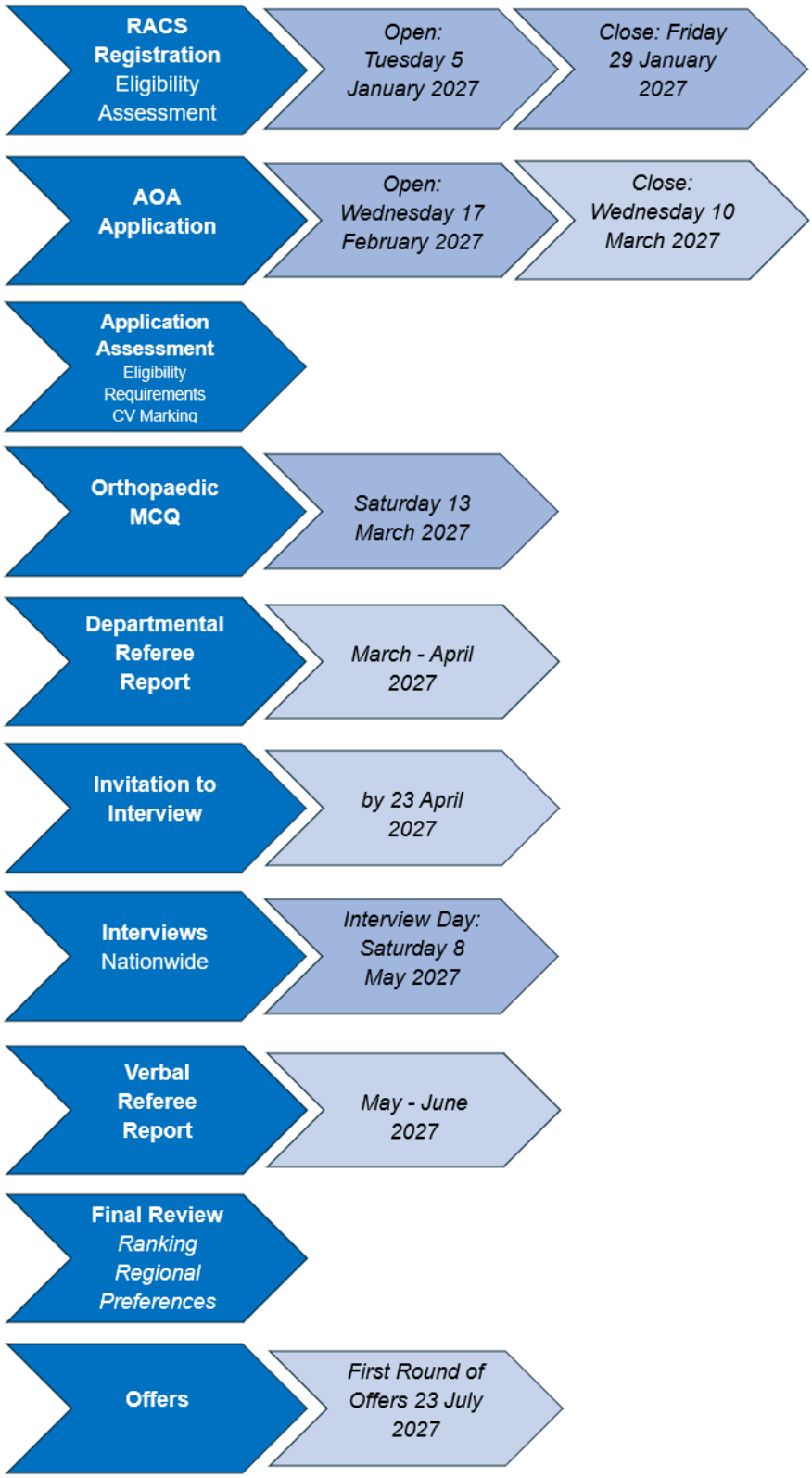
2.5 To assist in preparations, the AOA website will make available the updated Regulations, important dates, and a Frequently Asked Questions document.

2.6 The Selection process will abide by the principles of RACS Regulation: Registration and Selection to Surgical Education and Training.

2.7 The number of trainees selected in any year will depend on the number of accredited training posts available.

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3. Overview of the Selection Process



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3.1 The selection process uses the following selection tools. Where the tool contributes to the overall selection score, the weighting is outlined below.

3.2 *Excluding the Structured Curriculum Vitae, the Minimum score to progress may not apply to applicants outlined in Section 6.3.*

Selection tool	Weighting in overall score	Minimum score to progress	Scored in accordance with section
a) Structured Curriculum Vitae	N/A	6	Section 7
b) Orthopaedic Multiple Choice Question Test	N/A	>1 SD below the mean	Section 11
c) Departmental Referee Report	N/A		Section 12
c) Interview	60%	Ranking based	Section 13
d) Verbal Referee Report	40%	Ranking based	Section 14

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4. Application Eligibility

4.1 RACS Eligibility

4.1.1 Prospective applicants wishing to apply to the AOA 21 Training Program must first register in accordance with the RACS regulation: Registration for selection into SET available on the RACS website.

4.1.2 Prospective applicants must confirm for themselves, they meet the minimum RACS and AOA eligibility criteria required before submitting their completed registration form.

4.1.3 Prospective applicants must confirm for themselves that they have correctly registered for the AOA 21 Training Program in orthopaedic surgery.

4.1.4 Prospective applicants must submit a completed registration form, including the required supporting documentation, and pay the registration fee by the registration closing date.

4.1.5 Registrations will not be accepted after the closing date under any circumstances.

4.1.6 Prospective applicants who are not registered cannot lodge an application for the AOA 21 Training Program in orthopaedic surgery.

4.1.7 Prospective applicants will be emailed confirmation of completed registration and eligibility.

4.2 AOA Eligibility

4.2.1 In addition to the RACS generic eligibility criteria, applicants must fulfill the AOA specialty-specific eligibility criteria by the date AOA applications open (17 February 2027). AOA specialty specific eligibility criteria are outlined below.

4.2.2 Applicants who do not meet the specialty-specific eligibility criteria will be deemed ineligible and will not progress to the next stage of the Selection process.

4.2.3 Applicants must be deemed suitable for the AOA 21 Training Program by the FTC, taking into account, where applicable, any disclosure matters in 5.10 and an applicant's reason(s) and supporting evidence, if any are provided under 5.11.

