

Workforce Operations Advice

SUBJECT:

Constructing AHP Classification Review Panels (AHP3 & above)

Advice prepared by: **Workforce Operations**

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Summary	Updated Advice on Allied Health Professional (re)classification review panel membership with expanded information and further guidance.
Keywords	Reclassification; Classification; Allied Health Professional; Panel Membership; discipline; representation; delegate
Applies to	SA Health Care Act 2008 SA Public Sector Act 2009
Award/Enterprise Agreements covered by this advice	South Australian Public Sector Wages Parity Enterprise Agreement: Salaried 2012 - Allied Health Professionals (AHPs)
Staff impact	Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) SA Health Workforce Directorate
Notification	SA Health Workforce Directorate Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO) Managers of AHP employees Allied Health Professional (AHP) employees
Implementation and Action	Managers and Workforce/Human Resource Practitioners across SA Health responsible for and/or involved in the (re)classification of AHP positions
Related or Referred to documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaces WOA0002-11 • WOA0004-11 (Re)classification Principles and Processes

This advice supersedes any previous advice(s) regarding Allied Health Professional (AHP) Classification Review Panels and requirements.

Version control and change history

Version	Date from	Date to	Amendment
1.0	2 Sept 2011	31 Dec 2012	Original (replaced) version (WOA0002-11)
1.1	1 Jan 2013		Updated / expanded information and content



Constructing AHP Classification Review Panels (AHP3 & above)

General Principles

The development and implementation of Classification Panel membership requirements *specific* to Allied Health Professional (AHP) positions recognises the value and contribution of clinical knowledge and specific professional expertise to the formulation of appropriate, well considered and relevant AHP classification level decisions.

To foster consistency in the application and attribution of classification levels across the SA Health system, it is considered that classification panels established to determine AHP classification levels should as far as practicable include cross system representation (eg; from other LHNs), *or* where necessary, be centrally convened and coordinated by the Workforce Operations Unit.

Whilst specific panel membership requirements are indicated for AHP positions, the general principles, processes and classification requirements described in the SA Health Workforce Operations Advice: [WOA0004-11 \(Re\)classification Principles and Processes](#) (and associated resources and documents) will generally apply, unless indicated otherwise within *this* Advice.

Scope

This Advice has specific applicability to AHP3 and above classification levels (with respect to Classification Panel membership requirements for AHP positions).

The Peer Assessment Panel Process for progression from AHP1 to AHP2 is therefore not encompassed within this Advice. The Allied Health Professional Peer Assessment Panel (AHPAP) process, and the conditions and requirements associated with progression via peer assessment to AHP2 is the subject of separate guidelines and instructions issued by the Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO) in DHA.

With respect to non peer assessment related classification processes for requests seeking a classification level of AHP2, the normal classification requirements and general principles (refer Section above) are to apply.

Minimum Panel membership requirements

A set of minimum AHP Classification Review Panel membership requirements has been formulated, having regard to:

- the AHP Classification level sought for the position
- the nature of the AHP position to be assessed (ie; discipline specific or allied health management role).

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The minimum panel membership requirements for AHP positions seeking classification levels at AHP3 and above are detailed in the table [appended](#) to this Advice, and take into account the level of clinical (professional/discipline specific) or management representation considered relevant for each level.

Panel Representation

Human Resources

The Human Resources representative on AHP Classification Review Panels is a local Human Resources (HR) practitioner knowledgeable in the AHP career structure and work level definitions; *and* adequately trained in AHP classification assessment/determination processes. However, it is strongly recommended that more experienced HR practitioners participate on panels assessing AHP classification requests seeking classification levels above AHP3, and/or that initial mentoring for less experienced HR practitioners occurs on all AHP Classification Review Panels.

