



RANZCO

The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Ophthalmologists

Examination Policy

Approved by: QEC

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1. Purpose and scope

This policy provides guidelines to the RANZCO examination processes which are not explicit within other associated RANZCO policies including the Trainee Remediation Policy, Trainee Progression Policy, Temporary Training Registrar Policy, and the Part Time or Interrupted Training Policy.

These guidelines include RANZCO's exam registration and withdrawals processes, eligibility requirements for exam registration, marking, grading and feedback processes, examination paper retention guidelines, special consideration for examinations, as well as the support services which are available.

2. Examination Registration

All candidates are required to register for each examination. Eligibility to register for the OS, OBCK, OP and RACE examinations is as per the Trainee Progression Policy.

The examination registration process, fees and timetables are located on the Trainee Dashboard which can be accessed through the RANZCO website. Candidates (trainees undertaking the Vocational Training Program, Temporary Training Registrars and Specialist International Medical Graduates) are required to register using the specified registration process and pay the examination fee prior to sitting the examination. Registrations of Trainees for the OP and RACE is subject to review and approval of the Director of Training. Registrations will only be accepted up to the advertised closing date.

Trainees who are on Interrupted Training are not eligible to register for, or sit RANZCO examinations except when on Maternity/Paternity Leave. Please refer to RANZCO's Part Time or Interrupted Training Policy for further information regarding Interrupted Training.

Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMG) may be required to sit the RACE as part of his/her specialist recognition assessment (please refer to RANZCO's Specialist Recognition Pathway Process document for further information about SIMG's and recognition assessment).

Specialist International Medical Graduates must achieve a satisfactory performance in the RACE written examination before being permitted by the SIMG Committee to sit the clinical examination. Additionally, SIMG candidates can register to sit the written examination in either Semester 1 or Semester 2, and for the clinical examination in Semester 2 only.

3. Withdrawals

Candidates who wish to withdraw from an examination will need to advise RANZCO by email no later than two weeks prior to the examination date. Withdrawal after this date will result in the forfeiture of the examination registration fee paid by the candidate, unless there are extenuating circumstances, which can be supported by appropriate documentation submitted to the Censor-In-Chief. All withdrawals will incur an administration fee as shown on the RANZCO website.

4. Timeframe

All examinations are available twice per calendar year, the dates are published on the RANZCO website. COPEM Modules 1 and 2 online examinations are available online anytime as per arrangement with RANZCO.

5. Marking Process

5.1 Written examinations

A unique candidate number is allocated to each Trainee when they register for each examination. Examination scripts do not contain candidates' names, but are identified by their unique candidate number only, ensuring examiner objectivity. All written examination scripts are marked independently by at least two examiners. A copy of each examination script is sent to each examiner for marking. If there is non-concordance between the two examiners regarding the candidate's marks a third examiner will review the candidate's answers to determine the candidate's mark.

If there is non-concordance with a Short Essay Question (SEQ) within the RACE written and Ophthalmic Pathology examination the College Education Manager notifies the two markers and asks them to confer to determine whether either of them should adjust the grade. If concordance is still not reached both grades will be counted.

5.2 Practical /Clinical examinations

The non-written components of a practical/clinical examination will be marked by the observing examiner/s and discussed in a post-examination meeting with at least one other examiner to determine the grade. Should it be required an additional examiner will be consulted. Predetermined marking criteria are used by examiner(s) in the clinical stations of OBCK and RACE to grade the candidate. Within the RACE OSCE the marking criteria are also pre-determined and the candidate is graded as per that schedule by a single examiner.

6. Grading

Candidates will be awarded a result of pass or fail only for an examination. The results will be published on the RANZCO e-learning site Moodle approximately six weeks after the examination, excluding OBCK and RACE (two working days after the clinical examination). Trainee results are also communicated directly to the relevant network QEC Chair and Director of Training by the RANZCO Education Team.

7. Feedback

The Board of Examiners' decision regarding a candidate's performance is final and shall not be subject to any form of reassessment. Candidates are not permitted to contact the examiners to discuss any aspect of their performance. Completed examination scripts will not be made available to candidates at any time.

7.1 Ophthalmic Sciences Examinations

Individual feedback will be provided by the examiners in writing to candidates who have failed the examination.

7.2 OBCK Examination

Each candidate will receive a letter from the Chair of the Board OBCK Examiners stating either of the following:

- a) Passed examination – passed all stations
- b) Passed examination – not all stations were passed, name of failed stations
- c) Failed examination – individual feedback for each station

7.3 OP Examination and RACE

The cohort feedback referred to as Examiners' General Comments (OP) and Examiners Report (RACE) is published on Moodle and available to all candidates. Candidates who have passed the exam will receive a copy of their results by email. Individual feedback is not provided to candidates. RACE candidates who do not pass the exam will receive general feedback listing the total number of pass and fails in the written and clinical examinations. Candidates will also be provided with a summary of their scores in the short essay questions (Part A) (and which SEQs were failed) and the Clinical Curriculum Performance Standard stations. These summaries must be read in conjunction with the Examiner's Report.

