



# AOA

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2 June 2017

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Dear Mr Salisbury,

## **Draft National Competency Framework and Standards for Podiatric Surgeons.**

The Australian Orthopaedic Association (AOA) welcomes the opportunity to submit a response regarding the *Draft National Competency Framework and Standards for Podiatric Surgeons*.

AOA is the peak professional body for orthopaedic surgeons in Australia. AOA provides high quality specialist education, training and continuing professional development. AOA is committed to ensuring the highest possible standard of orthopaedic care and is the leading authority in the provision of orthopaedic information to the community.

AOA and the Australian Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) strongly believe that there should be a uniformity of minimum standards across education and training for **all** Australian health professionals practising within surgical disciplines and that a single organisation should be responsible for accreditation and training (which is the fundamental premise and stated intent of the National Registration legislation).

The basis for all orthopaedic surgeon training is a medical degree, followed by further education and significant clinical training involving actually performing supervised procedures in orthopaedic surgery, including foot and ankle surgery. The majority of orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeons have also gone on to undertake additional specific foot and ankle surgery fellowships – further post-specialist-registration orthopaedic surgical training commonly attached to nationally- or internationally-recognised orthopaedic surgeons.

Medical training in Australia is independently assessed by the Australian Medical Council (AMC). Operating podiatrists remain the only group of health professionals who operate on the Australian public that do not have their education and training assessed independently. AOA believes this anomaly should cease and that the AMC should be the assessing body for all health professionals performing surgery on the Australian public.



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The framework and standards as written will not ensure that operating podiatrists meet the same standards that apply for the surgical professions who perform invasive procedures on the Australian public. Regardless of the framework's implementation, podiatric surgical education and training will continue to lack independent assessment – an unsatisfactory situation for the Australian public.

AOA remains committed to ensuring a consistent and safe set of national standards and the highest level of medical care for the Australian public.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Incoll  
**Dean of Education**  
**President**