



Australasian Forensic Field Sciences
ACCREDITATION BOARD

Policy and Processes
For Certification

Interim Policy: Release date July 2018

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References in this notice to ANZPAA are references to the Members of ANZPAA.

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Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board

Background

1. The Australasian Police Professional Standards Council (APPSC) comprised of the Australia New Zealand Police Commissioners, the president of the Police Federation of Australia and the president of the New Zealand Police Association, established the National Fingerprint Accreditation Board (NFAB) in 2001, to operate under the Council in conducting assessment of competence, and accrediting fingerprint examiners with 'expert' status.
2. Following increasing interest in professional accreditation generally, it was proposed to replace NFAB with an umbrella body capable of accrediting a broader range of professionals. Consequently, the Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board (AFFSAB) was established in 2003 to assess the expertise of individual examiners, and accredit those that meet accepted criteria in a range of forensic field sciences.
3. AFFSAB operated under the auspices of APPSC until it was amalgamated into the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) in 2007. In 2009, the National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) was integrated into ANZPAA, and ANZPAA NIFS assumed management and secretariat functions of AFFSAB.
4. At present, AFFSAB is approved to certify Fingerprint Examiners, Firearm Examiners and Crime Scene Investigators. Any practitioner wanting to be considered for certification must undergo the AFFSAB certification process, including practitioners relocating from overseas.
5. Where the term competency is used in this document, it refers to the requirements set by the AFFSAB certification process established through demonstrable experience and a standardised assessment process.

Mission

6. AFFSAB is committed to enhancing professionalism for forensic field examiners and promoting confidence in forensic science practice throughout Australasia. This will be achieved by:
 - 6.1. assessing, certifying and registering competent forensic examiners
 - 6.2. ensuring through periodic revalidation that examiners maintain competence
 - 6.3. reviewing the certification of practitioners failing to comply with established professional standards.

Purpose and Function

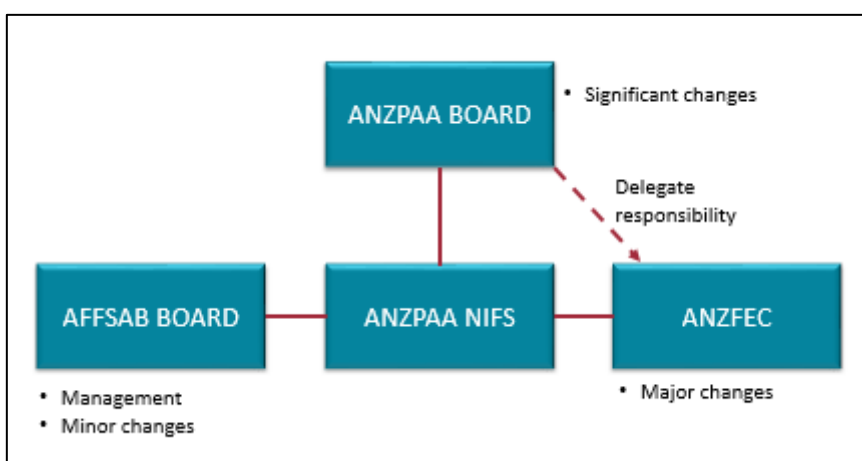
7. AFFSAB is an independent body that certifies individuals to an agreed professional standard. The AFFSAB assessment process is used to determine competency, to the AFFSAB requirements, and is separate to any jurisdictional education and training program or competency determination.
8. AFFSAB promotes and enhances professionalism in forensic science disciplines by determining standards of practice/performance as requisites for certification (and recognition as 'experts') within a policy framework endorsed by the Australia New Zealand Police Commissioners. Within this remit AFFSAB:
 - 8.1. establishes certification policy and processes, determines outcomes of applications received, and oversees management of the certification process

- 8.2. maintains a register of certified examiners and determines policy on its content, publication and access
- 8.3. develops guidelines under which AFFSAB may:
 - 8.3.1. determine outcomes of individual applications for certification
 - 8.3.2. renew, amend, remove or restore entries in the register of certified examiners.
- 8.4. promotes an ethical standard of practice for certified examiners (see AFFSAB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct)
- 8.5. considers policy matters in respect to registration or deregistration arising from information received from jurisdictions, the Quality Equivalency Panel, legal sources and relevant parties
- 8.6. determines strategy on external affairs and communication so as to enhance the national and international professional credibility of Australia New Zealand forensic examiners
- 8.7. provides an annual status report to the Australia New Zealand Forensic Executive Committee (ANZFEC)
- 8.8. provides yearly updates to the relevant Specialist Advisory Group (SAG)/Scientific Working Groups (SWG).

Organisation and Management

Governance

9. AFFSAB governance is overseen by the ANZPAA Board consisting of the Australia New Zealand Police Commissioners, the Australia New Zealand Forensic Executive Committee (ANZFEC) and the AFFSAB Board. The functions and reporting lines of these groups are outlined below:



10. The ANZPAA Board is responsible for significant changes to AFFSAB, in particular those changes that have a potential to create industrial issues, are high risk, or impact policing.
11. The expansion or reduction in scope of certification is an authority held by the ANZPAA Board.
12. ANZFEC are responsible for approving major changes and providing formal endorsement of significant changes for consideration by the ANZPAA Board. Major changes may include policy changes affecting certification or recertification criteria.
13. The AFFSAB Board is responsible for decisions relating to certification, including the granting, maintaining, recertifying, withdrawing and suspending of certification, as well as minor changes to processes.
14. The management of AFFSAB is the remit of the AFFSAB Board.
15. An update on the activities of AFFSAB is contained in the ANZPAA NIFS Quarterly Report which is provided to ANZFEC and the ANZPAA Board.

