

Information and FAQs–

Before you apply for an exemption from a pre-requisite course

The overarching principle is that the APA will be fair and equitable in granting exemptions from a pre-requisite course, in order to enable members to register in a higher level course. We will not require our members to undertake courses that duplicate or replicate their existing knowledge, skills and/or experience.

When do I have to apply for an exemption?

You need to apply for an exemption a minimum of 6 weeks before the scheduled course date. This will allow time for your application to be reviewed, for any additional information to be provided (if required) and if successful, complete the required pre-work for the course.

What's the minimum practice area experience by milestone level?

There are two elements that must be met:

- Continuous practice area experience
- Recency of practice

Continuous practice area experience

The APA aligns to the Australian Qualifications Framework and Career Pathway for continuous practice area experience.

Explanations:

- Practice area experience relates the specific national group practice area – for example, Gerontology or Paediatrics
- Continuous practice area experience – similar in concept to continuous employment service. For example, maternity or paternity leave doesn't break your period of continuous practice area experience, however it doesn't count towards it either

In many cases, physiotherapists will have several years work experience before moving into a particular national group practice area. For example, a physiotherapist may have five years full-time experience, however only two years continuous practice area experience in neurology. They may also have many years more continuous practice area experience than the minimum requirements.

Reasons vary and anecdotally this includes:

- undertaking an APA course as CPD refresher or evidence update
- the APA course includes particular topics of interest for their role or work setting
- the member is at a point in their career journey where they wish to progress through the APA credentialing pathway of titling and Fellowship.

There is a difference between the continuous practice experience to enter a milestone level and to complete it. For example, it takes a minimum of one year's continuous practice experience to progress from the start of level 2 through to completion of level 2.

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The following table indicates the generally accepted minimum continuous practice area experience to enter and exit a milestone level.

Minimum continuous practice area experience to enter and exit levels

Milestone Level	Minimum continuous practice area experience to enter or 'start' a level	Minimum continuous practice area experience to complete or 'exit' a level
Milestone Level 1 – Foundation	Nil	1 year
Milestone Level 2 – Intermediate	1 year	2 years
Milestone Level 3 – Highly Developed	2 years	3 years

Recency of practice

The APA aligns to the registration requirements set by AHPRA-Physio BA for Recency of practice standards. As of May 2020 these are 150 hours per year, or 450 hours over three years.

How do I demonstrate my knowledge, skills and experience?

The principle of equivalence of knowledge, skills and/or experience is paramount. You need to demonstrate that you have equivalent practice area knowledge, skills and/or experience to that attained by completing the pre-requisite course. In your written responses you may include examples demonstrating your competence and incorporate a range of relevant activities, tasks and roles. Options include (but are not limited to):

- job or role
- caseload
- level of seniority
- workplace setting
- client or patient caseload
- PD or course

You don't need to demonstrate that you've completed an equivalent course, however you **must** demonstrate relevant CPD in your CV/Resume. Appendix 1 contains some prompts and ideas for the information to include in your CV/resume.

We may ask for more information

Sometimes we need to ask for some more brief information. We'll provide guidance about what we need through a couple of questions or dot points.

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What are the decisions?

The decision may be:

- Exemption granted
- Exemption not granted – evidence-base or similar CPD required
- Exemption not granted

When will I find out the decision?

We appreciate the generosity of our members to support this process, which they do around their own commitments. We try to provide you with a decision or request more information within three weeks, however this isn't always possible. We'll keep you informed throughout.

How do I apply for an exemption?

To express your interest in applying for an exemption and for a copy of the application form, please email APA Exemption Exemption@australian.physio

Can I appeal?

You have the right to appeal the decision in writing within 28 days. If the appeal is dismissed, there may be an administration fee of \$120 (subject to change without notice).

Is there a quality assurance process to ensure consistency in decisions?

As part of the APA's quality assurance process, exemption decisions will be reviewed across states and territories and across national groups to ensure there is consistency.

What standard is the exemption process informed by?

APA's Education Principles: Access, Equity and RPL

https://australian.physio/sites/default/files/professional-development/APA_Education_Principles-AccessEquityRPL_v1Mar2022.pdf

APA's Credit Pathways Policy

APA's Competence Framework <https://australian.physio/pd/career-pathway>

APA's Recency of Practice Standards

https://australian.physio/sites/default/files/APA%20Standards_RecencyContinuousPractice_v1.0.pdf

AHPRA and Physiotherapy Board of Australia's Recency of Practice

<https://www.physiotherapyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/Recency-of-practice-guidelines.aspx>

Appendix 1 – Preparing your CV/Resume

What to include

- Maximum of five pages
- CPD list or table: title/topic, date, hours, name of the person or organisation who delivered it
- You only need to include sections and information that are relevant to you – the list below contains a selection of ideas or prompts, you may have other sections you wish to include
- We don't have any requirements about a standard format or template – however, it is expected to be written to a professional standard, please check your spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.

Standard sections

- Personal details: Name, Phone, Email, Address
- Qualifications and credentials
- Employment history
- CPD: title, date, hours, name of person or organisation
- Memberships

Optional sections/information

- LinkedIn or other website
- Professional or industry bodies: name and years, if relevant include role i.e. chair, committee member, or similar
- Other professional roles: may be voluntary or outside your normal employment role
- Publications, research and authorship – note lead or contributing, may include peer reviewed or other