

# Accreditation of impairment assessors

This fact sheet provides information for medical practitioners about how to become accredited as an impairment assessor in the Return to Work scheme and the Motor Accident Injury Assessment Scheme (MAIAS).

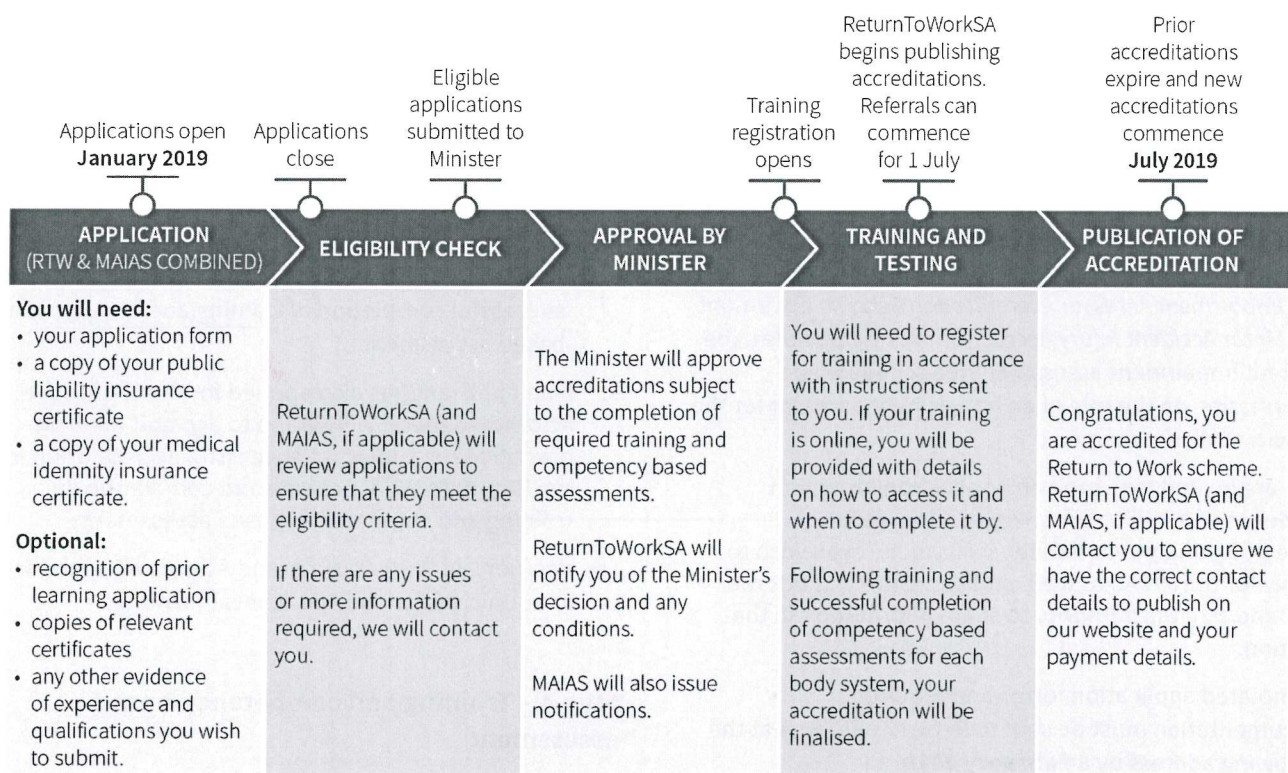
Impairment assessors are accredited by the relevant Ministers to conduct assessments that determine the level of impairment that has arisen from a work injury or,

for motor accident injury, an Injury Item Number as part of the ISV medical assessment.

The Return to Work scheme and the MAIAS accreditation period commenced on 1 July 2015 and current accreditations expire on 30 June 2019.

Applications for accreditation for the new accreditation period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022 are now invited.

## The accreditation process



## About whole person impairment assessments in the Return to Work scheme

A worker with a permanent impairment that results from a work injury may be entitled to receive lump sum payments and have access to serious injury support and common law, based on their degree of impairment.

The role of an accredited assessor is to assess injured workers and prepare assessment reports in accordance with the *Return to Work Act 2014* (the Act) and the *Impairment Assessment Guidelines* (the Guidelines).

Only a medical practitioner who holds current accreditation in the Return to Work scheme can undertake a whole person impairment assessment for the scheme.

The aim of this system is to establish a common set of standards for permanent impairment services and to provide consistency in impairment ratings across the Return to Work scheme.

For further details on whole person impairment assessments, please see the information sheet *The role of an accredited impairment assessor* available in the application pack and on ReturnToWorkSA's website.



## About Injury Scale Value (ISV) Medical Assessment in the CTP scheme

In the Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance scheme, a person who is injured in a motor vehicle accident may be entitled to compensation for their injuries. Their entitlement to certain types of compensation is subject to thresholds based on the Injury Scale Value (ISV) of the injuries sustained.

MAIAS was established by the designated Minister (the Attorney-General) under section 76 of the *Civil Liability Act 1936* (CLA) to accredit medical practitioners (AMPs) to undertake ISV medical assessments and reports.

A key objective of the MAIAS is to create an independent system that provides consistent, objective and reliable ISV medical assessments to determine the Injury Item Number in accordance with the *Civil Liability Regulations 2013* (CLR). The Injury Item Number then assists in the claims settlement process in the determination of an ISV within the given range.

For further information relating to MAIAS, please visit: [www.maiaas.sa.gov.au](http://www.maiaas.sa.gov.au) or telephone the MAIAS Administrator on 1300 303 558.

### Step 1 – Application

An application pack can be requested by emailing [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com). This pack includes an application form, the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme* document, the *Motor Accident Injury Accreditation Scheme Rules*, the current impairment assessment fee schedule and information on the role of an impairment assessor for the Return to Work scheme.

You are invited to submit an application form with evidence of qualifications, registration, medical indemnity and public liability insurance. If you wish to apply for the MAIAS as well, please ensure you tick the box and sign the authority to share information in that section.

Completed application forms and required documentation must be sent to ReturnToWorkSA at the following address by **8 February 2019**.

Applications can be emailed to [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com) or posted in a sealed envelope (marked confidential) to:

Impairment Assessment Services

ReturnToWorkSA

GPO Box 2668

ADELAIDE SA 5001

Please call (08) 8238 5727 if you have queries about the application process.

### Step 2. Eligibility

To be eligible for accreditation, an applicant must be a medical practitioner with relevant specialist qualifications and experience, be registered with the Medical Board of Australia with no current notations or relevant conditions recorded and have current public liability and medical indemnity insurance. Further information on eligibility criteria can be found in the *Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme*, along with the terms and conditions of accreditation (provided in the application pack).

ReturnToWorkSA will check your application against the eligibility criteria and contact you if anything is missing, before your application proceeds to the next stage.

### Step 3 – Consideration of and decision on applications

Each application is assessed as follows:

1. Assessment against the eligibility criteria to ensure the applicant has relevant specialist qualifications and experience for each body system for which they have applied. Each body system will be considered separately.
2. The Treasurer will decide to accredit Impairment Assessors for the Return to Work Scheme, subject to successful completion of training and competency-based assessments.
3. If an applicant has also applied for the MAIAS, the Attorney-General will decide to accredit medical practitioners, subject to successful accreditation for the Return to Work Scheme and completion of training and competency-based assessments.

The decisions of the Treasurer and Attorney-General will be communicated to the Applicants in writing.

### Step 4 – Training and competency-based assessment

After the Treasurer has made a decision on accreditation, successful applicants will be invited to undertake the required accreditation training in the body systems for which the Treasurer has approved accreditation.

The training is on the Guidelines' application of the American Medical Association's *Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment*, 5th edition (AMA5) (AMA4 for the Visual system) and the GEPIC for psychiatric assessment.

The format of this training may be either face-to-face (group) or online, depending on the number of attendees and the training module concerned. The applicant will be advised which training they are required to undertake.

An independent training provider contracted by ReturnToWorkSA will provide the training for the RTW scheme and the MAIAS.

**All applicants must have a copy of the American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, 5th edition (AMA5) which can be purchased in a hard copy or electronic format.**

Depending on their experience assessing whole person impairment in the Return to Work scheme, currently accredited assessors seeking renewal may only be required to undertake the competency based assessments, however training will be made available to those who wish to revisit it.

The training for new assessors in the Return to Work scheme includes:

- Two compulsory introductory modules:
  - outlining the Return to Work scheme, the role of impairment assessors, expectations and other information
  - using the AMA5 Guides.
- A training module for each of the body systems for which applicants have applied and been approved for accreditation (face-to-face or online training).

If the applicant has also applied for MAIAS, specific additional training for MAIAS and the CTP Scheme will also be provided. The applicant will be notified which training they are required to undertake.

The training for new assessors in the MAIAS scheme includes:

- Two compulsory introductory modules:
  - Introduction – to MAIAS, the CTP Scheme and legislative requirements of AMPs
  - The ISV Medical Assessment process, service standards and reporting requirements; overview of application of ISV table and Application of AMA5 that differs from the Return to Work Scheme
- For new assessors and some current assessors seeking renewal, training modules specific to the ISV medical assessment, including:
  - Spine – use of Range of Motion (ROM) method
  - Pain – use of AMA5 Pain Chapter
  - Application of ISV tables and factors for determining Injury Item Numbers

The *MAIAS Training Manual* will be provided to all new MAIAS applicants.

Each applicant will be provided with a competency-based assessment at the end of each completed body system training module. The assessment will be in a case study format. Each assessment must be completed and

returned to ReturnToWorkSA for the training provider to review *within three weeks* of the training module being completed.

The training provider will also review additional competency based assessments specific for the MAIAS.

## Recognition of prior learning

An applicant may apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) if they have completed a recognised permanent impairment training course (including interstate and international courses). RPL applications are to be identified when applying for accreditation (please see question on the application form).

To be considered for RPL status an applicant must have completed the recognised course within the preceding five years.

An applicant who receives RPL may be exempt from body system training but will still be required to undertake the compulsory introductory modules and pass the relevant body system competency-based assessment.

## Step 5 – Accreditation

Upon successful completion of the required training and competency based assessment, ReturnToWorkSA will confirm accreditation on the Treasurer's behalf. Successful applicants will be advised of their accreditation details and will be listed on ReturnToWorkSA's website as an accredited assessor.

Upon receipt of the accreditation confirmation from ReturnToWorkSA, assessors may accept whole person impairment assessment requests for the body systems for which they are accredited **from 1 July 2019**, in line with the Accreditation Scheme, Guidelines and requirements of the Act.

If seeking accreditation for the MAIAS, upon successful completion of the required training and competency based assessments and the Agreement, the MAIAS Administrator will confirm accreditation on the Attorney-General's behalf. Successful applicants will be notified of their accreditation details and will be listed on the MAIAS website as an Accredited Medical Practitioner (AMP).

Upon receipt of the accreditation confirmation, Accredited Medical Practitioners may accept ISV Medical Assessment referrals for their accredited body systems **from 1 July 2019** in line with the MAIAS Accreditation 2019 Scheme Document, the MAIAS Training Manual and requirements of the CLA and CLR.