Board Composition

16. The Board comprises of eight (8) members as outlined below:

Member	Tenure
Director of ANZPAA NIFS (Chair)	Permanent to position of Director, ANZPAA NIFS
Legal Representative	Permanent to position of Director Legal Services, Victoria Police
Education Representative	Three year appointment (eligible for further terms)
ANZFEC Representative	Three year appointment (eligible for second term)
Crime Scene Representative	Three year appointment (eligible for second term)
Fingerprints Representative	Three year appointment (eligible for second term)
Firearms Representative	Three year appointment (eligible for second term)
ANZPAA NIFS Representative (ex officio)	Three year appointment (eligible for second term)

17. Other than the positions of the Board Chair, Legal Representative, and the Education Representative, the board members are elected by their respective group for a period of three years.
18. An Education Representative with the appropriate credentials from an appropriate institution (such as ANZPAA), as determined by the Board, is appointed for a period of three years.
19. The ANZPAA NIFS Representative is an ex officio member of the AFFSAB Board and does not hold voting rights.
20. Nominations are accepted at the end of each term with an election conducted at the relevant groups annual meeting. An out of session election may be conducted if required.
21. The discipline representatives must be nominated by the SWG or SAG they represent and their nomination endorsed by their organisational head and the relevant SAG chair, noted by ANZFEC and approved by the Board before commencement.
22. Should a group's representative resign before their three-year term is completed, the group shall elect a representative to serve a new three-year term.

Board Members Responsibilities

23. Board members have the responsibility to:
 - 23.1. act without favour towards any individual or organisation
 - 23.2. serve without seeking personal gain or preferment
 - 23.3. promote and abide by the AFFSAB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
 - 23.4. declare interests or prior knowledge where relevant to specific AFFSAB business and withdraw from involvement in matters where a conflict of interest may arise
 - 23.5. be open about decisions and actions on behalf of the Board, restricting information only where it is identified as confidential while respecting the privacy of registrants
 - 23.6. not discriminate on grounds including of race, beliefs, gender, language, sexuality, social status, age, lifestyle or political persuasion

- 23.7. distinguish clearly between personal views and those of AFFSAB
- 23.8. promote and support AFFSAB principles by leadership and example.

Board Meetings

- 24. In respect to Board meetings:
 - 24.1. all meetings will be chaired by the Director of ANZPAA NIFS or their nominated proxy
 - 24.2. where the Chair (and proxy) is unable to attend, the Board will elect a Chair from the members of the Board in attendance
 - 24.3. meetings will be held at least once a year, generally at the ANZPAA offices in Melbourne, for the duration of one business day
 - 24.4. members unable to attend will nominate a proxy for approval by the AFFSAB Chair. The proxy should be a representative of the group or discipline the individual represents
 - 24.5. Board members may nominate and forward agenda items to the Director of ANZPAA NIFS (Chair) no later than close of business ten working days prior to the next scheduled meeting. The nomination should include any resources, papers or additional supporting documentation. The agenda shall be issued to all members no less than five working days before the meeting
 - 24.6. a quorum will comprise of four full non-proxy members
 - 24.7. conflict of interest declarations will be called for at the beginning of each meeting. Any perceived conflict of interest shall be declared, documented and taken into consideration for the discussion of agenda item(s)
 - 24.8. the Board will review and consider the following on an annual basis:
 - 24.8.1. actions from previous meetings and reviews
 - 24.8.2. grievances and complaints
 - 24.8.3. feedback from applicants, candidates and the SAG/SWG groups
 - 24.8.4. opportunities for improvement
 - 24.8.5. AFFSAB procedures, including the Policy and Processes for Certification document.
 - 24.9. meeting minutes and action items will be recorded and distributed to all members. A yearly report is provided to ANZFEC regarding the activities and progress of AFFSAB
 - 24.10. meeting agendas and minutes are stored electronically for a period of seven years.

Quality Equivalency Panel

- 25. When required, the Board may convene a sub-committee to make recommendations on the equivalency of education and training programs, against the current pre-requisite criteria at section 48 – 49, and ability to meet AFFSAB requirements. The sub-committee shall be comprised of:
 - 25.1. the AFFSAB Board education representative (to assess educational equivalency)
 - 25.2. the relevant AFFSAB Board discipline representative (to assess discipline technical requirements and standards)
 - 25.3. another AFFSAB Board discipline representative (to assess equivalency of technical requirements and standards between disciplines).

26. Applications for equivalency assessment may be submitted by the applicant or the head of an organisation, shall be addressed to the AFFSAB Board Chair and sent to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au or the following postal address.
Chair
Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board
Level 6, Tower 3, World Trade Centre
637 Flinders Street
Docklands, VIC 3008
27. The sub-committee members shall assess the application (paper based or via an assessment visit) within 40 business days of receiving the relevant documentation.
28. Each sub-committee member will develop a report supporting their opinion and assessment. If equivalency is not supported, specific reasons and actions required to reach equivalency, should be provided.
29. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached by the sub-committee members, the individual or head of organisation shall be notified and provided an opportunity to submit further information for consideration.
30. The Board Chair is responsible for reviewing the reports and approving the sub-committee recommendation.
31. The individual or organisational head will be notified of the outcome within ten business days of a decision being reached.

Administration

32. The management and secretariat functions of AFFSAB are undertaken by ANZPAA NIFS.
33. All AFFSAB forms are approved by the AFFSAB Chair after consultation with the Board and prior to publication.
34. The Policy and Processes for Certification document, and associated AFFSAB forms, are approved by the AFFSAB Board and are reviewed yearly to ensure they are current and fit for purpose. Additional reviews may be completed if deemed necessary by the Board.
35. The current version of all forms and documents are available on the ANZPAA NIFS website. The use of obsolete documents will not be accepted.
36. An AFFSAB register of experts and assessors containing their details, certification and recertification dates shall be maintained. Personal contact information is restricted. The AFFSAB register is updated as required.
37. All time frames listed in this document may be extended, if necessary, by the AFFSAB Chair.

