



National Competency Standards for Audiologists and Audiometrists

Introduction

As a self-regulated professional body, ACAud is responsible for ensuring that all practicing members have the required competencies to safely and effectively provide hearing services. These competencies describe the minimum standard of practice required by a hearing care practitioner at the conclusion of their internship and of every certified practicing member of ACAud.

Purpose

The National Competencies have been adopted to maintain a uniform approach to clinical competency across the hearing industry so that seekers of hearing care can easily identify the minimum standard expectations for hearing care practitioners.

The National Competency standards together with the Scope of Practice for Audiologists and Audiometrists and the Code of Conduct, provide the nationally agreed framework within which all hearing services are provided.

Policy

This policy outlines the clinical competency standards that certified ACAud members will be held to. ACAud's clinical competencies are aligned to the National Competencies which were developed by the National Competency Standards Working Group under oversight of the Audiology Australia University Accreditation and Competencies Committee.

The National Competency Standards include the following six domains:

1. Audiological clinical practice
2. Professional communications and collaborations
3. Education and lifelong learning
4. Quality, safety and compliance
5. Ethical and professional behaviour
6. Advocacy

Each domain is equally important and describes fundamental skills that ensure health care practitioners deliver equitable, safe and consistent services by the end of their internship. The first domain relating to Audiological clinical practice is relevant to each individual, their scope of practice and the needs of their work environment.

Domain 1: Audiological Clinical practice

Provides safe, evidenced-based, person- and family-centred, and responsive hearing care practice across the lifespan.

1.1 Facilitates the identification and referral of individuals and groups requiring hearing services

- i. Promotes screening programs and referral guidelines to ensure individuals requiring hearing services are identified and referred.
- ii. Collects and reviews information from a range of sources such as referrals, reports and consultation to determine an individual's need for services.
- iii. Recognises and responds to the distinct hearing health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other populations at risk of developing ear, hearing and associated conditions.

1.2 Plans, conducts and appropriately modifies an assessment

- i. Collects and analyses case history, client goals, expectations, needs and priorities, in partnership with the client, and when appropriate, their carers and/or significant others.
- ii. Collects and analyses pertinent information from referrals, reports, consultation, and other relevant sources of information to understand the client's situation.
- iii. Obtains client consent to the assessment.
- iv. Plans and conducts a valid, accurate and reliable assessment, selecting the tools, equipment and techniques that will address the unique needs of the client.
- v. Practises appropriate person- and family-centred clinical care.

1.3 Analyses and interprets assessment results

- i. Analyses and integrates the data using knowledge, skill and judgement.
- ii. Formulates appropriate conclusions regarding reliability of testing and the site of lesion and functionality of any ear, hearing and associated conditions.
- iii. Shares assessment findings with the client and when appropriate, their carers and/or significant others.

1.4 Develops, shares, and modifies recommendations based on the assessment results and client needs

- i. Establishes goals in collaboration with the client and when appropriate, their carers and/or significant others.
- ii. Develops recommendations for intervention, including appropriate audiological therapy, technology, modifications to the environment and/or further referrals.
- iii. Supports the client and relevant others to make informed decisions by sharing information and explanations of assessment results, implications, management options and recommendations.

1.5 Implements intervention plans with consent and evaluates client outcomes

- i. Implements and appropriately modifies intervention plans which are client and family centred.
- ii. Evaluates client outcomes using client reported and/or objective measures.

1.6 Uses reflective practice to evaluate and improve clinical practice

- i. Reviews own clinical performance through reflection on experience, knowledge, actions, feelings and beliefs on each occasion of clinical practice.
- ii. Plans and implements strategies to assist performance improvement.
- iii. [Seeks support for debriefing or guidance following a challenging interaction.](#)

1.7 Skills and knowledge reflected in the ACAud Professional Competency Standards Policy

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Domain 2: Professional communications and collaborations

Promotes health and wellbeing through respectful and appropriate communications to ensure mutual understanding with all stakeholders.