## Maintaining accreditation

To maintain their accreditation, assessors must continue to meet the terms and conditions of the Accreditation Scheme and may be required to attend continuing education as requested by ReturnToWorkSA, on behalf of the Minister. Assessors will be advised periodically of these education sessions that may be held either face-to-face or remotely, depending on the requirements at that time.

To maintain accreditation in the MAIAS, assessors must continue to meet the terms and conditions of the Return to Work scheme along with the terms and conditions of MAIAS. Assessors may be required to attend continuing education as requested by the MAIAS Administrator on behalf of the Attorney-General.

## Conditions of accreditation

Assessors should ensure that they are familiar with the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme and MAIAS Rules (if applicable) terms and conditions of accreditation and service standards.

## Frequently asked questions

### *Will my information be kept confidential?*

An applicant's information will be available to those involved in the assessment process and kept on file by ReturnToWorkSA. The name and details of assessment location(s) of accredited assessors will be placed on ReturnToWorkSA's website listing of accredited assessors, along with the body systems in which you are accredited. If you are also applying for the MAIAS scheme and have completed the authority in section 10 of the application form, information will be shared between ReturnToWorkSA and the CTP Regulator in its capacity as MAIAS Administrator.

### *What should I do if I cannot provide copies of all of the required documents by the date required to submit applications?*

Copies of all required documents need to be received with your application by **8 February 2019**.

If you are unable to provide ReturnToWorkSA with copies of all required material, please send in your completed application form with the copies you do have. Please make a note on your application advising when the remaining copies will be sent. Accreditation cannot be finalised without all the necessary documentation.

### *Is there a cost for the accreditation training?*

Return to Work scheme will meet the cost for this round of accreditation training. The costs of future accreditation training may be passed onto applicants seeking to be accredited. Accreditation training costs for

the MAIAS scheme will be borne by the CTP Regulator for this accreditation round.

### *Is accreditation for a fixed term?*

Yes. The accreditation term will run from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022, a period of three years. Any accreditations that are granted within this period will also cease on 30 June 2022 to ensure there is a common expiry date.

### *What can I charge for my services?*

The fees chargeable for whole person impairment assessment services will be detailed in the Return to Work scheme's medical fee schedule and guidelines. A copy of the current fee schedule is included with the application package. These fees will be updated each financial year as part of the fee setting process.

The Return to Work scheme's medical fee schedule applies to MAIAS assessments and reports.

### *Will I be guaranteed a certain level of work?*

No. Accredited assessors may receive requests for whole person impairment assessments from a number of parties (ReturnToWorkSA, ReturnToWorkSA's claims agents and self-insured employers). MAIAS accredited assessors may receive requests from CTP insurers and claimants.

### *Can I get help if I have a question on a particular assessment?*

Yes. ReturnToWorkSA can provide or arrange appropriate assistance on the application of assessment methodologies. However, this does not include providing explicit advice or opinions on specific cases. This will be covered in the accreditation training.

### *Do I have to follow a standard report format?*

Yes, all reports must be submitted in accordance with the standard format required as stated by the Guidelines. A copy of the report template can be downloaded from ReturnToWorkSA's website. This will be covered in training. Payment will not be made for reports that do not follow the standard format, and any non-standard format reports will be returned to the assessor for amendment.

For MAIAS, reports must use the ISV Medical Assessment Report templates prescribed by MAIAS Rules.

### *What levels of service will I be expected to provide?*

Accredited assessors are expected to meet the requirements of the Guidelines and the conditions outlined in the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

For MAIAS, accredited medical practitioners are expected to meet additional requirements of the MAIAS Rules.



***Will ReturnToWorkSA or MAIAS provide me with feedback on my performance?***

Yes. ReturnToWorkSA will be able to provide accredited assessors with confidential performance feedback and an opportunity to discuss this feedback.

ReturnToWorkSA reviews each report provided to the Claims Agents for compliance with the Guidelines. You may be contacted for clarification or in relation to any concerns.

MAIAS quality review program may result in findings requiring discussion with the MAIAS assessor, requiring the assessor to undertake counselling or additional training.

***Can my accreditation be suspended or cancelled?***

Yes. An assessor's accreditation may be reviewed, suspended or cancelled. The details are included in the conditions outlined in the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

ReturnToWorkSA is available to support assessors who have difficulty in meeting the conditions outlined in the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

MAIAS assessor accreditation may also be reviewed, suspended or cancelled. Any change in RTW Scheme accreditation status will immediately apply to MAIAS accreditation status. Details are included in the MAIAS Rules.

***What happens if someone makes a complaint about me?***

ReturnToWorkSA will investigate any complaint it receives about an impairment assessor. All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner and the assessor will be provided with opportunity to respond. More information is provided in the Guidelines and the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme.

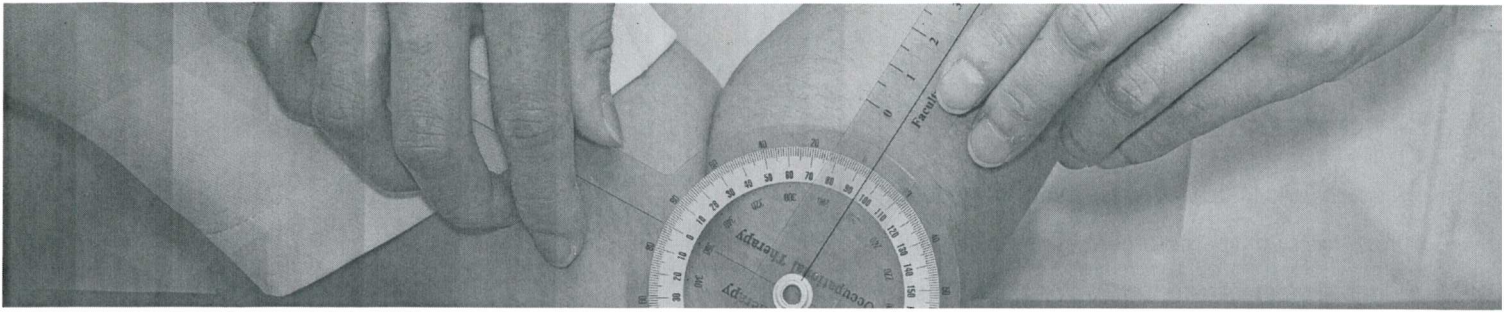
MAIAS will also investigate any complaints as outlined in the MAIAS Rules.

***Where can I get more information?***

A range of resources for impairment assessors are available on the ReturnToWorkSA [website](#) on the Assessor News and Resources page. Some resources are included in this application pack.

The MAIAS [website](#) contains resources about MAIAS accreditation.

For further information, including how to become an accredited assessor, please email [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com).



# Role of accredited impairment assessors

## Information for medical practitioners

Impairment assessors are accredited by the Minister to whom the scheme is committed (currently the Treasurer) to conduct assessments that determine the level of whole person impairment that has resulted from a work injury. This fact sheet provides an overview of their role and responsibilities.

## Role of an accredited assessor

A worker with a permanent impairment that has resulted from a work injury may be entitled to receive lump sum payments and/or have access to serious injury support and common law, based on the degree of their whole person impairment.

The role of an accredited assessor is to assess injured workers and prepare assessment reports in accordance with the *Impairment Assessment Guidelines* (the Guidelines) in order to determine:

- whether the worker's condition has resulted in impairment
- whether the condition has reached maximum medical improvement
- whether the resultant impairment is permanent
- the degree of whole person impairment resulting from the work injury.

In the majority of cases, an accredited assessor in receipt of a permanent impairment assessment request is not to treat or accept the worker as a patient. In some cases, it is not possible for another assessor to act on the request – either due to the nature of the injury or availability of assessors in that body system. In these cases, the worker's accredited treating practitioner may undertake the assessment and be able to continue treating the worker as a patient.

Only medical practitioners who are accredited by the Treasurer can undertake impairment assessments for the Return to Work scheme in South Australia.

## The Guidelines

Whole person impairment assessments and subsequent reports must be conducted in accordance with and comply with the Guidelines.

The Guidelines were developed to establish a common set of standards for whole person impairment assessment services across the Return to Work scheme in South Australia. Their purpose is to enable the consistent application of a defined methodology to permanent impairment assessments and reports.

The Guidelines are based on the American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, 5th edition.





## Referrals

Accredited impairment assessors may receive requests for an assessment of whole person impairment from ReturnToWorkSA, claims agents or self-insured employers.

Under the Return to Work scheme, injured workers have the choice of assessor. ReturnToWorkSA cannot guarantee a minimum level of assessment requests. The list of accredited assessors is available on ReturnToWorkSA's website [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com).

If an assessor is unable to accept a request, they should contact the referrer immediately and explain their reasons for not agreeing to perform the assessment.

## Appointments

Examinations should be performed as soon as possible after the request for an appointment is made. Generally, three weeks or less is an acceptable period between a request and the assessment appointment. If the assessor is unable to see the worker for more than six weeks, they should not accept the referral.

## Examinations

Workers may feel anxious about attending the whole person impairment assessment and part of an assessor's role is to put the worker at ease. Effective communication is vital to make sure the worker is well-informed and able to cooperate fully in the process. Assessors must also be aware of and sensitive to the worker's experience and needs, such as linguistic competence, level of comprehension, culture and injury.

It is important to be as punctual as possible with appointment times. A worker may become anxious if they have to wait for more than 30 minutes past the nominated appointment time.

It is important that assessors introduce themselves and explain their field of expertise and the assessment process. Plain English should be used, rather than technical words. It is also important to explain:

- the purpose of the examination
- your role as an assessor, that is, to provide an impartial impairment assessment, not to treat the worker or determine whether the treatment they are receiving is appropriate
- how the evaluation will proceed, including describing the part of the body to be examined, why it is to be examined, what the examination entails and the extent to which undressing is required.

Assessors should allocate sufficient time to make a fair and comprehensive assessment of the worker. It is important the worker feels the assessor is providing ample time for them to supply information they believe may be relevant to the assessment.

It is important that the worker has confidence that any examination is conducted professionally and appropriately.

## Conduct of physical examinations

As with other medical examinations, assessors should protect themselves and the worker by taking reasonable steps to preserve the worker's privacy and modesty as much as possible during the assessment.

This includes providing a screen behind which the worker can undress and dress, or the assessor leaving the consulting room while the worker is undressing.

If an assessor is required to conduct an examination that may be perceived as invasive or sensitive, the assessor should carefully explain the reasons and nature of the examination and obtain the worker's permission before examining them.

Assessors should always examine a worker in private, unless the worker has brought a support person to be present during the examination. Assessors may also choose to have an appropriate person (e.g. a nurse) present during the examination but must obtain the agreement of the worker first.

### **Other people present at the examination**

If a worker speaks little or no English, or has a hearing impairment, the case manager will arrange for a qualified interpreter to attend the examination, and will advise the assessor that the worker will be accompanied by an interpreter. Friends of the worker, family members or children must not act as interpreters. The assessor should stop the examination if this occurs and contact the worker's case manager immediately to reschedule the examination.

