



Australasian Forensic Science Assessment Body

Policy and Processes for Certification

June 2020

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Australasian Forensic Science Assessment Body

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. Operating under the Council, NFAB conducted competency assessments and accredited 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.
3. AFFSAB operated under the auspices of APPSC until it was amalgamated into the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) in 2007. In 2008, the National Institute of Forensic Science (NIFS) was integrated into ANZPAA. ANZPAA NIFS assumed management and secretariat functions of AFFSAB in 2009.
4. A major review of AFFSAB was conducted between 2017 and 2019. As part of this review, in September 2018, AFFSAB was renamed the Australasian Forensic Science Assessment Body (AFSAB), providing a better reflection of the program as a certification and assessment body.
5. AFSAB certifies Fingerprint Examiners, Firearm Examiners and Crime Scene Investigators in Australia.

Mission

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

Purpose and Function

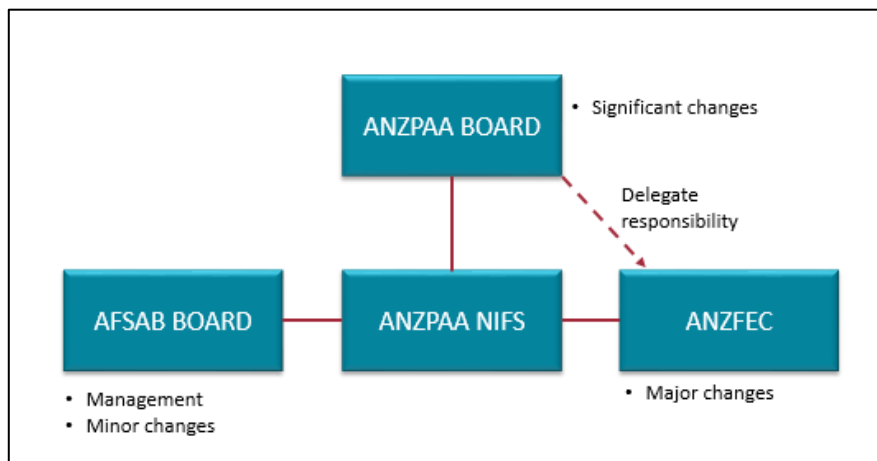
7. AFSAB is an independent body that certifies individuals to an agreed professional standard. The AFSAB assessment process is used to determine competency to the AFSAB requirements and is separate to any jurisdictional education and training program or competency determination.
8. AFSAB promotes and 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 AFSAB:
 - 8.1. establishes certification policy and processes
 - 8.2. determines outcomes of applications received
 - 8.3. maintains a register of certified practitioners and determines policy on its content, publication and access

- 8.4. considers policy matters including certification or decertification of practitioners, quality equivalences, grievances and appeals
 - 8.5. promotes an ethical standard of practice for certified practitioners (see AFSAB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct)
 - 8.6. maintains a communication strategy to keep Australasian forensic practitioners apprised of AFSAB related developments
 - 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 Groups (SAG).
9. AFSAB has been aligned to the International Organization of Standardization 17024:2012, *Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certifications of persons*, where possible.
 10. Where the term competency is used in this document, it refers to the requirements set by the AFSAB certification process established through demonstrable experience and a standardised assessment process.

Organisation and Management

Governance

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



12. The ANZPAA Board is responsible for significant changes to AFSAB, in particular those changes that have a potential to create industrial issues, are high risk, or impact policing.
13. The expansion or reduction in scope of certification is an authority held by the ANZPAA Board.
14. 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.
15. The AFSAB Board is responsible for decisions relating to certification, including certification, recertification and decertification, as well as minor changes to processes.
16. The management of AFSAB is the remit of the AFSAB Board.
17. An update on the activities of AFSAB is contained in the ANZPAA NIFS Quarterly Report which is provided to ANZFEC and the ANZPAA Board.

ANZFEC Member Responsibilities

18. ANZFEC members are responsible for governing the use of AFSAB certification in their jurisdiction. This includes providing recommendations and support for AFSAB activities, certification and recertification.
19. ANZFEC members may delegate their AFSAB responsibilities to no more than two (2) appropriate individuals within their organisation. Delegation shall not be to multiple people for one discipline.
20. Non-ANZFEC member agencies shall delegate an appropriate member of their organisation to assume the responsibilities of ANZFEC members for their agency.
21. All requests to delegate responsibilities shall be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and sent by the nominating ANZFEC member to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.

22. Where the term ANZFEC member is used in this policy or AFSAB related forms, it also refers to the ANZFEC members AFSAB approved delegate, or Non-ANZFEC agencies approved delegate.

