



ACCREDITED
EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST
SCOPE OF PRACTICE

ESSA's Accredited Exercise Physiologist (AEP) Scope of Practice* is a foundational document that describes the **minimum activities, roles, and professional practice standards** for AEPs. The scope aims to outline the breadth of practice of AEPs but is not intended to be an exclusive list of areas of practice.

ESSA endorses a broad scope of practice for AEPs that is **flexible, adaptable, and embrative of innovative practices** and the practice environment.

AEPs are also Accredited Exercise Scientists and the Accredited Exercise Scientist Scope of Practice should be read together with this document when considering full scope of practice [2].

1.0 Role of Accredited Exercise Physiologists

Accredited Exercise Physiologists are university-qualified allied health professionals who prescribe, deliver, and adapt movement, physical activity, and exercise-based interventions to **facilitate and optimise health status, function, recovery, and independence**. This helps people **participate in activities at home, school, work, and in the community**.

AEPs provide services to people across the full health spectrum, healthy through to those at risk of developing a health condition, and people with health conditions, a disability, and aged related illnesses and conditions, including chronic, complex conditions.

AEPs apply evidence-based judgment and clinical reasoning to individuals, groups, and the broader community to:

- » **Improve and maintain health status** and function and **support reablement**
- » **Prevent decline** of health status
- » **Prevent, treat, and manage health conditions** (including diseases, disorders, traumas and injuries), including complex, chronic conditions
- » **Screen, assess, and measure capacity and function** for activities of daily living and work-related activities, and to inform interventions
- » Prescribe, deliver, adapt, and evaluate **movement, physical activity, and exercise-based interventions** to:
 - » Enhance and maintain **function** and **quality of life**
 - » Facilitate recovery and promote reablement
 - » Maximise independence
- » **Educate** and advise about health and well-being and how physical activity and exercise can improve health outcomes
- » Empower people to **improve health outcomes**, and **self-manage health conditions**
- » **Coach and motivate to increase engagement and self-efficacy** in treatment and physical activity, including addressing client preferences, needs, barriers, and goals

AEPs apply a person-centred approach to people of diverse backgrounds and populations, and work collaboratively with clients and relevant others involved in supporting their health and well-being.

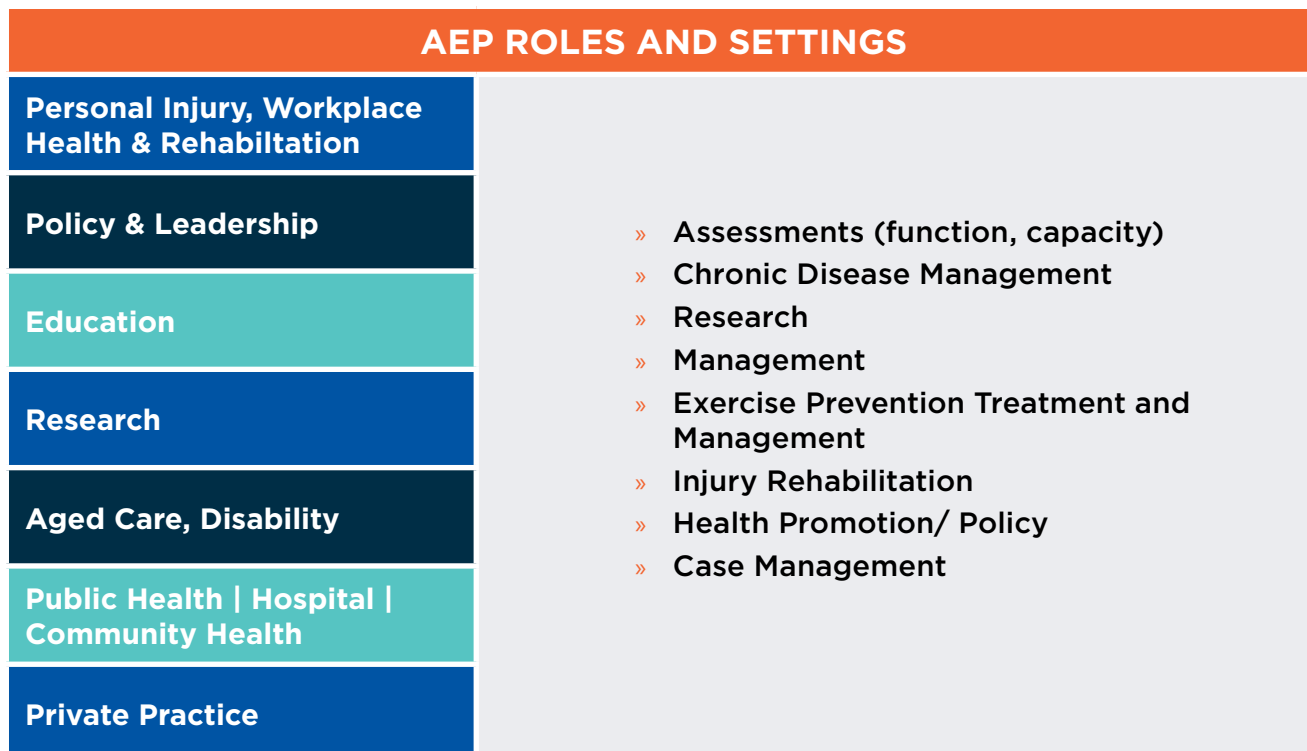
AEPs practise in a culturally safe and inclusive manner according to the principles of person-centred care and apply appropriate in-person and digital practices such as telehealth.