The worker may have another person present for support, but it is undesirable for children to be present. The support person should not answer questions or contribute to the assessment unless the worker has difficulty communicating or requires physical assistance.

### **Further testing**

Assessors should not generally order additional radiographic or other investigations for the assessment of permanent impairment.

Such tests should only be ordered when the results are crucial to determining the degree of permanent impairment. No additional radiographic or other investigations can be ordered without case management approval.

Where the assessor considers that further investigation is essential for a complete evaluation to be undertaken and deferral of the evaluation would considerably inconvenience the worker (e.g. when the worker has travelled from a country region specifically for the assessment), the assessor may proceed to order the appropriate investigations, provided there is no undue risk in carrying out these investigations to the worker. This should only occur in exceptional circumstances and requires the approval of the requestor.

### **Multiple impairments**

The Guidelines provide specific direction on assessing multiple impairments and assessors should follow these closely. In addition to this, the request information will also include specific directions regarding the injuries to include and disregard in the assessment.

### **Reports**

Reports play a key role in determining a worker's entitlements in the Return to Work scheme. A good report will help ensure a worker's entitlements are determined quickly so they can move on with their lives and focus on returning to work. A poor report may lead to costly litigation and delay a worker's return to work and receipt of benefits.

Reports must comply with the Guidelines and should be timely, easily comprehended, thorough and accurate. They must also be comprehensive and explain medical terminology so the requestor can act quickly on the information provided. They must also specifically address any questions asked in the request information regarding whole person impairment.



If the report requestor asks any questions that are not related to whole person impairment, responses should not be included in the impairment assessment report. The assessor may contact the report requestor and ask whether they would like additional responses included in a separate report.

## **Confidentiality**

A number of people may read an assessor's report, including the worker, case manager and other medical practitioners, so it is important not to disclose any information about the worker that is of a personal nature except where it is relevant to the impairment assessment.

## **Report format**

All reports must be in the format required by the Return to Work Scheme. A copy of the report template is available by contacting ReturnToWorkSA by email to [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com).

## **Performance monitoring**

In order to ensure the delivery of appropriate services and consistent application of the Guidelines, ReturnToWorkSA will monitor the performance of accredited permanent impairment assessors on an ongoing basis.

Assessors who are identified as providing services and reports that do not comply with the Guidelines or meet expected service standards may have their accreditation reviewed.

## **Ongoing education**

To maintain their accreditation, assessors are required to attend continuing education if requested by ReturnToWorkSA, on behalf of the Treasurer.

## **Where can I get more information?**

The ReturnToWorkSA website [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com) provides additional information on whole person impairment.

For further information, including how to become an accredited assessor, please email ReturnToWorkSA at [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com).

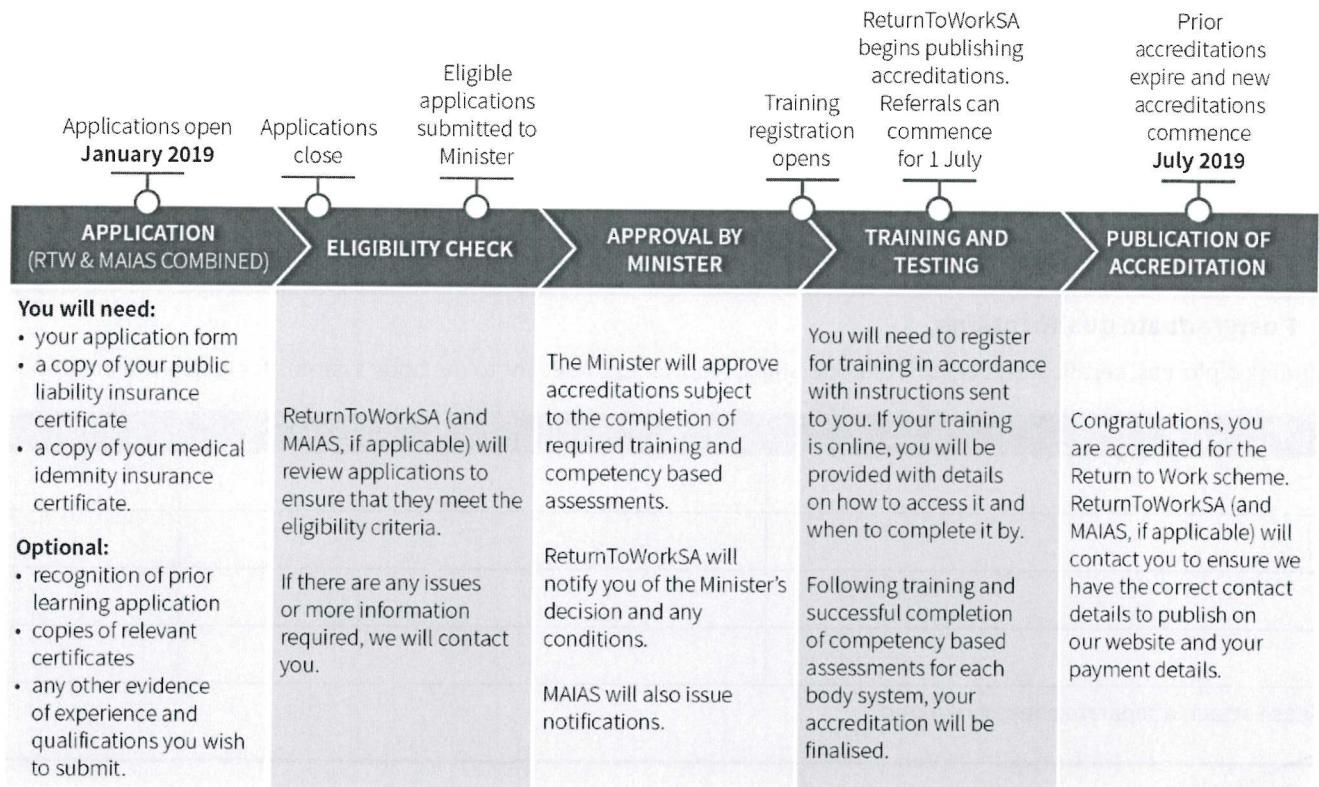
# Application for accreditation

## Return to Work Scheme / Motor Accident Injury Assessment Scheme



This form is to be used by medical practitioners when applying for accreditation as an impairment assessor for the *Return to Work Scheme 2014*. This form also applies to those applying to be an Accredited Health Professional (AHP) for the Motor Accident Injury Assessment Scheme (MAIAS).

### Impairment Assessor Accreditation Process



#### 1. Application for:

- ☐ I am applying for accreditation for the Return to Work scheme
- ☐ I am applying for accreditation for the Return to Work scheme AND the MAIAS

#### 2. Applicant contact details (not medical reporting company details)

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



### Medical registration

Are you currently registered with the Medical Board of Australia?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are there any notations or relevant conditions placed on your registration with the Medical Board of Australia?

☐ Yes

☐ No

**If yes, please describe (attach a separate page to this application if required)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your practising specialty? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Primary medical qualification

Please write the name of your degree in full:

\_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Postgraduate qualifications

Including diplomas, certificates, degrees, memberships, fellowships, relevant to the body systems for which you are applying.

Qualification (in full)	Awarding university / college / institution	Country	Year

\*Please attach a separate sheet if required.

### 5. Insurance

Are you covered by the required medical indemnity insurance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are you covered by the required public liability insurance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

\*Please attach copies of your certificates of currency.

### 6. Assessing location details

Will you be providing assessment services via a medico-legal reporting service?

☐ Yes

☐ No

**If yes, please provide name of company and contact details:**

Name of medico-legal service: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of medico-legal service: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

**If no, will your published location differ from the address on the front of this form? If so, please provide details here:**

Clinic name: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email for assessment request: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Body systems

Please tick the body systems you are applying to be accredited in (tick one or more)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> upper extremity                         | <input type="checkbox"/> cardiovascular           | <input type="checkbox"/> respiratory                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lower extremity                         | <input type="checkbox"/> nervous                  | <input type="checkbox"/> haematopoietic                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> spine                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> urinary and reproductive | <input type="checkbox"/> ear, nose and throat (excl. hearing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> digestive                               | <input type="checkbox"/> endocrine                | <input type="checkbox"/> hearing (ENT)                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> psychiatric and psychological disorders | <input type="checkbox"/> visual                   | <input type="checkbox"/> skin                                 |

If you are applying for additional body systems outside those which have been identified for your speciality in the Body System Guide (refer Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme), please provide additional evidence of qualifications or expertise.

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## 8. Application for recognition of prior learning

Have you undertaken a course on permanent impairment based on the relevant American Medical Association's 'Guides to the evaluation of permanent impairment'? (AMA5 or AMA4 for visual) and wish to apply for recognition of prior learning?

☐ Yes ☐ No

\*If yes, please enclose a copy of your certificate of attendance.

Please note: If your prior learning is recognised, you are still required to attend the compulsory introductory module and sit competency-based assessments for each body system for which you wish to be accredited.

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## 9. MAIAS requirements for accreditation

Please note the below section is applicable if you are applying for the MAIAS.

Do you authorise the CTP Regulator, on behalf of the MAIAS established under section 76 of the *Civil Liability Act 1936*, to undertake the following in regard to your application as an AHP?

- to liaise and share information with ReturnToWorkSA
- to request and receive information from ReturnToWorkSA.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you also consent to ReturnToWorkSA's disclosure to MAIAS of information concerning your accreditation under section 22 of the *Return to Work Act 2014*, in accordance with the provisions of section 185 of the *Return to Work Act 2014*?

☐ Yes ☐ No

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## 10. Your checklist

- ☐ All questions have been completed
- ☐ You have told us *if* you wish to apply for both the Return to Work scheme and the MAIAS
- ☐ Copies of insurance certificate/s of currency are attached for public liability and medical indemnity
- ☐ Chosen body systems are indicated (please advise if you will only assess certain injuries within that system) and evidence of qualifications and expertise, if required.
- ☐ Copy of certificate of attendance for any other AMA Guides (5th edition or 4th for visual system) course attended is attached (if applying for recognition of prior learning)
- ☐ The declaration is completed and signed (page 4)



## 11. Declaration by applicant

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name)

of \_\_\_\_\_ (address)

declare that I am the person named in this application and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the statements contained are true and correct. I understand that any incorrect statement in my application including (but not restricted to) my qualifications, experience, ability, physical or mental health or personal integrity may result in refusal of my application or suspension of my accreditation. I authorise ReturnToWorkSA (and MAIAS, if applicable) to seek information relating to my qualifications, professional standing and past experience as relevant to my application.

I have read the Return to Work Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme documents and understand my obligations as an accredited assessor in providing whole person impairment assessment services.

Should I be successful in my application, I agree to:

- Provide whole person impairment services and reports in accordance with the *Impairment Assessment Guidelines*
- Provide assessment reports in such format as required by ReturnToWorkSA from time to time.