8. RACE Individual Examination Performance Summaries

For candidates who fail RACE a second time a detailed performance summary will be forwarded to the Trainee Progression Committee to help inform their discussion with the candidate.

Specialist International Medical Graduates will also have a detailed performance summary forwarded to the SIMG Committee to help inform their deliberations and decision making about the candidate's application for assessment.

9. Retention of Examination Scripts

All examination scripts will be disposed of as soon as possible after the determination of results and release of individual feedback or cohort feedback, in a manner appropriate to the sensitivity of the information. In the case of RANZCO examination scripts this means disposal by physical destruction in such a way that the document cannot be retrieved or reconstructed.

10. Candidate Support

Candidates who have unsuccessfully attempted an examination should meet with their Director of Training, current Term Supervisor or mentor to discuss results and, if eligible, to prepare for the next sitting of the examination.

If further assistance or support is required RANZCO offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which is a professional counselling service that offers confidential, short-term support for a variety of work-related and personal problems that may be affecting a Trainee at work or at home. The program gives Trainees access to qualified professionals, including psychologists, social workers and management coaches. The EAP is available to all Trainees and their immediate family members.

11. Special Consideration for Examinations

11.1 Special Consideration Process

Special consideration may be given to a trainee or SIMG when there are circumstances that may impact on their performance in an examination which has been formally scheduled by RANZCO. Trainees or SIMG should apply to the Censor-In-Chief in writing as soon as possible prior to the exam, providing details of their circumstances which may warrant special consideration.

11.2 Special Consideration Not Applicable

Circumstances where special consideration will not be applied include:

- a) Minor illness or medical conditions.
- b) Ordinary or expected stress or anxiety associated with an examination.
- c) Unexpected or excessive work commitments.
- d) Mistaken timing or difficulties finding an examination venue.
- e) Optional commitments of a personal nature.

11.3 Circumstances in the Examination Room

If an individual experiences short-term discomfort or distraction in the examination room which may affect their performance they can ask the examination supervisor to be moved to another position if available. The individual should make this request promptly. The examination supervisor should note the request and the action taken.

If the examination supervisor believes that the conditions complained of are no different to those experienced by other candidates and will not impact upon the individual's performance, they have the right to refuse to move the individual or otherwise accommodate them.

11.4 Financial Considerations

Applications for special consideration on the grounds of financial hardship which precludes the timely payment of fees must be made in writing to the Censor-In-Chief at the time of examination registration.

If successful in their application for special consideration on the grounds of financial hardship, an individual will be granted a deferment of payment for the examination. A payment plan will then be determined by the CEO and College Finance Manager, in conjunction with the Censor-In-Chief.

Where an individual is registered to undertake an examination and withdraws to sit at a later date, they will be required to pay RANZCO an administration fee which is detailed on the RANZCO website and their examination fee will be held over until the individual re registers for that examination. Where withdrawal occurs within 10 business days of the examination, the individual will forfeit the full exam fee unless there are extenuating circumstances.

11.5 Special Consideration Process

Any requests for special consideration for an examination may be discussed and considered by the Court of Examiners at their post-exam meeting or by the Censor-In-Chief in consultation with the appropriate Head Examiner and RANZCO College Manager.

The head examiner will only initiate a discussion of the request for special consideration with the Court of Examiners if it may make a difference to the outcome of the exam as per point e) of 11.6 (Outcome of Requests).

If an applicant's request is discussed, then the Court of Examiners will keep any supplied information confidential. On the basis of the information provided by the individual the following could be taken into consideration:

- a) The severity of factors involved in the circumstances of the application.
- b) The likely impact of the individual's performance in the exam.
- c) The individual's performance in other RANZCO examinations to date.
- d) The individual's history of previous applications for special consideration

11.6 Outcome of Requests

An application for special consideration may include but, is not limited to one or more of the following outcomes:

- a) Deferment of the examination to a later scheduled date. This may include an extension to a mandatory time period in which an individual has to complete the examination.
- b) Omitting the examination result. The individual can re-sit the examination and the omitted result will not count as an attempt.
- c) Refund, deferment or waiving of payment for examination.
- d) No action, request denied.
- e) Adjustment of a borderline grade to a pass in the written and/or OSCE components of an exam. A candidate cannot be adjusted from a fail grade to a pass grade on the basis of special circumstances.

12. Appeals

The Board of Examiners' decision regarding a candidate's performance is final and shall not be subject to any form of reassessment. Candidates are not permitted to contact the examiners to discuss any aspect of their performance. Completed examination scripts will not be made available to candidates at any time.

13. Related Documents

Trainee Progression Policy

Trainee Remediation Policy

Temporary Training Registrar Policy

Part-time or Interrupted Training Policy

Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy

14. Amendments

Page	Details of amendment	Date approved