

DRAFT
March 2023

Certified Advanced Paediatric Audiologist

Draft framework

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The Advanced Paediatric Certification framework

This certification framework will be voluntary and will enable Audiology Australia Accredited Audiologists experienced and with advanced skills in the delivery of paediatric audiology services, to apply for certification as a Certified Advanced Paediatric Audiologist.

The focus of the proposed framework is to provide an avenue for certification as an advanced paediatric Audiologist, keeping the needs of the child at its core. Certification will apply to the individual Audiologist.

The certification framework will be aligned to AudA policies and procedures, including the requirement to abide by the Code of Conduct which sets the professional and ethical standards all members must meet.

The framework aligns with the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists* (PCS), funded by the Australian Government Department of Health. The PCS describes five areas of practice. Initially, certification will be available for the Paediatric Audiologist area of practice only. Work will be undertaken in the future to examine certification frameworks for the other four areas, with consultation to be conducted at that time.

Implementation of this framework is scheduled for mid-2023.

Refer [here](#) for more information on the project to develop a certification framework.

Review of the framework

The voluntary certification framework is scheduled for implementation in mid-2023. Two years after implementation, in 2025, the whole framework will undergo a review.

The review will examine all aspects of the framework, including each of the pathways, the application criteria, the requirements to maintain certification, the proportion of those audited, the assessment process, the fees, and other details.

As part of the review, consultation will be conducted to ensure the views of those with certification, and of AudA members more generally, are sought.

Voluntary certification will be available only to
Audiology Australia Accredited Audiologists
(referred to as Audiologists in this document)



Certification as an Advanced Paediatric Audiologist will be built on 3 pillars:

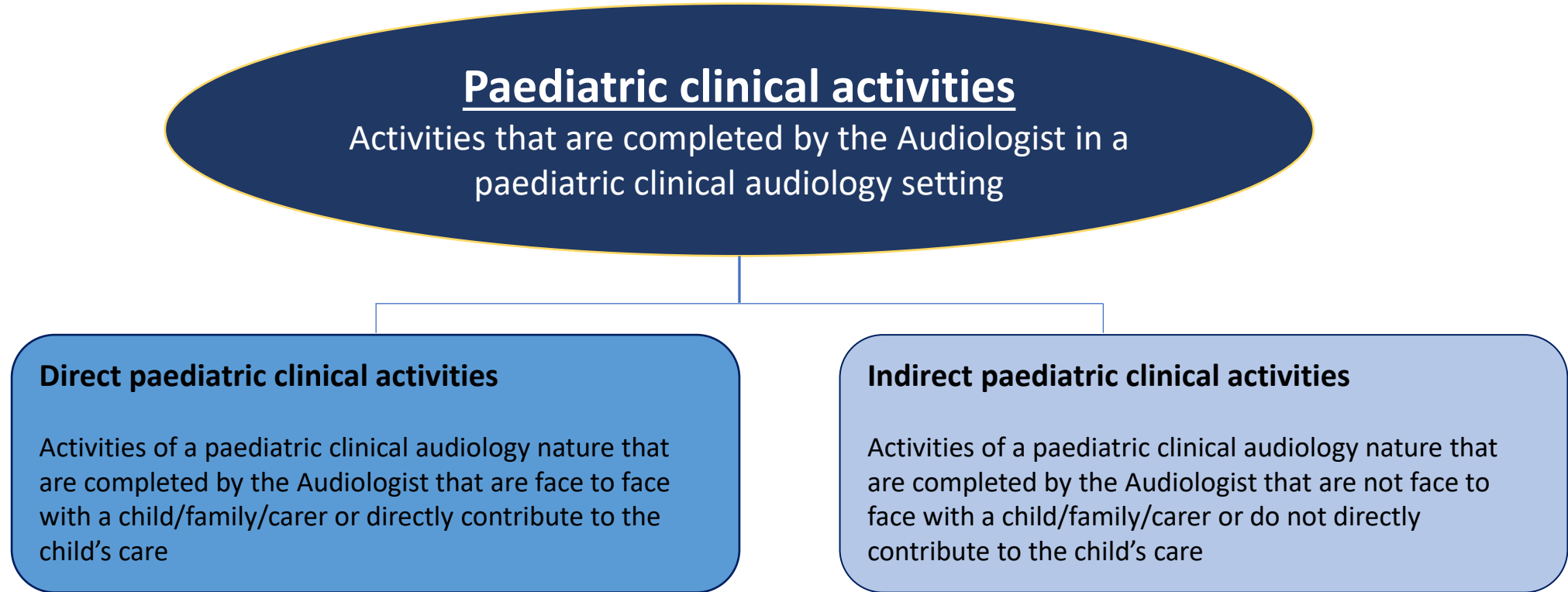
Competence*

Degree of
Experience#

Recency of
Experience#

*As defined by the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists* – Paediatric Audiologist area of practice