Board Composition

23. The Board is comprised 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)
Fingerprint Representative	Three-year appointment (eligible for second term)
Firearm Representative	Three-year appointment (eligible for second term)
ANZPAA NIFS Representative (ex officio)	Three-year appointment (eligible for further term)

24. Other than the positions of the Board Chair, Legal Representative, Education Representative and ANZPAA NIFS Representative, the Board members are elected by their respective group for a period of three years.
25. 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.
26. The ANZPAA NIFS Representative is an ex officio member of the AFSAB Board and does not hold voting rights.
27. 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.
28. The discipline representatives must be nominated by the SAG they represent, and their nomination endorsed by their ANZFEC member and the relevant SAG Chair, noted by ANZFEC and approved by the Board before commencement.
29. 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

30. Board members have the responsibility to:
- 30.1. act without favour toward any individual or organisation
 - 30.2. serve without seeking personal gain or preferment
 - 30.3. promote and abide by the AFSAB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
 - 30.4. declare interests or prior knowledge where relevant to specific AFSAB business and withdraw from involvement in matters where a conflict of interest may arise

- 30.5. 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 candidates
- 30.6. not discriminate on grounds including of race, beliefs, gender, language, sexuality, social status, age, lifestyle or political persuasion
- 30.7. distinguish clearly between personal views and those of AFSAB
- 30.8. promote and support AFSAB principles by leadership and example.

Board Meetings

31. In respect to Board meetings:
 - 31.1. all meetings will be chaired by the Director of ANZPAA NIFS or their nominated proxy
 - 31.2. where the Board Chair (and proxy) is unable to attend, the Board will elect a Chair from the members of the Board in attendance
 - 31.3. meetings will be held at least once a year, generally at the ANZPAA offices in Melbourne on the second Thursday of June, for the duration of one business day
 - 31.4. members unable to attend will nominate a proxy for approval by the AFSAB Board Chair. The proxy should be a representative of the group or discipline the individual represents
 - 31.5. Board members may nominate and forward agenda items to the Director of ANZPAA NIFS (Chair) no later than close of business ten (10) 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 (5) working days before the meeting
 - 31.6. a quorum will comprise of four (4) full non-proxy members
 - 31.7. 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)
 - 31.8. the Board will review and consider the following on an annual basis:
 - 31.8.1. actions from previous meetings and reviews
 - 31.8.2. grievances and complaints
 - 31.8.3. feedback from candidates and the SAG groups
 - 31.8.4. opportunities for improvement
 - 31.8.5. AFSAB procedures, including this Policy and Processes for Certification document.
 - 31.9. meeting minutes and action items will be recorded and distributed to all members.
 - 31.10. The ANZFEC Representative will provide an update on the activities and progress of AFSAB to ANZFEC on a yearly basis, generally at the meeting immediately following the AFSAB Annual Board Meeting.
 - 31.11. meeting agendas and minutes are stored electronically for a period of seven (7) years.

Quality Equivalency Panel

32. When required, the Board may convene a sub-committee to make recommendations on:
 - 32.1. the equivalency of an organisations education and training programs against the current pre-requisite criteria at clauses 59 – 60,
 - 32.2. the equivalence of education and training completed by an individual against the current pre-requisite criteria at clauses 59 – 60,
33. The sub-committee shall be comprised of:
 - 33.1. the AFSAB Board Education Representative (to assess educational equivalency)
 - 33.2. the relevant AFSAB Board discipline representative (to assess discipline technical requirements and standards)
 - 33.3. another AFSAB Board discipline representative (to assess equivalency of technical requirements and standards between disciplines).
34. In the event that an AFSAB Board discipline representatives has been involved in the development or delivery of the program which is being assessed for equivalency, an appropriate AFSAB certified individual will be appointed to the sub-committee by the AFSAB Chair, in their place.
35. Applications for equivalency assessment may be submitted by a candidate, an ANZFEC member or a representative of the ANZFEC member’s jurisdiction. The application should be addressed to the AFSAB Board Chair and sent to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.
36. The Quality Equivalency Panel (QEP) may request clarification or further information from the candidate, ANZFEC member or jurisdictional representative, if required.
37. The sub-committee members shall assess the application (paper based or via an assessment visit) within sixty (60) business days of receiving all relevant documentation.
38. The sub-committee will develop a report detailing their opinion and assessment. If equivalency is not supported, specific reasons and actions required to reach equivalency, should be provided.
39. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached by the sub-committee members, the candidate, ANZFEC member or jurisdictional representative shall be notified and provided with an opportunity to submit further information for consideration.
40. The AFSAB Chair is responsible for reviewing the report and approving the sub-committee recommendation.
41. The candidate, ANZFEC member or jurisdictional representative will be notified of the outcome within ten (10) business days of a decision being reached.

Administration

42. The management and secretariat functions of AFSAB shall be undertaken by ANZPAA NIFS.
43. This policy (*Policy and Processes for Certification*), and associated AFSAB forms, are available on the ANZPAA NIFS website (<http://www.anzpaa.org.au/forensic-science/resources/afsab>). They shall be reviewed yearly to ensure they are current and fit for purpose. Additional reviews may be completed if deemed necessary by the Board. Significant changes or updates shall be approved by the AFSAB Board. Minor updates may be approved by the AFSAB Chair.
44. The use of obsolete documents will not be accepted.
45. All time frames listed in this document may be extended, if necessary, by the AFSAB Chair.