2.1 Uses appropriate and effective verbal and non-verbal communication, adapted to suit the professional situation and health literacy of the other person(s)

- i. Ensures all interactions, regardless of communication mode, meet the specific needs of each client, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples.
- ii. Uses inclusive language and explains terminology and/or jargon which may be unfamiliar to the listener/reader.
- iii. Recognises the importance of non-verbal communication, including facial expressions and natural gestures.
- iv. Communicates in a professional, timely, caring and empathetic manner to encourage trust and honesty in all relationships.
- v. Participates respectfully in challenging conversations.

2.2 Optimises the environment and mode of communication as required to maximise effectiveness of communication

- i. Seeks appropriate interpreters, when required, to convey the message accurately and confidentially.
- ii. Considers the environment for communication, such as background noise, good lighting and camera angle.
- iii. Uses social media responsibly, particularly when engaged in advertising or marketing activities.

2.3 Communicates in accordance with confidentiality and privacy considerations, being aware of potential for personal details to be used inappropriately

- i. Obtains client consent, whether written or verbal, before information is shared, including with whom sharing will occur.
- ii. Determines with sensitivity what is relevant or pertinent to the person/organisation receiving information and clarifies why the information is being shared.

2.4 Ensures documentation is timely, stored securely and conforms with medical and legal requirements

- i. Retains evidence of communication regarding clients such as referrals, letters, emails, and case notes, allowing client appropriate access.
- ii. Identifies in the client record when consent has been obtained and whether written or verbal.
- iii. Produces case notes which are succinct, relevant, targeted, and informative.
- iv. Generates reports which are accurate and complete.
- v. Provides accurate, meaningful, and complete information in records being transferred to another provider.

2.5 Collaborates with clients, colleagues, and other health care professionals effectively

- i. Works together to develop strategies, policies, and solutions to problems, and manages misunderstandings and conflicts to enhance collaborative practice.
- ii. Works with the client, and when appropriate, their carers and/or significant others, colleagues, and other professionals to achieve the best outcome for the client.
- iii. Recognises and respects the roles and perspectives of other individuals.
- iv. Builds relationships between organisations.

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Domain 3: Education and lifelong learning

Maintains and improves currency of knowledge skills and new evidence for hearing care practice.

3.1 Ensures ongoing capability for hearing care practice and maintains currency of professional knowledge and performance to provide optimal care

- i. Identifies one's own professional strengths and areas for development through self-reflection, review of performance and feedback.
- ii. Uses a range of learning materials and modes such as literature, continuing education, and mentorship to fulfil learning needs.
- iii. Develops a plan and implements strategies to achieve and maintain capability and currency of professional knowledge and practice.
- iv. Maintains knowledge of relevant resources and technologies for audiological practice.
- v. Maintains digital literacy for hearing care practice.
- vi. Participates in and meets all requirements of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program of ACAud.

3.2 Contributes to the knowledge base of hearing care practice

- i. Participates in research or the ongoing review and critical appraisal of new and emerging evidence relevant to hearing care practice.
- ii. Reviews and shares evidence and adapts practice as appropriate.
- iii. Identifies and addresses gaps in the knowledge base.

Domain 4: Quality, Safety and Compliance

Provides safe, effective, compliant, and high-quality hearing services.

4.1 Ensures service delivery complies with relevant guidelines, standards, and legal obligations

- i. Complies with the policies and procedures that are consistent with current evidence and best practice professional standards.
- ii. Ensures knowledge of and adherence to all professional, legal, and statutory requirements pertinent to the workplace, to enable safe practice.

4.2 Takes responsibility for quality assurance

- i. Recognises need for and demonstrates ongoing continuous quality improvement incorporating client needs, emerging evidence, and practice standards.
- ii. Understands the right of the client to receive high quality care and best possible outcomes.
- iii. Complies with complaints processes and procedures and takes action to address issues that are relevant to quality service delivery.