Degree and recency of experience can be related to any/all of the five areas of practice in the competency standards



Child, as defined by the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists (PCS)*, is all those under 18 years of age; includes neonate, infant, child and young person.

Proposed paediatric clinical activities

Activities that are completed by the Audiologist in a paediatric clinical audiology setting

Direct paediatric clinical activities

Activities of a paediatric clinical nature that are completed by the Audiologist that are face to face with a child/family/carer or directly contribute to the child's care

Examples include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Preparing, reviewing, maintaining or discussing a child's case file
- Taking a case history
- Clinical discussion with child/family/carer
- Preparing a child/family/carer and/or audiology equipment for testing
- Setting up of the environment for best practice family centred interventions
- Performing audiology assessments
- Contact and initial interaction with family/carer prior to appointment
- Interacting with a child/family/carer and/or clinical educator during the child's appointment
- Interacting with other professionals for the benefit of a child, including referral to others; communication with the treating provider
- Analysing, integrating, and interpreting audiology test results
- Providing feedback on audiology test results
- Planning and implementing management plans, including (re)habilitation plans
- Providing audiological counselling
- Selecting, fitting and fine tuning hearing aids, ALDs, etc.
- Teaching child/family/carer how to use hearing aids, ALDs, cochlear implants, etc.
- Reading reports and report checking (including co-signing)
- Writing an audiology report
- Case conferences and discussion regarding a child (including with other allied health and medical professionals)
- School/family clinical discussion and planning
- Delivering or delegating school visits
- Delivering or delegating paediatric focussed screening clinics
- Peer review, mentoring or supervising a student or colleague with paediatric clients/cases
- Triage into appropriate appointment timing and types
- Clinical paediatric research if interacting directly with families/carers & children
- Clinical audits that involve critical analysis of paediatric clinical decision making

Indirect paediatric clinical activities

Activities of a paediatric clinical nature that are completed by the Audiologist that are not face to face with a child/family/carer or do not directly contribute to the child's care

Examples include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Delivering paediatric focussed CPD
- Delivering paediatric focussed education and training
- Clinical paediatric research
- Peer review of articles if used for evidence based paediatric practice
- Developing clinical protocols and policies for paediatric practice
- Clinical auditing and quality assurance with paediatric focus
- Preparing and delivering paediatric focussed presentations conducted at schools, GP clinics etc
- Providing expert paediatric audiology advice on paediatric audiology matters that do not directly contribute to a child's care

Eligibility

Pillars

Competence

Degree of Experience

Recency of Experience

Proposed pathways to eligibility for certification

- Each applicant to decide which pathway suits their circumstances best and apply accordingly
- All hours/years of experience in paediatric clinical activities can be related to any/all of the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists'* five areas of practice

Pathway A

May be suitable for more experienced paediatric Audiologists

As part of the review of the whole certification framework two years after implementation, the availability and details of this pathway will be reviewed

Pathway B

May generally be suitable for those with slightly less experience, or with inconsistent experience due to a variety of factors such as maternity or other leave, or part-time work

Case-by-case pathway

Audiologist who does not clearly meet either of the two pathways to eligibility (A or B) re: amount of experience, but believes they have equivalent experience or extenuating circumstances, and as such believes they should be considered for certification

All hours/years of experience in paediatric clinical activities can be related to any/all of the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists'* five areas of practice.

Eligibility Criteria for Pathways

Pathway A – eligibility criteria

Meets all competencies described in the Paediatric Audiologist area in the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists*

Degree of experience:

- 2 years full time equivalent (FTE) experience (equates to approximately 3600 hours), in paediatric clinical activities over a total maximum period of the last 10 years (i.e. 20% of total caseload over the last 10 years is in paediatrics)
- This experience gained after completion of Clinical Internship.