4.2.4 An attempt at selection is defined as a submitted application accompanied by the relevant application fee.

4.2.5 Eligible applicants may apply at their discretion.

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AOA SPECIALTY SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA		
Requirement	**Notes**	**Documentary Evidence**[1]
4.2.6 Completion of at least **26 working weeks of orthopaedic surgical experience** within the last two (2) years (commencing the start of the clinical year 2025 at the earliest), at PGY 3 or higher.	Experience within the last five (5) years will be accepted if a period of full-time study for the purposes of completing a Doctorate is demonstrated within the application (commencing the start of the clinical year 2022 at the earliest). Experience within the last five (5) years will be accepted if a period of parental leave of 12 months or longer is claimed. Experience must be in a public hospital with an Emergency Department and an on-call roster. Orthopaedic surgery terms with a minimum duration of six (6) continuous weeks can be added together for a cumulative total. Experience must be at PGY 3 or higher. In this context, PGY 3 means the third year following completion of primary Medical Degree. Eligible orthopaedic experience completed part-time will be accepted on a pro-rata basis where the position is at least 0.5 FTE.	A retrospective letter must be provided by the hospital administration or Head of Department, on hospital letterhead with the appropriate signature, detailing work history. Evidence must include commencement and end dates, position held, and hospital. Evidence must specify that the term completed was in orthopaedic surgery. Prospective evidence, including a work contract, will not be accepted. Assessment forms will not be accepted.
4.2.7 Successful completion of the ***Generic Surgical Sciences Exam (GSSE)***.	For more information regarding registration for the GSSE, please visit the RACS website. A pass in the February 2027 sitting of the GSSE will **NOT** be accepted for the 2028 intake.	Confirmation of GSSE completion will be provided by RACS.
4.2.8 Successful completion of a ***state-licenced Radiation Safety Course***.	Any radiation safety course that has been licenced or approved by the relevant state body will be accepted.	An official academic transcript, Certificate of Completion/Attendance or retrospective letter on the relevant institution's letterhead, with appropriate signature, confirming completion/attendance from the course organiser must be provided. Applicants must confirm for themselves if the Radiation Safety Course is state-licensed. Evidence should include details of the course licensing status/information. Prospective evidence, including confirmation of registration and receipt of payment, will not be accepted.

[1] Please also refer to clause 5.4 regarding documentary evidence

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5. Online Application

5.1 Applications must be submitted via the AOA online application system during the published dates. No other form of application will be accepted.

5.1.1 Applications will only be invited from those applicants who have registered with RACS in the current Selection round and fulfilled all of the RACS generic eligibility criteria. Invitations to apply will be sent based on eligibility confirmation from RACS.

5.1.2 Applications must be submitted by the closing date (10 March 2027). No extensions will be granted.

5.1.3 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they allow enough time to complete the application. Only complete applications will be considered.

5.2 Applicants who satisfy the eligibility and application requirements in accordance with AOA and College policy will be considered in open competition for Selection to the AOA 21 Training Program.

5.3 The online application includes the following components:

5.3.1 Personal Profile - Applicants will be required to provide personal profile information, including a current passport photo. Applicants will not be able to submit an application without completing all mandatory fields.

5.3.2 Eligibility Criteria - Applicants will need to demonstrate that they meet the specialty specific eligibility criteria (please refer to Section 4.2) in order to progress to the next stage of the Selection process.

5.3.3 Rurality – Applicants will have the opportunity to demonstrate their rural origin and connection (please refer to Section 6.3).

5.3.4 CV - Applicants will have the opportunity to outline their achievements against scored CV components (please refer to Section 7).

5.3.5 Professional Experience - Applicants must list and provide contact details for specific individuals at their current and previous hospital/ training sites to facilitate the completion of Referee Reports (please refer to Section 10).

5.3.6 Regional Preferences - Applicants must indicate in which regions they are willing to undertake training, in order of preference (please refer to Section 8).

5.3.7 Application Fee - Applicants will be required to pay an application fee except as outlined in clause 6.3.1.4. Applicants will not be able to submit an application without providing payment details. The fee is non-refundable.

5.3.8 Applicant's Statement - Applicants will be required to confirm their compliance with these Regulations.

5.4 Applicants must attach documentary evidence for all claims made in the application.

5.4.1 Applicants are responsible for ensuring their evidence meets the verification requirements.

5.4.2 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all necessary evidence is included in their application.

5.4.3 All evidence must be provided at the time of application.

5.4.4 In most cases evidence must be retrospective. Prospective evidence will not be accepted. Exceptions to this are noted in Section 7.

5.4.5 Forms of evidence other than what is outlined will not be accepted.

5.4.6 The Selection process changes on an annual basis and no application data are carried over from one year's Selection process to the next. Evidence that was accepted in the past will not be accepted on the basis that it has been accepted previously. All evidence must comply with the Regulations for the current Selection process.

5.4.7 Applications that do not include the required evidence, or which include evidence that does not meet the verification requirements will not be accepted. These applications may be considered ineligible or incomplete and will therefore not progress to the next stage of the selection process.

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5.4.8 Where a signature is required on documentary evidence, the signature must be either a physical, handwritten signature or an electronic scanned version of such a signature. Address blocks, typed signatures and email signatures are not acceptable.

5.4.9 Letters of evidence must be dated.

5.4.10 All documentary evidence must be in English. If any documentary evidence is in a language other than English, a certified translation must be provided.

5.4.11 The full name on documentary evidence must match the full name of the applicant as specified on the online application. If any documentary evidence bears a different name, proof of name change (e.g. marriage certificate) must also be provided.

5.5 During the published application dates, online applications may be commenced, saved, printed and re-accessed. However, applications must be submitted prior to the closing date. Saved, un-submitted applications will not be considered.

5.5.1 It is strongly recommended that applicants print their draft application for careful review prior to submitting it.

5.6 Applicants will receive an email confirmation when they have successfully submitted their application.

5.7 Once an application has been submitted, it cannot be changed. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their application is complete and correct.

5.8 Each application will be assessed and marked as submitted. No active follow-up will take place in instances where the application (or verification) is incorrect or absent.

5.9 Achievements that are not listed in the correct section of the application will not be accepted.

5.10 To enable the FTC to give effect to the AOA eligibility requirements under 4.2.3, applicants are required to disclose, at the time of this application, all or any of the following information:

a) In the last 10 years has the applicant been made aware of any notification or complaint made to the Medical Board of Australia, the New Zealand Medical Council, AHPRA, or any other regulatory health complaints entity in any State or Territory of Australia or in Aotearoa New Zealand relating to their medical practice (regardless of the outcome)? Or, if the applicant has practised in other countries, similar notifications or complaints made in those countries.

b) Is the applicant aware of any formal complaint made to any hospital or health service in which they have been engaged or employed during the last five years (regardless of the outcome)?

c) Is the applicant aware of any other formal complaint being made otherwise in relation to their practice as a medical practitioner in the last five years (regardless of the outcome)?

d) If answering 'yes' to any of the questions, Applicants are required to provide relevant information in their application and any further details upon request.

Please note: *It is a condition of application for selection that should, at any time during the selection process or in the future, the AOA become aware that the responses to the questions in 5.10 are incorrect, misrepresented, or untruthful, applicants may be deemed unsuitable for selection and not considered further in the selection process, or dismissed from the training program, and/or disqualified from making future applications to the AOA 21 Training program. It would be sufficient grounds for dismissal that the AOA has sufficient reasonable information for it to conclude that the answers to these questions were incorrect, misrepresented, or untruthful.*

5.11 Disclosure of any matters in 5.10 above will not automatically disqualify an applicant but are relevant to the FTC's assessment of the applicant's suitability for the AOA 21 Training Program. Applicants are invited to submit reason(s) and if applicable, any supporting evidence, demonstrating that they are suitable for the AOA 21 Training Program despite the disclosure matters in 5.10.

5.12 By submitting an application, applicants certify that the information provided is correct and in accordance with these Regulations.

5.12.1 The FTC may verify the information provided within the application and associated processes with external institutions or individuals.

