



RADIATION SAFETY ACT

Guidelines for Cosmetic use of Lasers

These guidelines are relevant for persons needing to use lasers for cosmetic purposes in Western Australia. The term "laser" used in this document refers to high powered lasers prescribed under the Radiation Safety Act 1975 as Class 3B and Class 4 lasers, as classified by *AS/NZS IEC 60825.1 Safety of laser products*. Intense Pulsed Light is currently not regulated under the Radiation Safety Act.

In Western Australia a registration and a licence or exemption from licence is required for the use of the use of Class 3B and Class 4 lasers.

Licence or Exemption from Licence – a use authorisation which allows the holder to possess, use, operate, manufacture or otherwise deal with class 3B and class 4 lasers for a particular purpose.

Registration – a possession and management authorisation which is required by the owner (registrant) for the premises and equipment.

To use a class 3B or class 4 laser in Western Australia you must either hold a licence or exemption from licence or be working under the supervision of a WA licensee or exemption holder. Supervision requirements vary depending on the training of the laser operator and the purpose the laser is being used for. There are three different levels of supervision, licence holders will need to check the conditions associated with their licence for the level of supervision they need to provide to people operating the laser. Immediate personal supervision requires the licensee to be present and maintain direct and continuous supervision of any person under the licensee's direction.

All class 3B and class 4 lasers must be registered under the Radiation Safety Act, even if they are in storage.

The use of laser for cosmetic purposes is covered by a number of different licence and registration purposes depending on the purpose the lasers will be used for and the profession of the users.

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LICENSING FOR USE OF LASERS

Licensing for Medical Practitioners

Medical practitioners who hold a relevant licence under the Radiation Safety Act, or medical practitioners working under the direction and personal supervision of a licensee, may operate lasers for medical or cosmetic purposes within their scope of practice. Personal supervision requires the licensee to be present on the registered premises.

To be eligible for a licence, medical practitioners must:

- Be registered with Ahpra as a medical practitioner, and
- attend a laser safety course recognised by the Radiological Council.

Licensing for Nurses

Nurses who hold a relevant *exemption from licence* under the Radiation Safety Act, or nurses working under the direction and personal supervision of a licensee, may operate lasers for medical or cosmetic purposes within their professional registration and scope of practice. Personal supervision requires the licensee to be present on the registered premises. An exemption from licence still requires an application to the Radiological Council and an exemption certificate to be issued.

To be eligible for an exemption from licence, nurses must:

- be registered with the with Ahpra as a Division 1 Nurse, and
- attend a laser safety course recognised by the Radiological Council.

Licensing for Other Practitioners using Cosmetic Lasers

Persons who are not medical practitioners or nurses may be able to use lasers for cosmetic procedures with a current *exemption from licence*. An exemption from licence still requires an application to the Radiological Council and an exemption certificate to be issued.

There are three types of exemptions from licence issued specifically for cosmetic use of lasers, *Lasers – Hair Removal*, *Lasers – Non-Ablative Cosmetic* and *Lasers – Tattoo Removal*. The prerequisites are listed below. Licensees supervising practical training will be held responsible for ensuring that the competence of trainees is accurately reported to the Council.

Lasers – Hair Removal

- have attended a laser safety course recognised by the Radiological Council;
- have undertaken minimum 25 hours practical training under the immediate personal supervision of a WA licensee for the use of lasers for hair removal.
- be signed off as competent in both consultation and beam-on aspects of laser hair removal procedures by a WA licensee for the use of lasers for hair removal.

Lasers – Non-Ablative Cosmetic

In December 2025 the purpose *Lasers – Non-Ablative Cosmetic* was introduced to replace the purpose *Lasers – Superficial Cosmetic*. This change allowed for a broader range of non-ablative cosmetic laser procedures to be performed by laser users who are not medical professionals.

Non-ablative cosmetic laser procedures are defined as: *non-ablative laser treatments for cosmetic purposes relating to skin conditions, other than hair removal and tattoo removal. This excludes congenital and acquired vascular anomalies and pigmented birthmarks. Non-ablative means that the outer layer of the skin remains intact.*

- have attended a laser safety course recognised by the Radiological Council;
- have undertaken a minimum of 100 hours practical training under the immediate personal supervision of a WA licensee for the use of lasers for non-ablative cosmetic procedures. Of these hours it is recommended that applicants complete a minimum of 20 hours for each treatment category.
- be signed off as competent in both consultation and beam-on aspects of non-ablative cosmetic laser procedures by a WA licensee for the use of lasers for non-ablative cosmetic procedures.

NOTE: Some dermal science courses include training which meets the requirements for a licence for hair removal and non-ablative cosmetic procedures. Please check with your course provider or Council if the course you wish to complete will meet the requirements. If a course has been recognised by Council full copies of logbooks may not need to be submitted with your licence application.

