



Bylaws

June 2024

Next review June 2026

Definition

- Any term used in these Bylaws and not otherwise defined has the same meaning given to it in the Constitution of Orthoptics Australia (OA).
- A reference to the Constitution of OA is a reference to the Constitution as it may be varied, amended or substituted from time to time.
- These Bylaws are in addition to and supplement those provisions contained in the Constitution and should be read together wherever possible.
- In the event of any inconsistency between any provision contained in these Bylaws and any Constitution of OA, the Constitution will prevail to the extent of such inconsistency.

1. Membership

1.1 Membership is offered in two classes:

1.1.1 Voting:

- Ordinary
- Fellow
- Graduate.

1.1.2 Non-voting:

- Student
- Associate
- Honorary.

Members can change categories at the time of their annual renewal if their circumstances change. Students must provide evidence of continuing eligibility for that category of membership at each annual renewal or change to another category for which they qualify.

1.2 Criteria for membership:

If a new member fulfils the criteria of more than one category, they may apply to join in whichever category they believe best suits their needs. Members can change categories at the time of their annual renewal if their circumstances change.

1.2.1 Ordinary Members shall be individuals who:

- Support the objects of OA, and
- Are a graduate of an entry-level orthoptic course of an Australian institution recognised by OA (see Clause 3), or hold a certificate of general registration with the registering body for orthoptists in Australia, or
- Are a graduate of an overseas orthoptic or other relevant training school wishing to practice within Australia and are granted registration with the registering body for orthoptists in Australia.

Ordinary Members: Part-time -

- Satisfy all criteria for Ordinary Members, and
- Are presently working less than sixteen (16) hours per week.

Ordinary Members: Supported –

- Satisfy all criteria for Ordinary Members, and
- Will be on planned parental leave for a period of more than 6 months during the membership year, or
- Will be a non-practising practitioner (retired, career break, sabbatical, travel or not in employment) for a period of more than 6 months during the membership year, or
- Is enrolled in full-time postgraduate study in orthoptics (master by research or doctoral degree only) and not engaged in eye health related employment for more than an average of 16 hours per week.

Members in each category of Ordinary membership will be allocated into sub-categories based on their registration status under the Australian Orthoptic Board.

1.2.2 Fellow Members shall be individuals who:

1.2.2.1 Fellow Members: Practising -

- Support the objects of OA
- Have previously held voting membership of OA as an Ordinary Member
- Have been appointed as a Fellow Member of OA under Clause 1.3 of these Bylaws
- Are working in eye health related employment in Australia for the ensuing period of twelve (12) months or longer.

Members in the Fellow Members: Practising category of membership will be allocated into sub-categories based on their registration status under the Australian Orthoptic Board.

1.2.2.2 Fellow Members: Non-practising -

- Support the objects of OA
- Have previously held voting membership of OA as an Ordinary Member
- Have been appointed as a Fellow Member of OA under Clause 1.3 of these Bylaws
- Are not working in eye health related employment in Australia for the ensuing period of twelve (12) months or longer.

1.2.3 Graduate Members shall be individuals who:

- Support the objects of OA
- Can demonstrate at the time of joining or renewing that they have graduated from an entry-level orthoptic course of an Australian institution recognised by OA (see Clause 3) within the past two years.

Members in each category of Graduate membership will be allocated into sub-categories based on their registration status under the Australian Orthoptic Board.

1.2.4 Student Members shall be individuals who:

- Support the objects of OA
- Can demonstrate at the time of joining and each subsequent renewal that they are presently studying an entry-level orthoptic course of an Australian institution recognised by OA (see Clause 3).

1.2.5 Associate Members shall be individuals who:

1.2.5.1 Associate Members -

- Support the objects of OA
- Are eligible to become an Ordinary Member of OA
- Are not engaging in eye health related employment in Australia for the ensuing period of twelve (12) months or longer.

1.2.5.2 Associate Members: Ophthalmology –

- Support the objects of OA
- Can demonstrate that they are a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists or equivalent international body.

1.2.6 Honorary Members shall be individuals who:

- Support the objects of OA
- Are not eligible for Fellow Membership
- Are awarded Honorary Membership via the process set out in Clause 1.3.