Record Retention

38. All records are confidential.
39. All official records including but not limited to the grievance request, written communication and decisions and resolutions related to the grievance will be included in the candidate's file and retained by AFFSAB.
40. Any change to certification status will be updated in the appropriate certification register.

Communication

41. AFFSAB communication occurs via the following channels:
 - 41.1. ANZPAA NIFS Website
 - 41.2. ANZPAA NIFS Newsletter – The Forensic Exhibit
 - 41.3. SAG/SWG annual meetings
 - 41.4. email distribution lists.
42. The Policy and Processes for Certification document and all AFFSAB Forms are available on the ANZPAA NIFS website at <http://www.anzpaa.org.au/forensic-science/resources/AFFSAB>. All versions are current and are updated as necessary.
43. AFFSAB announcements are published in the ANZPAA NIFS quarterly newsletter. Requests for receipt of this newsletter should be sent to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.
44. The SAG/SWG endorsed discipline representatives are responsible for providing updates and feedback from the SAG/SWG to the Board and changes from the Board to the SAG/SWGs.
45. An AFFSAB update is provided (standing agenda item) at each of the relevant SWG/SAG annual meetings by the SAG/SWG endorsed discipline representative. In the event that the representative is unavailable, an ANZPAA NIFS representative shall provide the update in their place.
46. AFFSAB groups (Board Members, Assessors and Experts) may communicate via the appropriate email distribution list. Access to the distribution list is provided upon certification, recognition as an assessor or appointment to the Board.
47. Each jurisdiction will nominate one individual to be the primary AFFSAB contact. A jurisdiction may also nominate discipline specific contacts, who may be contacted for discipline specific technical issues, if required.

AFFSAB Initial Certification

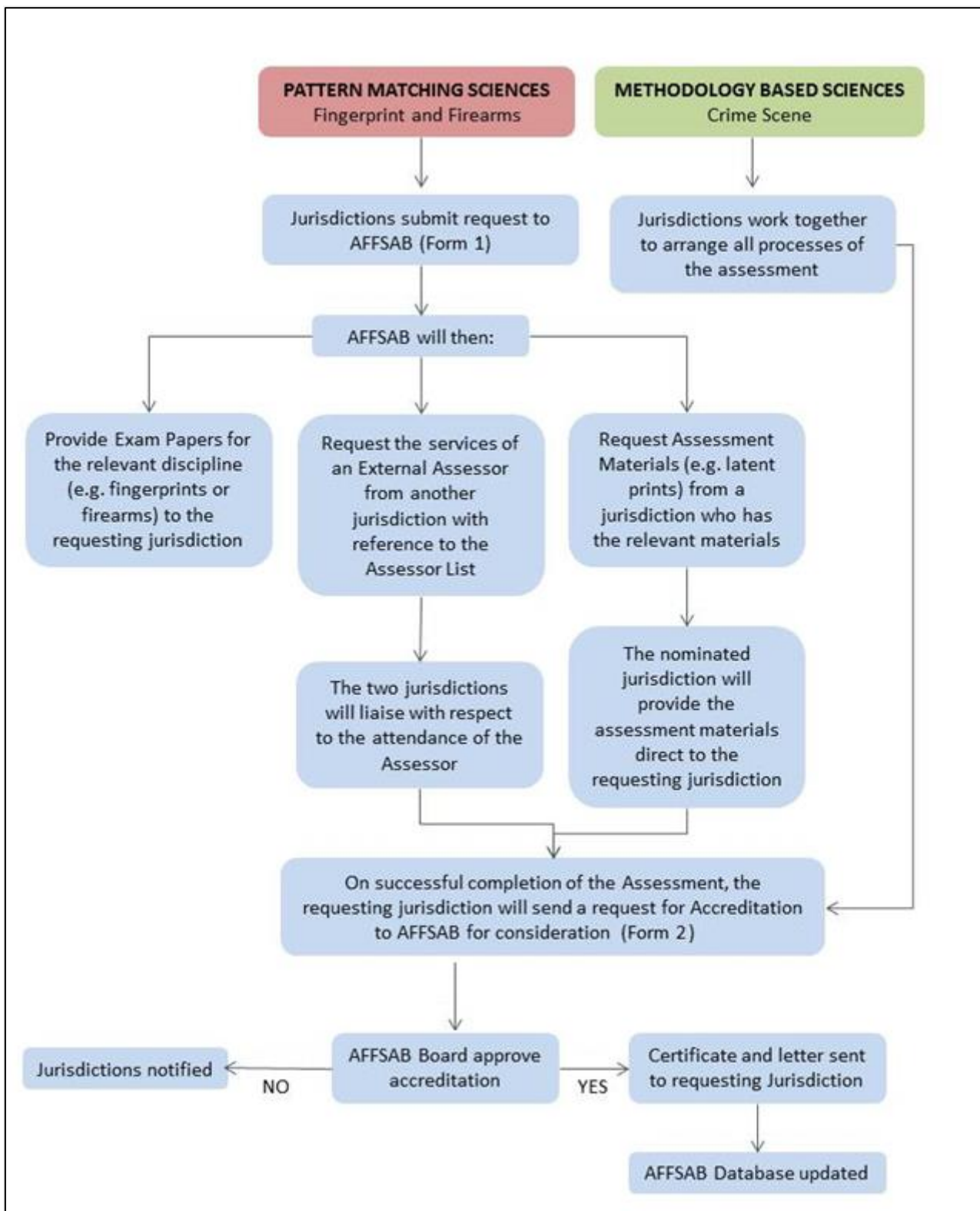
Pre-requisite Criteria for AFFSAB Certification

48. In order to apply for certification, applicants from all disciplines must satisfy the following criteria:
 - 48.1. Achievement and knowledge of AFFSAB assessment requirements.
 - 48.2. A minimum of four years' experience in analysing major/serious and complex crime and incidents prior to applying for certification.
 - 48.3. A Police Training Package Graduate Certificate relevant to the discipline or equivalent¹ (see Appendix B).
 - 48.4. Provision of a supporting statement from an applicant's supervisor outlining the applicant's experience, training and competence in the relevant discipline.
 - 48.5. Recommendation for AFFSAB assessment by the head of the organisation by way of signature on Form 1, Application for AFFSAB Certification.
49. Crime Scene Investigators who (by way of job description) are not authorised to lead major or serious crime incidents as the responsible reporting forensic case officer (including homicide, sexual assaults, suspicious deaths and clandestine laboratory/drug investigations), or only examine volume crime scenes, are not included within the definition of 'crime scene investigator' for the purposes of AFFSAB certification.