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5.12.2 If at any point during the Selection process, it is discovered that an applicant has provided incorrect or misleading information, that applicant will be withdrawn from the Selection process and their application will not be considered further.

5.12.3 If at any point during the Selection process, it is discovered that an applicant has submitted fraudulent evidence as part of their application, that applicant will be withdrawn from the Selection process and their application will not be considered further. In addition, the applicant will be reported to AHPRA. These Applicants may be deemed unsuitable for the AOA 21 Training Program and may therefore be considered ineligible for future applications.

5.12.4 By submitting an application, applicants are consenting to the collection, use, disclosure, and storage of the information by the FTC or its agent. The AOA is committed to maintaining the privacy of individuals who interact with the AOA. Click here to view and download a copy of AOA's Privacy Collection Notice.

5.13 On request, applicants must provide further information regarding previous professional conduct or performance issues. The FTC reserves the right to contact previous supervisors or institutions regarding such issues.

5.14 Separate applications must be made for the AOA 21 Training Program in Australia and the training program in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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6. Progress of Application

6.1 Harassment of any kind of any individual involved in the Selection process is a serious matter and may result in an applicant being deemed unsuitable for Selection and removed from the Selection process.

6.1.1 Harassment includes, but is not limited to, repeated requests by an applicant to any referee, RTC Chair, Committee member or AOA staff member.

6.1.2 Inappropriate, aggressive, or bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.

6.2 If the FTC receives evidence that an applicant has behaved in such a way that would be in breach of the AOA Code of Conduct, the AOA Ethical Framework or the AOA Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy, the applicant may be withdrawn from the Selection process. This includes refusal to provide further information and/or documentation regarding previous professional conduct or performance issues. These Applicants may be deemed unsuitable for the AOA 21 Training Program and may therefore be considered ineligible for future applications.

6.3 In order to promote diversity within the training program and address the workforce needs of rural communities, the FTC has implemented the following initiatives:

6.3.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

6.3.1.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants who have satisfied the minimum eligibility criteria specified in Sections 4.2 and 7.1 of these Regulations will progress through the Orthopaedic MCQ, Departmental Referee Report, Interview, and Verbal Referee Report stages of the Selection process independent of their score or rank.

6.3.1.2 Offers will be extended as described in Section 15 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants will have ranked highly enough to be considered for an offer when their score falls within two deciles below the decile indicated by the number of offers in each region. The FTC will determine which applicants receive an offer and in making any such determination will have regard to promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the training program.

6.3.1.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants seeking consideration under this initiative must, at the time of the RACS Registration process, be identified and verified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

6.3.1.4 In line with the AOA Strategic Plan, the Board has resolved to waive the Application Fee for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants eligible for this initiative.

6.3.1.5 An applicant's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status will only be known to AOA staff and FTC members directly involved in the selection process, for the purpose of implementing the Selection Initiative.

6.3.2 Gender Equity

6.3.2.1 Female applicants[2] who have satisfied the minimum eligibility criteria detailed in Sections 4.2 and 7.1 and achieved the minimum standard of performance on the Orthopaedic MCQ and Departmental Referee Report as outlined in Section 6.5 will progress to Interview. Following the Interview female applicants will rank highly enough to progress to Verbal Referee Reporting when their interview score falls within 2 deciles below the progression decile in each region.

6.3.2.2 Offers will be extended as described in Section 15. Female applicants will have ranked highly enough to be considered for an offer when their score falls within one decile below the decile indicated by the number of offers in each region. The

[2] Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender

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FTC will determine which applicants receive an offer and in making any such determination will have regard to promoting gender diversity in the training program.

6.3.3 Rural Equity

6.3.3.1 Applicants will have the opportunity to demonstrate their rural origin and connection (*Rurality*). Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements for rurality; and who have satisfied the minimum eligibility criteria detailed in sections 4.2 and 7.1 of these Regulations; and achieved the minimum standard of performance on the Orthopaedic MCQ and Departmental Referee Report as outlined in Section 6.5 will progress through the Interview and Verbal Referee Report stages of the Selection process independent of their score or rank.

6.3.3.2 When referring to a rural area for this purpose, the Modified Monash Model (MMM) will be used. The MMM is used to 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. Areas classified MM 2 to MM 7 are rural or remote.

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

6.3.3.3.1 Completed 10 years of combined primary, **and** secondary schooling in a rural area categorised as MM2[3] or above, **and** undertaken a period of tertiary education in a rural area categorised as MM2[3] or above. OR

6.3.3.3.2 Completed a minimum of 75% of medical training at a rural university or rural campus

6.3.3.4 Along with details confirming the rural area as MM2[3] 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
Tertiary education	An official academic transcript or an official letter from the university including details of rural tertiary education
Medical training	An official academic transcript or an official letter from the university including details of rural medical training

6.3.3.5 Offers will be extended as described in Section 15. Rural applicants will have ranked highly enough to be considered for an offer when their score falls within one decile below the decile indicated by the number of offers in each region. The FTC will determine which candidates receive an offer and in making any such determination will have regard to promoting workforce planning, especially as it relates to rurality.

[3] MM2 areas will only be accepted where they are located in a regional setting. That is, where they are surrounded by or contiguous to MM3 areas.

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6.4 CV Score

Applicants who meet the minimum CV score will be considered eligible for the next stage of Selection. Applicants who do not meet the minimum CV score will not be considered further in the Selection process. These applicants will be notified in writing that they have not met the minimum CV score and therefore will not be considered further in the Selection process.

6.5 Orthopaedic Multiple-Choice Question Test (OMCQ) and Departmental Referee Report (DRR)

Applicants will complete an Orthopaedic Multiple-choice Question (OMCQ) Test to assess their orthopaedic and clinical knowledge. Applicants will be scored on the OMCQ.

AOA will collect Departmental Referee Reports (DRR) for each applicant. Applicants will be scored on the DRR.

Scores from the OMCQ and DRR will be combined. Applicants who achieve a combined score 1 standard deviation below the mean, or lower, will not be considered further in the Selection process, except as outlined in Sections 6.3.1 and 6.5.1. These applicants will be notified in writing that they have not met the minimum combined score and therefore will not be considered further in the Selection process.

All other applicants will be ranked based on their combined score.

6.5.1 Additional Interview Capacity

In situations where a region has unfilled interview capacity and no further eligible applicants who achieved a combined score better than 1 standard deviation below the mean have preferenced that region, the FTC may offer the next ranked eligible applicant who achieved a combined score 1 standard deviation below the mean, or lower, the option to interview in that region in order to maximise use of interview capacity.

6.6 Interview

Applicants will be invited to interview based on their combined score ranking, their Regional Preferences, and the interview capacity in each region with consideration for applicants identified in Section 6.3. Expected interview capacities will be published on the website.

Applicants who meet the minimum CV and combined scores, but do not rank highly enough on their combined score to be invited to interview will not be considered further in the Selection process, except as outlined in Section 6.3. These applicants will be notified in writing of the following:

6.6.1 That they have not met the minimum standard required to progress to the interview and will not be considered further in the Selection process.