Discipline Specific Representation

Discipline specific representation is required on panels where the position/employee performs a role exclusively within *one* of the AHP professions (eg Pharmacist, Physiotherapist, Radiographer etc) listed in Appendix 5A of the *SA Public Sector Wages Parity Enterprise Agreement: Salaried 2012*. Representation from the same discipline/profession (as the applicant/position to be assessed) is considered necessary to enable a fully informed assessment of the role to be undertaken, and to ensure that classification level recommendations and determinations are well considered and relevant to the discipline.

Whilst it is preferred that discipline specific representation is sourced from another LHN/Health Network/Statewide Service, it is acknowledged that in certain instances obtaining a *non* local discipline specific representative can be challenging, or in some cases, unachievable. Factors that can impact on the ability to source a non local discipline specific representative include:

- the classification level required for discipline representation (dependent on the classification level sought for the position to be assessed)
- availability of suitable discipline representatives (affecting the timeliness of the classification process)
- perceived or actual bias, conflict of interest *or* compromise/impartiality issues
- lack of discipline specific representatives who have been trained in AHP classification review processes.

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Where the aforementioned factors prevent the sourcing of a non local discipline specific representative from within South Australia, it is acceptable to source the representative from an interstate health service, *provided that* the representative is considered to be at an equivalent or higher level (professionally) than the level sought for the position.

In certain instances it may also be acceptable for a discipline representative to be sourced from another health unit within the same LHN, *provided that* there are no other suitable alternatives (ie; attempts to obtain a non local discipline representative within a reasonable timeframe have been exhausted) and *only* where it has been determined and confirmed that no conflict of interest or bias could potentially arise.

Management Representation

In addition to discipline specific Allied Health positions, a significant proportion of management positions across SA Health are attributed with an AHP classification/level. A non discipline specific allied health manager may have multidisciplinary management responsibilities encompassing a range of allied health disciplines (and other professions) and/or provide a lead/professional role within an LHN/Health Network/Service (eg; an Allied Health Director/Advisor).

To ensure that allied health manager/director positions are comprehensively assessed, and remain consistently classified across SA Health, the participation (representation and input) of non local Allied Health Managers/Directors on these panels is particularly warranted.

Where difficulties are encountered in sourcing a non local allied health management representative at the specified level to participate on an assessment panel, and/or where the timeliness of the classification assessment process will be adversely affected, the same (exceptional) sourcing arrangements described in the section above (Discipline Specific Representation) are permissible in these circumstances.

Other Nominated Representatives

Classification assessment processes for proposed AHP5 and AHP6 level positions/incumbents require the involvement of the Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO), which is the Department for Health and Ageing's (DHA) central professional office for allied health disciplines/professions within SA Health.

Contact with ASHO will need to be made (by the local HR area) to discuss and determine who the nominated (ASHO) Representative will be for any locally coordinated panel assessing an application/request seeking an **AHP5** classification level. ASHO will, as far as practicable, directly participate on panels assessing positions at this level, but can otherwise nominate another suitable representative to fulfil this role if necessary.

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The *direct* participation of a representative from ASHO on centrally coordinated panels assessing proposed AHP6 positions/incumbents is however a requirement, as is the participation of a workforce classification expert nominated by Workforce Operations (usually sourced from within the Workforce Operations Unit).

Variation to Panel Composition

This Advice seeks to simplify the process for establishing classification panels for allied health positions and to enable classification assessment processes to be conducted in a more streamlined, consistent, efficient and timely manner. As the minimum panel membership requirements stated in the Appendix to this Advice describe the default level of participation expected on panels reviewing and assessing AHP classification levels, it remains the prerogative of local HR to vary or add to panel membership with the following considerations:

Additional Panel Members

SA Health local Health Networks and Services are encouraged to seek additional representation on AHP Classification Review Panels where it is considered that doing so will add value to the assessment and determination process. Instances where an additional panel member may be considered are;

- On panels where the assessment/determination process will be enhanced by increasing member participation (ie; above the stated default membership number requirements),
- Where a local Human Resources Representative requires mentoring during the AHP classification assessment process, or is less experienced than would ordinarily be deemed appropriate for panels assessing higher AHP classification levels or very complex applications/submissions,
- Where the panel would benefit from additional expert or other input – eg; from professionals and practitioners with particular specialist knowledge relating to a specific discipline (or a specific field within a discipline) obtained from either an internal or external source.