¹ Equivalence shall be assessed by the AFFSAB Quality Equivalency Panel and is considered as:

1. Training developed in line with the relevant Graduate Certificate or the ANZPAA Education and Training Guideline OR
2. Relevant degree and workplace training mapped to the relevant Graduate Certificate or ANZPAA Education and Training Guideline

Flowchart for AFFSAB Certification



AFFSAB Certification Application Process

50. Applicants seeking certification will be required to meet AFFSAB assessment requirements. These are to participate in a process to assess their skills and knowledge by way of practical, written and oral assessment.
51. Applications for AFFSAB assessment should be received by AFFSAB three months prior to assessment. AFFSAB will then:
 - forward theory papers to the nominated contact
 - nominate an external assessor with regard to distributing the assessment load fairly amongst all jurisdictions, and request that the external assessor's jurisdiction provides test materials (firearms) or latent test (fingerprints) for the assessment (**Form 1 – see Appendix A**)
 - request that test materials (firearms) or latent test (fingerprints) are forwarded directly to the nominated contact in the applicant's jurisdiction.
52. There will be two assessors. For Fingerprints and Firearms one will be nominated by the jurisdiction and the other will be an external assessor nominated by AFFSAB. For Crime Scene Investigation the assessment panel will consist of three assessors, two nominated by the jurisdiction and one external assessor from a different jurisdiction.
53. The assessors will be AFFSAB certified examiners and approved by the Board. At least one of the discipline-specific assessors will be a competent (qualified) workplace assessor. Where this is not possible, a qualified workplace assessor must be engaged as part of the assessment process.
54. All arrangements for the attendance of the external assessor will be made by, and costs met by, the hosting jurisdiction.
55. The nominated external assessor need only visit the jurisdiction to attend and participate in the oral examination (moot court or interview panel), consult with the internal assessor on the other parts of the examination, and provide feedback to applicants.
56. Written examinations will be forwarded to nominated assessors and can be marked in the assessors' home jurisdiction.
57. AFFSAB will be advised in writing of the results by the relevant organisational head following a recommendation from the assessors that an applicant is competent or not yet competent in all aspects of the assessment, and that he/she be considered for certification where appropriate (**Form 2**).

Fingerprint Examiner Assessment

Examination Procedure

Theory

58. Applicants will undertake two written theory examinations with subjects covering the following:

Part A	Part B
History	Crime Scene Investigation
Skin and Fingerprint Physiology	Latent development techniques and associated photography
Principles of Comparison	Deceased
Classification Systems	Forgeries/fabrications
Latent Fingerprints	Identification standards
	Legal precedent (case law)
	Fingerprint evidence/court
	Age of latent fingerprints
	Fingerprint information systems

59. Each examination will include questions and answers from the AFFSAB examination database, in groupings of multiple choices and short and long answer questions. Questions and answers will be reviewed every two years to ensure continuing relevance of material.
60. Completed theory papers are to be copied, the original retained, and a copy posted to the external assessor. After marking they will be sent to AFFSAB to retain in the applicant's file.
61. The theory examinations will be marked independently by the internal and the AFFSAB nominated external assessor, who will receive a copy of the completed examination in his/her own jurisdiction for marking (pass mark of 75%).

Practical

62. Each applicant will be required to undertake a comparison test of latent impressions against known impressions. The test requires each applicant to achieve 100% accuracy.
63. The test can be undertaken over five days each of eight hours' duration, not necessarily consecutive.
64. The completed latent comparison test is assessed by the internal assessor and is retained for examination by the 'external' assessor when he/she attends the relevant jurisdiction for the moot court or interview panel.
65. The latent impressions will be retained until the assessment period has passed. They will then be returned back to the jurisdiction of origin.
66. Latent impressions used in any re-assessment, shall be different to those used in the previous assessment.
67. An applicant's failure to demonstrate competence in the latent test, or failure to pass either of the theory examinations, will prevent the applicant undergoing the oral assessment. In this event, the external assessor is to be notified forthwith and arrangements made to cancel attendance.

68. The applicant may be advised to reapply for assessment after providing evidence that any identified deficiency has been overcome.

Oral

69. The moot court or interview panel will be carried out with the officer-in-charge of the Fingerprint Unit or their nominated representative as the Chair. Assessors may question the examinee and introduce other variations involving extra persons in the process to simulate reality.

70. The court process will encompass an element of oral examination generally and may be videotaped for feedback purposes. The final result is determined by agreement between the assessors. Disputed results will be referred to the Board for resolution.

71. The same external assessor will be engaged for the entire assessment process.

Firearm Examiner Assessment

Examination Procedure

Theory

72. Each applicant will be required to pass a written examination covering theoretical and technical aspects of forensic firearms examination and/or which may reasonably be expected to be asked in courts of law. The questions and answers in the examination will be drawn from the national training program and maintained in an AFFSAB database, which will be reviewed periodically. The responsibility for ensuring the manner in which these tests are completed rests with the internal assessor.

73. The theory examinations will be marked independently by the internal and the nominated external assessor who will receive a copy of the completed examination in his/her own jurisdiction for marking (pass mark 75%).