Confidentiality

46. The AFSAB certification process is confidential.
47. AFSAB Information that is not publicly available through the ANZPAA NIFS website (<http://www.anzpaa.org.au/forensic-science/resources/afsab>) is restricted and covered by a Deed of Confidentiality. This includes, but is not limited to policies, documents and assessment tools (e.g. question sheets, marking criteria, practical assessment) related to the Australasian Forensic Science Assessment Body (AFSAB), or its previously named entity, Australasian Forensic Field Sciences Accreditation Board (AFFSAB) and national or jurisdictional training guidelines, procedures or methods.
48. All individuals involved in the AFSAB assessment process, including but not limited to candidates, assessors, observers and nominated jurisdictional contacts, shall sign the Deed of Confidentiality before being provided with AFSAB Information.

Record Retention

49. All records relating to AFSAB are confidential.
50. All official records related to a candidate's certification will be included in the candidate's file and retained by AFSAB.

Communication

51. AFSAB communication occurs via the following channels:
 - 51.1. ANZPAA NIFS website
 - 51.2. The Forensic Exhibit
 - 51.3. SAG meetings
 - 51.4. Email distribution lists.
52. AFSAB announcements are published in *The Forensic Exhibit*, the ANZPAA NIFS quarterly newsletter. Requests for receipt of this newsletter should be sent to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.
53. An AFSAB update is a standing agenda item for all relevant SAG face-to-face meetings. The update will be provided by the SAG endorsed discipline representative. In the event that the representative is unavailable, an ANZPAA NIFS representative shall provide the update. Updates may also be provided via teleconference.

54. The SAG endorsed discipline representatives are responsible for providing updates and feedback from the SAG to the Board and changes from the Board to the SAG.
55. AFSAB 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 AFSAB Board Approved Assessor or appointment to the Board.
56. Each jurisdiction will nominate one individual to be the primary AFSAB contact. A jurisdiction may also nominate discipline specific contacts, who may be contacted for discipline specific technical issues, if required.
57. Communication with candidates, supervisors, ANZFEC members and nominated jurisdiction regarding certification and recertification with occur via email.
58. Should contact need to be made with AFSAB via mail, the correspondence should be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and sent to the following address:

Chair

Australasian Forensic Science Assessment Body
Unit 73H
63-85 Turner Street
Port Melbourne, VIC 3207

AFSAB Initial Certification

Pre-requisite Criteria for AFSAB Certification

59. Candidates from all disciplines must satisfy the following criteria before submitting an application for AFSAB certification:
 - 59.1. Demonstrated experience in analysing major, serious or complex incidents
 - 59.2. Completion of a Police Training Package Graduate Certificate relevant to the discipline or equivalent¹ (see Appendix B)
 - 59.3. Provision of a supporting statement from their supervisor outlining the candidate's experience, training and competence in the relevant discipline
 - 59.4. Recommendation for AFSAB assessment by their ANZFEC member by way of signature on *Form 1: Application for AFSAB Certification*.
60. Crime Scene Investigators who, by way of job description, are not authorised to lead major, serious or complex 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 AFSAB certification.

¹ Equivalence shall be assessed by the AFSAB 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

AFSAB Certification Application Process

61. Candidates seeking certification shall meet the AFSAB pre-requisite criteria prior to submitting their application.
62. Applications for AFSAB Assessment (*Form 1*) should be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and sent by the candidate or nominated jurisdiction contact to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au, along with any relevant documentation, no less than three months prior to the proposed assessment dates.
63. AFSAB may request clarification or further information from the candidate, nominated jurisdiction contact or the relevant ANZFEC member, if required.
64. AFSAB will review the application and relevant documentation to ensure it meets AFSAB requirements within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the information. If all requirements are met, an information pack containing the following will be sent to the candidate:
 - 64.1. discipline specific candidate guide
 - 64.2. current Policy and Processes for Certification
 - 64.3. copy of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
 - 64.4. Deed of Confidentiality.
65. If the candidate doesn't meet the requirements for certification, their application will be denied and notification will be provided to the submitting individual within five (5) business days of the decision being made.
66. The candidate may re-apply as soon as the AFSAB requirements for certification have been achieved.
67. To obtain certification the candidate must pass the relevant discipline specific written, practical and oral assessment (in that order). (moved)
68. AFSAB recommends that the written and practical assessment be conducted at least one (1) week apart and the oral assessment be scheduled six (6) weeks after the practical assessment (see *Form 1*) if the assessment is a face-to-face meeting.
69. The relevant jurisdiction shall nominate two (2) discipline specific AFSAB Board Approved Assessors from their agency to act as internal assessors and provide the names of these assessors on the AFSAB application (*Form 1*).
70. AFSAB shall appoint an appropriate AFSAB Board Approved discipline specific assessor from a different jurisdiction to the candidates to act as an external assessor. Their details will be provided to the nominated jurisdiction contact. If an appropriate external assessor is not available on the requested assessment date(s), AFSAB will liaise with the nominated jurisdiction contact and the external assessor to identify a suitable alternative.
71. In the event a jurisdiction does not have two (2) AFSAB Board Approved Assessors available for an AFSAB assessment, they shall either:
 - 71.1. nominate one (1) discipline specific AFSAB Board Approved Assessor from their agency. AFSAB shall appoint two (2) appropriate AFSAB Board Approved discipline specific assessors
OR
 - 71.2. nominate one (1) discipline specific AFSAB Board Approved Assessor from their agency, and one (1) certified practitioner that meets the AFSAB assessor eligibility criteria, but who is not approved as an assessor by AFSAB.
72. Assessment Documents (including the assessment questions) will be provided to the nominated jurisdiction contact within three (3) business days prior to each assessment.