If I am applying for the MAIAS, I have read the MAIAS Accreditation for Medical Practitioners document and understand my obligations as an AHP in providing ISV medical assessment services.

Should I be successful in my application, I agree to:

- Provide ISV medical assessment services and reports in accordance with the current edition of *MAIAS Training Manual*
- Provide assessment reports using the ISV medical assessment report templates prescribed by the MAIAS.

Signed:

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Please provide your application to:

Impairment Assessment Advisor

Email: [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com)

Mail:

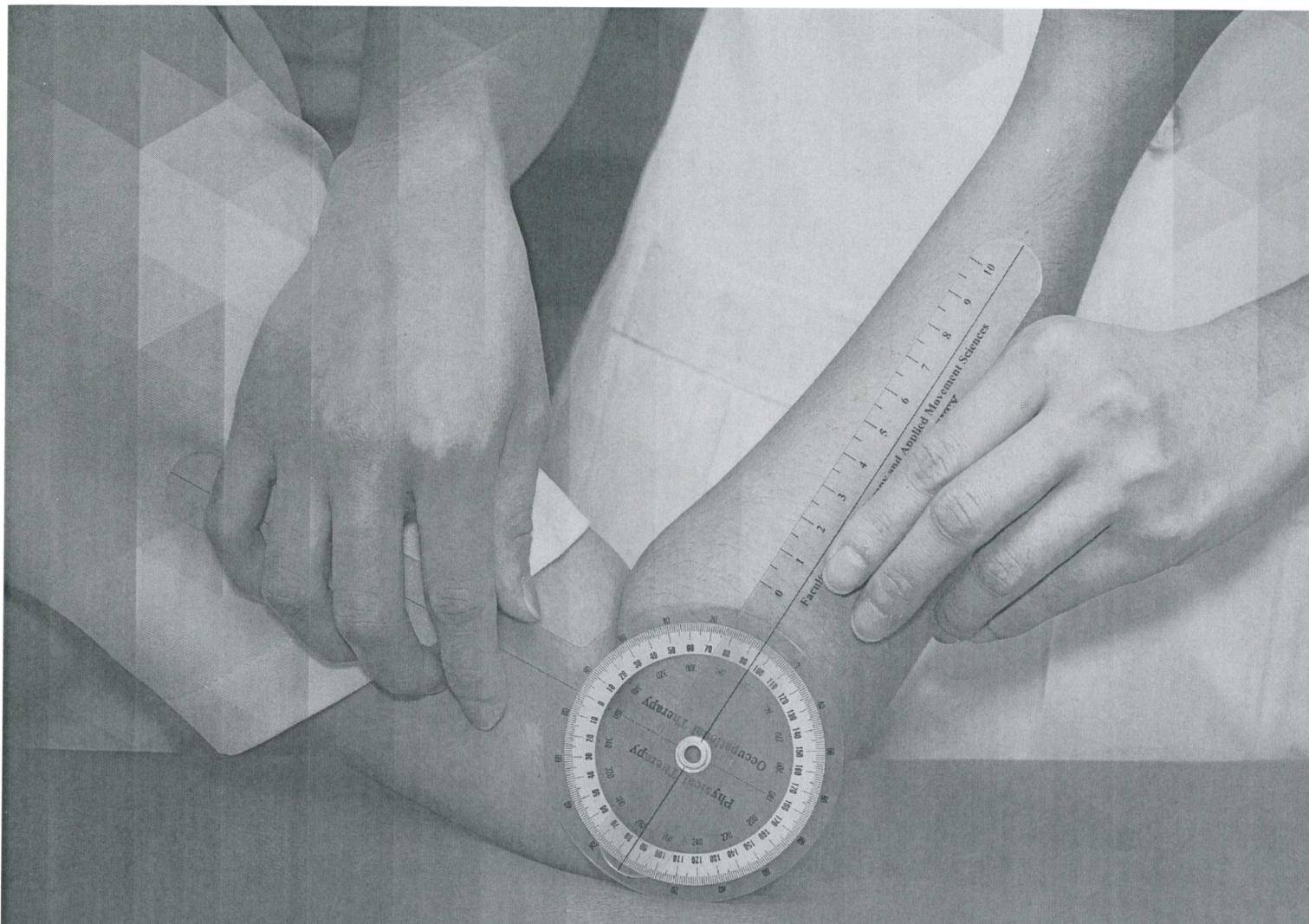
Impairment Assessment Services

ReturnToWorkSA

GPO Box 2668

Adelaide SA 5001





RETURN TO WORK SCHEME

# Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme



Government of  
South Australia



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## Definitions

In this scheme document:

**Accredited Assessor** means a medical practitioner who holds a current accreditation issued by the Minister in accordance with section 22(17) of the Return to Work Act 2014

**Act** means the Return to Work Act 2014

**Advisory Committee** means the Committee established in Part 11 of the Act

**Guidelines** means the Impairment Assessment Guidelines published under section 22(3) of the Return to Work Act 2014 (or the WorkCover Guidelines for the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, where required)

**Impairment Assessment Report** means a report prepared by an Accredited Assessor in accordance with the Impairment Assessment Guidelines

**The Minister** means the Minister to whom the Return To Work Act is committed under section 5 of the Administrative Arrangements Act 1994.

**RPL** means recognition of prior learning

**RTW Scheme** means the Return to Work scheme

**Scheme** means the Return to Work scheme's Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme

# Introduction

A worker with a permanent impairment that has arisen from a work injury may be entitled to receive specific support from the RTW Scheme, such as statutory lump sum payments, access to serious injury support and common law, based on their degree of whole person impairment.

**A key objective of the whole person impairment assessment process is to create a system that provides consistent, objective and reliable impairment assessments.**

Under section 22 of the Act an assessment of whole person impairment must be made in accordance with the Guidelines. The assessment must also be made by a medical practitioner who holds a current accreditation issued by the Minister.

## Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme

Under section 22(16) of the Act, the Minister must establish an accreditation scheme for the purposes of whole person impairment after consultation with the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee consists of nine members appointed by the Governor; three members who are medical practitioners, three members representing employee associations and three members representing employer associations.

An accreditation will be issued according to the period specified by the Minister and on conditions determined by the Minister.

The conditions are as outlined in this document or as determined by the Minister either for the Scheme or the individual assessor.

The Minister will consult with the Advisory Committee in accordance with section 171(2) of the Act.

The Scheme comprises the following elements:

1. Criteria for accreditation
2. Terms and conditions of accreditation
3. Service standards
4. Application process
5. Administrative requirements

6. Training requirements
7. Assessment request requirements
8. Performance monitoring

The Minister may not issue accreditations to all applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria.

The Minister may also consider successful completion of recognised interstate or international permanent impairment courses as prior learning. To be considered for RPL status an applicant must have completed the recognised course in the 5 years prior to an application for accreditation.

An applicant accepted for RPL will still be required to undertake the compulsory introductory module and pass the relevant body system competency assessment(s).

Accredited assessors will have their contact details placed on ReturnToWorkSA's website.



# 1. Criteria for accreditation

Under section 22(17)(b) of the Act, the Minister issues the accreditation to providers authorised to undertake whole person impairment assessments for the purposes of the RTW Scheme.

To be considered for accreditation by the Minister, an applicant must:

- be a medical practitioner registered with the Medical Board of Australia (under the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency)
- have at least 5 years post-graduate experience
- have no current notations or relevant conditions recorded against their registration for medical practice
- satisfactorily complete the training required for accreditation.

- The applicant must provide evidence that they:
- have relevant specialist qualifications and experience (see Guide to Eligibility Criteria for each Body System at Attachment A).
- are in active clinical or medico-legal practice and/or have experience in the assessment of whole person impairment for the RTW Scheme
- hold current medical indemnity and public liability insurance.

In determining the eligibility of applicants, the Minister may also consider the requirements of the RTW Scheme, the estimated number of assessments likely to be done each year in each body system and, where relevant, the applicant's prior performance.

# 2. Terms and conditions of accreditation

An accredited impairment assessor (assessor) must comply with the terms and conditions of accreditation determined by the Minister, which are outlined below.

The term of accreditation will be three (3) years from 1 July 2019 or such lesser period that the Minister specifies, either for the Scheme or for an individual assessor.

The first period of accreditation ends on 30 June 2022 and further periods may be specified by the Minister as required.

Assessors will provide assessments and reports of permanent impairment in accordance with the Guidelines, the Act and in the format required by ReturnToWorkSA.

Reports must contain clear rationale for decisions, must not contain material errors and must be in accordance with the compensating authority's instructions.

Assessors will provide assessments without bias and in a way that does not give rise to an apprehension of bias in the performance of their responsibilities.

Assessors must notify ReturnToWorkSA if found guilty or convicted of, or fined for, a criminal offence involving dishonesty or an offence punishable by imprisonment.

Assessors will declare any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest to the requestor at the time of request.

At all times, assessors must abide by the service standards, administrative and training requirements defined in this document.

An assessor must continue to meet the accreditation eligibility criteria outlined in this document on an ongoing basis and submit relevant details to ReturnToWorkSA within 14 days if the assessor no longer meets the eligibility criteria.

### 3. Service standards

In addition, in undertaking their responsibilities, the assessor must:

- abide by Schedule 5 of the Act (Statement of Service Standards) and all applicable professional standards and codes of conduct as required by their professional medical college and as described in Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia
- comply with the performance and review requirements set out in this document
- act in an ethical, professional and considerate manner when examining workers
- demonstrate respect for the RTW Scheme, law, fairness, accountability, independence, diligence, timeliness, integrity, transparency and respect for all persons
- act with integrity in the performance of their assessment responsibilities including conducting assessments and making decisions with due rigour and intellectual honesty
- provide assessment reports using the ReturnToWorkSA mandatory report template (note: self-insured employers may determine their own report template)
- comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Act and, where applicable, the Privacy Act 1988 and any other law relevant to health records
- ensure the worker understands the assessor's role in the evaluation and how the evaluation will proceed
- take reasonable steps to preserve the privacy and modesty of the worker during the evaluation assessment
- refrain from offering any advice to the worker about their rights or entitlements relating to their claim or any legal matter relating to their claim

- use their discretion as to whether it is appropriate to notify the worker and/or the worker's treating medical practitioner about any incidental clinical finding during a whole person impairment assessment of a worker
- refrain from providing comment in any publicly available forum on ReturnToWorkSA matters that are, or have been, before them. If involved in providing comment to the media on a matter unrelated to their assessment responsibilities they should not identify themselves as a Scheme assessor.

The perception of impartiality is important in the assessment process. As a result, assessors must:

- not provide, or have provided any form of treatment, advice or assessment in relation to the worker unless otherwise agreed with the requestor – in some circumstances there may not be an alternative assessor available to undertake the assessment.
- not offer any opinion on the worker's medical or surgical management by other medical practitioners unless it would cause detriment to the future health care of the worker
- be proactive and comprehensive in disclosing to a worker's Case Manager any factor(s) that conflicts with, or may conflict with, the performance of their assessment responsibilities
- not assess a worker if that worker, or a member of their immediate family, is known personally to the assessor or the assessor's family
- not accept, seek to obtain or offer gifts, benefits, preferential treatment or advantage of any kind from or to any person that could be perceived to compromise the impartiality of the assessor, the report requestor or ReturnToWorkSA.