Practical

74. Each applicant is required to be assessed as competent in the identification of discharged cartridge cases and projectiles. The test materials will include:

- Test projectiles fired from ten consecutively manufactured barrels and fifteen questioned projectiles for comparison. The examination must be completed in ten hours (not necessarily in one session), with 100% accuracy (identification or elimination).
- Test cartridge cases fired from at least five guns of the same make and model and ten questioned cartridge cases for comparison. The examination must be completed in five hours (not necessarily in one session), with 100% accuracy.

75. The responsibility for ensuring that these tests are completed individually rests with the internal assessor.

76. Differences (if any) in marking between the internal and external assessor will be moderated in the final overall assessment evaluation.

77. Test materials used in any reassessment shall be different to those used in the previous assessment.

78. An applicant's failure to demonstrate competence in the practical assessment, or failure to pass the theory examination, will prevent the applicant undergoing the oral assessment. In this event, the external assessor is to be notified forthwith and arrangements made to cancel attendance.

79. The applicant may be advised to reapply for assessment after providing evidence that any identified deficiency has been overcome.

Oral Examination

80. The oral examination will take the form of moot court or interview panel where applicants will be required to submit three case files. Case files selected should demonstrate the applicant's competence in firearm identification, range determination, firearm function and safety testing, and wound ballistics. Applicants will be required to provide evidence of expertise, present their findings in relation to the case files, and answer questions regarding their findings.
81. The 'internal' assessor will review the assessment in consultation with the 'external' assessor and make a recommendation to the head of the relevant organisation. The same external assessor will be engaged for the entire assessment process.

Crime Scene Investigator Assessment

Examination Procedure

82. The three phases will be completed within one day, where possible.
83. Where an applicant has failed to meet the required standard in any of the three assessment areas they will be deemed to have failed. For the applicant to achieve AFFSAB certification they will be required to repeat the assessment at a future sitting and complete the entire process.

Theory/Written

84. The purpose of the theory/written phase is to assess the applicants' skills in recording accurate information in relation to scene examination and exhibit collection. The applicant will be given the opportunity to record notes during the practical phase and will have access to these notes for the written exercise.
85. The written exercise will require the applicant to submit a preformatted report to the committee outlining why they notionally collected the exhibits they did during phase one, what forensic analysis they would subject the exhibits to, the sequencing of the forensic analysis and the anticipated benefits.

Practical

86. The purpose of the practical phase is to assess the applicant's technical knowledge, scene examination and management skills. The applicant will navigate through a computer interactive medium, such as ISRAPS or Panoscan that have been previously recorded at actual scenes of major or serious crimes.
87. The applicant will have 30 minutes to familiarise themselves with the scene and then one hour to identify the actions they would undertake, including initial response and the technical processing of evidence within that scene. The applicant will provide their verbal response to the assessment team who will be present in the room. The assessors will record the responses offered by the applicant.

Oral

88. The oral assessment will be in the form of a review where the applicant will submit copies of three finalised cases that are of a complex nature, covering work undertaken by them relating to major/serious crime or incidents. The cases will be submitted to the assessment panel two months prior to sitting the assessment.
89. The panel will select one case for use during the review process which is anticipated to take approximately one hour. The applicant will receive notice prior to attending the assessment as to which brief the committee has selected. The applicant will only submit the forensic component of the brief of evidence, and the assessment will be limited to the forensic aspect only.

Notification of Results

90. AFFSAB will be advised in writing of the results by the head of the relevant organisation following a recommendation from the assessors that an applicant is competent or not yet competent in all aspects of the assessment, and that he/she be considered for certification where appropriate (**Form 2**).

AFFSAB Recertification

Annual Recertification

91. Each jurisdiction shall on an annual basis submit their applications for recertification of each of their practitioners (**Form 3**). Recertification becomes due on 1 January of the year recertification is being sought.
92. Applications for yearly recertification (**Form 3**) should be addressed to the AFFSAB Board Chair and sent to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au or the following postal address:
Chair
Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board
Level 6, Tower 3, World Trade Centre
637 Flinders Street
Docklands, VIC 3008
93. The Board may request clarification or further information from the applicant or the relevant organisational head, if required.
94. Where a practitioner is not applying for recertification, a report detailing the circumstances should be provided with the application for yearly recertification form.
95. Certification shall be maintained by verification from the head of the relevant organisation that each person certified has maintained relevant competency, contemporary subject knowledge and successfully completed a proficiency test as determined by the jurisdiction.
96. Proficiency tests for fingerprints and ballistics should be from a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) listed provider (for example, CTS) and for crime scene the preferred test is After the Fact. Proficiency tests used for justification of annual recertification should be either an external test from the previous year, or an internal test. The results of successfully passing a proficiency test can only be used for recertification justification once; a new test must be performed each year.
97. The Board Chair is responsible for reviewing AFFSAB recertification applications and will determine the suitability of an application for AFFSAB recertification within 40 business days of receiving the application.
98. The head of the relevant organisation will be notified of the outcome within ten business days of a decision being reached.
99. AFFSAB will send a letter to all facilities on April 1 each year as a reminder of those who have not been re-certified. The letter will allow for a one-month response time.
100. Practitioners that received their initial certification in the 6 months prior to 1 January (i.e prior to 1 July), are not required to apply for annual recertification the following year.
101. Proficiency tests submitted for the purpose of five-yearly recertification shall have been completed in the 12 months prior to the date of submission, with exception of career breaks (see section 113). Any request for an exception shall be made with the support of practitioner's supervisor.

Five-yearly Recertification

102. Every five years' practitioners are required to undergo a more rigorous assessment to ensure they remain contemporary within their area of expertise for the short, medium and long term. In addition to the normal annual requirements, the examiner must demonstrate currency and professional

development in the discipline by accumulating 100 points of professional development as outlined in Form 4.