6.6.2 Feedback on their performance in comparison to the cut-off for invitations to interview in their preferred region.

6.7 Verbal Referee Reports

Following the Interview, applicants will be ranked based on their Interview Score or as described in section 9. AOA will collect Verbal Referee Reports at a minimum ratio of 1.5 applicants to each expected available post in each region, with consideration for applicants identified in Section 6.3.

Applicants who successfully progressed to interview, but who did not rank highly enough to progress to Verbal Referee Reporting will be classified as ‘Unsuccessful’. These applicants will be notified in writing of the following:

6.7.1 That they have not met the minimum standard required to progress to Verbal Referee Reporting and will not be considered further in the Selection process.

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6.7.2 Feedback on their performance in comparison to the cut-off for Verbal Referee Reporting in their preferred region.

6.8 Should an applicant desire further feedback; they may request this by emailing selection@aoa.org.au. A member of AOA staff will contact the applicant as soon as possible to provide further appropriate information. Only enquiries lodged through this email address will be accepted. Phone enquiries will not be accepted. No scores or rankings will be provided.

6.9 Special Consideration

AOA recognises that from time to time there will be serious misadventure, accident, illness or extenuating circumstances (*extenuating circumstances*), beyond an applicant's control, which is of such severity or gravity that it may adversely impact on the applicant's performance at a Selection assessment. In such cases, where an applicant considers extenuating circumstances may prevent or have prevented them from performing to their usual standard, an application for Special Consideration may be submitted.

6.9.1 Applicants must have achieved the minimum standard of performance required for the assessment in order to be considered for Special Consideration.

6.9.2 Special consideration will not take the form of allocating additional marks.

6.9.3 An application must be submitted to selection@aoa.org.au as soon as the candidate is aware that they have extenuating circumstances; either before the assessment, if possible, or by no later than 5.00pm AEDT/AEST on the day after the assessment. An application will not be accepted once outcomes for the assessment are published.

6.9.4 It is the candidate's responsibility to notify AOA in writing and to obtain and provide supporting documentation which demonstrates the severity and/or gravity and timing of the extenuating circumstances. The documentation should also demonstrate how the extenuating circumstances disrupted the assessment.

6.9.5 Factors contributing to or constituting extenuating circumstances must directly relate to the timing of assessment requirements. These may include:

a. Permanent and/or chronic illness, impairment or disability, including complications of pregnancy;
b. Acute medical conditions, serious illness or injury;
c. Compassionate grounds, such as:
    - The recent death or serious illness of an immediate family member, partner, close relative, or those who have had a significant relationship with the applicant.
    - The recent birth or adoption of a child.
d. Severe stress resulting from extreme hardship or trauma (e.g. victim of violent crime);
e. Significant hardship as a result of a natural disaster (e.g. flood or bushfire)
f. Emergency service commitments, where a candidate is required to attend an emergency situation and the requirement to attend is specified in supporting documentation
g. Legal commitments, where a candidate has been refused excusal from jury duty or is subpoenaed to attend a court, tribunal or hearing, and the requirement to attend is specified in supporting documentation;
h. Compulsory involvement in a ceremony or significant cultural activity of a unique nature where the requirement to attend is specified in supporting documentation from a relevant official or leader of the event/activity.

6.9.6 An event, condition or other factor will not be considered exceptional circumstances, or warrant special consideration, if the affected person is aware of the event, condition or factor and does not promptly advise AOA or if the person affected knowingly attempts the assessment without prior notice to AOA.

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The following would generally not be regarded as extenuating circumstances:

a. Stress or anxiety, which would ordinarily be associated with preparation for Selection or performance assessment, including travel arrangements associated with the assessment;
b. Knowingly attempting an assessment with inadequate preparation;
c. Stress or anxiety resulting from relationship difficulties (however a complete breakdown of a marriage, de facto relationship or equivalent might constitute exceptional circumstances);
d. Minor illnesses or medical conditions;
e. Pre-existing illness or medical condition affecting the individual, immediate family member, partner or close relative, which is not regarded as acute and substantive;
f. Excessive work commitments, including specific rostering arrangements;
g. Work-related anxiety and stress, such as may be met in the usual course of medical practice, including adverse outcomes, medico-legal issues;
h. Excessive educational commitments;
i. The inability of the individual to organise their time and plan effectively in order to meet administrative requirements/deadlines;
j. Ignorance of relevant regulations and/or policies;
k. Computer-related or other similar technological failure;
l. Difficulties with the English language;
m. Difficulties with visa arrangements that could have been reasonably anticipated;
n. Loss or theft of books or notes or similar materials;
o. Decisions to undertake optional commitments of a personal nature;
p. Personal or lifestyle choices where appropriate allowance or consideration has already been made;
q. Circumstances where other options were available (e.g. withdrawal, deferral or adjustments to examination arrangements, etc.) and application was not made for such arrangements.

6.9.7 In considering an application for Special Consideration, AOA will consider:

a. the severity of the event;
b. any history of previous applications for special consideration.

6.9.8 An applicant who seeks to gain an unfair advantage in Selection by submitting an application for special consideration that is not genuine is subject to appropriate disciplinary action whether or not the application is subsequently withdrawn.

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7. Curriculum Vitae

7.1 Applicants 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:

7.1.1 Surgical and Medical Experience	(Maximum 4 points)
7.1.2 Skills Course	(Maximum 3 points)
7.1.3 Higher Education Qualifications	(Maximum 3 points)
7.1.4 Research Presentation	(Maximum 2 points)
7.1.5. Research Publications	(Maximum 4 points)

7.2 The requirements for each component are outlined in the table below.

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CV COMPONENTS			
Requirement	**Notes**	**Point Allocation**	**Documentary Evidence[1] ***
7.2.1 Surgical and Medical Experience			
List acceptable terms that have been completed within the last five (5) years (commencing start of clinical year 2022 at earliest), with a minimum duration of six (6) continuous weeks. Terms used to meet the eligibility criteria (see Section 4.2) are not eligible for points in the Surgical and Medical Experience section.	Terms must be completed at the date AOA 21 Training Program applications open (17 February 2027). Acceptable terms include orthopaedic surgical terms, and non-orthopaedic surgical terms in Plastic Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Neurosurgery or General Surgery only. No other terms will be accepted. Only terms undertaken within Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand will be accepted. Acceptable terms cannot be combined with an unacceptable term. Orthopaedic surgical terms cannot be combined with non-orthopaedic surgical terms. Non-orthopaedic surgical terms of different types cannot be combined. Experience must be at PGY 3 or higher. PGY 3 means the third year following completion of primary Medical Degree. Applicants will be awarded a maximum of two (2) CV points for experience gained in one hospital/ training site. Locum posts in acceptable terms can contribute provided minimum duration is satisfied at a full time equivalent. Job sharing and part-time service positions are acceptable where the position is at least 0.5 FTE and will be calculated pro-rata.	**4 points maximum** 0.5 points per 12-week term 3 points maximum for orthopaedic surgical experience 1 point maximum for non-orthopaedic surgical experience	A retrospective letter must be provided by hospital administration or Head of Department, on hospital letterhead with the appropriate signature, detailing work history. Evidence must include commencement and end dates, position held, and hospital. Evidence must specify that the term completed was in an acceptable position. Prospective evidence, including a work contract, will not be accepted. Assessment forms will not be accepted.