Recency of experience:

- Of the minimum 2 years FTE experience in paediatric clinical activities required to meet Degree of experience, a minimum 30 hours in direct paediatric clinical activities is required over the last year

Examples to calculate hours:

- 37.5 hours per week over 2.5 years (37.5 hours x 46 weeks x 2.5 years = 4,312.5 hours)
- 15 hours per week over 6 years (15 hours x 46 weeks x 6 years = 4,140 hours)
- 10 hours per week over 10 years (10 hours x 46 weeks x 10 years = 4,600 hours)

This assumes 46 working weeks in a year, allowing for annual/other leave, public holidays etc.

Pathway B – eligibility criteria

Meets all competencies described in the Paediatric Audiologist area in the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists*

Degree and recency of experience:

- Minimum 400 hours in paediatric clinical activities in a period of at least 6 consecutive or non-consecutive months, over a total maximum period of the last 3 years (i.e. 10% of total caseload over the last 3 years is in paediatrics)
- 300 hours out of these 400 hours should be comprised of direct paediatric clinical activities, and at least 100 hours of these direct paediatric clinical activities should be completed over the last year
- This experience gained after completion of Clinical Internship.

Examples to calculate hours:

- 3 hours per week over 3 years (3 hours x 46 weeks x 3 years = 414 hours)
- 5 hours per week over 2 years (5 hours x 46 weeks x 2 years = 460 hours)

This assumes 46 working weeks in a year, allowing for annual/other leave, public holidays etc.

Case-by-case pathway – eligibility criteria

Meets all competencies described in the Paediatric Audiologist area in the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists*

Degree and recency of experience:

- Applicant explains why they do not meet the eligibility criteria of Pathway A or Pathway B, and presents their case to explain why they should be awarded certification nonetheless
- Required to have at least some current and recent experience in paediatric clinical activities
- Provide details of any extenuating circumstances

Information to submit in application	Pathway A	Pathway B	Case-by-case Pathway
Application form including brief response addressing each of the Paediatric Audiologist competencies in the Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists (PCS) (Refer to application form for guidelines on how to prepare the response to the competency standards)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Application form to also include declaration and statement that applicant meets the eligibility criteria. (Refer to the application form for eligibility criteria)	Yes	Yes	N/A
CV highlighting paediatric work, including amount and complexity/level of experience (Refer to the application form for guidelines on what to cover in CV)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Referee details including form completed by referee/s: ideally AudA Accredited Audiologist, preferably with paediatric certification - minimum of one referee required	Yes	Yes	Yes
Referee/s to tick boxes on form confirming they are happy to support (name's) application as a Certified Advanced Paediatric Audiologist, that they can be contacted if needed, and that they confirm the applicant's level and complexity of experience	Yes	Yes	Yes
If referee is not an AudA Accredited Audiologist (including based overseas), applicant must justify their choice	Yes	Yes	Yes
If applicant for Pathway A does not have a referee, must provide more information to substantiate claims re: level and complexity of experience	Yes	N/A	N/A
If applicant for Pathway B does not have a referee, must provide more information to substantiate claims re: amount and level/complexity of experience, e.g., provide an hours statement and further information regarding experience	N/A	Yes	N/A
One case submission (de-identified) from own caseload to demonstrate achievement of competencies. (Refer to application form for guidelines on what to include in submission)	*	Yes	*
Declaration of estimation of the amount of paediatric clinical experience over last 3 years, and last 10 years. Declaration to include explanation of why they do not meet Pathway A or B re: amount of experience (estimation of how much they are falling short), but why they believe they should be awarded certification. Include details of any extenuating circumstances – if do not wish to disclose in detail, asked to outline the length and extent, but not the full details, of the circumstances	N/A	N/A	Yes
Applicant may choose to attach calculator showing hours/years of experience as part of their application if desired	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assessment panel may request additional information if required (e.g. clarification on information provided, a case submission or additional case submission etc), and/or may contact referee if required	Yes	Yes	Yes

* For Pathway A and case-by-case pathway, case submission is not required as part of application, but may be requested at a later point by the assessment panel if needed

Ideally, referee should be an AudA Accredited Audiologist, preferably with Certification as an Advanced Paediatric Audiologist.