103. Applicants are only required to complete details in the development record. Supporting documentation does not need to be submitted with the form. The applicant's supervisor and the head of the organisation which they are employed, must endorse that the information is true and correct and recommend the applicant for recertification.
104. On an ad hoc basis AFFSAB may call for supporting documentation to be submitted by the jurisdiction for auditing purposes and to ensure robustness of the process.
105. AFFSAB will notify facilities in June of each year which AFFSAB certified members have reached their five-yearly recertification requirement. The process dates will be the same as for the annual recertification process.
106. Applications for five-yearly recertification (**Form 4**) should be addressed to the AFFSAB Board Chair and sent by the applicant to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au or the following postal address by the end of January of the relevant year.
Chair
Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board
Level 6, Tower 3, World Trade Centre
637 Flinders Street
Docklands, VIC 3008
107. The Board may request clarification or further information from the applicant or the relevant organisational head, if required.
108. Where a practitioner is not applying for recertification, a report detailing the circumstances should be provided with the application for five-yearly recertification form.
109. The Board Chair is responsible for reviewing AFFSAB recertification applications and will determine the suitability of an application for AFFSAB recertification within 40 business days of receiving the application.
110. The applicant and the head of the relevant organisation will be notified of the outcome within ten business days of the decision being made.
111. AFFSAB will send a letter to all facilities on April 1 each year as a reminder of those who have not been recertified. The letter will allow for a one-month response time.
112. Proficiency tests submitted for the purpose of five-yearly recertification shall have been completed in the 12 months prior to the date of submission, with exception of career breaks (see section 113). Any request for an exception shall be made with the support of practitioner's supervisor.

Professional Breaks and Certification

113. For certified practitioners who have extended periods of absence from the work place, the table below outlines the requirements for returning to operational duties.

Period of Absence	Policy
Less than two years absence	As proficiency assessments are typically valid for one year, the practitioner may simply return to duties if their certification with AFFSAB remains current. Should an assessment have lapsed, then the practitioner shall immediately sit the relevant proficiency test. Upon successful completion, the jurisdiction shall immediately complete the standard recertification form and submit it to AFFSAB. Once received the practitioner's certification will be updated to show the continuity of the their certification.
Between two and five years absence	<p>It will be the responsibility of the jurisdiction to evaluate the practitioner's skills and knowledge, particularly relating to changes in practices, processes and procedures during the period of absence. The jurisdiction will then implement an appropriate training program to address any identified deficiencies. This program should culminate in a normal proficiency test as a minimum.</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the proficiency test the jurisdiction should submit a detailed report to AFFSAB outlining the period of absence, the training undertaken upon return and the details of the successful proficiency test. AFFSAB may then reinstate the practitioner's certification.</p>
Greater than five years absence	<p>It is the responsibility of the jurisdiction to evaluate the practitioner's skills and knowledge, particularly relating to changes in practices, processes and procedures during the period of absence. The jurisdiction will then implement an appropriate training program to address any identified deficiencies. This program should culminate in a normal proficiency test as a minimum.</p> <p>To regain certification, the practitioner shall re-sit the full AFFSAB assessment process relevant to their discipline. This should be arranged by the jurisdiction in the same way that new candidates are nominated and assessed. The person must meet all the eligibility criteria that normally applies for a new candidate. The practitioner's certification status will recommence from the date that the re-assessments are processed by AFFSAB.</p>

Revocation of Certification

114. The Board may revoke an individual's certification on written advice from the head of the relevant organisation.

115. The Board may from time to time, by notice in writing to any certified person, call upon such person to show cause as to why their certification should not be cancelled. This will be based upon their failure to maintain any necessary competence (or competences) because they are no longer engaged in study or work consistent with certification. Such action will be in full consultation with the relevant organisational head.

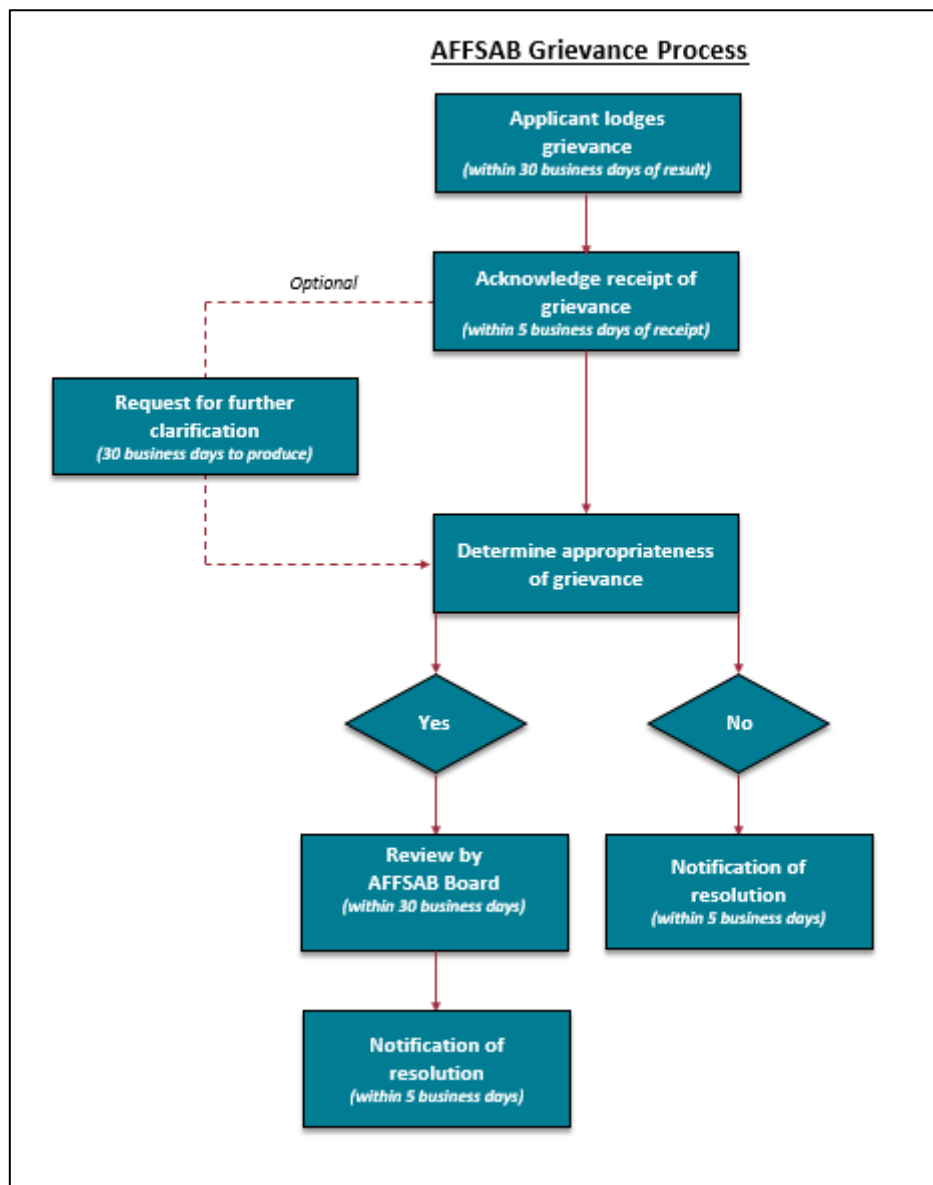
Certification Appeals and Grievance Process