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CV COMPONENTS (continued)			
Requirement	**Notes**	**Point Allocation**	**Documentary Evidence**[1]
7.2.2 Skills Courses			
Points may be claimed for completion of BST, ASSET, CCrISP or EMST/ATLS, or attendance at an AOA National ASM.	This experience must have been completed at the date AOA 21 Training Program applications open (17 February 2027). The following courses are recognised by AOA as equivalent: • BSS completed in the United Kingdom = ASSET; • CCrISP completed in the United Kingdom and other countries = CCrISP; • ATLS completed in the United Kingdom, United States and other countries = EMST. No other meetings will be accepted. ASM attendance must be within the last 5 years (i.e. 2022 AOA ASM onwards).	**3 points maximum** 1 point per course or ASM	An official academic transcript, certificate of completion/attendance, or retrospective letter on the relevant institutions' letterhead, with the appropriate signature, confirming completion/attendance from conference/course organiser must be provided. Prospective evidence including confirmation of registration including receipt of payment will not be accepted as evidence of meeting attendance.
7.2.3 Higher Education Qualifications			
Successful completion of a Masters, relevant to the practice of orthopaedic surgery, or Doctorate.	Must have been completed at the date AOA 21 Training Program applications open (17 February 2027). Any primary Medical Degree, whether undergraduate or postgraduate, will not be eligible for points. Only postgraduate degrees from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (or equivalent) will be accepted. Masters of Physiotherapy, Public Health, Health Science, Reproductive Medicine, and Health Management will not be eligible for points. No other higher education qualifications will be accepted.	**3 points maximum** 2 points per acceptable Master's degree 3 points per Doctorate	An official academic transcript showing course code, research project title, and completion date must be provided. Online transcripts and testamur certificates will not be accepted. Prospective evidence will not be accepted.

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CV COMPONENTS (continued)			
Requirement	**Notes**	**Point Allocation**	**Documentary Evidence**[1]
7.2.4 Research Presentation			
Presentations personally delivered by Applicant at national AOA (ASM or COE) or RACS (ASC) meetings, internationally equivalent national orthopaedic association meetings, AOA regional meetings or AOA national sub specialty society meetings.	Must have been personally delivered by Applicant at the date AOA 21 Training Program applications open (17 February 2027). Poster presentations will not be eligible for points. Presentations at AORA meetings, industry meetings and internationally equivalent College meetings will not be eligible for points. Applicants may only claim one presentation of the same research. Applicants cannot claim points for both presentation and publication of the same body of research.	**2 points maximum** 2 points per presentation at national AOA or RACS meeting 2 points per presentation at internationally equivalent national orthopaedic association meeting 1 point per presentation at AOA regional meeting (up to a maximum of 1 point) 1 point per presentation at AOA national subspecialty society meeting (up to a maximum of 1 point)	For national and international meetings, a meeting program (including cover page, contents pages, index pages and abstract page where these are available) showing meeting name and Applicant's name printed against presentation title, date and location must be provided. Alternatively, a letter on the conference organiser letterhead, with the appropriate signature, notifying of acceptance to present or confirming presentation will be accepted. For presentations at an AOA regional branch meeting, a retrospective letter on AOA letterhead, with the appropriate signature from the RTC Chair or Scientific Secretary stating that the Applicant's presentation was of an acceptable standard must be provided. No other forms of evidence will be accepted.

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CV COMPONENTS (continued)			
Requirement	**Notes**	**Point Allocation**	**Documentary Evidence**[1]
7.2.5 Research Publication			
Article in a peer-reviewed journal, with a minimum impact factor of one (1) or above, where the Applicant is a published author.	Must be published, or accepted for publication, at the date AOA 21 Training Program applications open (17 February 2027). Articles accepted for publication pending revisions will not be accepted. Literature reviews, systematic analyses and Cochrane Reviews are eligible for points. Abstracts, case reports, case series, letters to the editor and book chapters will not be eligible for points. Applicants cannot claim points for both presentation and publication of the same body of research.	**4 points maximum** 3 points per article where applicant is the first author 1 point per article where applicant is a latter (i.e., not the first) author	A PubMed citation and link to article, or full citation and ISBN, or retrospective letter of acceptance for publication on publisher letterhead, with the appropriate signature, must be provided. The letter of acceptance must specify Applicant's authorship. Provision of a web link or application shortcut only will not be accepted, as these cannot be accessed from the application. Applicants must embed the link in Word and/or PDF document.

7.3 Applications must be accompanied by appropriate documentary evidence, as advised for each of the CV components above and in Section 5 of these Regulations. Points will not be awarded for achievements claimed on the CV where the required evidence is not provided.

7.4 Each CV will be independently scored twice using a structured scoring system. From these independent scores, a consensus score will be determined.

7.5 Where any discrepancy occurs in the two (2) scores, a nominated representative will score the CV to identify the anomaly and determine the correct score. Further advice may be sought from the FTC if necessary.

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8. Regional Preferences

8.1 Applicants must indicate their preference to train in the following regions:

- 8.1.1 New South Wales - Sydney
- 8.1.2 New South Wales - Newcastle
- 8.1.3 South East Queensland
- 8.1.4 Far North Queensland
- 8.1.5 South Australia/Northern Territory
- 8.1.6 Victoria/Tasmania
- 8.1.7 Western Australia

8.2 Applicants must indicate their primary preference and may also indicate a secondary regional preference.

8.3 Applicants who select New South Wales - Sydney as their primary or secondary preference will also be required to numerically indicate their preference to train in one of the following regions:

- 8.3.1 New South Wales - Southside
- 8.3.2 New South Wales – Northside

8.4 Applicants who select Far North Queensland as their primary or secondary preference will also have the opportunity to claim rurality points in accordance with Section 9.

8.5 Applicants will only be considered for interviews and offers in the regions selected as their first or second preference. Please also refer to Clause 15.6.2.

8.6 The number of training posts available in each training region varies from year to year and is subject to change based on accreditation decisions and the progression of existing trainees. There is no guarantee that there will be training posts available in every region in any given year.

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9. Far North Queensland Rural Training Region

9.1 In 2028, AOA is establishing a Far North Queensland (FNQ) Training Region. This Training Region will transition accredited training posts across Mackay, Cairns, Rockhampton and Townsville into a rural training region separate to the South East Queensland Training Region.

9.2 The Far North Queensland Training Region aims to build a sustainable pipeline of orthopaedic surgeons for regional Queensland by delivering high-quality training within the communities where workforce need is greatest. The program seeks to develop trainees who are well-equipped to practise in regional settings and inspired to contribute to the long-term health needs of Far North Queensland communities.

9.3 Applicants for Selection to the AOA 21 Training Program in Orthopaedic Surgery in 2028 will be the first cohort able to indicate a preference to undertake a completely rural training pathway through preferencing the FNQ Training Region.

9.4 Applicants who preference FNQ will have the opportunity to claim rurality points for demonstrated commitment to rural Australia in accordance with the scoring framework in clauses 9.8 and 9.9.

9.5 Following interview, applicants who have interviewed in FNQ will have their interview score combined with their FNQ rurality score to determine progress to Verbal Referee Reporting.

