

CERTIFICATION PATHWAY FOR INTERNATIONALLY QUALIFIED PEDORTHISTS



**PEDORTHIC ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA**

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Introduction

The Pedorthic Association of Australia (PAA) is the peak professional body for pedorthists in Australia. PAA's mission is to represent and advocate for the pedorthic profession, lead and educate pedorthic practitioners, and improve overall patient outcomes.

Pedorthics is a self-regulated health profession in Australia. An independent PAA subcommittee, the Australian Pedorthists Registration Board (APRB) Committee, manages the certification of pedorthists in Australia. Certified practitioners, who are members of and registered with the PAA, are qualified pedorthists who have demonstrated the necessary education, training, knowledge and skills to provide safe and high-quality pedorthic services. The APRB Committee administers the Australian pedorthic profession through established policies, standards, codes, and criteria upheld by certified practitioners. The APRB Committee ensures that certified pedorthists are accountable to the highest standards of practice through registration, regulation, and monitoring of continuous improvement.

The PAA is a member of the Internationaler Verband Orthopaedieschuhtechnik (IVO), also known as the International Pedorthic Association. The IVO promotes international cooperation in orthopaedic shoe techniques, and member countries include Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Tyrol, and Switzerland. The IVO established International Standards for Orthopedic Shoe Technology in 2014 to promote consistent global standards for pedorthic education and training, which are endorsed by the PAA.

This document outlines the pathway for overseas qualified pedorthists seeking professional certification and registration in Australia as a Certified Pedorthist Custom Maker (CPedCM Au). The CPedCM Au is actively engaged in clinical practice and provides evidence-based services in all aspects of custom-made pedorthic footwear, prefabricated pedorthic footwear and orthotic appliances specific to the lower limb, including assessment, advice, education, fabrication, dispensation, modification, alteration, and repair.

Disclaimer: *The Pedorthic Association of Australia has taken care to ensure that at the time of publication, information contained within this document is accurate, current, and correct, however this information may not cover all relevant aspects of the certification pathway for overseas qualified pedorthists, dependent upon how the information is being utilised. The PAA therefore does not make any warranty about the accuracy, reliability, currency, or completeness of the material contained within the document. The PAA and any individual or organisation associated with the preparation of this document disclaim any and all liability associated with any loss the user of this document may suffer as a result of reliance on the document. Individuals should exercise their own independent knowledge, skill, and judgment before relying on this document.*

1. Eligibility

1.1 Internationally Qualified Pedorthists

Overseas qualified pedorthists can take the pathway to certification in Australia if they have:

- obtained their pedorthic qualifications in a country outside Australia,
- not completed an approved qualification leading to pedorthic certification in Australia, and
- not held certification in Australia before.

For those holding an Australian accredited qualification, please refer to the [Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics](#) and the [Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists](#).

1.2 Working in Australia

Overseas qualified pedorthists may need to apply for a visa issued by the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs (Immigration and Citizenship) before arriving in Australia. **This process is entirely separate from the certification pathway and the PAA is unable to assist applicants to obtain a work visa.**

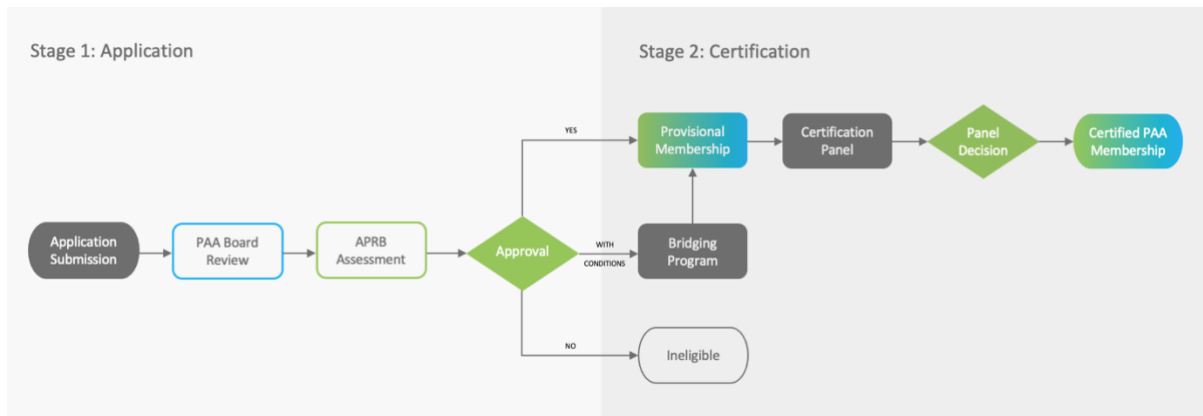
Information on visa applications, including skills assessments and assessing authorities, is available on the [Australian Government Department of Home Affairs website](#). Information regarding working in Australia can be found [here](#). Please note that immigration policies and procedures are subject to revision and updates.