AFFSAB will accept requests for reconsideration, challenge or appeal in relation to certification, recertification or assessor status and is committed to resolving these matters in a fair, accurate and timely manner. The submission, investigation and decision on appeals shall not result in discriminatory action against the candidate from the Board.

General Considerations

116. The grievance process provides candidates with the ability to:
- 116.1. request re-scoring of assessments
 - 116.2. request reconsideration of certification or assessor status
 - 116.3. challenge or appeal examination questions, scores or procedure
 - 116.4. evaluate the accuracy of Proficiency Tests
 - 116.5. challenge one or more assessors' credentials, impartiality or conflict of interest management
 - 116.6. seek special considerations.
117. Notice of an applicant's opportunity to lodge a grievance is provided in writing or verbally at the beginning of each examination.
118. The Board are responsible for addressing all grievances related to certification, recertification or recognition as an assessor.
119. The Board will strive to maintain confidentiality for all grievance processes and outcomes. All individuals involved in a grievance, including the candidate, will also maintain confidentiality. If necessary, the candidate may engage a support person to assist them throughout the process however, the support person is also required to maintain confidentiality. Any breaches of confidentiality will be dealt with by the Board.
120. Jurisdictional policies such as termination or promotion cannot be used as grounds for an AFFSAB appeal.
121. Any opportunities for improvement observed during the grievance process may inform subsequent iterations of the certification process.
122. A grievance may be withdrawn at any stage shall the candidate gain additional information and no longer wish to proceed with their request.

Grievance/Appeal Procedure



123. All grievances shall be addressed in writing to the AFFSAB Board Chair and sent via email to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au or to the following postal address along with any supporting evidence or documentation.

Chair

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Docklands, VIC 3008

124. All requests must be date stamped/postmarked within 30 business days of the date the candidate obtained written confirmation of their certification result. Grievances received after this date will not be considered.

125. The candidate must clearly articulate their point of challenge so that the Board can fully investigate their request.

126. The Board will acknowledge receipt of a grievance via email within five business days of receiving the request.
127. The Board may request clarification or further information from the candidate, if required, in order to make an informed decision. The candidate will have 30 business days from the date postmarked on the request to produce the information. If the requested information is not provided within the specific time frame, the request will be denied.
128. The Board Chair will initially determine whether the grievance is suitable for progression to the Board for consideration.
129. If a Board Member is involved in a grievance, or a conflict of interest arises during the review process, they will be withdrawn from any further involvement.
130. In the event the grievance relates to the assessment process, an external assessor from a different jurisdiction (to the original assessment) will be appointed by the Board to review and re-score the assessment. The results of the re-assessment will be provided to the Board for review.
131. The Board will review the case and come to a resolution within 30 business days of them receiving the grievance and any further supporting documentation. Previous grievance resolutions may be used to inform current or future cases.
132. The candidate will be notified of the resolution within five business days of the Board reaching a resolution.
133. During the grievance process, the original certification or revocation decision will remain in place. If the appeal is successful, the certification status will be reinstated.
134. The decisions of the Board are final and are not subject to further appeals.

AFFSAB Assessors

Application and Approval Process

135. Applicants seeking recognition as an AFFSAB assessor are required to meet the eligibility criteria prior to submitting their application.
136. Applications for recognition as an AFFSAB assessor (**Form 5**) should be addressed to the AFFSAB Board Chair and sent by the applicant to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au or the following postal address along with any supporting documentation.
- Chair
Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board
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637 Flinders Street
Docklands, VIC 3008
137. The Board may request clarification or further information from the applicant or the relevant organisational head, if required.
138. AFFSAB will communicate with the applicant via email.
139. The Board Chair will determine the suitability of an application for recognition as an AFFSAB assessor within ten business days of receiving the application and all supporting documentation.
140. If the applicant doesn't meet the eligibility criteria for recognition as an AFFSAB assessor, the application will be denied and notification will be provided to the individual, supervisor and the relevant organisational head within five business days of the decision being reached.
141. The applicant may re-apply as soon as they meet the eligibility criteria.
142. Appointed assessors shall conduct one AFFSAB internal assessment under the supervision of an experienced AFFSAB assessor from their agency prior to being eligible to perform external AFFSAB assessments. Details of these assessments, including the marking sheets and assessor comment shall be retained by AFFSAB.
143. To maintain knowledge of the AFFSAB Assessment process, AFFSAB assessors shall conduct at least one AFFSAB assessment every five years, as either an internal or external assessor. Exceptions may be approved by the Board in circumstances where the assessor has been on extended leave or insufficient assessments have been conducted by AFFSAB over the five-year period. A formal request for special considerations, supported by the relevant Organisational Head, should be sent via email to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.