## 4. Application process

An applicant should complete the *Impairment Assessor Application Form* providing the evidence required and submit it to ReturnToWorkSA. The application process is a six step process:

**Application** - Complete the application form including which body systems you wish to be accredited for and submit the application form to ReturnToWorkSA with evidence of registration, qualifications, professional indemnity, public liability insurance and previous training (if relevant).

**Eligibility** - Applications will be considered against the eligibility criteria set out in the attached Guide, with those meeting the criteria provided to the Minister for consideration.

**Approval** - Applicants approved for accreditation will be advised of their specific training requirements.

**Training** - The applicant undertakes the required training.

**Testing** - The applicant completes the relevant competency assessment/s for their approved body system/s.

**Finalise** - Upon successful completion, the applicant receives confirmation of accreditation and their details are published on the RTW Scheme list of accredited assessors.

## 5. Administrative requirements

- An assessor is to see the worker within six (6) weeks of the appointment being requested, unless agreed and documented between the requestor and assessor.
- An assessor is to provide the impairment assessment report in the required template to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 days of the assessment being completed as per 1.50 of the Impairment Assessment Guidelines.
- An assessor will provide accurate contact details to ReturnToWorkSA and notify ReturnToWorkSA in writing within 14 days of any change to name or contact details (as these appear on the published list of assessors).
- An assessor must have access to sufficient resources and infrastructure to undertake all administrative activities necessary to undertake the role of an assessor, including maintaining an email address to be used for all written communication for ReturnToWorkSA.
- The location of the assessment must comply with the premises standards relevant to the assessor's college or association e.g. disability access, first aid etc.
- An assessor must disclose to ReturnToWorkSA details of any claims of unethical conduct against the assessor or any breaches of any applicable guidelines relating to ethical conduct prior to or during any period in which they are accredited for the RTW Scheme.

## 6. Training requirements

- An assessor must complete the required training and successfully pass the competency assessment required for each relevant body system module, as well as any new published version of the Guidelines prior to its implementation.
- The methodology in the Guidelines is largely based on the American Medical Association's Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, Fifth Edition (AMA5), with the exception of the Hearing, Visual and Psychiatric body systems. For this reason, it is recommended that assessors complete AMA5 training prior to undertaking training in the SA Guidelines, however, AMA5 training is not a mandatory pre-requisite. A number of other jurisdictions use AMA5 and applicants may have undertaken relevant training elsewhere.
- Consideration of RPL may be taken into account where the training completed is relevant and comparable (i.e. for a scheme using similar guidelines) and has been undertaken in the previous five (5 years). Competency assessment will still be required.
- Applicants who have requested RPL for training undertaken elsewhere will also complete training in the compulsory introductory Core module as it contains information specific to the Guidelines and the RTW Scheme.
- An assessor must attend or complete any refresher training and/or competency assessment required by ReturnToWorkSA following identification of ongoing report compliance or quality issues.
- ReturnToWorkSA may offer advanced training for assessors who have been previously trained and would benefit from more complex learning and discussion.

## 7. Assessment request requirements

Requests for a whole person impairment assessment must comply with the selection process provided in Chapter 17 of the Guidelines. Assessments can only be requested by a claims agent, self-insured employer, ReturnToWorkSA or the South Australian Employment Tribunal. Assessors will not accept referrals from workers or their legal representatives for assessment under the Guidelines, unless directed by the South Australian Employment Tribunal.

As the worker has the right to choose their assessor, there can be no guarantee of a minimum number of requests an assessor might receive during the accreditation period.

A list of assessors and relevant accreditation information (e.g. body systems, location, etc.) will be made available to claims agents, self-insured employers and the South Australian Employment Tribunal, as well as on ReturnToWorkSA's website.



## 8. Performance monitoring

It is important for the effective functioning of the RTW Scheme that impairment assessments accurately reflect assessment findings based on due rigor and intellectual honesty. The accuracy, timeliness and consistency of assessments, and the extent to which assessments comply with the Act and the Guidelines, will be monitored through the Impairment Assessment Compliance Review process administered by ReturnToWorkSA.

Assessors not meeting their accreditation obligations including, but not limited to, the expected service standards and requirements may have their accreditation suspended or cancelled by the Minister.

### Performance monitoring process

In monitoring the performance of accredited assessors ReturnToWorkSA will:

- monitor services provided by assessors to ensure the appropriate delivery of whole person impairment assessment services and required service standards are met
- monitor whole person impairment assessment reports (this does not include Independent Medical Advisors' opinions) issued by assessors to ensure:
  - consistent application of, and compliance with, the Act and the Guidelines
  - assessment reports are delivered within required timeframes
  - medical consistency and sound reasoning
- monitor complaints received by, or concerns raised with, ReturnToWorkSA regarding assessors to:
  - review the number, nature, validity and outcome of complaints
  - identify non conformity with accreditation obligations and establish assessors' willingness and/or ability to comply with these obligations
  - determine whether an assessor's accreditation needs to be reviewed

- monitor and review assessor eligibility status including required attendance at continuing accreditation education
- investigate complaints and non-conformity with accreditation obligations in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

ReturnToWorkSA may contact the assessor to seek clarification about a report or discuss any possible issues.

Assessors should also regularly review and evaluate their own performance and capacity as an assessor and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary for the effective performance of their assessment responsibilities.

The performance of assessors may be taken into account by the Minister in the renewal process.

### Suspension or cancellation of accreditation

The Scheme provides for the suspension or cancellation of accreditation by the Minister on specified grounds as outlined in section 22(17)(c) of the Act.

Repeated evidence demonstrating a non-compliance with the terms and conditions of accreditation or failure to abide by the Service Standards and requirements, may be grounds for the suspension or cancellation of accreditation by the Minister.

### Action other than cancellation or suspension

ReturnToWorkSA may impose requirements for remedial action as an alternative to the Minister suspending or cancelling the accreditation for an assessor. Examples of remedial action may include retraining or coaching or the removal of a body system from the accreditation where retraining or coaching has not resulted in improvement. ReturnToWorkSA may require that remedial action be at the assessor's cost.

# Guide to eligibility criteria for each body system

## 2018 Impairment Assessor applications

### GUIDANCE TABLE

This table provides a **guide** to body systems usually approved for specific speciality groups.

If an application is received that is outside the guidance table, the applicant may provide additional evidence of qualifications and expertise in that area to support their application.

Body system	Cardiologist	Craniofacial Surgeon	ENT	Dermatologist	Gastroenterologist	General physician	General practitioner	General surgeon	Neurologist	Neurosurgeon	Occupational Physician	Ophthalmologist	Ortho surgeon	Pain Specialist	Plastic & Reconstructive surgeon	Psychiatrist	Rehab Physician	Respiratory physician	Rheumatologist	Thoracic Surgeon	Urologist/ Gynaecologists	Emergency Medicine Specialist	Public Health Specialist
Cardiovascular (heart and aorta)	✓					✓														✓			
Cardiovascular (systemic and pulmonary)	✓					✓																	
Central and peripheral nervous		✓*				✓			✓	✓				✓			✓						
Digestive					✓	✓	✓	✓			✓						✓						
Endocrine						✓											✓						
ENT (excl. NIHL)		✓	✓																				
ENT (incl. NIHL)			✓																				
Haematopoietic						✓								✓			✓						
Lower extremities							✓	✓			✓		✓	✓					✓			✓	✓
Psychiatric																✓							
Respiratory						✓					✓							✓		✓			
Skin		✓		✓		✓									✓		✓						
Spine						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓
Upper extremities						✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓
Urinary and reproductive																					✓		
Visual												✓											
TEMSKI (Assessment of Skin up to 4% as per the IAGs)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

\* For cranial nerves only

# For herniae only



For Official Use Only



# Medical fee schedule

## Permanent Impairment services

Effective date: 1 July 2018

Return to *work*.  
Return to *life*.



Government of  
South Australia

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## How to use this fee schedule

This fee schedule contains information on services and fees that apply to medical practitioners who hold a current accreditation issued by the Minister for Industrial Relations for the Return to Work scheme.

This publication is based on Schedule 1B published by the Minister for Industrial Relations in the *South Australian Government Gazette*. Gazetted fees are the maximum fees chargeable, excluding GST. Where applicable, GST can be applied over and above the gazetted fee.

**All services and fees in this schedule are effective 1 July 2018.**

Invoicing and service provision is actively monitored to ensure services are billed in accordance with this fee schedule and that services are reasonable for the work injury and payable under the *Return to Work Act 2014*.

## Returning to work and the role of the health provider

### Why return to work is important

The beneficial effect that work can have on a person's health and wellbeing has been well evidenced in the *Australian and New Zealand consensus statement on the health benefits of work - Position statement 2011: Realising the Health Benefits of Work*.

Source: The Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM), and The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).

### The health provider's role in the recovery process

Health providers have a vital role to play in helping injured workers stay at or return to work. The health provider is best placed to advise and educate patients that, in most cases, a focus on return to work is in their best interest – for both their future, quality of life and that of their family. Staying at home until completely recovered is often not the best thing for an injured worker. Health providers can help by focusing on what a worker can do rather than what they can't.

To help make a difference, ensure that you:

- screen for risk early
- adopt a whole person approach
- set clear expectations
- provide clear certification of the worker's capacity and detail about what the worker can do on the *Work Capacity certificate*
- make enough time for clinical management
- contact the workplace where applicable.

For more information, visit the health provider tab at [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com).

## ReturnToWorkSA's expectations

### Payments

Payment for services contained in this schedule will not be made in advance.

All costs incurred by an injured worker under this fee schedule are subject to approval for payment. To ensure payment, it is recommended to seek case manager authorisation prior to the provision of the service.

## Permanent impairment services

These services are to assess whole person impairment in accordance with Section 22 of the *Return to Work Act 2014*. An impairment assessor means a person registered under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (South Australia) Act 2010*, to practice in the medical profession (other than a student) and, who holds a current accreditation issued by the Minister for Industrial Relations for the Return to Work scheme. Only those accredited are entitled to payment for the services listed below.

The *Impairment Assessment Guidelines* relates to the guidelines published by the Minister in the South Australian Government Gazette for the Return to Work scheme.

For information to become an accredited assessor, please refer to the ReturnToWorkSA website at [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com) or contact ReturnToWorkSA on 13 18 55.

### Permanent impairment assessor – standard report

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA10	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor standard report, simple assessment of one body system - reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,029.30
PIA30	Specialists (excluding psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor standard report, simple assessment of one body system - reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,029.30
PIA40	Psychiatrists: permanent impairment assessor standard report for the assessment of psychiatric disorders; assessment where there is one disorder or condition related to the work injury – reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> and using the <i>Guidelines to the Evaluation of Psychiatric Impairment by Clinicians (GEPIC)</i> .	\$1,286.60

Note 1: Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.

