

Registration audit guide

October 2025



Australian Government
Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Engage
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This resource provides general guidance only. It's your responsibility to know your obligations and legal responsibilities under the *Aged Care Act 2024* and *Aged Care Rules 2025*.



Background

Provider Registration Policy

Under the *Aged Care Act 2024* (new Aged Care Act), to provide Australian Government-funded aged care services (aged care services), providers must be registered by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (Commission).

Our [Provider Registration Policy](#) explains our process and principles for registering providers of aged care services.

Overview

This guide helps you prepare for and take part in a registration audit. It describes:

- the purpose of the audit and how it informs (helps us make) registration decisions
- the 3 stages of the audit process (initiation, delivery, reporting)
- what to expect and what to do at each stage
- the types of evidence we consider (collect and think about) during audits
- how we define the audit ratings
- the audit tools we use
- other relevant resources.

Audit purpose

If you're registered in category 4, 5 or 6, you must comply with the [strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards](#) (strengthened Quality Standards).

We do an audit to assess if you can confirm with relevant strengthened Quality Standards. The audit helps us make a decision about your application.

You can learn more about the [relationships between registration categories, service types and related strengthened Quality Standards](#) on the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing website.



Registration audit

We do a registration audit if you're applying for initial provider registration (to register as a provider for the first time) in categories 4, 5 or 6.

A registration audit focuses on collecting and assessing evidence of your governance arrangements, systems and processes.

We collect evidence based on:

- relevant strengthened Quality Standards
- the types of services you plan to deliver.

We usually do a registration audit offsite. We may visit you onsite if we want to see the environment where you will deliver services.

Evidence collection and assessment

During the audit, we:

- collect, confirm, assess and map evidence against the [strengthened Quality Standards](#) and their Outcomes
- use this evidence to give audit ratings for each Outcome and strengthened Quality Standard.

Evidence collection

Our audit team collects evidence to help them make accurate, reliable and defensible findings. This means that we can defend our findings if anyone challenges or questions them. Auditors collect evidence from 8 evidence categories, depending on the type of audit they're doing, including:

- experience of older people
- governing body feedback
- management feedback
- worker feedback
- third-party feedback
- observations
- documents and records
- care outcomes.

The evidence they collect across these categories can vary.

First, we collect evidence about governance arrangements, systems and processes. Then we collect evidence from different sources to confirm statements, issues or risks.



Evidence assessment

We assess evidence to understand and test if:

- your governance arrangements, systems and processes meet the intent of relevant strengthened Quality Standards and Outcomes
- you have methods to monitor if you deliver services in line with your governance arrangements, systems and processes
- you will continuously improve your governance arrangements, systems and processes.

When we assess the evidence to give audit ratings, we consider:

- the totality of evidence (all the evidence), which includes:
 - the environment you work in (for example, rural, remote, metropolitan)
 - how your governance arrangements, systems and processes are performing
 - how these things affect older people
- the appropriateness of evidence, which means assessing if the evidence is:
 - relevant – it relates to the strengthened Quality Standards and Outcomes we assessed
 - current – it is within an appropriate time and context of time is considered
 - credible – it is provided by credible and unbiased sources
 - valid – it is verified through and consistent with other sources.
- the strength and sufficiency of evidence, which means assessing if there is enough information and taking a strengths-based approach to support accurate, valid and reliable findings.

We use this approach to ensure our assessment of evidence is reliable, consistent, promotes fairness and minimises subjectivity and potential bias.

Audit ratings

We give audit ratings to all Outcomes in a relevant strengthened Quality Standard. We base the overall rating for that strengthened Quality Standard on the Outcome ratings.

The ratings are:

- conformance
- minor non-conformance
- major non-conformance.



Conformance rating

A conformance rating means you have demonstrated (shown) you can:

- establish, implement, monitor and continuously improve governance arrangements, systems and processes to meet requirements of the Outcome/strengthened Quality Standard
- deliver person-centred quality care.

Minor non-conformance rating

A minor non-conformance rating means you have demonstrated you can:

- establish, implement, monitor and continuously improve governance arrangements, systems and processes to meet the requirements of the Outcome/strengthened Quality Standard
- **but** some gaps are identified.

Identified gaps affect a minor (small) part of the system or process, which are unlikely to present significant risks to the health, safety and wellbeing of older people or workers.

Major non-conformance rating

A major non-conformance rating means you have **not** demonstrated you can:

- establish, implement, monitor and continuously improve governance arrangements, systems and processes to meet the requirements of the Outcome/strengthened Quality Standard
- **and** it is likely to present significant risks to older people and workers.