Eligibility Criteria

144. To be eligible to apply for recognition as an AFFSAB assessor, practitioners shall have met the following criteria:
- 144.1. The practitioner shall be AFFSAB certified, and have held this certification for a minimum of two years, in the discipline that they are requesting recognition as an AFFSAB assessor.
- 144.2. The practitioner shall have as a minimum a Certificate IV in training and assessment².

² Current assessors will be grandfathered and permitted to maintain their assessor status for a period of two years, at which time they will be required to demonstrate they comply with section 144.2, or their status will be revoked.

144.3. The practitioner shall complete any ongoing or refresher training as required by an external education provider to maintain their qualification obtained under section 144.2.

144.4. The practitioner shall maintain competency and complete any ongoing AFFSAB certification requirements for their discipline.

Revocation of AFFSAB Assessor Status

145. The Board shall revoke an individual's status as an AFFSAB assessor if they fail to complete any ongoing AFFSAB certification requirements for their disciplines.

146. The Board may also revoke an individual's status as an AFFSAB assessor on written advice from the individual's head of organisation.

147. The Board may from time to time, by notice in writing to any AFFSAB assessor, call upon such person to show cause as to why their recognition as an assessor should not be revoked. This will be based upon their failure to maintain any necessary competence (or competences) due to a change in position, roles or function. Such action will be in full consultation with the relevant head of organisation. Refer to section 144 for the AFFSAB assessor's eligibility criteria.

148. An AFFSAB assessor may at any time choose to have their status as an AFFSAB assessor revoked. A request, noted by the individual's organisational head, should be sent via email to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au or the following postal address.

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Conflict of interest

Potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed to ANZPAA NIFS secretariat when considering whether to accept an invitation to participate in an assessment.

Confidentiality

Assessors will strive to maintain confidentiality for all assessment processes and outcomes. Any breaches of confidentiality will be dealt with by the Board.

AFFSAB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

In order to promote professional conduct by its Applicants, Experts and Assessors, the following constitutes the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct which must be adhered to in order to apply for, obtain and maintain AFFSAB certification. The code encompasses work completed by the above individuals, as well as to the extent possible, work supervised by them. Any violations of the code will be referred to the Board and the relevant organisational head.

AFFSAB Applicants, Experts and Assessors shall:

1. comply with any workplace standards, code of conducts or legislation relevant to their jurisdiction
2. act professionally and impartially without unlawful discrimination
3. not engage in fraudulent, dishonest behaviour or professional misconduct
4. not disclose any confidential information without specific consent from the appropriate parties
5. disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest
6. conduct examination and analysis in a manner appropriate to the nature of the case ensuring evidential integrity
7. not knowingly or deliberately misrepresent, exaggerate or embellish their qualifications, training, experience or certification status
8. continue to engage in professional development and actively assist and encourage their colleagues and peers to do likewise
9. not disclose particulars of the certification assessment outside official communication with the Board, Assessors or their organisational head
10. report any known breaches of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct by another Applicant, Expert or Assessor to the Board
11. immediately notify the Board of any matter which may impact an individual's ability to fulfil certification of professional conduct requirements
12. discontinue use of all claims to AFFSAB certification upon certification suspension or withdrawal and return any AFFSAB issued certificates
13. refrain from issuing public statements that may appear to represent the position of AFFSAB without obtaining specific authority from the Board
14. not use the AFFSAB logo without prior authorisation by the Board
15. not use certification in a manner which may bring AFFSAB into disrepute or make misleading or false statements regarding certification.

Appendix A – Schedule of Forms

AFFSAB Form Name	Form Number
Application for AFFSAB Certification	Form 1
Notification of AFFSAB Assessment Results and Recommendation for Certification	Form 2
Application for Annual Recertification	Form 3
Application for Five-yearly Recertification	Form 4
Application for Recognition as an AFFSAB Assessor	Form 5

Appendix B – Changes to Landscape Overtime

AFFSAB Stated Prerequisite Qualification/Education and Training Highlighted in **BOLD**

FORENSIC AREA	QUALIFICATIONS		EDUCATION AND TRAINING PRODUCTS	
	Superseded	Current	Current	Current
	Public Safety Training Package (PUA 12)	Police Training Package (PoITP)	ANZPAA Education and Training Guidelines	Other training
Forensic Investigation	Diploma of Public Safety (Forensic Investigation) Advanced Diploma of Public Safety (Forensic Investigation)	Diploma of Forensic Investigation (POL 54115) Advanced Diploma of Forensic Investigation (POL 64115)	Forensic Investigation	Bachelor of Forensic Science (Crime Scene Examination) - CIT
Crime Scene Investigation	Vocational Graduate Certificate of Public Safety (Crime Scene Investigation)	Graduate Certificate in Crime Scene Investigation (POL 84315)	Crime Scene Investigation	N/A
Fingerprints	Vocational Graduate Certificate of Public Safety (Fingerprint Investigation)	Graduate Certificate in Forensic Fingerprint Investigation (POL 84215)	Forensic Fingerprint Investigation	N/A
Ballistics	Vocational Graduate Certificate of Public Safety (Forensic Firearm Examination)	Graduate Certificate in Forensic Firearm Examination (POL 84115)	Forensic Firearm Examination	National Training Curriculum (NTC) for Firearm Examiners*

*The NTC was reviewed and streamlined in 2015. It remains equivalent to the old NTC.

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AFFSAB is facilitated and managed by ANZPAA NIFS.