9.6 Following Verbal Referee Reports, applications will progress in accordance with Section 14 (rurality scoring will no longer apply).

9.7 By preferencing FNQ applicants acknowledge that, if offered a training position in FNQ, they are committing to undertake the duration of their training within the Far North Queensland Training Region.

9.8 Applicants must achieve a minimum score of two (2) points on the rurality components in order to be eligible for FNQ rurality points. The components scored are:

9.8.1 Formative Years

9.8.2 Rural medical prevocational learning

9.8.3 Orthopaedic Specialised Working Experience (PGY 3+)

The requirements for each component are outlined in the table below.

9.9 To be eligible for points:

9.9.1 The component must have been completed in a rural area categorised as MM2[2] or above, for a continuous period of 12 months or more in any one area.

9.9.2 A minimum total of 2.5 points must be achieved across components.

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FNQ Rurality Points			
Requirement	**Notes**	**Point Allocation**	**Documentary Evidence**[1]
9.8.1 Formative Years **(Up to a maximum of 7 points)**			
Residing regionally	Formative years are defined as from the year commencing primary school to the end of secondary school (K-12). Where an applicant's primary residence is in a rural area, as defined in these Regulations, eligibility for rurality points will not be affected by whether they attended school locally or at boarding school.	1 point per complete year	An official academic transcript or an official letter from the school including details of rural schooling.
Undergraduate course in a rural university		2 points per undergraduate course	An official academic transcript or an official letter from the university including details of rural tertiary education.
9.8.2 Rural medical prevocational learning			
Medical Degree in a Rural university	Rural medical prevocational learning is defined as learning taking place post-secondary school (PGY 1–2) in a rural setting as defined in these Regulations	2 points per medical degree	An official academic transcript or an official letter from the university including details of rural medical training.
Medical Intern Activities in a rural setting		1 point per two continuous years	An official letter from the hospital including details of rural medical training.
9.8.3 Orthopaedic Specialised Working Experience (PGY 3+) **(Up to a maximum of 7 points)**			
Orthopaedic specialised unaccredited registrar in a rural setting	Orthopaedic Specialised Working Experience (PGY 3+) is time spent working in a rural setting as defined in these Regulations as an Orthopaedic specialised unaccredited registrar or Principal House Officer. Points are only awarded for periods of 12 full months and more of continuous work.	1.25 points per complete year 4 points for 3 cumulative years 6 points for 4 cumulative years 7 points for 5 cumulative years	A retrospective letter must be provided by the hospital administration or Head of Department, on hospital letterhead with the appropriate signature, detailing rural work history. Evidence must include commencement and end dates, position held, and hospital. Evidence must specify that the work experience was completed in orthopaedic surgery.

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			Prospective evidence, including a work contract, will not be accepted. Assessment forms will not be accepted

Please Note: The following activities do not attract rurality points:

- being part of a bonded medical school scheme (except for above points).
- rural undergraduate scholarships.
- rural society membership.
- international (outside AUS & NZ) regional areas.

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10. Professional Experience

10.1 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 2025 and include 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.

Note 1: 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.

10.2 Applicants must provide contact details including a valid e-mail address for every surgeon.

10.3 Applicants will also be required to detail the extent of their 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

10.4 Applicants will have the opportunity to highlight two (2) surgeons as those they consider best able to provide an assessment of their performance. Highlighted surgeons must be FRACS qualified orthopaedic surgeons and be able to comment on all aspects of the Applicant's workplace performance.

Note: There is no guarantee that the highlighted surgeons will participate or be invited to provide a referee report. Referees will be selected at the discretion of the FTC.

10.5 It is the applicant's responsibility to seek consent for the inclusion of current contact details as required in these Regulations.

10.6 Where an applicant has had a serious conflict or disciplinary action with a potential referee listed in documenting their professional experience, and would prefer to exclude them from the referee process, they will have the opportunity to indicate this within the application.

Note: The applicant will be required to supply written documentation in relation to this request. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in complete confidence. The FTC reserves the right to contact this person as part of the review or for the purposes of a Referee Report.

10.7 If an applicant elects not to provide contact details as stipulated by these Regulations, or it is subsequently discovered that the applicant has provided incorrect or misleading information either intentionally or unintentionally, the applicant may be automatically withdrawn from the Selection process, and their application will not be considered further.

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11. Orthopaedic Multiple-Choice Question Test (OMCQ)

11.1 The OMCQ will assess an applicant's orthopaedic and clinical knowledge. Applicants select from a range of possible responses to a question stem.

11.2 Applicants must complete the OMCQ scheduled on 13 March 2027.

11.3 Further information on the OMCQ will be published on the AOA website and provided to applicants following registration.

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

11.5 The OMCQ will be marked and the score combined with the Departmental Referee Report score to create a "combined score".

11.6 Applicants who achieve a combined score 1 standard deviation below the mean, or lower, will not be considered further in the Selection process, except as outlined in Section 6.3.1 and 6.5.1 These applicants will be notified in writing that they have not met the minimum combined score and therefore will not be considered further in the Selection process.

11.7 All other applicants will be ranked based on their combined score.

11.8 The FTC may choose to scale scores as required.

11.9 The combined score does not contribute to the overall score.

11.10 Applicants will not be provided with their OMCQ score, combined score or ranking.

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12. Departmental Referee Report

12.1 A Departmental Referee Report will be collected from each site at which the applicant has worked during the previous two clinical years. The Departmental Referee Report will represent the collective opinion of the multidisciplinary orthopaedic team including non-surgical perspectives.

12.2 Departmental Referee Reports are collected to establish the applicant's readiness for training.

12.3 Departmental Referee Reports are collected in strict confidence. Applicants will not be provided with updates on the Reports collected or information on who contributed to the Reports before, during or after the process. Applicants will not be involved in the collection process in any way.

12.4 Applicants must not attempt to ascertain which colleagues gave input to their Departmental Referee Report, or the outcomes of their Departmental Referee Reports. Applicants attempting to discuss their Departmental Referee Reports in this manner may be considered in breach of Section 6.1.

12.5 All referees contacted as part of the Selection process will be advised of the confidential nature of the reports.

12.6 Referees may be asked to verify compliance with these Regulations.

12.7 Departmental Referee Reports will be marked and the score combined with the OMCQ score to create a "combined score".

12.8 Applicants who achieve a combined score 1 standard deviation below the mean, or lower, will not be considered further in the Selection process, except as outlined in Section 6.3.1 and Section 6.5.1. These applicants will be notified in writing that they have not met the minimum combined score and therefore will not be considered further in the Selection process.

12.9 All other applicants will be ranked based on their combined score.

12.10 The FTC may choose to scale scores as required.

12.11 The combined score does not contribute to the overall score.

12.12 Applicants will not be provided with their Departmental Referee Report score, combined score or ranking.

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13. Interview

13.1 Applicants will be ranked according to their combined 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 and section 6.5.1. Expected Interview capacities will be published on the website.

13.2 The Interview has been designed to assess the suitability of applicants for the AOA 21 Training Program by addressing the key attributes deemed important to the practice of orthopaedic surgery, including:

13.2.1 The ability to interact effectively and cordially with peers, mentors, members of the health care team, hospital administrators, patients and their families.

