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POLICY

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure minimum standards for professional genetic counselling practice. It outlines the requirements for entry into genetic counselling practice, and sets minimum requirements for practitioners to maintain their skills and competency.

2. NASRHP Definition of 'practice'

For the purposes of regulation, the National Alliance of Self Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP) definition of practice has been adopted, as follows¹: "Practice means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession...practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct nonclinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession."

3. Registration Requirements

3.1. Initial Registration

3.1.1. HGSA Membership

All genetic counsellors applying for HGSA-registration must have an account on the HGSA website to make their application. All applicants are encouraged to be a current financial member of the HGSA before applying to join the HGSA-Register of Genetic Counsellors, however HGSA membership is not mandatory. The HGSA membership fees subsidise some of the administrative requirements of registration and thus there are different prices for the application and renewal fee for the HGSA-Register of Genetic Counsellors depending upon the individuals membership status. Information about applying for HGSA membership is available on the [HGSA website](#).

Please ensure a current, regularly monitored email address is provided for correspondence as this is the primary form of communication.

You do not require membership of the Australasian Society of Genetic Counsellors (ASGC) to apply for HGSA-Registration.

3.1.2. Application Form

The [application form](#) to join the HGSA-Register of Genetic Counsellors is available on the HGSA website. NASRHP requires the following evidence at the time of initial registration.

3.1.3. Evidence

Mandatory evidence:

- Evidence of a tertiary qualification in Genetic Counselling by providing:

¹ National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions. (May 2024). *Membership Standards Users Guide*.

- Access to a secure online electronic copy of the applicant's academic transcript and granted qualification from the granting institution (e.g. via My eQuals Australia).
- Only if a secure electronic access is not available, a copy of the academic transcript and qualification from the granting institution, which will be subject to primary source verification.
- Proof of identity according to the requirements for the Australian Federal Police 100 point checklist (afp.gov.au) and certified change of name documents if relevant.
- Evidence of compliance with Recency of Practice requirements.

Other applicable evidence:

- Applicants may be required to provide evidence of English language proficiency (refer to the [English Language Requirements for Genetic Counsellors Policy](#)).
- Applicants who have completed Genetic Counselling Certification or Registration through an overseas body must provide evidence of their Certification/Registration eligibility and history from the overseas body.

3.2. Application Review Process

All initial registration applications will be reviewed and assessed by the Professional Practice Committee. The committee meets monthly, and approval may take one or more months depending on the capacity of the committee, when the application is submitted, and whether all the required information is received. Registration will not be complete until the application has been approved or declined by the committee.

Applicants submitting incomplete or unclear applications will be notified by email and asked to resubmit their information via email. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the committee has the requirement information.

Successful applicants will be formally advised by email. They will be added to the HGSA-Register of Genetic Counsellors with no additional fee until renewing their registration the following membership year. They will then be expected to meet annual CPD and practice requirements and make annual mandatory declarations to maintain their registration. If they are a member of the HGSA, they will then be entitled to use the title MHGSA.

Unsuccessful applicants will be formally advised by letter forwarded to their email address. The letter will contain details regarding the reason/s for the unsuccessful application. The applicant will not be added to the HGSA-Register of Genetic Counsellors. The application fee will not be refunded due to the administrative requirements to assess the application. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the eligibility and registration requirements prior to applying.

3.3. Mandatory Declarations

A mandatory declaration is included in the online application form at the time of registration. The practitioner must declare that they meet all of the requirements for registration and make any required disclosures, attest that all information provided is true and correct to the best of their knowledge, and agree to notify the BOC as soon as practicable if any of this information changes.

3.4.Fee

Once the application form and mandatory declaration are complete, the applicant will be asked to check out online through the HGSA website, and the application fee will be applied.

- If the application is successful, this will be used as the first year's registration fee. Applications received from the 1st of January through to the 31st of March will apply through to the 31st of March the following year.
- If an application is unsuccessful, the application fee is retained to cover the administrative costs of the BOC and HGSA in assessing the application. If the same applicant makes another application in the future, a new application fee will apply for each subsequent application.
- Individuals who are current financial members of the HGSA receive a discounted registration application and renewal fee, in comparison to applicants who are not current financial members of the HGSA.

4. Professional status

For successful applicants to the HGSA-Register, those who are current financial members of the HGSA are granted the title Member of the Human Genetics Society of Australasia (MHGSA) in recognition that a genetic counsellor meets the minimum educational requirements for employment as a genetic counsellor in any area of genetic counselling practice.

MHGSA status is an essential requirement for genetic counsellors to pursue Fellow of the Human Genetics Society of Australasia (FHGSA) status. The HGSA grants FHGSA status to genetic counsellors who have demonstrated their achievement of the HGSA Professional Standards for Genetic Counsellors to the Board of Censors for Genetic Counselling through submissions and supervised practice, and are current financial members of the HGSA.

