

The regulation of audiologists and audiometrists in Australia

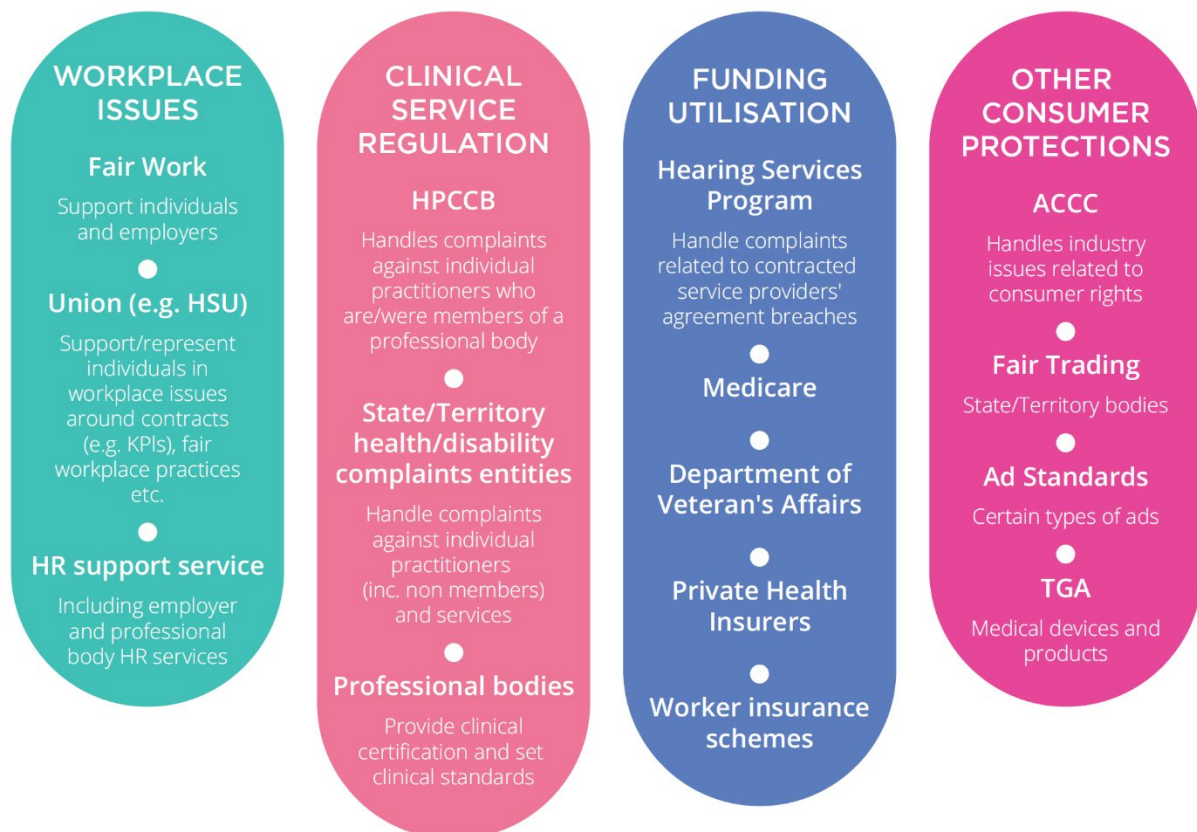
Regulation by professional bodies

Hearing service practitioners (audiologists and audiometrists) are regulated by their professional bodies.

Audiology Australia provides clinical certification, regulation and professional support to audiologists. The Australian College of Audiology Inc HAASA provides clinical certification, regulation and professional support for both audiologists and audiometrists. [Audiology Australia's Register of Accredited Audiologists](#) includes all current audiologists clinically certified by Audiology Australia. The Australian College of Audiology Inc HAASA issues a Full Membership and Clinical Competency certificates to confirm their certification of audiologists and audiometrists and members of the public can request to see these certificates.

The HPCCB handles complaints and can recommend sanctions of members and/or clinically certified members to the Boards of Audiology Australia, the Australian College of Audiology Inc HAASA.