Exceptions - Alternative Panel Composition

It is acknowledged that some local health networks/services within SA Health are structured in a way which restricts (to varying degrees) the ability to source panel participants in accordance with the minimum or acceptable panel membership requirements. In these instances, an (acceptable) alternative panel composition should be discussed and confirmed with the relevant local Director of Workforce (or at a minimum, Manager, HR Operations/HR Manager) prior to convening a panel. As a general principle, an alternative panel composition should aim for cross system representation to maintain the consistency of AHP classification levels and processes across SA Health.

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The Workforce Operations Unit can be contacted for further advice regarding acceptable alternative panel compositions.

General Considerations - Participants

It is expected that any participant on an AHP Classification Review Panel will be able to effectively contribute and add value to the assessment/determination process. Generally, participants are chosen for their specific expertise, knowledge and experience, which may have a discipline, management or HR/classification focus.

Whilst it is strongly preferred that all AHP Classification Review Panel participants have undergone the relevant (AHP) classification training, and have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Allied Health Professional career structure and work level definitions, this is not always possible (particularly in instances where external/interstate representatives are asked to participate on panels).

When the above situation occurs, it is imperative that (at a minimum) any panel participant who has not undergone the appropriate training or does not have a sound understanding of the AHP career structure and work level definitions is provided with all information relating to AHP Classification Review Panel conduct, processes and AHP assessment (benchmark) criteria, prior to a scheduled AHP Classification Review Panel meeting.

Delegate Approval for AHP Classification matters

Delegate approval of AHP Classification Review Panel classification recommendations remains with the **local** delegate for classification matters, except where:

- The level sought for a position is **AHP6**, and/or
- Where a **centrally** coordinated process has been undertaken to assess/determine classification levels for AHP positions (which may be at any level) - with the exclusion of the AHPAP process.

In the above instances, the delegate for approval is the Group Director Workforce, Health System Performance.

For more information

Workforce Operations
Workforce, Health System Performance
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AHP Classification Review Panel Composition (minimum)

Classification Level Sought and Type Of Allied Health Position To Be Assessed		
Level	DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC	ALLIED HEALTH MANAGEMENT
AHP3	2 person panel (minimum requirement)	
1.	A discipline specific representative (AHP3 level or above) from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service.	An Allied Health Director or Manager (AHP4 level or above) from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service OR , at a minimum , from a different Health Unit.
2.	A Human Resources Representative	A Human Resources Representative
AHP4	2 person panel (minimum requirement)	
1.	A discipline specific representative (AHP4 level or above) from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service.	An Allied Health Director or Manager (AHP5 level or above) from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service OR , at a minimum , from a different Health Unit.
2.	A Human Resources Representative	A Human Resources Representative
AHP5	3 person panel (minimum requirement)	
1.	A discipline specific representative (AHP5 level or above) from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service.	An Allied Health Director or Manager (AHP5 level or above) from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service OR , at a minimum , from a different Health Unit.
2.	A representative from the Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO), DHA OR , at a minimum , a person nominated by ASHO to fulfil this role on the Panel	A representative from the Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO), DHA OR , at a minimum , a person nominated by ASHO to fulfil this role on the Panel
3.	A Human Resources Representative	A Human Resources Representative
AHP6	3 person panel (minimum requirement)	
1.	A discipline specific representative (equivalent to an AHP6 level) sourced from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service, OR from interstate (if necessary).	An Allied Health management representative sourced from another LHN/Health Network or Statewide Service, OR from interstate if necessary) and as deemed appropriate by Workforce Operations
2.	A representative from the Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO), DHA	A representative from the Allied and Scientific Health Office (ASHO), DHA
3.	A workforce classification expert nominated by Workforce Operations	A workforce classification expert nominated by Workforce Operations