Audit stages

The audit process has **3 stages**:

- Stage 1 Audit initiation: starts the audit program
- Stage 2 Audit delivery: we collect and assess evidence
- Stage 3 Audit reporting: we prepare preliminary and final audit reports.

See [Appendix A: registration audit flow chart](#).

Stage 1: Audit initiation

We start the audit process by contacting you. This is your opportunity to:

- engage (talk) with us to understand the process
- prepare the required documentation.



What to expect

You'll receive an email

This email includes:

- a request for you to complete and submit the [Audit Evidence Collection Tool \(AECT\)](#) and provide supporting documentation
- how long you have to provide the AECT and other documents
- a request for details about your governing body and senior management representatives who will attend the audit meetings
- resources to help you prepare for the audit
- a reminder for you to send us updated policies and procedures when they're available.

After we send you the email, we'll call you to:

- confirm you have received the AECT
- explain the AECT process and information you need to provide
- confirm a date and time for the audit initiation meeting
- answer your questions.

What you need to do

Complete and submit the AECT by the deadline

You need to:

- complete the AECT
- prepare all required documents and make sure we can access all documents
- check you've fully completed the AECT
- submit the AECT and required documents by the set time
- make sure you've submitted all the required documents.

If you **don't** submit the AECT before the deadline:

- we'll contact you to remind you and to confirm your next steps
- if delays continue, we can issue a formal notice under the new Aged Care Act requiring you to provide the documents.

How to complete the AECT

To complete the AECT, fill in the sections that apply to the category of services you plan to deliver. Each section aligns with the strengthened Quality Standards that apply to you. You can find more information in the Guidance tab in the [AECT](#).

You will also have been given the name and contact details of a Commission officer who will be able to answer any questions you may have about completing the AECT.



If you don't complete the AECT

If you don't satisfactorily complete and submit the AECT by the deadline, we can withdraw your application.

Audit initiation meeting

We schedule an audit initiation meeting with you. This is an online meeting and takes about 30 minutes.

We explain the purpose of the meeting in the [audit initiation meeting agenda](#).

Stage 2: Audit delivery

In this stage we review your governance arrangements, systems and processes. We look at how you use them in your day-to-day operations. This can include:

- document reviews
- interviews
- onsite observations
- feedback sessions.

This helps us determine if you can meet the strengthened Quality Standards.

What to expect

In this stage, we collect and assess evidence about your governance arrangements, systems and processes from:

- the [AECT](#)
- a governing body meeting
- a senior management meeting
- onsite observations (if needed).

Review of documents and evidence

We assess the AECT you submitted and any supporting documentation. This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate how you'll conform with the strengthened Quality Standards by explaining:

- your systems and processes
- how you'll deliver high-quality care to older people.



Governing body meeting

We meet with 1 to 3 members of your governing body. This meeting is online and takes about 90 to 120 minutes.

We explain the purpose of the meeting in the [governing body meeting agenda](#).

Senior management meeting

We meet with 2 to 5 members of your senior management leadership group. This meeting is online and takes about 90 to 120 minutes.

We explain the purpose of the meeting in the [senior management meeting agenda](#).

Onsite observations

We may talk to you about organising an onsite visit to see your service environment (where you will deliver your services). This could be a residential care home or a community location where you plan to deliver services. We will discuss the details of the visit with you and ask for your consent to visit.

Entry meeting

If an onsite observation is required, at the start, we hold a brief entry meeting to give you an overview of what we will be observing. We explain the purpose of the meeting in the entry meeting agenda.

Closing meeting

At the end of the audit, we hold a 30-minute closing meeting to present our preliminary audit findings and ratings. We explain the purpose of the meeting in the [closing meeting agenda](#).

You can't provide more information or evidence at this meeting. However, you will have the opportunity to provide more evidence when you respond to our preliminary audit report.

Stage 3: Audit reporting

This is the final part of the audit process. This is where:

- we prepare the preliminary audit report
- you respond to the preliminary audit report
- we prepare a final audit report.

Preliminary audit report

In the preliminary audit report, we give you:

- a summary of our key findings from the audit
- your conformance ratings against each Outcome of the strengthened Quality Standards.

You will have the opportunity to respond to the preliminary audit report.



Responding to the preliminary audit report

We send you an email with a link to the preliminary audit report. You can also use this link to submit your response. You need to respond within the timeframe in the email.