A referee does not have to be in a position of seniority to the applicant - refer to the Glossary for further details.

If applicant has an alternate referee (not an AudA Accredited Audiologist), applicant must provide justification for their choice (for example the referee is an ENT or Head of Department and has worked with the applicant for a number of years).

Referees based overseas who are Audiologists but are not AudA Accredited Audiologists should be accredited by an equivalent body.

If applicant does not have a referee, applicant will be required to provide more information in support of their application. See *Application information to submit* for details.

Application details

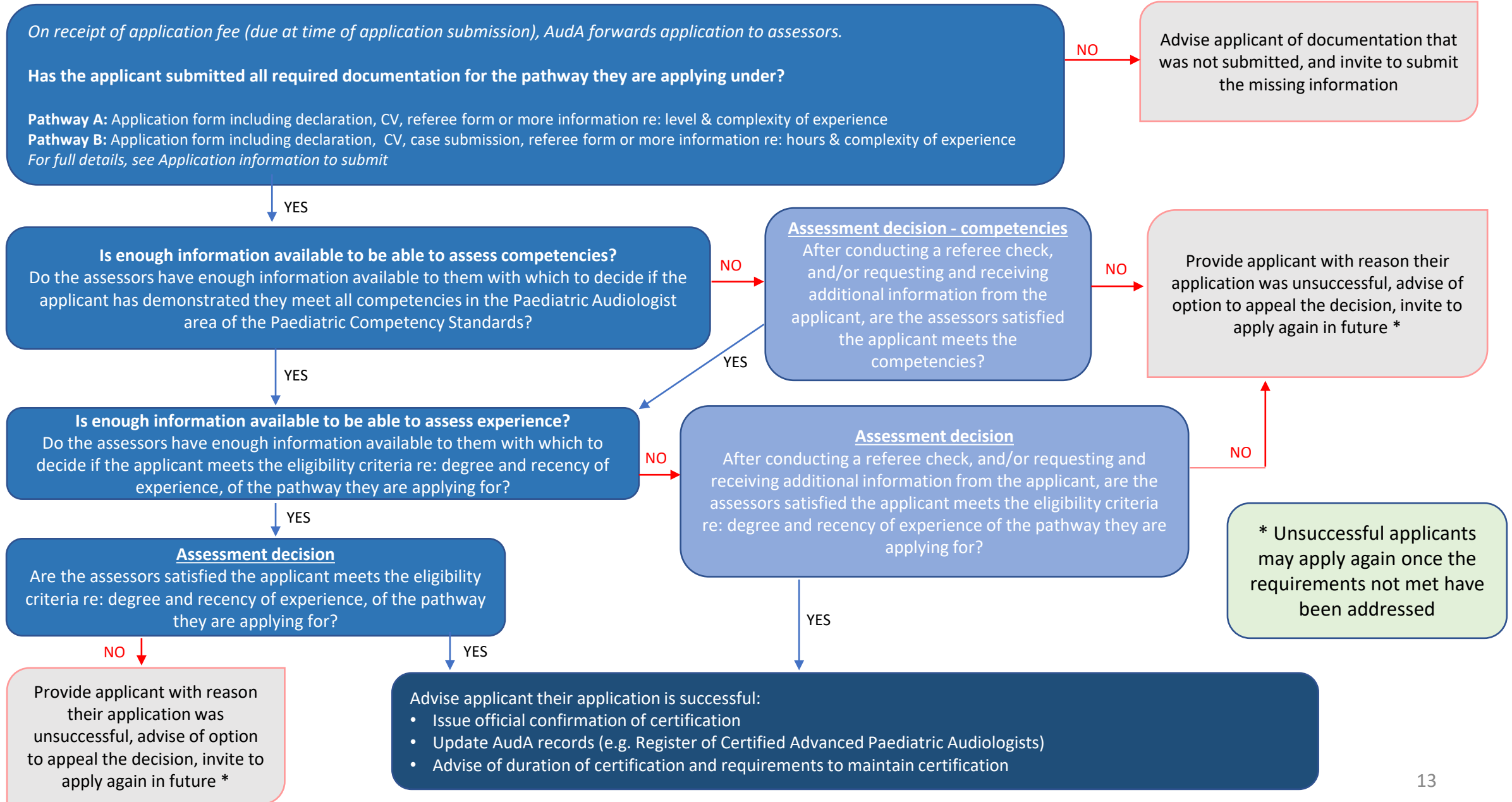
- After the application documentation has been assessed, referee checks conducted if required
- Applicant has option to complete tick box stating that if their application is successful, they agree to have contact details shared with Certified Advanced Paediatric Audiologists for networking
- Applicant has option to complete tick box stating that if their application is successful, they are willing to be considered to act as an assessor of other applications in future
- Assessors awarded CPD points (number to be determined) for each application assessed