The HGSA Register of Genetic Counsellors lists the dates that MHGSA and FHGSA credentials are awarded to genetic counsellors. All genetic counsellors on the HGSA-Register are expected to meet minimum continuing education and continuing practice requirements, and to make mandatory declarations for annual registration.

5. Entry into Practice

5.1. Eligibility for MHGSA or equivalent

Individuals who have completed a tertiary qualification in genetic counselling, can apply to be recognised as a HGSA-Registered Genetic Counsellor. If the individual is approved and is a current financial member of the HGSA, they will be granted MHGSA status as described in section 4.

5.1.1. Master of Genetic Counselling

Graduates of an HGSA accredited two-year Master of Genetic Counselling program are considered sufficiently competent to practise as entry-level genetic counsellors under appropriate supervision (see the [Genetic Counselling Course Accreditation Committee](#) page of the HGSA website).

MHGSA and/or HGSA-Registration is not automatically granted for graduates. It is recommended that graduates with a Masters of Genetic Counselling apply for HGSA-Registration at the earliest opportunity. Applications may be submitted at any time and will be reviewed regularly by the [Professional Practice](#)

[Committee.](#)

5.1.2. Graduate Diploma Genetic Counsellors

Genetic counsellors who completed an accredited Graduate Diploma in Genetic Counselling prior to 2008 had until 31st March 2023 to apply for Registration. This option is now obsolete. Please contact the Professional Practice Committee via email to discuss further if required.

5.1.3. Overseas trained and/or certified genetic counsellors

Genetic counsellors who have trained or certified overseas may apply to the [Professional Practice Committee](#) for HGSA-Registration. The Committee will consider the relevance and transferability of their postgraduate qualification in genetic counselling obtained from an overseas institution. Applicants may be required to provide evidence of English language proficiency (refer to the [English Language Requirements for Genetic Counsellors Policy](#)).

5.2. MHGSA and Registration

Successful applicants will be entitled to use the title *HGSA-Registered Genetic Counsellor*. Financial members of the HGSA, are entitled to use the postnominals MHGSA. Genetic counsellors are granted registration as evidence that they meet entry-level requirements for employment as a genetic counsellor in Australia and New Zealand.

MHGSA genetic counsellors can undertake FHGSA Clinical Certification in Genetic Counselling by application to the [Certification Committee](#). See the HGSA [Clinical Certification Policy for Genetic Counsellors](#). When the FHGSA requirements are met, the genetic counsellor will be entitled to use the postnominals FHGSA.

6. Registration status

The HGSA maintains a [Register of Genetic Counsellors](#) who are regulated by the [Board of Censors for Genetic Counselling](#). This register is intended to help clients and employers to identify genetic counsellors who have the appropriate education and training, and whose knowledge and skills are current.

Any genetic counsellor with a status of Registered on the HGSA-Register holds a tertiary qualification in genetic counselling recognised by the HGSA to enter practice as a genetic counsellor and meet annual requirements for registration. This applies to new graduates. This includes, Registered Member - MHGSA and Registered Non-Member.

Those with the status of Registered Fellow hold a tertiary qualification in genetic counselling recognised by the HGSA and have been awarded FHGSA Clinical Certification in Genetic Counselling, are actively working in genetic counselling practice, and meet ongoing annual requirements for registration. This is not restricted to clinical practice, and includes practice in other areas (see Section 2. NASRHP Definition of 'practice').

7. Recency of Practice

Recency of Practice refers to the period of time over which an individual has used their professional knowledge and skills, and the extent to which they have maintained their contemporary practice and competencies within a profession. For more details see the [Recency of Practice policy](#).

7.1. Supervision in practice

Ongoing supervision is a foundation of reflective practice and is a requirement of genetic counselling practice. Actively practicing genetic counsellors in any area of practice will be required to provide evidence of appropriate supervision as defined in the HGSA [Supervision Policy for Genetic Counsellors](#).

8. Re-registration

Re-registration is required on an annual basis, and applies to all genetic counsellors on the register. In line with the HGSA membership year, re-registration is open from the first of January to the 31st of March, for registration through till the 31st of March the following year. Re-registration requires renewal of the practitioner’s mandatory declaration, and payment of the annual registration fee. Practitioners must maintain evidence that they meet the requirements for registration, including CPD, practice hours, and supervision, that may be requested in the event of an audit.

9. Version History

7 May 2026	New policy created which amalgamates information from other policies to summarise the registration process as recommended by NASRHP Standard 6.
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10. Figure: Regulation Flowchart

Visit <https://hgsa.org.au/Web/Consumer-resources/Genetic-Counselling.aspx>