2. Certification Pathway

2.1 Pathway Structure

Australian certification for overseas qualified pedorthists comprises the following pathway and involves two stages: **Application** and **Certification**.

Figure 1. Certification Pathway Structure



Stage 1: Application

a) Application

The overseas qualified pedorthist applies for certification.

b) Assessment

The application is assessed according to requirements.

c) Application Outcome

i. Approval

The international candidate meets all requirements and can apply for PAA membership and attend the certification interview.

ii. Approval with conditions

The applicant holds relevant but not substantially equivalent qualifications to meet requirements. The applicant may complete a bridging program to become eligible for certification.

iii. Ineligible

The applicant does not meet the requirements for certification and cannot undertake the bridging program or attend the certification interview.

Stage 2: Certification

- **Bridging program**

A program approved or recommended by the PAA that the applicant can complete to be eligible to attend the certification interview.

- **Certification interview**

The applicant attends an interview with the APRB Committee Certification Panel and presents a case study and work sample.

- **Certification outcome**

The decision made by the APRB Committee to grant or refuse certification.

3. Application (Stage 1)

3.1 Application Guidelines

The seven (7) areas to address in the application are outlined in the table below:

Assessment Area	Requirement	Supporting documents
1. Pedorthic Qualifications	Tertiary qualification in pedorthics or a related discipline comparable to an Australian bachelor's degree at level 7 of the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF).	Certified copy (and translation into English) of your qualification. Certified copy (and translation into English) of your academic transcript. Proof of your identity (and translation into English).
2. English Language Proficiency	International English Testing System (IELTS) examination (Academic Module) results. Applicants must achieve an overall score of 7 with a minimum of 7 achieved in all four components (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking). Waivers exist for the United States of America, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland, Canada, and South Africa.	Original documents or a certified copy of your IELTS examination results.
3. Work Experience and Recency of Practice	Applicants can demonstrate relevant prior pedorthic work experience. The applicant can show that at least 1000 hours of practice have been attained over the past 5 years. Applicants who received their qualification within the last 2 years are exempt from Recency of Practice requirements.	Provide a complete Curriculum Vitae (CV).
4. Criminal History Check	Applicants can demonstrate they are of good character.	Provide an Australian Federal Police (AFP) National Police Check.
5. Key Competencies	High level of competency in all aspects of CPedCM Au as detailed in Section 3.5 in the Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics and the Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists .	Provide a summary statement addressing CPedCM Au key competencies.
6. References	Professional persons who can verify information included in the application.	Provide details of two (2) referees.
7. Mandatory Declarations	PAA Mandatory Declaration whereby the individual is self-assessing their suitability for membership and certification with PAA to provide pedorthic services.	Sign the mandatory declarations included in the application form.

3.1.1 Pedorthic Qualifications

Applicants must hold a qualification in pedorthics, orthopaedic shoe technology, footwear engineering or a related discipline equivalent to level 7 of the [Australian Qualification Framework \(AQF\)](#). A level 7 usually represents an Australian bachelor's degree, and graduates at this level have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work and/or further learning. The education provider must possess statutory registration or authorisation to issue qualifications and deliver higher education.

