

March 2021 Podiatry Accreditation Committee meeting

The Podiatry Accreditation Committee (Committee) publishes this communiqué on its [accreditation webpages](#). Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

Committee's response to COVID-19

The Committee and Ahpra continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impacts on accredited and approved programs. The Committee has released statements outlining its plans for its accreditation activities on the ['News and updates'](#) accreditation webpage.

Committee meeting

The ninth meeting of the Committee was held on 23 March 2021 via Zoom. The Committee anticipates holding three more meetings in 2021.

Some activities that were discussed at the Committee's March 2021 meeting, as well as some other key activities for the Committee, are outlined more thoroughly below.

Review and development of podiatry accreditation standards and professional capabilities feedback being considered post public consultation

The draft accreditation standards and proposed professional capabilities for podiatry, podiatric surgery, endorsement for scheduled medicines and podiatric therapeutics (professional capabilities and accreditation standards) were released for public consultation in late November/early December 2020. The public consultation period closed in March 2021. The Committee is currently reviewing the feedback from stakeholders. The Committee plans to provide the accreditation standards and professional capabilities to the Podiatry Board of Australia (National Board) in mid-2021 for their consideration and approval. The Committee anticipates the accreditation standards and professional capabilities will be approved by the National Board in mid-to-late 2021.

Podiatry Focus Groups – February 2021

In February 2021 the Committee held two online focus groups as part of public consultation on the draft proposed professional capabilities and accreditation standards for podiatry and podiatric surgery.

The purpose of the focus groups was to share information about the draft proposed professional capabilities and accreditation standards, explore stakeholders' initial views on these documents and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to ask questions and seek clarification.

The focus groups were recorded, and are available on the [Accreditation consultations](#) webpage.

Assessment activities for approved programs of study

At its March 2021 meeting, the Committee considered the assessment team's findings for one program of study against the current accreditation standards. The Committee will provide their accreditation decision to the education provider in April 2021.

The Program Accreditation Team has recently contacted education providers to advise them of their tentative accreditation assessment application dates against the new and revised accreditation standards, once they are approved by the National Board and take effect.

Monitoring approved programs of study

Under section 50 of the National Law, the Committee has a statutory responsibility to monitor approved programs of study and the education providers offering them.

[2021 Routine annual monitoring](#)

At its March 2021 meeting, the Committee confirmed its 2021 Routine annual monitoring package and timeframes for reporting. The 2021 Routine annual monitoring report form and associated templates will be disseminated to education providers in two rounds - either April or July 2021. The Routine annual monitoring reports will seek information from education providers on the downstream impacts of COVID-19 in 2021 and beyond.

The Committee will continue to provide advice to the National Board on its monitoring of approved programs including the downstream impacts of COVID-19.

Call for accreditation assessor applications

In January 2021, the Committee commenced a campaign to recruit accreditation assessors, which recently closed. The Committee has appointed its Selection Advisory Panel to review the applications and interview the shortlisted candidates. The Selection Advisory Panel's recommendations of accreditation assessor appointments will be considered by the Committee in August 2021. All successfully appointed accreditation assessors will be required to undergo assessor training in late-2021.

Accreditation fees for podiatry

In December 2020, on behalf of the Committee, the Program Accreditation Team sent the communication package to the education providers and the Australasian Council of Podiatry Deans (ACPD) about the proposed approach to podiatry accreditation fees 2021-2024. The consultation period ran from December 2020 – January 2021. The correspondence to education providers and ACPD also foreshadowed that the Accreditation Officers would be in contact to gauge interest in meeting via videoconference with the Chair and another Committee representative to discuss any of the Committee's work outlined in the letter or in recent Communiqués. The meetings with the education providers is covered in this Communiqué' under Stakeholder Engagement.

No formal feedback was received from stakeholders, and at its March 2021 meeting, the Committee confirmed the approach to accreditation fees for 2021-2024 and agreed to submit the confirmed approach to accreditation fees for 2021-2024 to the National Board for approval.

Subject to the National Board's approval of the approach, the Program Accreditation Team will publish the fees information on the Committee's accreditation webpages, and advise education providers.

March 2021 Key Performance Indicators reporting to the National and Ahpra

As outlined in section 7 of its [Terms of Reference \(ToR\)](#), the Committee must provide to the National Board reports and supporting documentation in accordance with the timeframes and form and content requirements as identified in attachment F of the ToR.

The Committee submitted its March 2021 Key Performance Indicator report to the National Board on 31 March 2021.

Stakeholder engagement

The Program Accreditation Team, on behalf of the Committee, continues to engage with education providers via the Committee's [accreditation webpages](#), and through videoconference, phone and email correspondence, and its communiqués.

Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders

In early 2021, Program Accreditation Team contacted education providers to seek their interest in meeting with the Chair and a Committee representative to discuss various topics such as: podiatry fees consultation paper; draft podiatry accreditation standards; COVID-19 impacts on program delivery; and composition of assessment teams and the expression of interest for accreditation assessors. Seven education providers requested meetings with the Committee Chair and a Committee representative. The meetings were held via Zoom in January and February 2021.

Contact information

For any queries related to podiatry program accreditation, please contact the Committee via the Program Accreditation Team at program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au.

For more information on podiatry accreditation please visit the Committee's [accreditation](#) webpage.

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