

Optometry Board of Australia – Policy and Education Committee

25 May 2023

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The objectives of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) are to provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only optometrists who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered, and to facilitate the provision of high-quality education and training of optometrists.

The Policy and Education Committee of the Board (the Committee) is established by the Optometry Board of Australia pursuant to Schedule 4, clause 11 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The Committee oversees the development and review of the standards, codes and guidelines that provide guidance to health practitioners registered in the profession. The Committee reviews accreditation standards developed for approval by the Board submitted to the Board by an accreditation authority.

The Board is committed to the National Scheme's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Cultural Safety Strategy 2020-2025. It aims to ensure that Board policy furthers the goal of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group that *Patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia's health system is the norm, as defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.*

The Committee will make recommendations to the Board for their approval and will report to the Board as required.

2. Terms of Reference

At the request of the Board, the Committee will advise the Board on the following matters with respect to the:

- review of the current registration standards, codes and guidelines with directions from the Board and via other committees established by the Board
- development of new policies, registration standards and codes and guidelines as directed by the Board
- recommendation of areas to the Board in which registration standards, codes and guidelines are required, and
- any other matters that the Board may refer from time to time.

3. Membership

The chairperson is a Board member, appointed by the Board.

Diversity

The Board has a preference that there be a balance of practitioner and community members and people from a diverse background¹.

The Policy and Education Committee is to comprise:

- at least two health practitioner Board members
- at least two community Board members, and
- at least two suitably qualified and experienced people who are not Board members.

The Board may appoint additional members as required including external members.

4. Terms of office

For Board members, the term of appointment to membership of the Committee is in accordance with the Board appointment cycle.

For non-Board members, the term of appointment to membership of the Committee is for a period of three years, with eligibility for reappointment, for a maximum of three terms of office.

The Board may change the membership of the Committee when and as it sees fit.

5. Quorum

The Committee is an advisory rather than a decision-making group. A simple majority of members is required for a quorum to be present. It would be at the discretion of the quorum with good reason, given the subject matter at hand, to request a matter be deferred to another time should the preference be for a full membership of the Committee to be present.

6. Conflict of interest

Members of the Committee are to comply with the conflict of interest requirements set out in clause 8 of Schedule 4 of the National Law.

7. Procedures

The Committee will adopt procedures consistent with the National Boards, which will include agendas, minutes, privacy and declarations of any conflicts of interest.

8. Records of meeting

Records of meetings of the Committee will be made available to the Board as required.

9. Support

Administrative support is to be provided by the Executive Officer and Board Support Officer.

10. Review

These Terms of Reference apply from 25 May 2023. The Board will review these Terms of Reference every two years.

Last reviewed: 25 May 2023

¹ People with a diverse background includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, those living in rural or regional areas in Australia, culturally diverse people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning (LGBTIQA+) people, people with disability and carers.