To meet the requirements for Pedorthic Qualifications, please provide the following documents:

- **Certified copy of your qualification (degree certificate/testamur).**
 - Please include a certified copy of the original AND a certified copy of an English translation if in a language other than English.
- **Certified copy of academic transcript.**
 - Please include a certified copy of the original AND a certified copy of an English translation if in a language other than English (both sides).
- **Evidence of change of name.**
 - If your name is different from the name on your qualification, please include a certified copy of documents such as marriage certificate, deed poll etc.
- **Certified proof of identity.**
 - Acceptable proof of identity includes a passport, driver's licence, or birth certificate. Please include a certified copy of the original AND a certified copy of an English translation if in a language other than English.

For information on how to certify documents in Australia, please refer to the AHPRA [guidelines for documentation certification](#).

3.1.2 English Language Proficiency

Competence in verbal, written and scientific use of the English language is essential to the practice of pedorthics in Australia.

The PAA accepts the International English Testing System (IELTS) examination (Academic Module) as evidence of English language proficiency. Applicants must achieve an overall score of 7 with a minimum of 7 achieved in all four components (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking).

To meet the requirements for English Language Proficiency, please provide the following document:

- **Original documents or certified copies of IELTS results**, or you can arrange for the results to be sent to PAA directly from the test administrator.

Test results will only be accepted from one test sitting or a maximum of two test sittings in six months only if the applicant achieves:

- A minimum score of 7 in each sitting
- A minimum score of 7 in each component across two sittings
- No score in any test component of the test is below 6.5.

Applicants are responsible for meeting all costs associated with the IELTS test.

Applicants must complete the IELTS no more than two years before applying unless the applicant can demonstrate that:

- They have been in continuous employment as a certified practitioner (which commenced within 12 months of the test date) in one of the recognised countries where English was the primary language of practice. These countries include the United States of America, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland, Canada, South Africa.

The English Language Proficiency Test is waived where applicants have either completed a tertiary education program that has been taught in English of at least four years' duration (or equivalent) leading to a degree or post-graduate diploma in pedorthics in one of the following countries:

- United States of America
- United Kingdom
- New Zealand
- Ireland
- Canada
- South Africa

3.1.3 Work Experience and Recency of Practice

The applicant requires clinical and technical experience relevant to pedorthic practice. Examples of relevant work experience include apprenticeships, internships or other training programs involving analysis, design and/or manufacture of regular and/or medical grade/pedorthic footwear; mentorships with senior medical grade/pedorthic footwear practitioners; work in larger manufacturing organisations providing medical grade/pedorthic footwear and services or experience in supplying medical grade/pedorthic footwear and services in a small business or health care setting.

Recency of practice means that practitioners have maintained and utilised their pedorthic knowledge and skills and remained connected to the pedorthic profession. The recency of practice threshold varies according to the number of years since graduation and the number of years practising:

- Practitioners applying for certification up to two years since graduation are exempt from the Recency of Practice requirements.

- All other practitioners must have practised for at least 1000 hours over the previous five years (or part thereof*).

*If a practitioner graduated three to five years ago, the total hours of practice they must accrue is calculated on a pro-rata basis of 200 hours per year.

For more information about Recency of Practice, please refer to the [PAA Recency & Resumption of Practice Policy](#).

To meet the requirements for Work Experience and Recency of Practice, please provide the following document:

- **A complete Curriculum Vitae (CV).**
 - Please provide a summary of your employment history, qualifications, skills and education.

3.1.4 Criminal History Check

Criminal history checks help to ensure that only those practitioners who are suitable and safe to practice are granted pedorthic registration in Australia. Applicants are required to declare any criminal history and provide a criminal history record.

To meet the requirements for the Criminal History Check, please provide the following document:

- **An Australian National Police Check.**
 - Please provide a National Police Check obtained through the Australian Federal Police (AFP). This document may be obtained at the following website: www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/national-police-checks.

Applicants are responsible for meeting all costs associated with the Australian National Police Check.

