



The Medical Process For Applicants Applying For Entry Into the Australian Defence Force.

The aim of this information is to help you understand the medical suitability processes that you are required to undertake as part of your application for enlistment into the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Why Is A Medical Examination Required?

Medical standards in the ADF need to be of the highest level to allow the successful completion of all military duties. These are often performed in isolated and stressful circumstances where there is no ready access to medical care.

These high standards are necessary not just because of the rigorous lifestyle in the Defence Force, but also to protect you and your future health. Therefore, a medical examination will be conducted to assess your physical and mental fitness. The medical examination process will assess your suitability to perform military specific duties, and your ability to adapt to different living conditions. The medical examination aims to ensure that you do not have a pre-existing medical condition requiring uninterrupted access to medication, medical care or special diets.

Medical Fitness is divided into the following classifications:

- **CLASS 1** – Medically fit for all duties within any service, subject to any particular requirements laid down in the chapters relating to aircrew, divers and submariners.
- **CLASS 2** – Medically fit for employment, subject to single service waiver action.
- **CLASS 3** – Temporarily medically unfit for enlistment. This is for candidates with a medical condition which is remediable and likely to be resolved within 12 months rendering the applicant suitable for service.
- **CLASS 4** – Permanently medically unfit. This is for candidates with a disqualifying medical condition which is permanent or unlikely to resolve within 12 months.



What Are The Processes Of The Medical Screening?

Initially, a 'Medical History Questionnaire' (MHQ) is sent to you as part of an Application Pack. The MHQ requires you to answer questions concerning your current and past medical history. Consultation with your own Doctor may be appropriate as you are required to provide a report to any answer of 'yes' or 'not sure' to a question marked with an asterisk. You will need to bring your completed MHQ answer sheet plus any medical reports with you on the Job Options Evaluation Session (JOES) day where the Medical Staff will review your responses. If you are considered suitable for further testing, you will be contacted and advised of the details. If you are considered to be CLASS 4, you will be advised in writing as to the reasons for this and no further processing of your application will take place. You have the right to appeal the decision if you disagree and this procedure is explained further on.

On Assessment Day you will undergo the next part of your medical assessment that will involve undergoing a set of preliminary examinations.

What is Involved In The Preliminary Examinations?

- Measurement of height and weight. Included in this assessment your Body Mass Index (BMI) will be calculated. The National Health and Medical Research Council has endorsed the BMI approach to determine an acceptable weight for height range for the population. BMI is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in metres squared. Candidates are weighed wearing only underwear. Females are requested to wear a sports bra (or similar) and briefs. Males are requested to wear underpants.
- Candidates should note the minimum height requirement for entry into the ADF, without shoes, is 152 cm. Aircrew candidates are also required to meet specific anthropometric measurements.
- Hearing test.
- Vision test, including colour perception. Note: if you wear contact lenses you are requested not to wear them for two days prior to the testing. If you wear glasses you are required to bring them on the testing day.
- Urine Test. This also includes a pregnancy test for females.



What Is Involved In The Medical Examination?

After the preliminary examination is completed, the Doctor will review your Medical History Questionnaire and you will be examined. You will be asked if you would like a chaperone present during the examination. During this examination you will be required to undress down to your underwear (both males and females will be provided with a gown to wear, if requested).

The Doctor is required to do a thorough examination including, but not restricted to:

- Looking at you to view your body build and physique, looking for evidence of skin disease or abnormal marks.
- Listening to your heart and measuring blood pressure. All applicants aged 35 years and over will undergo a cardiovascular risk assessment as part of the medical examination. As part of this cardiovascular risk assessment you may be required to undergo pathology testing and or specialist assessment.
- Listening to your chest and looking/feeling for impaired movement of the chest.
- Looking and feeling for any abnormalities around the abdomen and anal regions. A rectal examination is not performed. Males will have the external genitals examined for abnormalities.
- You will be required to perform specific exercises such as sit-ups and push-ups to enable the Doctor to assess physical capacity.
- Gynaecological examination will not be performed on females. If the Doctor deems a gynaecological examination necessary to determine your fitness you will be referred back to your own Doctor.
- Females are not required to have their breasts examined. If there is a problem identified in the medical history questionnaire, you will be referred to your own Doctor for further follow up.
- Aircrew, Submarine and Diver candidates will also be required to undergo mandatory specialist assessments, including ophthalmology, ear, nose and throat, dental assessments, pathology testing and ECG. These specialist assessments will only be arranged if you are classified fit for further testing after review by the examining medical Officer. Your fitness for these specialised occupations will be subject to confirmation by ADF military medical specialists.
- An ophthalmology or optometry assessment is required for all applicants who wear glasses or who have less than perfect vision, or are 45 years of age or over.



On completion of the examination your medical fitness will be given a classification as described on Page 1. You will also receive counselling with regards to mandatory blood testing and be asked to sign a consent form. If at any time you feel uncomfortable or are unsure of the proceedings of the examination, you are to advise the Doctor or Medical Staff.

What Will Happen if I Am Found To Be Medically Unfit (CLASS 4)?

You may be found to be medically unfit for enlistment during any section of the medical examination process. The Medical Staff will inform you if you have not reached the required standard and you will also receive notice in writing. You have the right to appeal the decision if you disagree and this procedure is explained further on.

What Happens If I Am Made Fit (CLASS 1)?

Following successful completion of the whole assessment process you will be contacted with an offer of enlistment into the ADF. With this offer you will also be sent pathology request forms for the mandatory blood testing required prior to enlistment. You may withdraw your application if you do not wish to undergo these blood tests.

The blood tests are valid for 12 months. Your medical examination is also valid for 12 months.

Please note – If you have been requested to provide medical reports from your own Doctor or Specialist during any stage of the medical screening process, your application will not progress any further until these reports are received.



How Do I Appeal A Decision?

If you have been made CLASS 4 and do not agree with the decision you have the right of appeal. You will need to provide your reasons in writing as to why you consider the decision to be incorrect and provide supporting documentation with regards to your medical condition/fitness from Medical Specialists, your local Doctor, and perhaps your sport coaches or employer. Your appeal documentation is to be sent to the DFRC Medical Section at the address indicated on your CLASS 4 letter. The Medical Staff will forward, on your behalf, your appeal together with your medical records to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Headquarters Defence Force Recruiting in Canberra for review and decision. The outcome of the appeal will be formally advised to the DFRC Medical Section who in turn will notify you. If your appeal is unsuccessful you will also be advised by the CMO in writing as to the reason.

What Happens On The Day Of Enlistment?

On the day of enlistment you will be required to undergo an Attestation Medical. This medical is to ensure that nothing has changed since your last medical examination and that you remain fit to undergo military training. Females will also be required to have a pregnancy test.

Please note – It is very important that you provide details to the Medical Staff of any type of illness or injury that occurs AFTER your medical examination date and BEFORE your enlistment date.

On the day of enlistment it is also important to bring with you any previous vaccination certificates or other documentation relating to vaccinations that you may have received. Failure to provide evidence of previous vaccinations may require you to undergo the full course of immunisation again at the Training Unit.

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