13.2.2 The ability to contribute effectively as a member of the health care team.

13.2.3 The ability to act ethically, responsibly, and with honesty.

13.2.4 A conscientious approach to learning that demonstrates insight, responsiveness to feedback, and accountability.

13.2.5 The capacity to care, demonstrate concern, and sensitivity to the needs of others.

13.2.6 Effective oral communication.

13.2.7 The ability to assimilate and organise information and to adapt accordingly.

13.2.8 The ability to present concisely within a time frame.

13.2.9 Commitment to a career in orthopaedic surgery.

13.2.10 The ability to recognise and respond appropriately to ethical issues.

13.2.11 The ability to promote health maintenance and respond to the health needs of the community, patients, colleagues, and self.

13.2.12 Relevant medical and technical expertise.

13.3 Interviews are conducted nationally in up to six (6) locations.

13.3.1 Interview locations may include Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Cairns, Adelaide and Perth.

13.3.2 Interview locations may incorporate multiple interview venues and/or interview streams.

13.3.3 Applicants will be invited to participate in an interview based on their ranking and regional preferences.

13.3.4 If a candidate accepts an interview in a training region, they will only be considered for an offer to train in that region (except in circumstances outlined in Clause 14.6.2).

13.3.5 It is the applicant's responsibility to make the appropriate travel arrangements and to meet any costs incurred in attending the interview. AOA accepts no responsibility for any costs incurred by applicants in attending an interview.

13.4 Applicants will be notified of the date, time and location of the interview in writing, via email, at least ten (10) business days prior.

13.4.2.1 Applicants must make themselves available at the scheduled interview time. Applicants who do not present for the interview at the scheduled time will not be considered further in the Selection process and their application will be withdrawn.

13.4.2.2 Applicants will be provided with a brief on the structure of the interview.

13.5 Interviews will be conducted by a series of five (5) interview panels, each comprised of at least two (2) members.

13.5.1 Interview panels are comprised of AOA members, surgeons from other specialties and non-surgical representatives. Panels may also include a jurisdictional representative and/or an observer.

13.5.2 Applicants will spend a maximum of ten (10) minutes with each panel.

13.5.3 Each panel will conduct a designated section of the interview, with applicants rotating between panels.

13.6 During the interview, applicants will be asked standard initiating questions by each panel, with follow-up probing questions (which may vary between applicants) to explore the breadth and depth of the applicant's experience and insight in relation to selection criteria.

13.6.1 Interviewers will have attended interviewer training prior to being involved on the panel.

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13.6.2 Applicant responses will be evaluated based on a standardised interview scoring guide, which includes positive and negative indicators of performance.

13.6.3 The score for each panel will be the mean of the interviewer scores.

13.6.4 The scores for the five interview panels will be combined and converted to a total interview score.

13.7 The total score for the interview will comprise 60 % of the overall selection score.

13.8 The FTC may choose to scale interview scores as required.

13.9 Applicants will not be provided with their Interview rank or score.

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14. Verbal Referee Reports

14.1 Following the Interview, applicants will be ranked based on their Interview Score or as described in section 9.
14.2 AOA will collect Verbal Referee Reports at a minimum ratio of 1.5 applicants to each expected available post in each region. AOA will collect a minimum of 3 referee reports for each of these applicants.
Note 1: 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.

14.3 Verbal Referee Reports are collected to obtain information, in confidence, regarding the observed work performance, character, and abilities of the applicant.
14.4 Referees may be asked to verify compliance with these Regulations.
14.5 Applicants must not attempt to ascertain which colleagues gave input to their Verbal Referee Report, or the outcomes of their Verbal Referee Reports. Applicants attempting to discuss their Verbal Referee Reports in this manner may be considered in breach of Section 6.1.
14.6 Verbal Referee Reports are collected in strict confidence. Applicants will not be provided with updates on the Reports collected or information on who contributed to the Reports before, during or after the process. Applicants will not be involved in the collection process in any way.
14.7 All referees contacted as part of the Selection process will be advised of the confidential nature of the reports.
14.8 Verbal Referee reports will contribute to 40% of the overall score.
14.9 The FTC may scale referee report scores as required.
14.10 Applicants will not be provided with their Verbal Referee Report rank or score.

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15 Outcomes of Application

15.1 Applicants will be scored on their Interview and Verbal Referee Reports. Applicants will not be provided with their scores. The addition of scores for these tools will determine an applicant's overall score as follows:

- 15.1.1 Interview 60%
- 15.1.2 Verbal Referee Reports 40%

15.2 Applicants will be ranked according to their overall score. Applicants will not be provided with their rank.

15.3 The FTC will conduct a final review of applications where applicants have ranked highly enough to be considered for an offer with consideration for applicants identified in Section 6.3. The FTC will determine which candidates receive an offer and in making any such determination will have regard to promoting diversity within the training program and workforce planning, especially as it relates to rurality and social equity.

15.4 Applicants who successfully progressed to verbal referee reporting but who did not rank highly enough to be offered a position on the AOA 21 Training Program will be classified as 'Unsuccessful'. These applicants will be notified in writing of the following:

- 15.4.1 That they have not ranked highly enough to be made an offer of a position on the AOA 21 Training Program and have therefore been unsuccessful.
- 15.4.2 Feedback on their performance in comparison to the cut-off for offers in the region where they had their interview.
- 15.4.3 Should an applicant desire further feedback, they may request this by emailing selection@aoa.org.au. A member of AOA staff will contact the applicant as soon as possible to provide further appropriate information. Only enquiries lodged through this email address will be accepted. Phone enquiries will not be accepted.

15.5 Applicants who rank highly enough to be made an offer of a position on the AOA 21 Training Program will be classified as 'Successful'.

- 15.5.1 A list of successful applicants will be posted on the AOA website after all applicants have been notified of their selection outcome.

14.6 Successful applicants will be notified in writing of the following:

- 15.6.1 That they have been deemed successful in the Selection process and are being offered a position on the AOA 21 Training Program.

Note 1: No scores or ranking will be provided.
Note 2: No verbal or written feedback will be provided.

- 15.6.2 Their regional allocation.

Note 1: Successful applicants will only be offered a training post in the region in which they interviewed, except in circumstances where the number of available posts in a region exceeds the number of successful applicants who interviewed in that region. In these circumstances, AOA will consider offering these positions based on applicants' ranking and preferences notwithstanding their interview location.

Note 2: Successful applicants are required to accept or decline the training region post allocated to them.

Note 3: Where a successful applicant declines the offered training post, they will not be considered further in the Selection process. This includes offers extended for the FNQ Training Region.

- 15.6.3 Their expected commencement date in either February (Term 1) or August (Term 2).

15.7 It is expected that due to deferral and interruption requests, there may be several rounds of offers to the AOA 21 Training Program.

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15.7.1 Applicants who progressed to verbal referee reporting but who do not receive a first-round offer to the AOA 21 Training Program will be considered eligible for subsequent rounds of offers made by the FTC.

15.8 Once an offer has been accepted, the relevant RTC will allocate the successful applicant to an accredited training post.