3.1.5 Key Competencies

Applicants must attach a summary detailing their current level of understanding and experience in each of the key areas of competence for CPedCM Au, as listed in section 3.5 of the [Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics](#) and described in the [PAA Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists](#). Key competency areas include:

- Collaborative Practice
- Professional Conduct
- Clinical Practice and Care
- Provision of Orthotic Appliances
- Provision of Pedorthic Footwear
- Footwear Modifications
- Business Management
- Professional Development

To meet the requirements for Key Competencies, please provide the following document:

- **Statement addressing Competency Standards**
 - Please include a summary of how you meet the competency standards detailed in the [PAA Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists](#).

3.1.6 References

The applicant nominates two (2) referees who can verify information contained in the application. A referee is someone with whom the applicant has a professional relationship, such as an employer or mentor.

To meet the requirements for References, please provide the following information:

- **Two (2) Referees.**
 - Please provide the names and contact details of two (2) professional referees.

3.1.7 Mandatory Declarations

Mandatory declarations must be made by all individuals who join the PAA.

Before making the declarations, individuals must read, understand, and be willing to abide by the [PAA Privacy Policy](#), [PAA Code of Ethics and Standards](#) and [PAA Continuing Professional Development \(CPD\)](#) annual requirement. These are legally binding statements signed by the applicant.

Please refer to the [PAA Mandatory Declarations Policy](#) for more information.

To meet the requirements for Mandatory declarations, provide the following information:

- **Signed Mandatory Declarations.**
 - Please read the above documents and sign the declarations included in the application form.

3.2 Application Fees

Applicants are required to pay a **non-refundable** application fee of AUD \$1,380. Payments are to be made via the PAA website at the time of lodging the application. Applicants will be provided with a receipt for payment.

PLEASE NOTE: The application fee only applies to Stage 1: Application. Additional fees are payable as part of the Stage 2 certification process.

3.3 Application Submission

Please submit your application and supporting documents via the [PAA website](#).

It is recommended that you keep a copy of your application and retain it for your records.

All materials which are copies of original documents, such as your qualification or transcript, must be certified as a true and accurate copy of the original and signed by a Justice of the Peace or another person who has legal authority. For information on how to certify documents in Australia, please refer to the AHPRA [guidelines for documentation certification](#).

Any documents other than English must be submitted with a certified translation into English by a professional translator.

Any evidence of fraudulent representation will result in immediate rejection of the application.

3.4 Application Process

Applicants must ensure that the information they provide is accurate and addresses the requirements set out in the application guidelines.

The application process is as follows:

1. Prepare all documentation according to the application guidelines.
2. Complete the online application form and upload all required supporting documentation.
3. Pay the AUD \$1,380 **non-refundable** application fee.
4. Use the [application checklist](#) to ensure your application is complete.

3.5 Assessment Process

The assessment process is as follows:

1. Application Lodgement
2. Assessment
 - i. PAA Board Assessment
 - ii. APRB Committee Assessment
3. Application Outcomes
 - i. Approval
 - ii. Approval with conditions
 - iii. Application withdrawn
 - iv. Ineligible

3.5.1 Application Lodgement

The PAA will endeavour to confirm receipt of an application within a reasonable timeframe.

The PAA Board reviews the application to ensure that all supporting documents have been received and are authentic. The PAA Board will contact the applicant if there are outstanding documents or additional information is required. Once the applicant has provided all necessary documents, the application will be assessed.

3.5.2 Assessment

The application is reviewed by the PAA Board. When assessing qualifications, the Board uses the qualification assessment guidelines provided by the Australian Government Department of Education and accepted educational resources, including the University Admissions Centre Assessment of Qualifications Manual, to establish the Australian equivalence of candidate's overseas qualifications.

If verified and approved, the application is forwarded to the APRB (Australian Pedorthists Registration Board) Committee. The APRB Committee assesses the application and all supporting documents against requirements before deciding on each application to ensure a consistent and fair evaluation of applications.

Applications are also assessed in relation to the IVO International Standards for Orthopedic Shoe Technology as well as current PAA standards, guidelines, and criteria, including:

- [The PAA Competency Standards for Australian Professional Pedorthists](#)
- [English Language Requirements for PAA Certification](#)
- [PAA Recency & Resumption of Practice Policy](#)
- [PAA Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics](#)

Wherever possible, the APRB Committee aims to complete the assessment of an application within eight to ten weeks of receipt of all required documents. However, this will depend on the circumstances of the application.