Note 2: Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.

Note 3: Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.

Note 4: Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the relevant guidelines stated above. Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.

Note 5: 'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.



## Permanent impairment assessor – moderately complex report

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA11	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor moderately complex report, simple assessment of two body systems or more than one injury to a single body system - reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,286.80
PIA31	Specialists: permanent impairment assessor moderately complex report, simple assessment of two body systems or more than one injury to a single body system - reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,286.80
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> . Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 5:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	

## Permanent impairment assessor – complex report

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA12	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor complex report, complex assessment on a single body system or multiple injuries involving more than one body system or lead assessor report – reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,629.90
PIA32	Specialists (excluding psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor complex report, complex assessment on a single body system or multiple injuries involving more than one body system or lead assessor report – reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,629.90
PIA42	Psychiatrists: permanent impairment assessor complex report for the assessment of psychiatric disorders or conditions; assessment where there is more than one disorder related to the work injury or pre-existing or non-work-related and/or neurological considerations – reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> and using the <i>Guidelines to the Evaluation of Psychiatric Impairment by Clinicians (GEPIC)</i> .	\$1,800.80
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the relevant guidelines stated above. Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 5:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	
Note 6:	The lead assessor may only bill for the final complete report including the sub-assessor's report(s).	



## Permanent impairment assessor – ENT report

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA50	ENT specialists: permanent impairment assessor ENT report – reading, examination of ear, nose and/or throat only, including audiometric testing and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,029.30
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> . Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 5:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	

## Permanent impairment assessor – standard report where an examination is conducted with the assistance of an interpreter

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA13	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor standard report with interpreter, simple assessment of one body system – reading, examination conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,286.80
PIA33	Specialists (excluding psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor standard report with interpreter, simple assessment of one body system - reading, examination conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,286.80
PIA43	Psychiatrists: permanent impairment assessor standard report with interpreter, for the assessment of psychiatric disorders; assessment where there is one disorder or condition related to the work injury – reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> and using the <i>Guidelines to the Evaluation of Psychiatric Impairment by Clinicians (GEPIC)</i> .	\$1,608.20
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	If an interpreter is present at the examination, the medical fee payable is in accordance with the fees set out above.	
Note 5:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the relevant guidelines stated above. Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 6:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	



## Permanent impairment assessor – moderately complex report where an examination is conducted with the assistance of an interpreter

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA14	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor moderately complex report with interpreter, simple assessment of two body systems or more than one injury to a single body system – reading, examination conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,544.20
PIA34	Specialists: permanent impairment assessor moderately complex report with interpreter, simple assessment of two body systems or more than one injury to a single body system – reading, examination conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,544.20
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	If an interpreter is present at the examination, the medical fee payable is in accordance with the fees set out above.	
Note 5:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> . Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 6:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	

## Permanent impairment assessor – complex report where an examination is conducted with the assistance of an interpreter

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA15	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor complex report with interpreter, complex assessment on a single body system or multiple injuries involving more than one body system or lead assessor report – reading, examination conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,887.20
PIA35	Specialists (excluding psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor complex report with interpreter, complex assessment on a single body system or multiple injuries involving more than one body system or lead assessor report – reading, examination conducted with the assistance of an interpreter and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,887.20
PIA45	Psychiatrists: permanent impairment assessor complex report, with interpreter, for the assessment of psychiatric disorders; assessment where there is more than one disorder related to the work injury or pre-existing or non-work-related and/or neurological considerations – reading, examination and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> and using the <i>Guidelines to the Evaluation of Psychiatric Impairment by Clinicians (GEPIC)</i> .	\$2,251.00
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	If an interpreter is present at the examination, the medical fee payable is in accordance with the fees set out above.	
Note 5:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the relevant guidelines stated above. Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 6:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	
Note 7:	The lead assessor may only bill for the final complete report including the sub-assessor's report(s).	



## Permanent impairment assessor – ENT report where an examination is conducted with the assistance of an interpreter

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA51	ENT specialists: permanent impairment assessor ENT report with interpreter, reading, examination of ear, nose and/or throat only, conducted with the assistance of an interpreter, including audiometric testing and report in accordance with the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> .	\$1,286.80
Note 1:	Reports will be requested by a case manager or self-insured employer.	
Note 2:	Permanent impairment assessment reports must be requested in writing, specifying whether a standard, moderately complex, complex or supplementary report is required.	
Note 3:	Reports are to be provided to ReturnToWorkSA within 10 business days of the examination unless the assessor believes there are reasonable grounds for an extension of time and has sought the requestor's prior consent for an extension of time.	
Note 4:	If an interpreter is present at the examination, the medical fee payable is in accordance with the fees set out above.	
Note 5:	Payment will only be made following submission of the report which is prepared in accordance with, and conforms with, the requirements of the <i>Impairment Assessment Guidelines</i> . Corrections and amendments to the report do not attract an additional fee.	
Note 6:	'Specialist' means a specialist in a surgical discipline or a consultant physician.	

## Permanent impairment assessor – non-attendance or cancellation of an appointment

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA16	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor non-attendance at, or cancellation with less than 48 hours' notice (excluding weekends or public holidays in South Australia) before an appointment.	\$370.70
PIA36	Specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor non-attendance at, or cancellation with less than 48 hours' notice (excluding weekends or public holidays in South Australia) before an appointment.	\$370.70
Note 1:	A fee for a cancellation with more than 48 hours' notice (excluding weekends and public holidays in South Australia) is not payable.	
Note 2:	A fee for a cancellation or non-attendance does not apply if the appointment is subsequently filled with any other earning activity.	

## Permanent impairment assessor – supplementary report

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA17	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor supplementary report, where additional information is requested by the report requestor.	\$257.30
PIA37	Specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor supplementary report, where additional information is requested by the report requestor.	\$257.30
<p>Note 1: Supplementary report fees are not payable if additional work is required as a result of an error or omission on the part of the assessor.</p>		

## Permanent impairment assessor – additional reading time

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA18	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor additional reading time in conjunction with a standard or moderately complex report. This fee is only to be charged if there are more than 25 pages of reading material supplied by the report requestor. The first 25 pages are included in the report fee and are therefore not chargeable under this item. <b>Derived fee:</b> \$9.50 per page over 25 pages.	DF
PIA38	Specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor additional reading time in conjunction with a standard or moderately complex report. This fee is only to be charged if there are more than 25 pages of reading material supplied by the report requestor. The first 25 pages are included in the report fee and are therefore not chargeable under this item. <b>Derived fee:</b> \$9.50 per page over 25 pages.	DF
PIA19	General practitioners: permanent impairment assessor additional reading time in conjunction with a complex report. This fee is only to be charged if there are more than 51 pages of reading material supplied by the report requestor. The first 51 pages are included in the report fee and are therefore not chargeable under this item. <b>Derived fee:</b> \$9.50 per page over 51 pages.	DF
PIA39	Specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor additional reading time in conjunction with a complex report. This fee is only to be charged if there are more than 51 pages of reading material supplied by the report requestor. The first 51 pages are included in the report fee and are therefore not chargeable under this item. <b>Derived fee:</b> \$9.50 per page over 51 pages.	DF
<p>Note 1: Reading fees are only payable where the material has been directly supplied by the report requestor. A fee is not payable for the reading of case notes, clinical material or any other material that is not directly supplied by the report requestor.</p>		

- Note 2: The reading of material supplied by the requestor can only be charged once. No additional charge can be submitted for re-reading of material.
- Note 3: A full page for reading time consists of a whole A4 size page of standard print (12 point font or smaller) of information, full page letters and detailed reports. Examples include: hospital treatment notes, medical reports, investigation reports.
- A half page of reading time consists of half an A4 page or a full A5 size page of standard print (12 point font or smaller) of information, brief file notes, scattered file notes on a page, letters consisting of one or two paragraphs, results and certificates. Examples include: pathology results, full page of handwritten notes.

### Permanent impairment assessor – travel for examinations

Item no.	Service description	Max fee (ex GST)
PIA60	General practitioners or specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor travel, a full day attendance at a venue more than 100 kilometres from the Adelaide GPO for the purpose of providing a permanent impairment report.	\$150.50
PIA62	General practitioners or specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor – cancellation of an attendance at a venue more than 100 kilometres from the Adelaide GPO.	\$240.70
PIA64	General practitioners or specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor accommodation – overnight accommodation including meals and incidentals.	\$318.80
PIA66	General practitioners or specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor motor vehicle travel – travel by motor vehicle, to and from a venue for the purpose of an appointment made by the report requestor.	ATO Rates
PIA68	General practitioners and specialists (including psychiatrists): permanent impairment assessor aircraft travel – travel by aircraft, to and from a venue for the purpose of an appointment made by the report requestor.	Economy Airfare
Note 1:	The first 50 kilometres of any travel is not chargeable.	
Note 2:	If an assessor is travelling for the purpose of conducting more than one permanent impairment assessment, the travel fees must be apportioned accordingly.	
Note 3:	'A full day' as per item PIA60 refers to a stay of more than five hours at the venue including travel time.	
Note 4:	ATO rates means the rate, applicable to the type of motor vehicle in which the assessor travelled, published by the Australian Taxation Office as the rate per kilometre that may be claimed as a deduction for business travel expenses incurred in the previous financial year.	
Note 5:	Economy airfare means the amount determined by ReturnToWorkSA to be the reasonable cost of undertaking the travel using a standard economy airfare.	



## Accounts and invoicing standards

All amounts listed in this booklet are exclusive of GST. If applicable, ReturnToWorkSA will pay to the provider an amount on account of the provider's GST liability in addition to the GST exclusive fee. Suppliers should provide ReturnToWorkSA with a tax invoice where the amounts are subject to GST.

For all invoices, whether a tax invoice or not, the following information should be provided:

- provider details – name, Medicare provider number (if applicable) and/or ReturnToWorkSA provider number (if known), practice and address details
- invoice number and invoice date
- Australian Business Number (ABN)
- worker's surname and given name(s)
- claim number (if known)
- brief description of the injury to which the services relate
- employer name (if known)
- each service itemised separately in accordance with this fee schedule including:
  - date of service and commencement time
  - service item number and service description
  - duration of service in hours/minutes rounded to the nearest six minutes for hourly rate services
  - charge for the service
  - total charge for invoiced items plus any GST that may be applicable.
- bank account details for electronic funds transfer (EFT).

Invoices are to be submitted within six weeks of service. Invoices for services displaying the information set out above will allow for prompt and efficient processing. Invoices that do not meet these standards may be returned to the provider for amendment.

ReturnToWorkSA or their claims agents are unable to pay on 'account rendered' or statement invoices. Payment will be made where appropriate, on an original invoice or duplicate/copy of the original. Payment for services, including reports, will not be made in advance.

### GST

For all GST-related queries, please contact the Australian Tax Office or your tax advisor.

### Changes to provider details

For changes to provider details, such as Australian Business Number, change of address or electronic funds transfer details, please complete the Provider registration form available on our website. Once completed either email to [prov.main@rtwsa.com](mailto:prov.main@rtwsa.com) or fax to ReturnToWorkSA on (08) 8238 5690.