In your response, you can:

- describe the steps you've taken, or will take, to address (fix) any non-conformances
- include a continuous improvement plan showing the planned steps and how and when you will take them.

Final audit report

We prepare a final audit report. The audit report will:

- include a conformance rating against the strengthened Quality Standards and Outcomes
- summarise your response to the preliminary audit report
- describe our reason for the final conformance rating.

We send you the final audit report by email and contact you to confirm that you received it. This is the end of the audit.

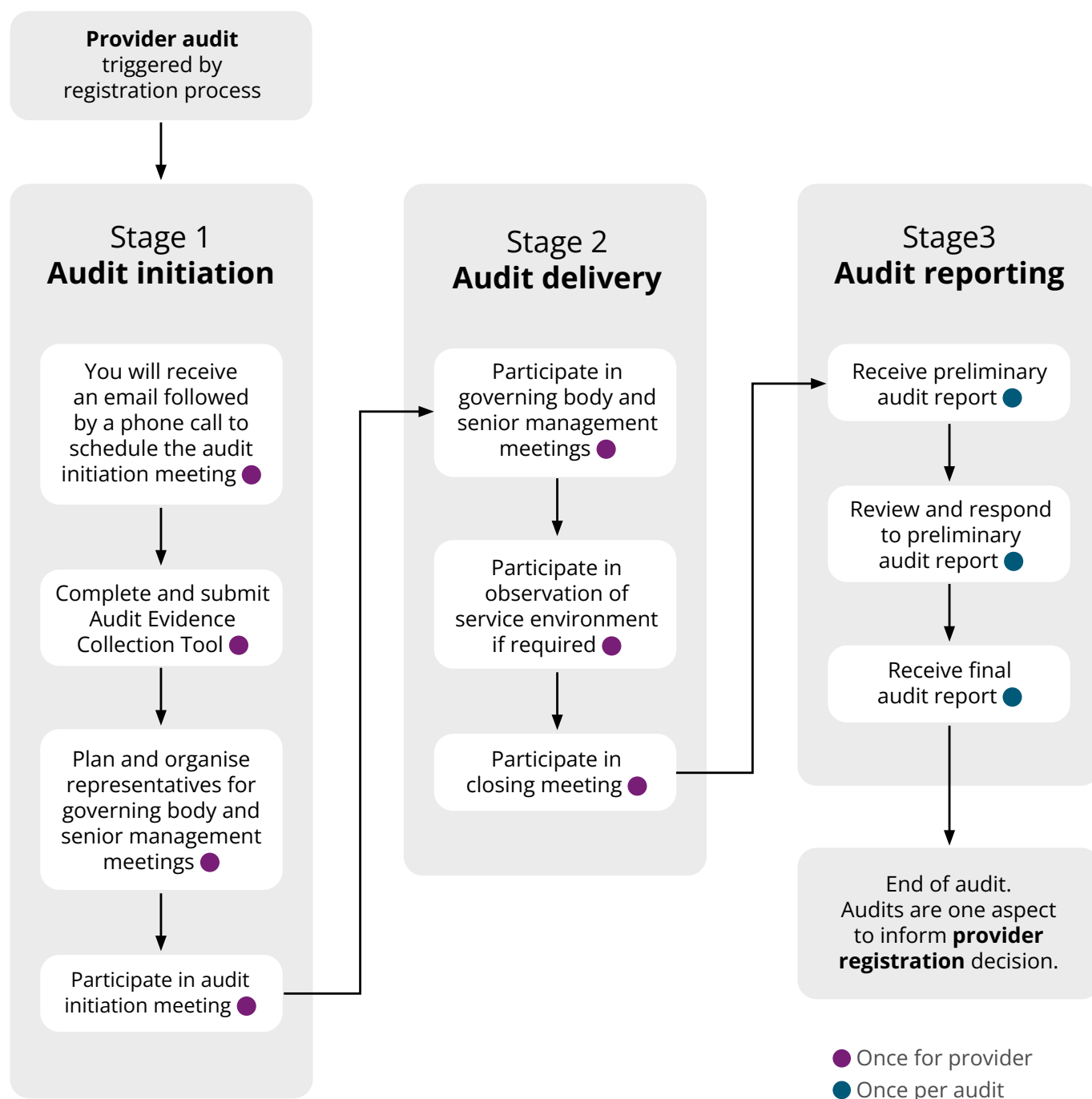
We base our registration decision on the final audit report.

You can read more about the end-to-end registration process and your obligations as a registered aged care provider on our [website](#).



Appendix A

Registration audit flow chart





The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders both past and present.



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