3.5.3 Outcomes

The PAA considers and decides the outcome of all applications.

There are four (4) potential outcomes:

i) Approval

The applicant is approved if the PAA decides that the applicant meets all requirements based on the application and supporting documents. The applicant can be accepted as a provisional PAA member and apply to attend an interview with the Certification Panel and seek registration as a certified pedorthist in Australia.

ii) Approval with conditions

The applicant is approved with conditions if the PAA decides that the applicant holds relevant but not substantially equivalent qualifications and experience to meet requirements based on the application and supporting documents. The applicant will be invited to undertake a bridging program recommended or approved by the PAA to address the applicant's gaps in pedorthic skills and knowledge. If the applicant completes the bridging program, they can obtain provisional PAA membership and apply to attend an interview with the certification panel to seek registration as a certified pedorthist in Australia.

iii) Application withdrawn

If the applicant does not provide all the information required to assess the application within a reasonable time, the application may be withdrawn due to insufficient information to conduct an assessment.

Applicants can also contact the PAA Board via email at info@pedorthics.org.au to request that the application be withdrawn if they do not wish to continue with their application.

If the application is withdrawn, the application fee is not refunded.

iv) Ineligible

The applicant is deemed ineligible if the PAA finds that the applicant does not hold relevant qualifications and experience and does not meet the requirements for certification, based on the application and supporting documents. If the PAA denies the application, the reasons for the decision will be communicated to the applicant via email.

4. Certification (Stage 2)

4.1 Bridging Program

Overseas trained pedorthists who receive **approval with conditions** will be referred to a bridging program to upgrade their qualifications and become eligible to attend the certification interview.

A bridging program is a course of study approved or recommended by the PAA that enables international applicants who do not qualify for certification to meet requirements by completing further study and assessment. To be eligible, overseas trained pedorthists have undergone the Stage 1 Application process, received the outcome of **approval with conditions**, and been referred to the bridging program by the PAA.

As there are no pedorthic specific programs currently offered by education providers in Australia, the bridging program will be delivered or recommended by the PAA and tailored to the specific needs of the individual to address any gaps in competency. It may include one or more of the following components:

- Pre-Certification online course
- Custom-made medical grade/pedorthic footwear prescription, design, patterns, and fabrication
- Health care and clinical practice in Australia
- Practice management in Australia
- Research and statistical skills

The bridging program is only available in Australia to overseas trained pedorthists and recognised solely by the PAA. The PAA is not a formally recognised vocational education and training or higher education provider and these courses are offered in a professional development capacity. Bridging programs will incur course fees that are wholly payable by the international applicant. Please note that Commonwealth Grant Scheme Funding is not applicable.

Delivery of the program may involve online delivery, face-to-face delivery, mentorship or a combination. Overseas trained pedorthists who complete the bridging program can apply to attend the certification interview and seek registration as a certified pedorthist in Australia. Successful completion of the bridging program does not guarantee certification.

4.2 Certification Guidelines

Approved pedorthists and pedorthists who have successfully completed the bridging program can obtain provisional PAA membership, attend the certification panel interview and seek registration as a certified pedorthist in Australia.

4.3 Certification Process

The certification process is as follows:

1. Provisional PAA Membership.
2. Payment of Fees.
3. Certification Panel Interview.
4. Certification Outcomes.
 - i. Certification
 - ii. Certification Denied

4.3.1 Provisional Membership

The PAA will email approved applicants a link to sign up as a provisional PAA member and submit a request to attend a certification panel.

4.3.2 Membership and Certification Fees

The following fees are payable by applicants:

1. PAA certified membership fee
2. Certification panel fee

The current certified membership fee can be found on the [PAA website](#).

Provisional membership will be upgraded to full certified membership upon successfully passing the Certification Panel.

Applicants must also pay a **non-refundable** certification panel fee of AUD\$330 for a standard panel (minimum 3 participants) or AUD\$990 for an individual panel.