For any queries relating to this form, please contact ReturnToWorkSA on 13 18 55.

### Where payment is outstanding

Please contact ReturnToWorkSA's EnABLE Unit, claims agent or self-insured employer if the claim has been accepted and the payment is outstanding. If the claim has not been accepted, responsibility for payment of accounts rests with the worker.

## Useful contacts

### Claims agents

All work injury claims (*that are not self-insured or serious injury*) are managed by EML or Gallagher Bassett. To identify which claims agent is managing a worker's claim, refer to the 'Claims agent lookup' function on RTWSA website at [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com).

#### EML

Phone: (08) 8127 1100 or free call 1300 365 105  
Fax: (08) 8127 1200  
Address: 26 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000  
Postal address: GPO Box 2575, Adelaide SA 5001  
Online: [www.eml.com.au](http://www.eml.com.au)

#### Gallagher Bassett Services Pty Ltd

Phone: (08) 8177 8450 or free call 1800 664 079  
Fax: (08) 8177 8451  
Address: Level 3, 115 Grenfell Street, Adelaide SA 5000  
Postal address: GPO Box 1772, Adelaide SA 5001  
Online: [www.gallagherbassett.com.au](http://www.gallagherbassett.com.au)

### ReturnToWorkSA Serious Injury Unit

For claims relating to severe traumatic injuries, please contact this unit directly.

Phone: 13 18 55  
Fax: (08) 8233 2051  
Address: 400 King William Street, Adelaide SA 5000  
Postal address: GPO Box 2668, Adelaide SA 5001  
Online: [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com)

### Self-insured employers

For matters relating to self-insured claims, please contact the employer directly.

## Bowe, Trish

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**From:** WPI  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 9 January 2019 6:02 PM  
**Cc:** Bowe, Trish  
**Subject:** Impairment Assessor Accreditation for the Return to Work scheme and the MAIAS  
**Attachments:** Impairment Assessor Application Pack for current RTW scheme assessors 2019.pdf



Dear Assessor

ReturnToWorkSA would like to invite you to apply for impairment assessor accreditation.

Current accreditations expire on 30 June 2019 with new accreditation effective from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022.

More information is contained in the application pack attached. If you have any questions regarding the application pack or the accreditation process, please email [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com) with your request and contact details or contact Kirstie O'Callaghan on (08) 8238 5727 or 13 18 55.

Applications close on **Friday 8 February 2019**

Kind regards

**Trish Bowe**

Manager Impairment Assessment Services

Scheme Regulation

400 King William Street Adelaide SA 5000

08 8233 2413

[www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com) | [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com)





9 January 2019

Dear Doctor

**Impairment assessor accreditation – Return to Work scheme and MAIAS - Application pack**

Thank you for your interest in becoming an accredited impairment assessor. This application pack contains:

1. information about the accreditation process and the role of an assessor
2. the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme
3. the Motor Accident Impairment Assessor Scheme (MAIAS)
3. an application form for you to complete and return to ReturnToWorkSA
4. the current fee schedule and guidelines for permanent impairment services (please note, these are updated each financial year).

Please return your completed application, marked confidential, as soon as possible, and in any case **before 8 February 2019** to:

Email to:  
[wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com)

Mail to:  
Kirsten O'Callaghan  
Impairment Assessment Services  
ReturnToWorkSA  
GPO Box 2668  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Notification of your applications' outcome and any accreditation by the Treasurer will be made to you in March/April 2019. Any accreditation for **new assessors** will be subject to your successful completion of training in the Introduction to the Impairment Assessment Guidelines and in the body system(s) approved as follows:

- online training in the Introduction to the Guidelines and the Return to Work Scheme
  - face to face training in GEPIC assessment for psychiatric impairment
  - face to face training in the assessment of the Spine
  - face to face training in the assessment of the Upper and Lower Extremities
  - online training for all other body systems
- as well as the relevant, competency-based assessments.

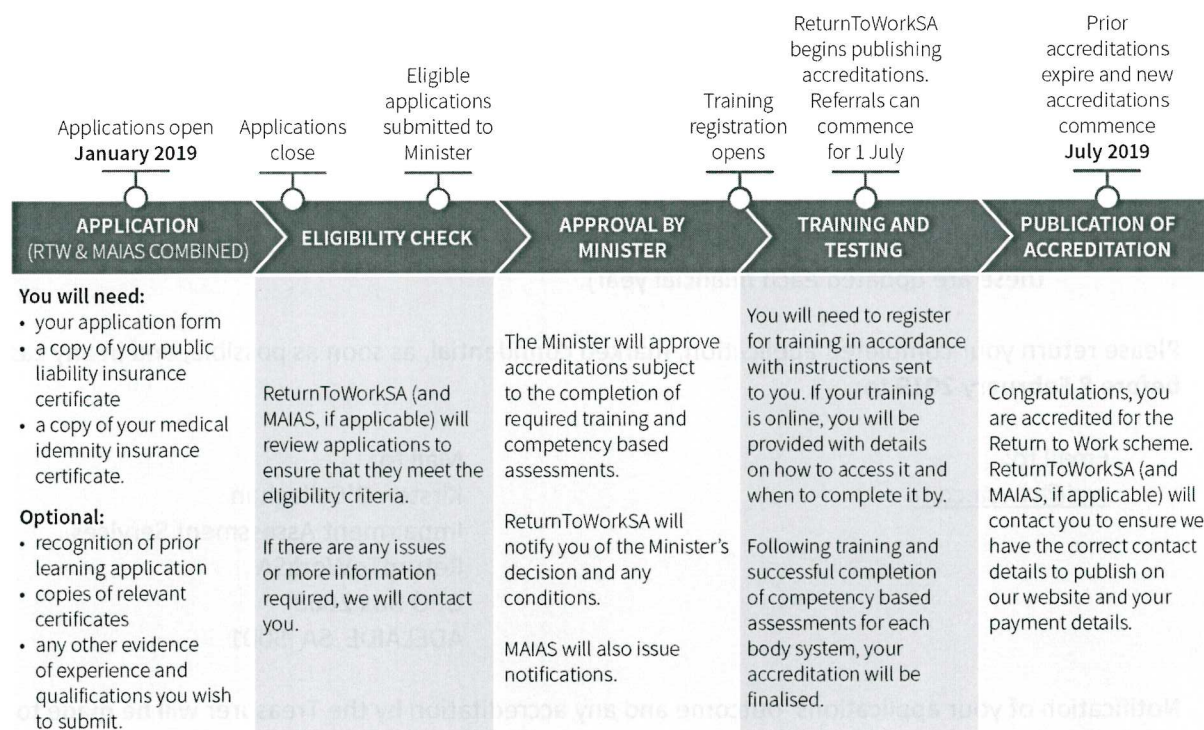
The cost of this training (not including travel) will be met by ReturnToWorkSA. **Assessors with current accreditation for the Return to Work scheme will be notified of the training they are required to undertake upon notification of their application's outcome and any accreditation by the Treasurer.**

If you have also applied for the MAIAS, in accordance with the *Civil Liability Act 1936*, the Minister (Attorney-General) will issue accreditation to assessors (pending completion of required training and competency based assessments).

For the MAIAS, **new assessors** will be required to undertake additional training for that scheme as follows:

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- online training about MAIAS and ISV medical assessments and the CTP Scheme
- face to face training on the application of the ISV table (Civil Liability Regulations 2013) to determining Injury Item Numbers in the ISV Medical Assessment
- face to face training in the assessment of Spine
- face to face training in the assessment of Pain



Dates for training and how to access online modules will be provided to applicants approved by the Treasurer.

Similarly for MAIAS assessors, following approval by the Attorney-General, dates for training will also be provided. The cost of this training (not including travel) will be funded by the CTP Regulator through the administration fee component of CTP premiums paid by motor vehicle owners with their vehicle registration.

Further information is contained in the application pack provided with this letter and available at [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com). If you have any questions please email [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com) or contact Kirsten O'Callaghan on (08) 8238 5727.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely



Trish Bowe  
Manager, Impairment Assessment Services

9 January 2019

Dear Dr/Prof.

**Impairment assessor accreditation – Return to Work scheme and MAIAS - Application pack**

Your current Impairment Assessor Accreditation for the Return to Work scheme expires on **30 June 2019**. The *Return to Work Act 2014* (the Act) provides for the Minister (currently the Treasurer) to establish the accreditation scheme and issue accreditations. The new accreditation period for the scheme commences on 1 July 2019 and current assessors are now invited to submit applications for consideration.

If you do not apply for the new accreditation period, your accreditation will cease on 30 June 2019.

Material relating to the new accreditation scheme is included with this letter. Consistent with the previous accreditation process, you are invited to complete the application form in the Application Pack and provide relevant documentation to support your application. The Return to Work scheme and Motor Accident Injury Assessment Scheme (MAIAS) application process has now been combined. If you wish to apply for MAIAS, please ensure you complete the relevant sections on the application form.

Please return your application, marked confidential, as soon as possible **before 8 February 2019** to:

Email to:  
[wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com)

Mail to:  
Kirsten O'Callaghan  
Impairment Assessment Services  
ReturnToWorkSA  
GPO Box 2668  
ADELAIDE SA 5001

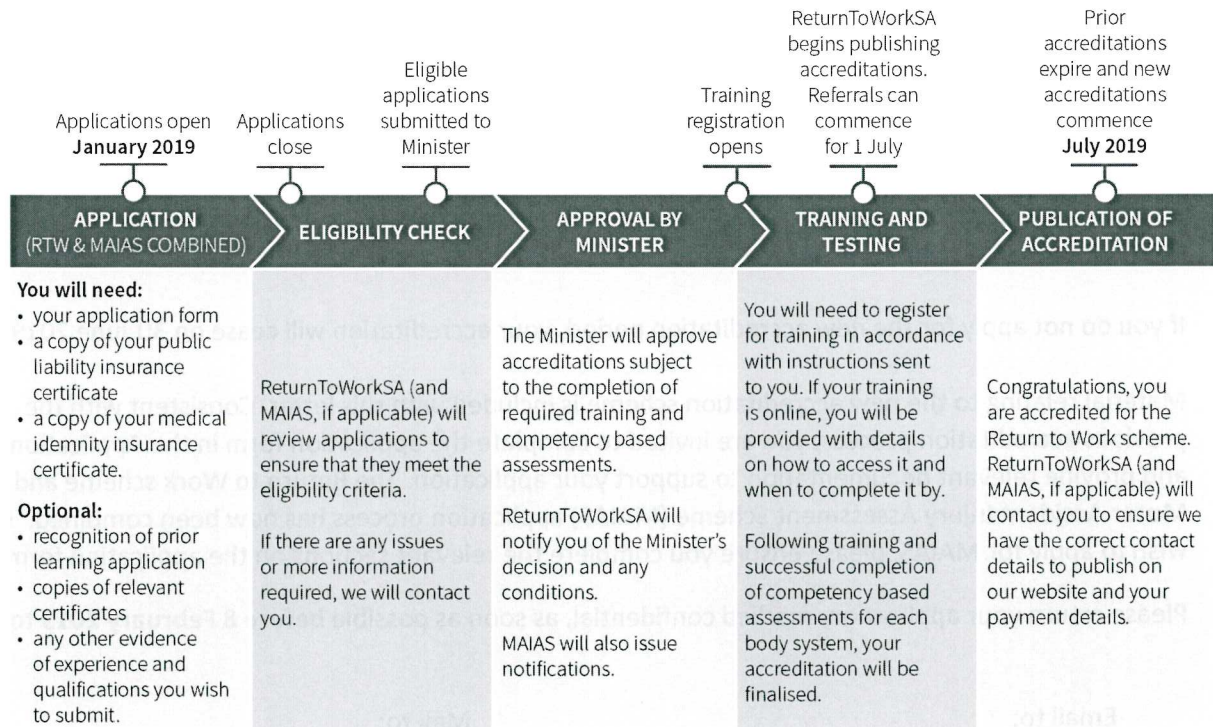
Notification of your application's outcome and any accreditation by the Treasurer will be made in March/April 2019. Any accreditation will be subject to your successful completion of training in the Introduction to the Impairment Assessment Guidelines and the Introduction to AMA5 and modules for the body system(s) for which you have been approved, as well as the associated competency-based assessments. **The cost of this training (not including travel) will be met by ReturnToWorkSA.** You will be advised what training is required and, where relevant, how to access it online following approval of your application and accreditation by the Treasurer.