Proposed assessment of applications

Eligibility pathway	Pathway A	Pathway B	Case-by-case pathway
How are applications assessed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly assessed against <i>Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists</i> – Paediatric Audiologist area • Professional judgement of Paediatric Certification assessors on how much experience and in what situations competent advanced practitioners in paediatric audiology would be expected to have relative to the eligibility criteria, based on all the information provided in the application including the CV etc, and, if required, on additional information submitted and/or referee checks • Applications assessed following the principle of the child’s needs being paramount 		
Who assesses applications?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially, two members of the Working Group membership - both AudA Accredited Audiologists experienced in offering audiology services to children/families/carers, preferably with paediatric certification (after an initial period, this requirement may be reviewed and tightened, e.g., at least one assessor, or both assessors, to have paediatric certification) • Assessors required to declare any conflict of interest, and the decision on who will assess each application is dependent on no assessor having actual or perceived conflict of interest • Each selected assessor reviews the application independently • If the two assessors reach same conclusion, Working Group accepts their recommendation • If the two assessors disagree, Working Group meets to discuss and makes final decision 		

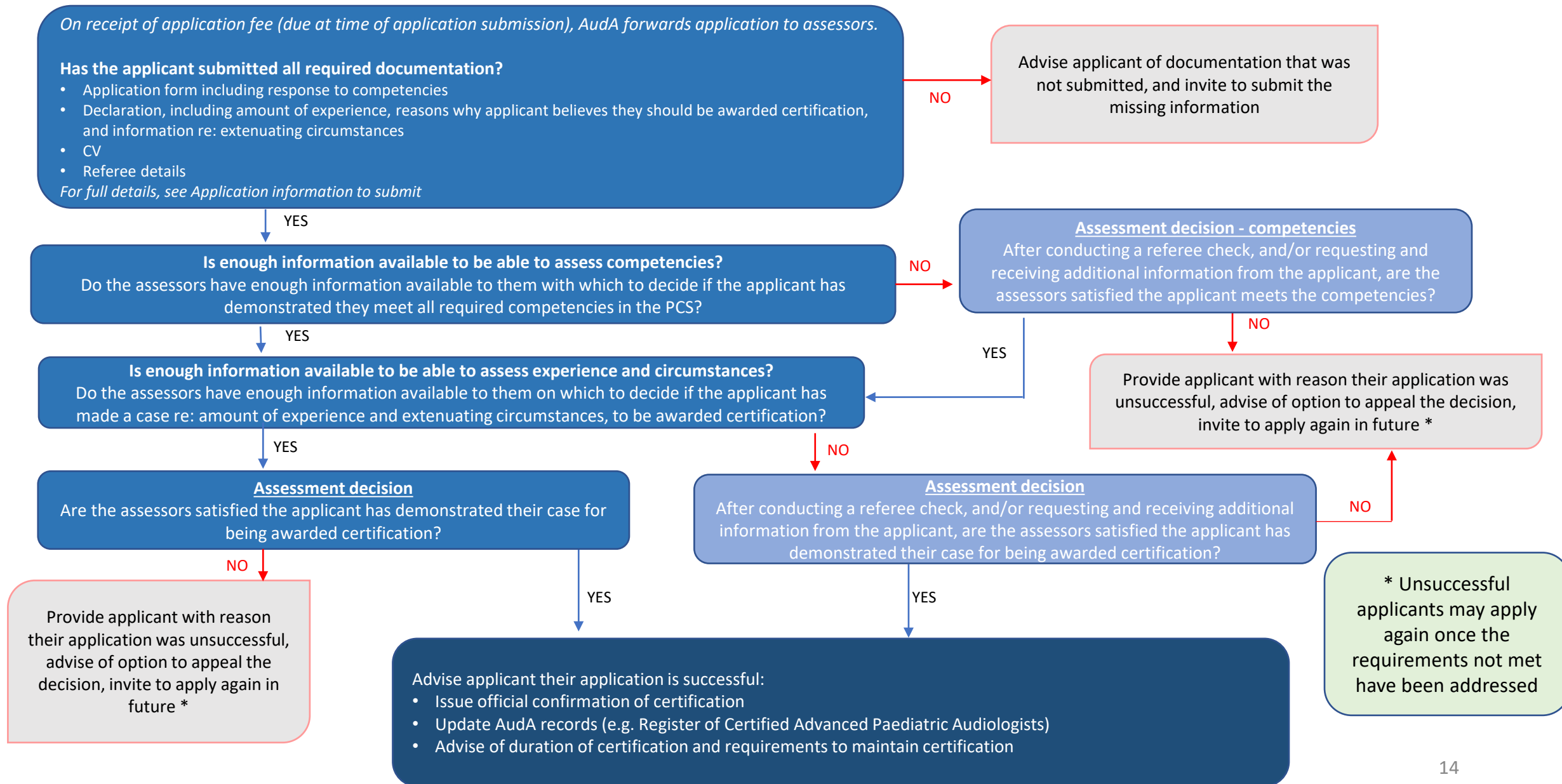
Application details

Application assessment flowchart – Pathway A and Pathway B



Application details

Application assessment flowchart – case by case pathway



Appeals process

- After assessing an application, if the application does not meet the eligibility criteria, the assessment panel will provide feedback to the applicant which will include information on the application's deficits, and will invite the applicant to apply again in future
- The unsuccessful applicant will also be advised they have the option of lodging an appeal
- Lodging an appeal will require payment of the appeals fee

Assessors of Appeals

An appeal to be assessed by two people:

1. An AudA Accredited Audiologist who is an independent subject matter expert in paediatric audiology and/or has certification in it. The assessor is not one of the original assessors of the application, and is not a member of the Paediatric Certification Working Group
 2. Chair of the Working Group, or their proxy. The Chair or proxy is not a member of assessment panels of applications for certification.
- Both assessors of the appeal are required to declare any conflict of interest, and the decision on who will assess the appeal is dependent on no assessor having actual or perceived conflict of interest