73. The nominated jurisdiction contact is responsible for returning the completed assessment documents to AFSAB within a timely manner following the completion of each assessment.
74. Assessment Marking Documents (including the candidate's completed assessments, marking criteria, benchmarked answers, and feedback forms) will be provided by AFSAB directly to the appointed AFSAB Board Approved Assessors for each candidate. AFSAB will provide the assessors with the Assessment Marking Documents within three (3) business days of receiving the completed assessments.
75. Each AFSAB Board Approved Assessor is responsible for independently assessing the candidate's completed assessment and returning it to AFSAB within five (5) business days of receiving the Assessment Marking documents.
76. Assessor(s) shall provide candidates with their assessment results and feedback within ten (10) business days of completing each assessment.
77. At the completion of the AFSAB Assessment Process (or partial process in the event of unsuccessful attempts), AFSAB should be notified of certification recommendations (*Form 2*) by the nominated jurisdiction contact.
78. The AFSAB Chair will review the assessment results and certification recommendation (*Form 2*) and AFSAB will notify the candidate, supervisor and the relevant ANZFEC member of the certification outcome within five (5) business days of receiving the documents.
79. All three assessments shall be completed within a two-year period. If the certification process is not completed within this time frame, the candidate will be required to re-sit all components of the assessment. Exceptions may be approved by the Board in extenuating circumstances. A formal request for special considerations, supported by the relevant ANZFEC member, should be sent via email to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.
80. A maximum of three certification attempts per assessment (written, practical and oral) is permitted per candidate within a two-year period.
81. If a candidate does not agree with an assessment result or certification recommendation, they are permitted to lodge an appeal or grievance in accordance with the *AFSAB Certification Appeals and Grievance Process*.

AFSAB Assessment Process

82. There are eight (8) core AFSAB competencies:
 - 82.1. Decision making
 - 82.2. Communication
 - 82.3. Critical thinking
 - 82.4. Problem solving
 - 82.5. Sequencing of examinations
 - 82.6. Technical knowledge
 - 82.7. Uncertainty
 - 82.8. Understanding limitations.
83. The AFSAB assessment process utilises the core AFSAB competencies as a basis for candidates to demonstrate the foundational knowledge, skills, reasoning, and abilities in tasks relevant to the operational requirements and practices, standards and contemporary issues relevant to their specific discipline.

- 84. These core competencies are assessed in light of discipline specific competencies, which represent the knowledge and skills required of an 'expert' to perform their day-to-day role (in their discipline).
- 85. The assessments incorporate both underpinning knowledge and principle sand jurisdictional processes, where applicable and appropriate.

Assessment Structure

- 86. AFSAB assessments consist of the following:

Assessment Component	Maximum Length
Written	3 hours
Practical	3 days
Oral	3 hours

- 87. Candidates should sit each assessment in the order presented in the table above.
- 88. Each assessment component shall be assessed by a panel of three (3) assessors - two (2) from the candidate's own jurisdiction and one (1) external to the jurisdiction.
- 89. Further information on the assessment process can be found in the discipline specific candidate guides which are available from the ANZPAA NIFS website (<http://www.anzpaa.org.au/forensic-science/resources/afsab>).

Unsuccessful Assessments

- 90. Failure by a candidate to demonstrate the required standard for certification in any of the three (3) assessments (written, practical or oral) will result in a failed certification attempt.
- 91. Candidates shall not attempt the next assessment in the certification process once they have failed to demonstrate competency in any one (1) assessment.
- 92. The results of any failed assessment shall be provided to AFSAB by the nominated jurisdictional contact (*Form 2*).
- 93. The AFSAB Chair will review the assessment results and certification recommendation (*Form 2*) and AFSAB will notify the candidate, supervisor and the relevant ANZFEC member of the certification outcome within five (5) business days of receiving the documents.
- 94. A candidate may re-apply for certification, at the discretion of the relevant jurisdiction, but no sooner than one (1) month after receiving notification from AFSAB of a failed certification attempt. The application should be submitted as per the *AFSAB Application Process*. The three (3) month minimal notification period required by AFSAB on initial application may be waived in this instance. The date of the final assessment should be within two years of the original application date.
- 95. On re-applying, recognition of previous partial assessment completion may be sought by the candidate for any assessment passed during the previous failed certification attempt.