* This scope is based on the AEP Professional Standards for Accreditation [1].

2.0 AEP Roles and Settings

AEPs apply their skills in a broad range of contexts including but not limited to the health care, aged care, and disability sectors. They can apply their skills in both clinical and non-clinical settings.

Figure 1.



3.0 Core Rules, Regulations and Boundaries

AEPs must practise in accordance with ESSA's Code of Professional Conduct & Ethical Practice [3]. They must also respect and adhere to standards established through relevant government legislation, regulations, and common law.

At all times, AEPs must also:

- » Demonstrate **evidence-based practice**, critically evaluating and communicating the scientific rationale for their decision-making and service delivery.
- » Practise ethically, collaboratively, and innovatively within the scope of practice including referrals to relevant medical and health professionals and/or services as appropriate.

Individual Scope

Individual scope of practice refers to all the knowledge, skills, and competencies an individual professional has.

Practitioners are responsible for evaluating and justifying their individual scope of practice. Accredited Exercise Physiologists are expected to advance their individual scopes of practice through continuing education, competency development, and professional experience. ESSA supports practitioners to employ the full range of AEP interventions within their individual scopes of practice [4].

Individuals may have gained additional skills (i.e., expanded scope of practice) through appropriate education, training, or qualification. Some of these skills may be beyond standard exercise practice and ESSA's jurisdictional monitoring.

4.0 Accreditation Requirements for ESSA Accredited Exercise Physiologists

Accreditation with ESSA demonstrates a commitment to evidence-based practice and continuous quality improvement.

AEPs need to meet high-level quality assurance standards to gain and maintain accreditation with ESSA. These requirements meet the evidence-based national framework of regulatory standards set by the National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions (NASRHP) [5].

AEPs are required to have a tertiary qualification in exercise physiology to be eligible for accreditation with ESSA.

To ensure currency of knowledge and experience, AEPs are required to meet annual requirements for professional practice and professional development as outlined in Table 1 below. They are also required to maintain financial status, which is renewable on a yearly basis.

ESSA ANNUAL ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

All ESSA accredited professionals are required to complete/hold these each year:

Complete 20 CPD points

Min. 15 in Further Education



Accrue 1000 hours of practice every 5 years

*No more than 2 years without practice
200 hours in the last 3 years*



Hold Professional Indemnity Insurance



Hold First Aid certificate*

**Hold CPR certificate*
(renew yearly)**



Declare criminal and/or ethical history



**if providing in-person physical activity and exercise services to clients*

For more information about these requirements, please review the ESSA website, essa.org.au

Disclaimer: This scope is not a description of the level of education, experience, skill, or competency required to carry out practice activities. ESSA has chosen to use a broad, principle-based approach to define the scope of practice of an Accredited Exercise Physiologist. By adopting this approach, ESSA aims to harness individual competencies, embrace innovative practice, and remain sensitive to changes within the industry environment. The information provided in this document is not intended to be professional advice and is no substitute for professional or medical advice relevant to the user's circumstances and purposes. Individuals must ensure they have the appropriate competencies for all activities undertaken. ESSA does not endorse, warrant, or make any representations in relation to, and does not accept any liability in relation to, the goods and services of those third parties who utilise this document.

References

1. [Accredited Exercise Physiologist Professional Standards for Accreditation](#)
2. [Accredited Exercise Scientist Scope of Practice](#)
3. [ESSA Code of Professional Conduct & Ethical Practice](#)
4. [ESSA Scope of Practice Policy](#)
5. [National Alliance of Self-Regulating Health Professions Standards](#)