 - In the event of differing opinions on the merits of the appeal, the Chair or their proxy has the final say

Maintaining certification

Certification awarded for one year. Proposed requirements to maintain certification

CPD points

Minimum 4 CPD points in areas with paediatric focus within the last year.

The CPD points:

- i. Can be related to any/all of the five areas of practice in the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists*
- ii. Can be drawn from any CPD category
- iii. Can count towards the 20 points required for AudA membership in each annual cycle

Hours

30 hours of direct paediatric clinical activities within the last year.

These hours can be related to any/all of the five areas of practice in the *Paediatric Competency Standards for Audiologists*

The 30 hours applies whether the applicant works full time or part time

- Every year Certified Advanced Paediatric Audiologists will be required to apply for renewal of their certification. This will include a declaration that they have met the minimum hours and CPD requirements
- Payment of the annual certification renewal fee will be required
- Applicants for renewal to be advised that their declaration may be subject to an audit, and they will be required to have documentation on hand to substantiate their declaration, should it be requested (as per existing requirements for AudA membership)

Paediatric focused CPD events and activities

- In addition to the CPD events with a paediatric focus currently offered, AudA will ensure more (both in-person and online) are developed and are available once the certification framework is implemented
- AudA will promote the endorsed paediatric focused CPD events to ensure members are aware of which events are available
- Members will be able to choose endorsed and/or non-endorsed events and activities
- Some paediatric focused CPD activities will be available at no cost, such as the current activities based on journal articles



Maintaining certification

Proposed audit process

The existing process for auditing AudA Accredited Audiologists is to audit a minimum of 5% every year. Any found to be lacking the required CPD points during the audit are contacted and asked to clarify.

20% of the members with paediatric audiology certification would also be audited annually – some of these may be part of the 5%.

This 20% figure will be reviewed in two years as part of the review of the whole framework, with the goal to reduce the figure towards 5%.

As part of the audit of 5% of all members, any of those members audited with certification would also be audited as part of the 20% of members with certification. Additional members with certification would be audited outside of the 5%, to ensure a total of 20% of members with paediatric audiology certification are audited each year (with the figure to be reviewed two years after implementation).