Recognition of Certification by a Body other than AFSAB

96. A candidate that is certified by another equivalent independent certification board other than AFSAB may submit a request to have the assessments undertaken to obtain their certification recognised as equivalent to one or more of the AFSAB assessments.
97. The certification body should be aligned to ISO 17024, *Conformity assessment – General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons*. Completion of an in-house training program is not considered equivalent to AFSAB.
98. Requests for equivalency should be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and include written evidence of the assessments completed in obtaining their certification and submitted with the candidate's application.
99. Assessments of equivalency shall be based on determining whether achievement of the AFSAB learning outcomes and assessment requirements have been demonstrated.
100. If a candidate is unable to produce evidence of an assessment deemed to be of AFSAB standard, equivalency will not be granted, and the candidate will be required to sit the full AFSAB certification program relevant to their discipline.
101. The candidate, supervisor and ANZFEC member will be notified of the equivalency assessment outcome within sixty (60) business days of AFSAB receiving the application.
102. The Board holds authority for approving equivalency requests. The decision of the Board is final and is not subject to further appeals.

Fees

103. AFSAB does not charge a fee for certification or recertification.
104. Fees may be charged by an external assessor for the provision of flights and accommodation associated with attending AFSAB assessments. Payment of these fees are the responsibility of the requesting jurisdiction.

Assessment Observation

Observer Attendance at Oral Assessments

105. An ANZFEC member may, in consultation with the AFSAB Board Chair and any other relevant organisation, request for a member of their agency or another appropriate agency to attend an oral assessment as an observer.
106. An invitation to attend an oral assessment may be sent to an appropriate individual, as determined by the AFSAB Board Chair, for the reasons outlined below. All requests for attendance shall be made in consultation with all relevant jurisdictions.
107. An individual may attend an oral assessment as an observer for the following purposes:
 - 107.1. identifying process improvements
 - 107.2. ensuring standardised processes are adopted across disciplines and jurisdictions
 - 107.3. training and professional development
 - 107.4. auditing.
108. Observer attendance at oral assessments is limited to the following individuals:
 - 108.1. AFSAB Board Approved Assessors
 - 108.2. Board Member
 - 108.3. ANZPAA NIFS Representatives
 - 108.4. other persons as approved by the candidate's ANZFEC member.
109. An observer shall not influence the assessment process or outcome.
110. Observers shall provide feedback to AFSAB within twenty (20) business days of attending an oral assessment. Observers attending for the purpose of training and development are not required to give feedback but may opt to provide feedback if they identify an area of improvement.
111. A maximum of three (3) observers are permitted per oral assessment.
112. A candidate shall be notified, prior to commencing their assessment, that an observer will be present at their oral assessment. The details of the observer and reason for their attendance should also be provided. Any concerns regarding the attendance of an observer shall be raised by the candidate with the relevant ANZFEC member.

Conflict of interest

113. Potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed to AFSAB when considering whether to participate in an assessment.

Confidentiality

114. Observers will strive to maintain confidentiality for all assessment processes and outcomes. Any breaches of confidentiality will be referred to the AFSAB Board.

Fees

115. AFSAB will fund the flights and accommodation associated with an ANZPAA NIFS or Board Representative attending AFSAB assessments.
116. Costs associated with the attendance of any individual not stated above will be at the expense of the requesting jurisdiction.

AFSAB Recertification

Annual Recertification

117. Each jurisdiction shall on an annual basis submit their applications for recertification of each of their practitioners (*Form 3*). Recertification is due on 1 January of the year recertification is being sought.
118. Applications for yearly recertification (*Form 3*) should be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and sent to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au no later than 31 January each year.
119. The Board may request clarification or further information from the candidate, nominated jurisdiction contact or the relevant ANZFEC member, if required.
120. Certification shall be maintained by verification from the relevant ANZFEC member that each certified practitioner has maintained relevant competency, contemporary subject knowledge and successfully completed an internal or external proficiency test.
121. A new proficiency test shall be completed each year. Proficiency tests submitted for the purpose of annual recertification shall have been completed in the 12 months prior to the date of submission, with exception of career breaks. Any request for an exception shall be made with the support of the candidate's ANZFEC member.
122. External proficiency tests for fingerprints and firearms should be from a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) recognised provider. Internal proficiency tests, where the ground truth is known may be used as an alternative.
123. The proficiency test for Firearms Examiners shall be either a fired cartridge case or fired bullet proficient test.
124. The proficiency test for Fingerprint Examiners is one (1) Fingerprint proficiency test.
125. The proficiency test for Crime Scene Investigators is After the Fact.
126. Internal proficiency tests, where the ground truth is known may be used as an alternative.
127. The nature and results of proficiency test shall be provided to AFSAB upon applying for recertification. This includes copies of proficiency test results for practitioners who have completed an internal proficiency test.
128. Where a certified practitioner is not applying for recertification, AFSAB shall be notified (*Form 3*) and details of the circumstances provided. Notification shall include the relevant ANZFEC member's approval.
129. The AFSAB Chair is responsible for reviewing AFSAB recertification applications and will determine the suitability of an application for AFSAB recertification within forty (40) business days of receiving the application.
130. The AFSAB certified practitioner and nominated jurisdiction contact will be notified of the outcome within ten (10) business days of a decision being reached. The ANZFEC member will be notified once all yearly recertification's for their organisation have been processed.
131. AFSAB will notify nominated jurisdiction contacts on 1 March of each year if all the jurisdiction's recertification applications have not been received. The letter will allow for a one-month response time.
132. Individuals that received their initial certification in the 6 months prior to 1 January (i.e. after 1 July of the previous year), are not required to apply for annual recertification the following year.