Lasers – Tattoo Removal

- have attended a laser safety course recognised by the Radiological Council;
- have attended a tattoo removal course;
- have undertaken a minimum of 100 hours practical training under the immediate personal supervision of a WA licensee for the use of lasers for tattoo removal. Of these 100 required hours, at least 50 must be in tattoo removal procedures; supervised practical hours obtained in the other above laser cosmetic procedures may be used to for the remaining hours.
- be signed off as competent in both consultation and beam-on aspects of laser tattoo removal procedures by a WA licensee for the use of lasers for tattoo removal.

Use of Fractional Ablative Lasers by Non-Medical Practitioners

Suitably trained laser users who hold a licence for *Lasers – Non-Ablative Cosmetic* can perform cosmetic treatments using a fractional ablative laser under the personal supervision of a Ahpra registered medical practitioner who holds a licence for *Lasers – Medical*.

***'fractional ablative cosmetic procedures'* means a laser treatment for cosmetic purposes relating to skin conditions using a fractional ablative laser. Ablative means that the outer layer of the skin does not remain intact. Fractional means that this damage to the outer layer of the skin is only over small precise areas of the treatment field. Full field ablative lasers which remove the top layer of the skin over the entire treatment field cannot be used by non-medical laser users.**

Personal supervision requires the supervising licence holder to be on the premises while the laser is being used but does not require them to be in the room during the use of the laser. The supervising licence holder must ensure that all laser users using fractional ablative lasers for cosmetic procedures under their supervision have received training and been signed off as competent in the use of the laser for that treatment. The conditions of your registration require that training records for each licence holder must be kept.

Recognition of Interstate Experience

Applicants who hold a Queensland or Tasmanian licence to use lasers for cosmetic purposes, may use this to gain a Western Australian licence for the equivalent purpose. For applicants who do not hold a Queensland or Tasmanian licence, but who have logbook hours and competency sign-off from a Queensland or Tasmanian cosmetic laser licence holder, this documentation may also be used for a WA licence application (in lieu of the same sign-off by a WA licensee).

Applicants with other interstate experience will still need to complete a recognised laser safety course and provide evidence demonstrating suitable interstate experience in the use of lasers for hair removal, non-ablative cosmetic procedures or tattoo removal procedures. Suggested documents to provide are a CV and a letter from a prior employer confirming experience and competency. These applications are considered on a case by case basis and extra documentation or further training may be required before an exemption from licence can be granted.

Applications for a Licence or Exemption from Licence

Application forms are available under [Forms](#) on the Radiological Council website. Persons applying for either a licence or an *exemption from licence* will need to complete the initial application for licence ([LX Form](#)) and will need to include evidence of meeting the above prerequisites.

REGISTRATION OF LASERS AND PREMISES

The premises and all Class 3B or Class 4 lasers in use or storage must be registered under the Radiation Safety Act.

For use of lasers by non-medical practitioners for hair removal, non-ablative cosmetic and tattoo removal procedures a medical practitioner will be required to be involved with setting up the protocols and procedures relating to cosmetic laser treatments. For tattoo removal, confirmation must also be provided that a registered medical practitioner is available to provide medical support to the person undertaking the laser tattoo removal procedures.

For cosmetic laser procedures (except for hair removal) patients must have an in-person consultation with a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner to check for skin cancers or other underlying conditions as appropriate to the type of treatment being performed. Written correspondence must be provided by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner confirming the patient has undergone a skin check in person with the medical practitioner prior to each course of new treatment.

Applications for Registration

Registration application forms are available from the [Forms](#) section of the Radiological Council website.

If your clinic does not have a medical practitioner directly involved with the practice you will need to provide the following supporting documents with your application.

Lasers – Hair Removal

- Written confirmation from an Ahpra Registered Medical Practitioner that they endorse the policies and procedures for laser hair removal.
- Evidence that the laser conforms to *AS/NZS IEC 60825.1 Safety of laser products*.

Lasers – Non-ablative Cosmetic

- Written confirmation from an Ahpra Registered Medical Practitioner that they endorse the policies and procedures for non-ablative cosmetic laser treatments.
- Evidence that the laser conforms to *AS/NZS IEC 60825.1 Safety of laser products*.

Lasers – Tattoo Removal

- Written confirmation from an Ahpra Registered Medical Practitioner that they endorse the policies and procedures for laser tattoo removal.
- Written confirmation from an Ahpra Registered Medical Practitioner that they are available to provide medical support to the person undertaking the laser tattoo removal procedures (this support does not need to be in person)
- Evidence that the laser conforms to *AS/NZS IEC 60825.1 Safety of laser products*.

Other Cosmetic Laser Procedures

Division 1 nurses holding a licence for the purpose of *Lasers – Medical (Exemption)* may use lasers for cosmetic purposes within their professional registration and scope of practice. This may include cosmetic laser procedures which are not captured under the above purposes, such as fractional ablative procedures. If your clinic does not have a medical practitioner directly involved with the practice you will need to provide the following supporting documents with your application.

- Written confirmation from an Ahpra Registered Medical Practitioner that they endorse the policies and procedures for laser treatments.
- Evidence that the laser conforms to *AS/NZS IEC 60825.1 Safety of laser products*.

CONTACT US

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