The audit of members with certification would examine CPD points and hours (as specified under Requirements to maintain certification, above).

Each audited member would be asked to provide information to demonstrate they have met the requirements, in line with the process for audits for AudA Accredited Audiologists.

In the event that the member with certification fails an audit, they will be covered under the AudA CPD policy and Recency of Practice Policy and be provided with follow up actions to be achieved within a set time period based on their individual circumstances.

During this time, their certification remains. Should they fail to meet the requirements by the end of the set time period, their certification will be withdrawn.

Fees

Fees for application, renewal and appeals

Administrative support for the assessment of applications received under each of the three pathways will be required.

The system needs to be user pays to reflect the additional resources needed to process applications and manage the system on an ongoing basis.

This work will be in addition to current membership administrative support.

Fee type	Fee	Payable
Application fee	\$150	Payable at time of submission of application
Annual renewal fee	\$100	Payable 30 June each year
Appeal fee	\$100	Payable at time of submission of appeal against an assessment decision

Application of existing AudA policies to the certification framework

Code of Conduct

The requirement for all AudA Accredited Audiologists to meet the professional and ethical standards of the Code of Conduct remains in place for those members with certification, and similar processes apply.

Recency of practice policy

For those who wish to apply for reinstatement as AudA Accredited Audiologists with certification in paediatric audiology

- Tailor requirements to the individual as per the policy - e.g., higher percentage of next year's CPD requirements in paediatric focussed area

Resumption of practice policy

For AudA Accredited Audiologists seeking initial certification or renewal of certification in paediatric audiology

- Tailor requirements to the individual as per the policy - e.g., higher percentage of next year's CPD requirements in paediatric focussed area

Continuing Professional development (CPD) policy

For AudA Accredited Audiologists seeking renewal of certification in paediatric audiology

- Participants unable to meet the CPD requirements due to personal circumstances or hardship can apply for a reduction in the requirements

Policies and processes for overseas qualified practitioners

- Same eligibility and renewal requirements as for Australian qualified practitioners
- Eligible to apply for certification
- Information will be published to state that AudA will accept practice undertaken overseas in applications for certification

Possible College of Paediatric Audiologists

(to be explored as an option in a future survey)

Once the paediatric certification framework is operational, a survey to be conducted on the possibility of establishing a College of Paediatric Audiologists (or similar name)

The survey to ask AudA members if they support such a college being formed, and if so, if those with certification would be interested in joining the college.

The survey would also seek feedback on the types of activities and features the college could offer, and other aspects of its operation.

Some possible goals and activities of a college:

- Facilitate collegiality
- Facilitate knowledge sharing
- Contribute to development of CPD activities
- Enhance prestige of paediatric certification
- Contribute to review of certification process and paediatric competencies
- Provide mentoring to new or future members

Some possible operational details of a college:

- Audiologists with certification in paediatrics could join on an opt-in basis
- Members would be eligible to participate in the activities of the college and receive CPD points for these activities - to be determined
- Any fee for joining college and maintaining membership to be determined

Glossary

Term	Definition
Face to face	Either in-person, or via teleaudiology, where the Audiologist and the child/family/carer are face to face.
Full time equivalent (FTE)	The equivalent of one Audiologist working full time, equal to approximately 1800 hours per year.
Child/family/carer	<p><u>Child</u> All those under 18 years of age; includes neonate, infant, child and young person.</p> <p><u>Family/Carer</u> The child's family members and carers. May include siblings, kinship carers, foster carers, legal guardians and significant others. The term family/carer is used to acknowledge the fact that modern Australian families are diverse and that a range of individuals may be involved in the care of child.</p>
Paediatric client	Child aged under 18 years, and their family/carer.
Paediatric clinical audiology setting	The environment involving and/or supporting the provision of clinical audiology services to a child and their family/carer. In addition to directly providing audiology services to a child, this could include an educational context such as schools or professional development, as well as research and quality assurance.
Referee	A person who in the vast majority of cases is an AudA Accredited Audiologist, who knows the applicant and can attest to or verify their claimed experience and advanced skills as a paediatric Audiologist. The referee acts as a witness and is not required to be or to have been in a position of seniority to the applicant.