

# ATHLETICS AUSTRALIA OFFICIALS EDUCATION SCHEME (AAOES)

## *GENERAL GUIDELINES*

### **Introduction**

In 1993 Athletics Australia introduced a new education and certification system for competition (technical) officials to be known as the Athletics Australia Officials Education Scheme (AAOES).

A principal objective of the AAOES is to create a pool of technical officials who are each proficient in many of the tasks required to conduct Track & Field and/or “Out-of-Stadia” competitions (ie – cross country, road running & road walking and mountain running) rather than the narrower event by event focus of the previous system. Athletics Australia now requires that its technical officials be multi – skilled. The scheme therefore concentrates on event groupings rather than individual events and technical officials are encouraged to become proficient across a number of event groupings.

The main focus of the AAOES is education through regular seminars and the provision of training booklets and other reference material.

The emphasis of the scheme is on knowledge and proficiency rather than length of service and appointments to international and national events will be based solely on merit and competence (ability and agility).

The scheme is aimed at being more widely accessible and at encouraging the participation of large numbers – school teachers, students, parents, fun run organisers, Little Athletics Centres, community volunteer groups, etc., so that as many people as possible have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to conduct athletics competitions.

### **Event Groups and Elements**

- TRACK – starting; judging/photo finish / timekeeping; umpiring / lap scoring / wind gauge.
- JUMPS – long jump / triple jump; high jump; pole vault.
- THROWS – shot put; discus throw; hammer throw; javelin throw.
- WALKS – walk judging (track & road); general track/road officiating.
- ADMINISTRATION/TECHNICAL – competition management; seedings & draws; announcing; technical management
- OUT of STADIA – course setting; starting; timekeeping; judging; umpiring; lap scoring.
- COURSE MEASUREMENT – specialist course.

### **Certification Levels and Requirements**

- LEVEL “C” – The basic (entry) level. To achieve this level candidates must either:-
  - (a) Pass a written examination with a pass mark of at least 70%, OR
  - (b) Have their practical proficiency certified (by a Level “B” or higher official) in at least two elements of the event group over ten (10) competition days, OR
  - (c) Posses the highest level certification under the Australian Little Athletics Officials Scheme (such translation of certification will be automatic on application by the official to Athletics Australia).
- LEVEL “B” – To achieve this level candidates must:-
  - (a) Pass a written examination with a pass mark of at least 70%, AND
  - (b) Have their practical proficiency certified (by a level “A” or IAAF official) in at least three of the four (or 2 of the 3) elements of the event group over fifteen competition days.
- LEVEL “A” – To achieve this level candidates must:-
  - (a) Pass a written examination with a pass mark of at least 75%, AND
  - (b) Have their practical proficiency certified (by a level “A” or IAAF official) in all the elements of the event group over 15 competition days.

### **Advancement through the Levels**

- LEVEL “C” – Examinations may be taken at any time after the candidate has officiated on at least four separate occasions or has undertaken an education seminar within AAOES;
- LEVEL “B” – Examinations may be taken after the expiration of one year following successful completion of the relevant Level “C” exam provided the practical proficiency element has also been completed OR at any time by an official who receives automatic translation from the relevant Little Athletics grading OR one year after having been graded Level “C” under the no examination option.
- LEVEL “A” – Examinations may be taken after the expiration of two years following successful completion of the relevant Level “B” exam, provided the practical proficiency element has also been completed, by application to Athletics Australia. In order to attempt the written examinations for Competition Management Level A or Technical Management Level A, candidates must have also attended the relevant AAOES management seminar.

### **Examinations**

Exam papers are set by the Athletics Australia Officials Commission and are updated regularly. Answers are based on the IAAF rules currently in force. Officials Education Liaison Officers (OELO’s) are appointed in each Member Association to organise seminars & courses and to arrange examinations. OELO’s may appoint a number of assistants to conduct exams under their direction in regional areas, however Athletics Australia guidelines for exams must be strictly observed.