1.3 The OA Board will appoint Fellow Members and Honorary Members subject to the following:

1.3.1 Fellow Members:

Any voting member of OA may nominate an eligible member to be considered for Fellow membership. Nominations must be in writing, seconded by another voting member of OA and be addressed to the President. Applications should outline the reasons why the member is suitable, including details that the nominee meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Significant contribution to the development of OA and the advancement of the orthoptic profession
- Demonstrated performance and dedication to OA via a committee or representative position, or the profession
- Demonstrated support and mentoring of OA members
- Personal conduct reflects the values of OA.

The OA Board will review each nomination. Directors who declare a conflict of interest will abstain from the review and subsequent vote. All directors participating in the review and subsequent vote must support the nomination for the nominee to be endorsed. If endorsed, the nominee will be awarded Fellow Membership at the next Annual General Meeting.

1.3.2 Honorary Members:

Any voting member of the OA may nominate a person to be considered for Honorary membership. Nominations must be in writing, seconded by another voting member of OA and be addressed to the President. Applications should outline the reasons why the person is suitable including details that the nominee meets the following criteria:

- Demonstrated commitment and significant contribution to OA, the orthoptic profession or eye healthcare
- Personal conduct reflects the values of OA.

The OA Board will review each nomination. Directors who declare a conflict of interest will abstain from the review and subsequent vote. All directors participating in the review and subsequent vote must support the nomination for the nominee to be endorsed. Endorsement is subject to the limitation that no more than 15 individuals can hold Honorary Membership at the same time. If endorsed, the nominee will be awarded Honorary Membership at the next Annual General Meeting.

2. Membership Applications

- 2.1 Applications for membership must be made on either the prescribed application form or online via the OA website's online joining function along with supporting evidence demonstrating eligibility and accompanied by the prescribed membership subscription.
- 2.2 The Board delegates authority to the Membership Committee to assist the OA Office to approve applications for membership where necessary. The Board delegates authority to the Membership Committee to manage the membership approval process as per the membership committee guidelines.
- 2.3 The Board will receive for noting a quarterly report containing the name, state and membership category of all new members.

3. Recognised qualifications

For the purpose of determining eligibility for membership, OA recognises the entry level orthoptic qualifications offered by University of Technology Sydney and Latrobe University Victoria accepted by the registering body. All previous Australian and United Kingdom qualifications recognised by the registering body for orthoptists in Australia are eligible for membership. Overseas orthoptic and other related qualifications whose graduates are granted registration with the registering body for orthoptists in Australia are also recognised qualifications for the purpose of determining eligibility for membership.

4. Membership subscriptions

In line with the Constitution and accepting good governance practices, the OA Board will set membership subscriptions along with a budget at least three months prior to the commencement of each financial year.

At the discretion of the Board:

- Membership subscriptions may be prorated for new members who join part way through the membership year.
- Membership subscriptions may include discounts for members who demonstrate loyalty through ongoing retention of their membership.
- Membership subscriptions for new members may include a joining fee.
- Non-practising Fellow members will not be charged an annual membership subscription.
- Practising Fellow members will be billed an annual membership subscription that aligns with Ordinary membership and offered a discount of 75% should they wish to claim this.

As a guide, membership subscriptions will increase annually in line with the Australian Consumer Price Index (CPI) unless there are changes to the services and benefits offered to members which warrant additional charges or discounts.

5. Procedure for election of directors

5.1 Nominations for Directors to serve on the Board shall be proposed and seconded by financial Voting members on the prescribed form and must include a formal signed consent from the nominee. Nominations will open at least eight (8) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting and will close six (6) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting.