Overview of entities that provide the regulatory framework for hearing services in Australia



Regulation via legislation

Audiologists and audiometrists do not require registration under the [National Law](#) with one of the National Boards under [the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency](#) and are therefore often referred to as “unregistered” health practitioners. However, this does not mean that they do not need to comply with relevant Codes of Conduct, including those of professional bodies such as Audiology Australia and the Australian College of Audiology, and any other State/Territory legislation relating to “unregistered” health practitioners. This includes abiding by the National Code of Conduct for health care workers (the National Code) which is currently implemented in most States in Australia and is planned to be implemented in all States and Territories. The National Code includes provisions which prevents people without the appropriate qualifications and experience from representing themselves as an audiologist or audiometrist.

Clinical certification required for Government-funded hearing services

Australian Government’s Hearing Services Program

In order to provide services under the Australian Government’s Hearing Services Program an audiologist or audiometrist must be determined to be a Qualified Practitioner by the Federal Department of Health. This includes meeting the requirement of clinical certification by one of the three Practitioner Professional Bodies: 1. Audiology Australia (audiologists only), 2. The Australian College of Audiology (audiologists and audiometrists), or 3. The Hearing Aid Audiometrist Society of Australia (audiometrists only). You can read more about Qualified Practitioners under the Hearing Services Program [here on the Department of Health’s website](#), and in the relevant legislation: [Hearing Services Program \(Voucher\) Instrument 2019](#) (see Division 6.1—Services to be delivered by qualified practitioners).

Medicare

In addition, to be able to claim Medicare benefits, audiologists must be clinically certified by Audiology Australia or the Australian College of Audiology. You can read more about Eligibility for recognition as an allied health professional [here on the Department of Human Services’ website](#).

Private Health Insurance

The legislation relating to private health insurance requires that audiologists must be clinically certified by Audiology Australia or the Australian College of Audiology. The following legislation sections read in the following order describe this requirement:

1. [Private Health Insurance \(Accreditation\) Rules 2011](#) §9 Treatments provided by allied health professionals
 - o 9(1) states that if the treatment is a services in section 12 of the Health Insurance Regulations 2018, then it needs to be provided by an allied health professional qualified in that field.
2. [Health Insurance Regulations 2018](#) §12 Health service not specified in an item-meaning of health service
 - o 12(b) states that audiology is a health service, therefore 9(1) and 9(2) of the Private Health Insurance (Accreditation) Rules 2011 apply
3. [Private Health Insurance \(Accreditation\) Rules 2011](#) §9 Treatments provided by allied health professionals
 - o 9(1) states that if the treatment is a services in section 12 of the Health Insurance Regulations 2018, then it needs to be provided by an allied health professional qualified in that field.

4. [Health Insurance \(Allied Health Services\) Determination 2014](#) Schedule 1—Qualification requirements for allied health professionals, 2 Audiology health service
 - o Schedule 1.2 Audiology health service states that:

"A person is an allied health professional in relation to the provision of an audiology health service if the person is

(a) a Full Member of Audiology Australia and the holder of a Certificate of Clinical Practice issued by that organisation; or

(b) an Ordinary Member—Audiologist, or a Fellow Audiologist, of the Australian College of Audiology."

Other Government scheme requirements

The National Transport Commission and Austroad's [Assessing Fitness to Drive \(AFTD\)](#) (see pages 106-108) recognises the role of audiologists and audiometrists certified by Audiology Australia, the Australian College of Audiology and the Hearing Aid Audiology Society of Australia in conducting hearing assessments and fitting hearing aids. Furthermore, audiologists certified by Audiology Australia and the Australian College of Audiology are able to conduct further assessments for those who are unable to meet minimum hearing thresholds even when fitted with hearing aids to determine whether they are eligible for a conditional licence.

The National Transport Commission's [National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers](#) (see asterisk notes on pages 166 and 169) requires that audiologists conducting health assessments under their program are members and clinically certified by Audiology Australia (formerly known as the Audiological Society of Australia Inc.).

Many State and Territory Government schemes, such as work cover schemes, also have their own specific requirements regarding the clinical certification of audiologists and audiometrists who are able to conduct assessments and provide rehabilitation services.