- LEVEL “C” & “B”
  - (a) Time allowed is 2 hours. The IAAF Handbook, IPC Athletics Rules and Combined Events Scoring Tables may be used.
  - (b) Pass mark is 70%.
  - (c) Papers consist of a compulsory Part A (General Questions) covering the whole event group, plus a choice of 3 out of the remaining 4 parts (throws & track) or 2 out of 3 (jumps) covering specific elements (eg. shot put, high jump, track judging, etc.)
  - (d) Level “C” & “B” papers can be marked by the Association’s OELO’s or their assistants, and are generally available on request.
  - (e) Level “C” papers are generally multiple choice with some requirement to insert a correct word or measurement.
  - (f) Level “B” papers are a combination of multiple choice and supplying written answers.
- LEVEL “A”
  - (a) Time allowed is 3 hours. The IAAF Handbook , IPC Athletics Rules and Combined Events Scoring Tables may be used.
  - (b) Pass mark is 75%.
  - (c) Papers include a range of problem solving questions. All sections are compulsory.
  - (d) “A” papers are marked by IAAF graded officials and are available on application to AA.

NOTE 1 – PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATES – These may be issued by Associations for a single event (or range of events) to technical officials who do not wish to undertake examinations. They will not be issued in levels but will simply acknowledge that the bearer has demonstrated the practical knowledge and skills to officiate in an event or range of events. Member Associations are solely responsible for maintaining records of recipients of such certificates.

NOTE 2 – Association OELO’s may, after discussion in each case with the Athletics Australia Officials Commission, make special provision for people unable to handle written examinations.

### **Maintenance of Gradings**

- To maintain gradings at Level “A” or “B” technical officials must have attended an AAOES seminar within the preceding three years period.
- Technical officials whose certification lapses may have their certification restored after certified practical proficiency over 10 competition days and attendance at an AAOES seminar.

### **Amendments and Interpretations**

Any such matters are the responsibility of the Athletics Australia Officials Commission.

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***QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT AAOES***

- Q1.** Do I still have to do a practical test and submit a card to get my “C” level?
- A.** No. Once you pass the Level “C” theory paper you are issued with your grading card, however you are required to officiate for four days (or attend an AAOES Education Seminar) before sitting the exam and that is regarded as your practical test.
- Q2.** What about Levels “B” & “A”?
- A.** Yes. Both require 15 days practical, for “B” in at least 3 of the 4 elements (2 of 3 for Jumps) and for “A” in all of the elements.
- Q3.** My club is in the country and we don’t have 15 competition days in a season. Do I have to wait until the following year to do 15 days to get my grading?
- A.** No. Your Association OELO will make alternative arrangements. Usually one season is required.
- Q4.** There are no Level “A” officials in my club and I can’t get to Championships. How do I do my Level “B” practical?
- A.** In this situation assessment by another Level “B” official is acceptable, if approved by the OELO.
- Q5.** I am a Little Athletics official with that organisations highest level of officials grading and so have been translated to Level “C” in Athletics Australia’s scheme. When can I sit for the Athletics Australia Level “B” exam?
- A.** Immediately, but you must still do your Level “B” practical thereafter.
- Q6.** Do I have to have a grading to officiate or to just “help out” at my local club?
- A.** No. Everyone is welcome to help, however it would be in your best interests and for your own protection to at least obtain a proficiency certificate through your Association to attest to your competence.
- Q7.** Do I have to attend a seminar before sitting for a Level “C” exam?
- A.** No, but you should attend one as soon as possible.
- Q8.** I am a Level “A” Official. Does this mean I am automatically a Referee or Chief Judge?
- A.** No. Referees and chief judges are by appointment for specific meetings by either the Athletics Australia or Association Officials Committee.
- Q9.** Can I take the paper home with me to complete at my leisure?
- A.** No. You must complete the paper under supervision within the time allowed.
- Q10.** Is there such a thing as a “State Grading scheme”?
- A.** No. Only the Athletics Australia Officials Education Scheme (AAOES) is recognised.
- Q11.** Do I have to be registered with Athletics Australia or one of AA’s Member Associations before I can sit for an exam and get a grading?
- A.** No, any interested person can attend seminars and sit for exams, however practical tests can only be supervised by an appropriately graded Athletics Australia official and only registered officials will receive appointments to Athletics Australia events.
- Q12.** What are the minimum and maximum ages for officials?
- A.** The minimum age is 14 years. There is no maximum – the only qualifications are “Ability & Agility”.