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## **Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists Inc. (AIOH)**

### **1. Introduction**

This Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists Inc. (AIOH) established its certification scheme in 2005. The scheme received IOHA recognition in 2006.

The AIOH was established in 1980 and is an incorporated body which functions in accordance with its Rules and Statement of Purposes. By-Law 1 under the Rules is the AIOH Code of Ethics. The AIOH is governed by an honorary Council consisting of a President, President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer and three Councillors. All Councillors serve a two year term. The AIOH employs a full-time Administrator/Office Manager to run the day to day affairs of the Institute.

There are five grades of membership in the AIOH:

- (a) Full Member,
- (b) Provisional Member,
- (c) Associate Member,
- (d) Fellow, and
- (e) Honorary Fellow.

There is also Retired Status (available to all membership grades); Student status (available to Associate members); and Certification Status (available to all membership grades subject to fulfilling the criteria detailed below).

The AIOH has close links with kindred occupational health and safety organisations in Australia. In particular the President of the AIOH is a member of COSHAP – the Congress of Occupational Safety and Health Association Presidents. Through this group the AIOH has dialogue with the Australian College of Occupational Health Nurses Incorporated (ACOHN), the Australian Faculty of Occupational Medicine (AFOM), the Safety Institute of Australia (SIA), and the Ergonomics Society of Australia Incorporated (ESA).

### **2. Outline of the Certification Scheme**

Any member of the AIOH can apply for certification with the exception of members holding Retired Status or Student Status. Applicants are assessed under three criteria to demonstrate competence - knowledge, experience and verification (written and oral examination). Successful applicants may use the term “Certified Occupational Hygienist” abbreviated to COH after their name. COHs must supply evidence that they have maintained their knowledge and skills every five years.

### **3. Entry Criteria for the Certification Scheme**

Applicants for certification must provide evidence of five years of occupational hygiene work experience. In addition they shall have successfully applied for and gained certification under an IOHA recognised certification scheme or will have successfully completed an AIOH accredited course of study. An AIOH accredited course of study has been accredited through a rigorous process in order to determine that it meets nominated criteria in terms of hours of study allocated to all relevant aspects of the course – lectures, assignments and project work. There are no set education qualifications required of an applicant for certification. However they will have to have met the education requirements for the other IOHA scheme they are accredited under, and if they did an AIOH accredited course they would have to have met the educational criteria for that course. If the application is accepted the candidate shall sit an oral examination. The oral examination is set and run by the AIOH Certification Board on behalf of the AIOH Council.

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#### **4. Certification Board**

The AIOH certification scheme is run, under the auspices of the AIOH Council, by the Certification Board. Board members are appointed by Council for a term of two years and may be reappointed for up to four additional terms. Board members shall be Full Members of the AIOH and must hold COH status. A member of the AIOH Council will be on the Board or a Board member shall be appointed as Council liaison.

The examination panels who conduct the oral examination are drawn from the Board. However Full Members of the AIOH with COH status who are not on the Board may be invited to assist in giving the oral examination. Examiners undergo training in oral examination techniques.

The AIOH representative on the IOHA Board has a formal liaison with the Certification Board. He or she is either a full and active member of the Board or may be an ex-officio member of the Board who shall receive Board correspondence but will not be otherwise required to participate in the normal activities of the board.

##### Oral Examination

In the course of the oral examination the candidate will be asked a series of scenario based questions. These questions are designed to assess the candidate's skills and knowledge in the areas of physical, chemical and general occupational hygiene, specifically evaluating the following performance criteria:

Technical skills/hazard and risk identification

Professional knowledge

Professional judgment

Problem appreciation/solving/critical thinking/ability to analyse information

Oral communication

Ethics

The exam is conducted over a period of 45-60 minutes.

#### **5. Certification Maintenance**

The Certification Board administers the certification maintenance program. The purpose of the Certification Maintenance (CM) program is to ensure that COHs continue to develop and enhance their professional occupational hygiene knowledge and skills for the duration of their active careers. The emphasis of the certification maintenance program is on continuing skills, knowledge and education.

In order to maintain certification a certified occupational hygienist must accumulate 40 Certification Maintenance (CM) points over 5 years in seven categories:

Active Occupational Hygiene Practice

Technical/Professional Committee Service

Publication/review of papers, book chapters.

Attendance at approved Meetings and Educational Programs

Teaching or lecturing, mentoring, examining, and presenting CESs in occupational hygiene outside the core employment role of the member.

Successful completion of the ABIH Examination

Other Activities (as approved by the Board).

A minimum of 10 points must be accrued in core occupational areas gained through attendance at approved meetings and educational programs. The evaluation of a conference, seminar, course or local meeting for the allocation of certification maintenance points is done in accordance with documented criteria by the Certification Board. All COHs must submit evidence of certification maintenance at the end of each 5 year cycle detailing how they have maintained their level of competency. A number of COHs are selected for audit and they must submit detailed evidence of certification maintenance. Certification is withdrawn if sufficient evidence of certification maintenance is not supplied.

Further information is available from [http://www.aioh.org.au/cert\\_index.asp](http://www.aioh.org.au/cert_index.asp)