PLEASE NOTE: Membership and Certification panel fees are separate from, and in addition to, the \$1,380.00 application fee.

Payment may be made via the PAA website, and applicants will receive a receipt following payment.

4.3.3 Certification Panel Interview

The Certification Panel interview is the final stage of the certification process. The Certification Panel is an independent panel of examiners who will review the evidence provided by an applicant, assess the applicant's competency and suitability for certification, and make a decision regarding certification.

The APRB Committee will contact the applicant to arrange an in-person interview with the Certification Panel. The interview will be conducted at a venue that is as convenient as possible for all parties.

All costs incurred to attend the interview are at the applicant's expense.

For more information, please refer to Section 4.1 in the [PAA Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics](#).

Applicants are required to present a case study and related sample of work at the Certification Panel interview.

The candidate needs to present an example of work requiring the provision of custom-made pedorthic footwear including custom-made orthoses or an orthotic element. The work sample should include the actual custom-made pedorthic footwear, custom-made orthoses or orthotic element, the last, patterns and profile drawings as appropriate, together with de-identified patient assessment data and clinical notes. Digital media (photographs, videos etc.) and impressions (e.g., pedographs) may also be included as appropriate.

Applicants must present their work in a manner that shows their decision-making process, demonstrates critical evaluation of their work and a provision for follow-up. The Certification Panel will be looking for evidence of safe, appropriate, timely, and efficient service provision and a clear and consistent decision-making process.

For more information, please refer to the [PAA Criteria for Certification in Pedorthics](#).

4.3.4 Certification Outcomes

The APRB Chair will notify applicants and the PAA Board of the outcome at the earliest opportunity.

There are two (2) potential outcomes for Stage 2, Certification:

i) **Certification**

The applicant meets all requirements for certification and registration as a Certified Pedorthist Custom Maker in Australia. Successful applicants will receive a certificate, and their names will be entered on the Pedorthist Register. Certificates expire twelve (12) months after registration is granted and require renewal.

ii) **Certification Denied**

The applicant does not currently meet the requirements for certification and registration as a certified pedorthist in Australia. The PAA will advise applicants of the reason/s for an unsuccessful application. The applicant will be allowed to re-sit the panel on a future date. Additional fees are payable for a re-sit.

5. Appeals

Applicants who disagree with the application or certification outcome have the right to appeal.

An appeal may be lodged in writing via the [PAA website](#), via email to complaints@pedorthics.org.au or by post.

Appeals will be acknowledged and investigated by the APRB Committee according to the PAA Complaints Policy. The [PAA Complaints Policy](#) outlines the process and management of appeals and complaints.

Glossary

Australian Pedorthists Registration Board (APRB) Committee: The certification body within the PAA that credentials individuals as certified Pedorthists. Certification is granted to individuals not organisations.

Bachelor program: a university-based Bachelor level education program that is accredited by the board of the PAA to deliver pedorthic education.

Certification: The process for credentialling and registration of pedorthists.

Certification Panel: An independent panel of examiners assesses applications for certification and makes a judgement on the applicant's competency and suitability for certification. Each certification panel will consist of certified pedorthists, medical practitioners and APRB Committee members.

Pedorthic Footwear: Footwear specially designed and/ or modified to improve mobility, reduce discomfort and or minimise the propensity for problems in the medium and long-term future. Similar terms include medical grade, orthopaedic, therapeutic, extra-depth or surgical footwear.

Orthotic Appliances: An appliance worn on the body to reduce or prevent deformity or to provide support, relieve pain and facilitate movement.

Pedorthic Association of Australia (PAA): A membership organisation and the peak representative body for pedorthists.

Pedorthics: The professional field concerned with the provision of medical grade footwear, orthotic appliances and appropriate advice to a patient/client after assessment and analysis of the patient/client. Includes the provision of prefabricated footwear, alteration of prefabricated footwear, custom designed and fabricated footwear, orthotic appliances and advice on the need and application of medical grade footwear and orthotic appliances.

Pedorthist Register: A list of certified pedorthists registered with the APRB in Australia.