15. 9 Acceptance of the offer to the AOA 21 Training Program will be conditional on the following:

15.9.1 Applicants holding unconditional general registration with AHPRA.

15.9.2 Applicants being employed by the relevant health areas and/or the allocated hospital.

15.9.3 The information submitted in the application form being verifiable, true, and correct.

15.9.4 Return of an acceptance of offer form, which incorporates acceptance of the training region identified in the offer, to AOA by the stipulated deadline.

15.9.5 Return of a signed training agreement, which incorporates an agreement to abide by AOA Regulations and policies at all times and acceptance of the conditions laid out therein, to AOA by the stipulated deadline.

15.10 Applicants who fail to satisfy any of the above conditions will automatically forfeit the offer.

15.11 Applicants who fail to return the acceptance of offer form by the stipulated deadline, or who decline the offer, will automatically forfeit the offer.

15.12 Applicants who return the acceptance of offer form by the stipulated deadline and who satisfy the conditions will be contacted by AOA with regard to system access, post information, and induction session opportunities.

15.13 Applicants are encouraged to apply for Selection in the year prior to which they intend on commencing the AOA 21 Training Program (i.e. apply in 2027 for commencement in 2028). Deferral requests will be considered by the FTC, but will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

15.14 All applications for deferral of training must comply with the AOA 21 Training Program Policies.

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16. Reconsideration and Review of Selection Decisions

16.1 From time to time, an applicant may believe they have been adversely affected by a Selection Decision. An applicant adversely affected by a Selection Decision may request reconsideration or review of that decision in accordance with these Regulations. Requests for reconsideration and review can only be made on the grounds outlined in Section 13 of the AOA Reconsideration, Review, and Appeal of Training Decisions policy, which have been reproduced below:

16.1.1 The original decision was the result of an error of law or error in due process.

16.1.2 That relevant and significant information, available at the time of the original decision, was not considered or not properly considered in the making of the original decision.

16.1.3 That the original decision was clearly inconsistent with the evidence and arguments put before the body making the original decision.

16.1.4 That irrelevant information was considered in the making of the original decision.

16.1.5 The procedures that were required by AOA to be observed in connection with the making of the decision were not observed and this could have had a material impact on the decision.

16.1.6 That the original decision was made for an improper purpose.

16.1.7 A copy of this policy is available on the AOA website.

16.2 To the extent of any inconsistencies between the provisions of the AOA Reconsideration, Review, and Appeal of Training Decisions Policy, and these Regulations, then these Regulations shall prevail.

16.3 In the absence of manifest error in scoring applications for Reconsideration or Review concerning CV, OMCQ or Departmental Referee Report scoring will not be accepted.

16.4 If an individual has known of extenuating circumstances prior to or during Selection assessment and failed to notify those circumstances within the time prescribed, those circumstances will not form the basis of a Reconsideration or Review application.

16.5 Reconsideration

A reconsideration of a Selection Decision may be made as the Federal Training Committee (or delegate) may determine from time to time.

16.5.1 An applicant adversely affected by a Selection decision of AOA may, within five (5) business days of receipt of notice of the decision, apply to have the decision reconsidered by the original decision makers.

16.5.2 Applications for reconsideration are to be made in writing to the Chair of Education and Training and must be accompanied by all relevant information or grounds upon which the applicant seeks to rely in respect of the reconsideration. Applicants should submit their applications for reconsideration to the Chair by emailing selection@aoa.org.au .

16.5.3 The applicant will bear the onus of proof to establish the grounds of the reconsideration upon application. If AOA determines in its absolute discretion that grounds have not been established, or that information provided in order to establish grounds is not relevant to the decision or policy, the reconsideration will not proceed.

16.5.4 The original decision maker(s) will form a Reconsideration Panel and will convene to reconsider the original decision and material associated with that decision. The Reconsideration Panel will also consider information the applicant provides to establish grounds for reconsideration.

16.5.5 The reconsideration will be conducted with as little formality as possible, but otherwise the Reconsideration Panel shall have full power to regulate its conduct and operation.

16.5.6 The reconsideration of the decision by the Reconsideration Panel will be reviewed in accordance with the AOA Guiding Principles of Procedural Fairness in Assessment.

16.5.7 Minutes of the meeting shall only record the Reconsideration Panel's decision, the reasons for the decision, and any recommendations made.

16.5.8 The outcome of the reconsideration and the reasons for the outcome will be provided to the applicant in writing within five (5) business days of receipt of the request for reconsideration.

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16.6 Review

16.6.1 An applicant adversely affected by a Selection decision of AOA and having had the decision reconsidered by the original decision maker(s) by the process outlined in these Regulations may, within five (5) business days of receipt of notice of the reconsideration decision, apply to have the decision reviewed by an AOA internal independent Review Panel.

16.6.2 Applications for review are to be made in writing to the National Education and Training Executive Manager and must be accompanied by all relevant information or grounds upon which the applicant seeks to rely in respect of the review. Applicants should submit their applications for review to the National Education and Training Executive Manager by emailing selection@aoa.org.au .

16.6.3 The applicant will receive an acknowledgment within five (5) business days of receipt of the application for review

16.6.4 The applicant will bear the onus of proof to establish the grounds of the review upon application. If AOA determines in its absolute discretion that grounds have not been established, or that information provided in order to establish grounds is not relevant to the decision or policy, the review will not proceed.

16.6.5 The applicant must pay a fee, which shall be the current fee as published by the AOA Board at that time.

16.6.6 A review panel will be established. AOA will provide administrative and procedural assistance. The Review Panel will be made up of at least three (3) Fellows of AOA with no previous involvement in the decision.

16.6.7 The Review Panel will convene to review the original decision and material associated with that decision and will also consider information the applicant provides to establish grounds for review.

16.6.8 The review will be conducted with as little formality as possible, but otherwise, the Review Panel shall have full power to regulate its conduct and operation.

16.6.9 The review of the decision by the Review Panel will be undertaken in accordance with the AOA Guiding Principles of Procedural Fairness in Assessment.

16.6.10 The Review Panel may uphold or overturn the decision. Where the decision is overturned, the Review Panel may not make a determination as to whether the applicant should progress in the selection process. The Panel may only:

16.6.10.1 Require a new decision to be made via a defined alternative process, or

16.6.10.2 Refer the matter back to the original decision maker with directions, terms or conditions regarding the process for the making of a new decision.

16.6.11 Minutes of the meeting shall only record the Review Panel's decision, the reasons for the decision, and any recommendations made.

16.6.12 The outcome of the Review and the reasons for the outcome will be provided to the applicant and the original decision-maker in writing.

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17. Continuous Review

17.1 The FTC is bound by these Regulations and will be held accountable for their processes and decisions.

17.2 The Selection process will be reviewed annually, and feedback will be given to the FTC on potential quality improvements.

17.2.1 The completed national selection data is sent to an independent statistician for objective scrutiny.

17.2.2. As a result of the process of continuous review, the Selection Regulations change on an annual basis. It is imperative that applicants read these Regulations in detail. Incomplete or incorrect applications may result in ineligibility or failure to progress through the Selection process.

17.3 Applicants will be asked to complete an online evaluation form during the Selection process.

17.4 AOA may trial additional selection tools during the selection process for the 2028 intake. By submitting an application for the 2028 intake, applicants consent to participate in these trials as directed by AOA. Data collected as part of the trials will not contribute to selection scores.

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