Five-yearly Recertification

133. Every five years, certified 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 candidate must demonstrate currency and professional development in their discipline by accumulating 100 points of discipline duties and professional development as outlined in *Form 4: Application for Five-Yearly Recertification*.
134. Certified practitioners are not required to provide supporting documentation for the points claimed as part of five-yearly recertification. On an ad hoc basis, AFSAB may call for this documentation to be submitted by the candidate for auditing purposes and to ensure robustness of the process.
135. AFSAB will notify all nominated jurisdiction contacts in July of each year which AFSAB certified practitioners will be due for five-yearly recertification in the following year. Notification will also be sent to the candidates.
136. Applications for five-yearly recertification (*Form 4*) should be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and sent by the certified practitioner to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au not later than 31 January of the relevant year.
137. The Board may request clarification or further information from the certified practitioner, nominated jurisdiction contact or the relevant ANZFEC member, if required.
138. A new proficiency test shall be completed each year. 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. Any request for an exception shall be made with the support of the candidate's ANZFEC member.
139. External proficiency tests for fingerprints and firearms should be from a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) recognised provider. Internal proficiency tests, where the ground truth is known may be used as an alternative.
140. The proficiency test for Firearms Examiners shall be one (1) fired bullet proficiency test, one (1) fired cartridge case proficiency test and one (1) serial number restoration proficiency test
141. The proficiency test for Fingerprint Examiners is one (1) Fingerprint proficiency test.
142. The proficiency test for Crime Scene Investigators is After the Fact.
143. Internal proficiency tests, where the ground truth is known may be used as an alternative.
144. The nature and results of proficiency test shall be provided to AFSAB upon applying for recertification. This includes copies of proficiency test results for practitioners who have completed an internal proficiency test.
145. Where a certified practitioner is not applying for recertification, AFSAB shall be notified (*Form 3*) and details of the circumstances provided. Notification shall include the relevant ANZFEC member's approval.
146. The AFSAB Chair is responsible for reviewing AFSAB recertification applications and will determine the suitability of an application for AFSAB recertification within forty (40) business days of receiving the application.
147. The AFSAB certified practitioner and nominated jurisdiction contact will be notified of the outcome within ten (10) business days of a decision being reached. The ANZFEC member will be notified once all yearly recertification's for their organisation have been processed.
148. AFSAB will notify all nominated jurisdiction contacts on 1 March of each year if all recertification's applications have not been received. The letter will allow for a one-month response time.

Professional Breaks and Certification

149. For certified practitioners who have extended periods of absence from the work place, the table below outlines the requirements for retaining or regaining their AFSAB certification.

Period of Absence	Policy
Retaining Certification	
Less than two years absence	<p>If the practitioner has had a period of absence but returns within the year that they have already completed and submitted a successful proficiency test, their certification remains current. Should an annual recertification period have lapsed, the practitioner shall immediately sit an approved proficiency test and provide the results to AFSAB.</p> <p>The practitioner is not required to acknowledge a lapse in certification.</p>
Between two and 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 shall as a minimum, identify any deficiencies, develop a training program to address these deficiencies, and then arrange for the practitioner to sit an approved proficiency test. The results shall be provided to AFSAB along with a reporting detailing the period of absence and the training undertaken by the practitioner on their return.</p> <p>The practitioner is not required to acknowledge a lapse in certification.</p>
Regaining Certification	
Greater than five years absence	<p>AFSAB certification lapses after a five-year period of absence. To regain certification, the individual shall re-sit the full AFSAB assessment process relevant to their discipline. The person must meet all the eligibility criteria that normally applies for a new candidate.</p> <p>The practitioner's certification will re-commence from the date the re-assessment is processed by AFSAB and the practitioner is required to acknowledge a lapse in certification.</p>

Revocation of Certification

150. The Board may revoke an individual's certification on written advice from the AFSAB certified practitioner's ANZFEC member.

151. The Board may, by notice in writing to any certified person, call upon such person to show cause as to why their certification should not be revoked. This will be based upon their failure to maintain any necessary competency because they are no longer engaged in study or work consistent with their certification. Such action will be in full consultation with the relevant ANZFEC member.