4.3 Ensures the environment is safe and meets the clinical need

- i. Complies with relevant occupational health and safety legislation and workplace policies.
- ii. Ensures cleanliness, infection control, safety of room, maintenance and calibration of clinical equipment.
- iii. Complies with infection control processes that are consistent with current national, state, territory and workplace standards.
- iv. Adheres to risk management processes and protocols.
- v. Ensures test environment is appropriate for the clinical need and modifies where necessary.

4.4 Contributes to ongoing wellbeing in the workplace

- i. Participates in ongoing training to maintain safety and wellbeing.
- ii. Utilises effective and efficient strategies to manage workload.
- iii. Recognises the factors impacting wellbeing in the workplace and how to respond when required.

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Domain 5: Ethical and professional behaviour

Acts in an ethical, safe, lawful and accountable manner that upholds integrity of the hearing care professions.

5.1 Ensures professional and ethical behaviour

- i. Practises in a way that maintains equity, dignity, honesty, cultural sensitivity and safety, diversity, and individual rights.
- ii. Practises hearing services within scope of practice, capability, and experience.
- iii. Refers to or consults with other professionals or services when faced with issues outside scope of practice, capability, or experience.
- iv. Ensures all communications including advertising and marketing are accurate, evidence-based, and not misleading or coercive.
- v. Recognises and effectively manages own judgements and values to ensure clients are not unduly impacted.
- vi. Upholds personal and professional ethics within the workplace and applies ethical principles to decision-making.
- vii. Ensures clients' rights, privacy, needs, interests, and choices are prioritised and supported.
- viii. Escalates or supports others to escalate concerns about unethical practice as appropriate.

5.2 Maintains integrity of the hearing care professions

- i. Complies with the ACAud and workplace codes of conduct.
- ii. Ensures all interactions with clients, other professionals, and the public, including those on social media, are respectful and maintain the integrity of the profession.

5.3 Maintains professionalism, respectful demeanour, and standards

- i. Maintains appropriate professional boundaries.
- ii. Maintains a suitable appearance to meet the standards of the workplace.
- iii. Recognises, discloses, and effectively manages conflicts of interest to ensure client outcomes are placed above commercial gain.
- iv. Understands and takes responsibility to manage impact of own behaviour on others.
- v. Works with colleagues and other professionals in a respectful and supportive manner.

Domain 6: Advocacy

Promotes the hearing care professions and advocates for the health and wellbeing of people with regards to ear, hearing and associated conditions.

6.1 Advocates for and partners with people who have or are at risk of ear, hearing and associated conditions

- i. Works with professional bodies and engages with policy makers, community groups and Government to advocate for people who have, or are at risk of developing, ear, hearing and associated conditions and their families.
- ii. Raises awareness of the communication needs of those who have, or are at risk of developing, ear, hearing and associated conditions.
- iii. Identifies and addresses the barriers that impede or prevent access to services and resources by the client.
- iv. Empowers people with ear, hearing and associated conditions to participate in their community through education and ongoing support.

6.2 Advocates for and partners with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with regards to their hearing health care

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- i. Assists government agencies, policy makers, other healthcare professionals, or employers to be aware of and respond to the specific hearing health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- ii. Advocates for the development of cultural capability and the development of resources to ensure audiological care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is carried out in a culturally sensitive and safe manner.

6.3 Advocates for self and colleagues

- i. Advocates for a safe and equitable work environment, free from discrimination and undue pressures.
- ii. Advocates within the workplace for best practice standards.
- iii. Advocates within the workplace for fair and reasonable performance expectations that align with ACAud ethics and Code of Conduct.

6.4 Advocates for the hearing care professions

- i. Identifies and engages with opportunities to advocate for the hearing care professions.
- ii. Ensures all professional interactions are held in a manner that helps promote positive perceptions of the hearing care professions.
- iii. Promotes the hearing professions through the sharing of professional knowledge and experience.

Procedures

Clinical interns will be assessed against these clinical competencies to attain Clinical Certification as an Audiologist or Audiometrist.

Related Documents

- Code of Conduct for Audiologists and Audiometrists
- ACA23011 Code of Conduct Policy
- Scope of Practice for Audiologists and Audiometrists
- ACA23026 Scope of Practice Application

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