If you have also applied for the MAIAS, in accordance with the *Civil Liability Act 1936*, the Minister (Attorney-General) will issue accreditation to assessors (pending completion of required training and competency based assessments). If you are successful, you will be contacted by the MAIAS



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Administrator with information about the additional training required for the MAIAS. The cost of this training (not including travel) will be funded by the CTP Regulator through the administration fee component of CTP premiums paid by motor vehicle owners with their vehicle registration. Further information is contained in the information sheet enclosed.



Further information is contained in the application pack provided with this letter and is also available at [www.rtwsa.com](http://www.rtwsa.com). If you have any questions please email [wpi@rtwsa.com](mailto:wpi@rtwsa.com) or contact Kirsten O'Callaghan on (08) 8238 5727.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely



Trish Bowe  
Manager, Impairment Assessment Services

MINISTER'S OFFICE	
Rec'd	24/8/18
File No:	1037
Physical ID:	TR518D11600

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Our reference: D18/01595393

**TO: TREASURER**

**RE: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE IMPAIRMENT ASSESSOR ACCREDITATION SCHEME AND CONSULTATION**

## PURPOSE

This briefing seeks:

- your in-principle approval to amend the Return to Work Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme (with final changes to be approved by you subsequent to consultation feedback); and
- your approval to consult with the Minister's Advisory Committee and current assessors/their representative associations on the proposed amendments on your behalf.

## ISSUES

### Amendment of the Return to Work Scheme - Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme

The Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme (the Accreditation Scheme) was first established by the former Minister for Industrial Relations on 15 January 2015 for a term of four years, with appointments expiring on 30 June 2019.

The *Return to Work Act 2014* (the Act) requires that medical practitioners are accredited by you under the Return to Work Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme in order to perform permanent impairment assessments. Doctors are accredited for particular body systems, which is determined by their specialist expertise. Permanent impairment assessments conducted by these doctors determine an injured worker's whole person impairment, which impacts lump sum entitlements for those under 29%. Workers with a whole person impairment above 30% are 'seriously injured workers,' which is a key entitlement gateway in the Return to Work Scheme. In summary, the payment of significant benefits hinges on the permanent impairment assessment.

Section 22(17) of the Act allows you to amend or substitute the Accreditation Scheme after consultation with the Minister's Advisory Committee.

ReturnToWorkSA (RTWSA) proposes a number of amendments to improve the practical operation of the Accreditation Scheme (the amended Accreditation Scheme is at Attachment A). We have also provided a copy of the current Accreditation Scheme in operation (Attachment B); and a summary of the proposed changes at Attachment C.

### Proposed amendments

The proposed amendments are intended to clarify and simplify the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme to ensure that it attracts a range of suitably qualified and skilled specialists to conduct assessments, and improve the quality and consistency of assessments in some complex

ReturnToWorkSA

400 King William Street Adelaide SA 5000 • GPO Box 2668 Adelaide SA 5001 • ABN 83 687 563 395

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areas of impairment. It is also aimed at strengthening the ability for RTWSA to monitor assessors more effectively to manage performance and outlier behaviour.

The proposed amendments include a number of simplifications and clarifications. The more substantive changes proposed include:

- A greater focus on relevant specialist qualifications. While the ability to accredit the applicant in only some body systems and not others has not changed, there is an increased focus in the amended Accreditation Scheme on relevant specialist qualifications. This has the potential to alter the distribution of assessors in favour of more specialist assessors versus more generalist medical practitioners. This should improve the quality and consistency of assessments in these areas.
- Your powers to suspend or cancel an accreditation have been strengthened where RTWSA has evidence of repeated failure to comply with accreditation requirements. This is important in addressing outlier performance.
- It is also proposed that the new terms for accreditation as an assessor be changed from 4 years to 3 years (1 July 2019 – 30 June 2022). Given the significance of assessments in determining benefits paid, the Accreditation Scheme should be reviewed and refreshed more frequently.

For context, it should be noted that the Impairment Assessment Guidelines provide that the injured worker chooses their assessor, from the list of assessors accredited for the relevant body system. Anecdotally, it seems this decision is often influenced by the worker's legal representative. Experience has shown that since 1 July 2015, only a small group of assessors have received the majority of assessment referrals as detailed in a recent briefing to you (our reference D18/1058638).

#### Stakeholder issues

The proposed amendments reflect the need for higher levels of specialist qualifications and experience in assessing some more complex impairments. This may be controversial within the assessor community, as it will mean that some current assessors will no longer be qualified to assess some of the body systems they are currently accredited for.

Those who will lose accreditation for some body systems due to the need for greater specialist skills and experience may react negatively, and the strengthening of performance management options will not be welcomed by current assessors with performance issues. However, we think these changes are necessary to improve the quality and consistency of assessments for these impairments.

There is also a risk through the next accreditation period that medical practitioners who have not received many referrals over the last four years will not reapply to be accredited (as noted earlier, worker choice has resulted in a small group of assessors performing the bulk of assessments). This could result in a more limited pool of specialist skills and experience. Targeted communication to medical specialist colleges and to individual medical specialists in specialties that are at risk of being under represented will be undertaken to mitigate this risk.

#### Consultation process

Section 22(17) of the Act allows you to amend or substitute the Accreditation Scheme after consultation with the Minister's Advisory Committee.

It is proposed that RTWSA consults with the Minister's Advisory Committee on your behalf and tables the proposed amended Accreditation Scheme at its next meeting on 24 September 2018.

Following this, RTWSA proposes to undertake an informal consultation process with all currently accredited assessors and relevant medical associations.



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There are currently 161 Impairment Assessors accredited to undertake assessments of whole person impairment. Along with the current Impairment Assessors, RTWSA plans to informally consult with the key representative organisations for these assessors:

- Australian Medical Association (AMA SA Branch)
- Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ)
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO)
- Australian Society of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery (ASOHNS)
- Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ)
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
- Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM)
- Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP)
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)
- Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GSA)

### Timing

Assessor accreditations expire on 30 June 2019. In order to be ready to take referrals for assessment from 1 July 2019, assessors need to have their new accreditation confirmed and training completed by June 2019. A recommendation of suitably qualified assessors will be submitted to you for approval in February 2019. The schedule of work to implement the proposed changes to the Accreditation Scheme is as follows:

Timing	Event
24 September 2018	Minister's Advisory Committee meeting
September/October 2018	Informal consultation with assessors and professional medical associations commences
October 2018	Consideration of feedback and further amendment of Accreditation Scheme as necessary
October 2018	Out of session consultation with the Minister's Advisory Committee (if required)
October/ November 2018	Summary of stakeholder feedback and proposed final amendments to new Accreditation Scheme provided to you for approval via formal briefing
November 2018	Applications for accreditation open
February 2019	Assessor appointment recommendations made to you for approval via formal briefing
March – June 2019	Training of assessors
1 June 2019	Publication of new list of assessors
1 July 2019	Assessment and performance monitoring by RTWSA under the new Accreditation Scheme commences

Further to the above key milestones, there is an opportunity for us to discuss the proposed changes to the Accreditation Scheme at our upcoming meeting of 14 September 2018.

### Compulsory Third party Insurance Regulator (CTPIR)

The Compulsory Third party Insurance Regulator (CTPIR) also has an interest in the Return to Work Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme. To be accredited as an assessor in the Motor Accident Injury Assessment Scheme, "the Minister has determined that an applicant must be accredited with Return to Work SA as a Permanent Impairment Assessor". RTWSA has been working in collaboration with the CTPIR in the review and amendment of the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme. CTPIR supports the amended Accreditation Scheme provided for your in-principle approval at Attachment A.

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**BACKGROUND**

The assessment of whole person impairment is a critical element of the *Return to Work Act 2014*. The percentage of whole person impairment sets non-economic loss lump sum entitlements, underpins the economic loss lump sum calculations and determines whether the threshold for serious injury and common law is met.

Section 22(17) to (18) further outlines details regarding the Accreditation Scheme.

*"22(17) The accreditation scheme –*

- (a) will provide for the accreditation of medical practitioners who are determined, under the scheme, to be suitably qualified to undertake assessments for the purposes of this section; and*
- (b) will work on the basis that the Minister will issue the accreditations; and*
- (c) may provide for the suspension or cancellation of accreditation by the Minister on specified grounds; and*
- (d) may be amended or substituted by the Minister from time to time after consultation with the Advisory Committee.*

*22(18) An accreditation will be issued by the Minister –*

- (a) for a period specified by the Minister; and*
- (b) on conditions determined by the Minister."*

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that you:

1. note this briefing; and
2. approve in principle the proposed amendments to the Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme at Attachment A (with the final Accreditation Scheme to be approved by you subsequent to consultation feedback); and
3. approve consultation with the Minister's Advisory Committee, current assessors and their representative associations on the proposed amendments.

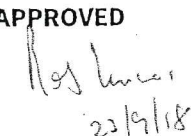
Please note that your approval is required by 17 September 2018 to enable the distribution of the amended Accreditation Scheme in Committee papers prior to the Minister's Advisory Committee meeting on 24 September 2018.



**Rob Cordiner**  
Chief Executive Officer

24 August 2018

**APPROVED**

  
23/9/18  
Treasurer

Contact: Sally Burrridge, Manager, Government Relations  
8223 2267 or [sally.burrridge@rtwsa.com](mailto:sally.burrridge@rtwsa.com)

Attachment A: Amended Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme (draft for in-principle approval)  
Attachment B: Current Impairment Assessor Accreditation Scheme (current in operation)  
Attachment C: Summary of proposed changes to Accreditation Scheme