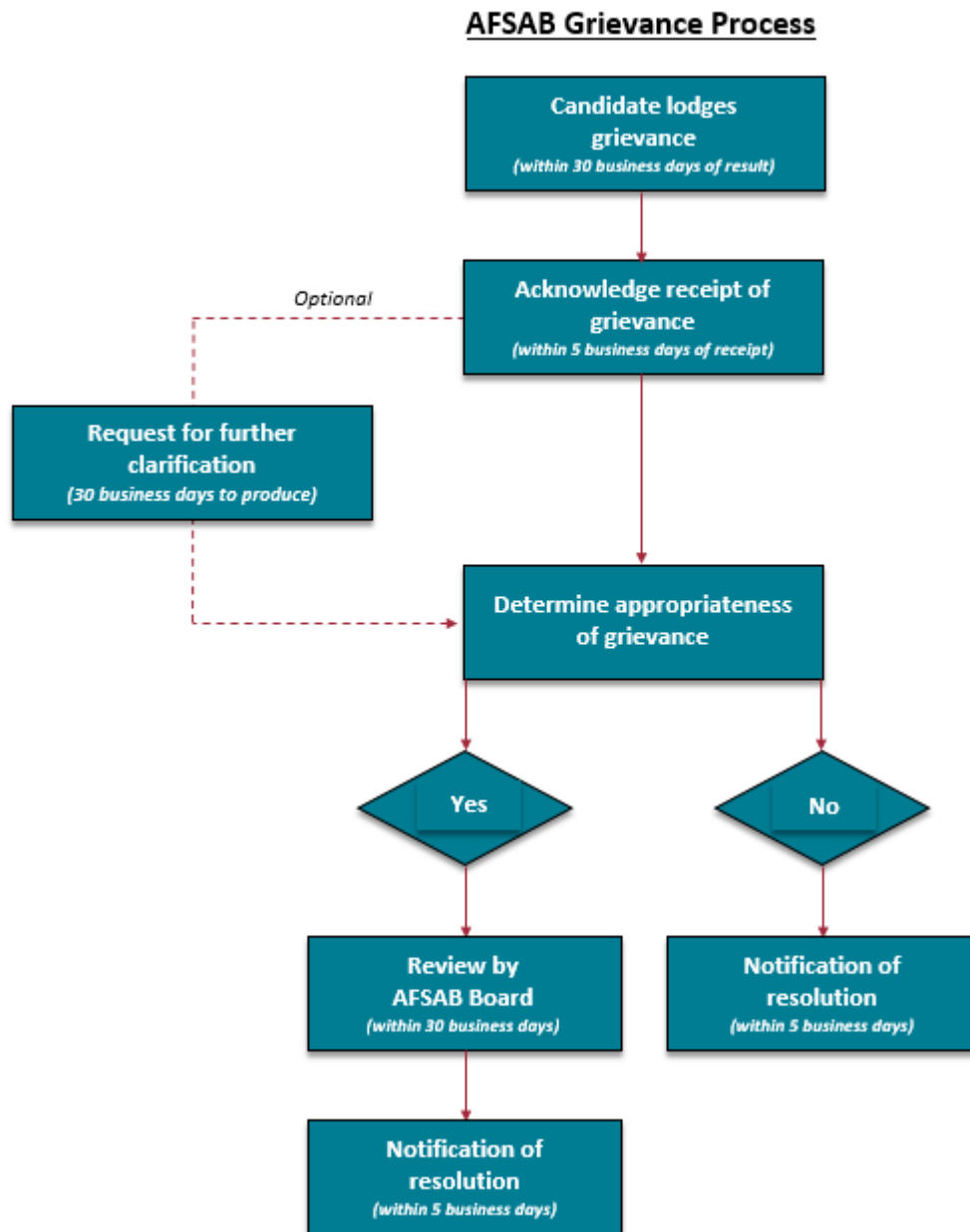
Certification Appeals and Grievance Process

AFSAB 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

152. The grievance process provides candidates with the ability to:
 - 152.1. request re-scoring of assessments
 - 152.2. request reconsideration of certification or assessor status
 - 152.3. challenge or appeal assessment questions, scores or procedure
 - 152.4. evaluate the accuracy of Proficiency Tests
 - 152.5. challenge one or more assessors' credentials, impartiality or conflict of interest management
 - 152.6. seek special considerations.
153. Notice of a candidate's opportunity to lodge a grievance is provided in writing or verbally at the beginning of each assessment.
154. The Board are responsible for addressing all grievances related to certification, recertification or recognition as an assessor.
155. 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 referred to the AFSAB Board.
156. Jurisdictional policies such as termination or promotion cannot be used as grounds for an AFSAB appeal.
157. Any opportunities for improvement observed during the grievance process may inform subsequent iterations of the certification process.
158. 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



159. All grievances shall be addressed in writing to the AFSAB Chair and sent via email to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au along with any supporting evidence or documentation.
160. All requests must be received by AFSAB within thirty (30) business days of the date the candidate obtained written confirmation of their certification result. Grievances received after this date will not be considered.
161. The candidate must clearly articulate their point of challenge so that the Board can fully investigate their request.
162. The Board will acknowledge receipt of a grievance via email within ten (10) business days of receiving the request.
163. The Board may request clarification or further information from the candidate, if required, in order to make an informed decision. The candidate will have thirty (30) business days from the date of

request to produce the information. If the requested information is not provided within the specific time frame, the request will be denied.