5.2 Should the number of nominations received exceed the number of vacancies or fall outside the Clause 24.3 of the Constitution, an election will be required under Clause 28 of the Constitution. The process for an election is:

- 5.2.1 The Secretary will act as the Returning Officer.
- 5.2.2 Each nominee is required to provide an Election Statement of up to 250 words to support their nomination. The statement must be ethical and able to be substantiated and shall be approved by the Secretary.
- 5.2.3 Voting via an online voting system shall commence at least five (5) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting ensuring access to voting members for one vote only. Where possible, a photo and Election Statement for each candidate will appear on a rotational basis to provide equal opportunity to all candidates.
- 5.2.4 To be recognised, a vote must be completed in accordance with instructions. Voting members will be able to nominate their preferred candidate(s) up to the maximum number of vacancies which exist. As a proportional voting system, voting members will not be required to rank candidates in the order of their choice.
- 5.2.5 Online voting will conclude three (3) weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.2.6 If any number of nominees receive an equal number of votes, the President shall have a second or casting vote.
- 5.2.7 Immediately after the conclusion of the ballot the Returning Officer shall advise the President who will ensure all nominees are advised of the ballot results. Results shall be given to the chair of the Annual General Meeting for presentation to members and to enable the declaration of the nominees with the highest number of valid votes as directors.
- 5.2.8 All records pertaining to elections shall be retained by the OA Office for a period of not less than six (6) months.

6. Appointed Directors

- 6.1 The OA Board, at a properly constituted meeting, at its discretion and after considering the diversity, skills and knowledge available via its elected directors and any continuing appointed directors, may elect to appoint up to 2 Appointed Directors under Clause 24.1 of the Constitution. Appointment is via an Expressions of Interest process.
- 6.2 The OA Board will consider whether a call for Expressions of Interest should be disseminated to members only, or whether they wish to consider applications from beyond the voting membership. The OA Board will identify the skills, knowledge and attributes it seeks and ensure this information is conveyed to interested parties. The OA Board will articulate requirements for applications – e.g. CV, references, photograph, letter, outlining how they meet the desired criteria.
- 6.3 The OA Board will appoint a sub-committee to undertake the selection process. The sub-committee will make themselves available to respond to enquiries from interested parties during the advertising period. All Expressions of Interest will be submitted to the OA Office, then forwarded to the selection sub-committee as soon as possible after the closing date. The sub-committee will: assess every application against the criteria and agree to a short-list of applicants; undertake interviews with short-listed applicants and reference checks if thought appropriate. At the conclusion of the process the sub-committee will meet to discuss the applications and make a recommendation to the Board.
- 6.4 Following ratification of the sub-committee's recommendation, the President will advise all applicants of the outcome and work with the Secretary to ensure all statutory requirements are completed. The President will also schedule an induction session at the earliest opportunity.

7. Casual vacancies

- 7.1 The OA Board, at a properly constituted meeting, at its discretion and after considering the diversity, skills and knowledge available via its elected and appointed directors, may seek to fill a casual vacancy which exists as a result of nominations being less than vacancies or the mid-term resignation of a director as detailed under Clause 27 of the Constitution.
- 7.2 The OA Board will call for Expressions of Interest from eligible members after identifying the skills, knowledge and attributes it is seeking. The OA Board will articulate requirements for applications – e.g. CV, references, photograph, letter, outlining how they meet the desired criteria.
- 7.3 The OA Board will appoint a sub-committee to undertake the selection process. The sub-committee will make themselves available to respond to enquiries from interested parties during the advertising period. All Expressions of Interest will be submitted to the Secretary, then forwarded to the selection sub-committee as soon as possible after the closing date. The sub-committee will: assess every application against the criteria and agree to a short-list of applicants; undertake interviews with short-listed applicants and reference checks if thought appropriate. At the conclusion of the process the sub-committee will meet to discuss the applications and make a recommendation to the Board.

7.4 Following the OA Board's ratification of the sub-committee's recommendation, the President will advise all applicants of the outcome and work with the Secretary to ensure all statutory requirements are completed. The President will also schedule an induction session for successful applicant(s) at the earliest opportunity.

8 Appointment of Committees, Working Parties and Representatives

The OA Board appoints committees, sub-committees, working parties and representatives to undertake roles as delegated from time to time. Details, including those pertaining to appointment, role and authority, are set out within relevant Terms of Reference for each committee, sub-committee or working party or representative established by the OA Board. The OA Board may vary such arrangements from time to time. The Terms of Reference for each committee will include purpose and scope, responsibilities, structure and membership, authority, reporting and review.

Refer to the Constitution for further information.

9 State operations

Arrangements are set out in the State Handbook.