164. The AFSAB Chair will initially determine whether the grievance is suitable for progression to the Board for consideration.
165. 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.
166. 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.
167. The Board will review the case and come to a resolution within thirty (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.
168. The candidate will be notified of the resolution within five (5) business days of the Board reaching a resolution.
169. 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.
170. The decisions of the Board are final and are not subject to further appeals.

AFSAB Assessors

Application and Approval Process

171. AFSAB Certified Practitioners seeking recognition as an AFSAB Board Approved Assessor are required to meet the eligibility criteria prior to submitting their application.
172. Applications for recognition as an AFSAB assessor (*Form 5*) should be addressed to the AFSAB Chair and sent by the certified practitioner to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au along with any supporting documentation.
173. The Board may request clarification or further information from the practitioner, nominated jurisdiction contact or the relevant ANZFEC member, if required.
174. The AFSAB Chair will review the application and relevant documentation to ensure it meets AFSAB requirements within ten (10) business days of receiving the information. If all requirements are met, an assessor pack containing the following will be sent to the candidate:
 - 174.1. discipline specific assessor guide
 - 174.2. current Policy and Processes for Certification
 - 174.3. copy of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
 - 174.4. Deed of Confidentiality.
175. If the candidate doesn't meet the eligibility criteria for recognition as an AFSAB assessor, their application will be denied and notification will be provided to the practitioner, nominated jurisdiction contact and the relevant ANZFEC member within five (5) business days of the decision being reached.
176. The candidate may re-apply as soon as the eligibility criteria for recognition as an AFSAB assessor has been met.
177. AFSAB Board approved assessors shall conduct one (1) internal AFSAB assessment under the supervision of an experienced AFSAB Board Approved Assessor from their jurisdiction prior to being eligible to perform external AFSAB assessments. Details of these assessments, including the marking sheets and assessor comment shall be retained by AFSAB.
178. To maintain knowledge of the AFSAB assessment process, AFSAB assessors shall conduct at least one (1) AFSAB assessment every five (5) 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 AFSAB 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

179. To be eligible to apply for recognition as an AFSAB assessor, practitioners shall:
- 179.1. hold AFSAB certification and have held this certification for a minimum of two (2) years, in the discipline that they are requesting recognition as an AFSAB assessor
 - 179.2. hold as a minimum the Assessor Skill Set qualification²
 - 179.3. complete any ongoing or refresher training as determined by AFSAB
 - 179.4. maintain competency and complete any ongoing AFSAB certification requirements for their discipline.

Revocation of AFSAB Assessor Status

180. The Board shall revoke an individual's status as an AFSAB Board Approved Assessor if they fail to complete any ongoing AFSAB certification requirements for their disciplines.
181. The Board may also revoke an individual's status as an AFSAB Board Approved Assessor on written advice from the individual's ANZFEC Member.
182. The Board may, by notice in writing to any AFSAB 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 competency due to a change in position, roles or function. Such action will be in full consultation with the relevant ANZFEC member.
183. An AFSAB assessor may at any time choose to have their status as AFSAB Board Approved Assessor revoked. A request, approved by the individual's ANZFEC member, should be sent via email to secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au.

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 referred to the AFSAB Board with by the Board.

² Current assessors will be grandfathered and permitted to maintain their assessor status until 31 June 2021, at which time they will be required to demonstrate they have the minimum education requirement, or their status will be revoked.

AFSAB Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

In order to promote professional conduct by its Candidates, Certified Practitioners 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 AFSAB 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.

AFSAB Candidates, Certified Practitioners 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 Candidate, 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 AFSAB certification upon certification suspension or withdrawal and return any AFSAB issued certificates
13. refrain from issuing public statements that may appear to represent the position of AFSAB without obtaining specific authority from the Board
14. not use the AFSAB logo without prior authorisation by the Board
15. not use certification in a manner which may bring AFSAB into disrepute or make misleading or false statements regarding certification.

Appendix A – Schedule of Forms

AFSAB Form Name	Form Number
Application for AFSAB Certification	Form 1
Notification of AFSAB 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 AFSAB Assessor	Form 5

Appendix B – Education and Training

AFSAB Pre-requisite Education and Training Criteria 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	Queensland Police Service and Griffith University's Graduate Certificate of Forensic Fingerprint Investigation
Firearms	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.

ANZPAA
Australia New Zealand
Policing Advisory Agency



Level 6, Tower 3, World Trade Centre
637 Flinders Street
Docklands Victoria 3008
Australia

T +61 3 9628 7211
F +61 3 9628 7253

Web: www.anzpaa.org.au/nifs

Email: secretariat.nifs@anzpaa.org.au

Twitter: [@nifs_auz](https://twitter.com/nifs_auz)

AFSAB is facilitated and managed by ANZPAA NIFS.