



RANZCO

The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Ophthalmologists

Trainee Progression Policy

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Table of Contents

1.	Purpose and Scope	3
2.	Related Documents	3
3.	Training requirement for Fellowship	3
4.	Progression through Training	4
5.	Training and Assessment Requirements	5
5.1	Accredited Training	5
5.2	Work-Based Assessment	5
5.2.1	Basic Training	5
5.2.2	Advanced Training	6
5.2.3	Final Year	6
5.3	Assessment Records	7
5.3.1	Basic Training	7
5.3.2	Advanced Training	8
5.4	Examinations	9
5.4.1	Basic Training	9
5.4.2	Advanced Training	9
5.4.3	Final Year	10
5.4.4	Multiple Failure of an Examination	10
5.5	Research Requirement	11
6.	Notification of Discontinuation of Training	11
7.	Record of Amendments	12

1. Purpose and Scope

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) is accredited by the Australian Medical Council to deliver the Specialist Vocational Training Program (VTP) that leads to the award of the Fellowship of the RANZCO (FRANZCO).

The College is committed to maintaining a high academic standard and ensures that trainees maintain satisfactory levels of performance and progress throughout their training. Trainee progress will be assessed and reviewed periodically in accordance with identified progression points within the College's VTP.

The College expects that each trainee is capable of progressing in and completing the VTP in an appropriate time, and that he/she will be an active participant in his/her own training as an adult learner.

The purpose of the Trainee Progression Policy is:

- 1.1. To define the requirements that a RANZCO trainee must meet for satisfactory progression through the training pathways and completion of The College's VTP,
- 1.2. To define the conditions under which non-progression is determined, and
- 1.3. To outline the process to be undertaken in the event of a trainee's unsuccessful progression in training.

2. Related Documents

- a) Vocational Training Program Handbook
- b) Trainee Undertaking
- c) Part-Time or Interrupted Training Policy
- d) Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy

3. Training Requirement for Fellowship

- 3.1. The RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP) consists of three (3) training pathways or stages: Basic Training, Advanced Training and a Final Year.
- 3.2. The VTP can be completed in a minimum of five years and a maximum of 12 years, subject to satisfactory progression through the training pathways and completion of the program.

- 3.3. To be eligible to apply for admission as a Fellow of the College, a trainee must have satisfactorily completed:
- a) **Two years of Basic Training (Year 1 & 2)** during which trainees must demonstrate integrated clinical skills and knowledge in the Ophthalmic Sciences (OS) and Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge (OBCK).
 - b) **Two years of Advanced Training (Year 3 & 4)** during which trainees are expected to demonstrate integrated knowledge, clinical and surgical skills as documented in the RANZCO Clinical Curriculum Performance Standards.
 - c) **A Final Year** during which trainees develop their experience, in preparation for specialist qualification and to function in the community as an independent general ophthalmologist.

4. Progression through Training

- 4.1. To progress through each stage of the RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP), a trainee needs to have:
- a) Satisfactorily met all Training and Assessment requirements (Refer Item 5), and
 - b) Met the full registration and financial commitments as a Trainee Associate Member.
- 4.2. It is the trainee's responsibility to ensure he/she meets the training, assessment and progression requirements and membership commitments by the relevant timelines.
- 4.3. A trainee's performance and progress are reviewed at the end of each training period and at progression points for each stage of the VTP. However, the College may also review a trainee's performance at other times if there are specific concerns about a trainee's ability to progress satisfactorily. The possible outcomes following such an assessment are:
- a) The trainee has satisfied the training and assessment requirements, his/her progress is satisfactory, and he/she is in "good standing".
 - b) The trainee has not satisfied the training and assessment requirements and is not eligible for progression on the VTP (Refer Item 5).
 - c) A trainee has exceeded the maximum length of enrolment and is excluded from the VTP (Refer Item 3.2).
- 4.4. A trainee whose training is discontinued owing to failure to progress will not be able to continue in the VTP and will lose his/her Training Associate Member status with the College.

5. Training and Assessment Requirements

5.1. Accredited Training

- 5.1.1. At each stage of the RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP), trainees are required to satisfactorily complete a minimum of 12 months' accredited training for each training year.
 - a) Periods of annual employment, study and examination leave set out in a trainee's employment contract with the training hospital is included for the purpose of this policy.
 - b) Periods of approved leave from training approved by the College are excluded for the purpose of this policy (Refer "Part-Time or Interrupted Training Policy").
- 5.1.2. Accredited training time for a Basic Trainee does not start until the trainee passes the Clinical Ophthalmic Pharmacology and Emergency Medicine (COPEM) Module 1 examination.
- 5.1.3. In the Final Year of the VTP, a trainee's Final Year program must have been approved by the Censor in Chief before commencement.

5.2. Work-Based Assessment

During Basic and Advanced Training, training occurs in structured terms/rotations in training hospitals in Australia and New Zealand. During this time, a trainee's progress and performance is assessed by the Term Supervisor and monitored and recorded through a series of assessment reports. To meet the College's standard, a trainee needs to undertake at least four supervised clinics and two supervised theatre sessions each week.

5.2.1. Basic Training Work-Based Assessment

- 5.2.1.1. **Core Induction Standards Assessment:** All Basic Trainees must complete an induction assessment within the first three months of commencing accredited training.
- 5.2.1.2. **Basic Ophthalmic Surgery Pre-Surgical Assessment:** All Basic Trainees must submit a Pre-Surgical Assessment Form completed by his/her Term Supervisor within the first three months of commencing formal training. This assessment is important to help ensure patient care and safety.
- 5.2.1.3. **End of Term Assessment:** In each Term, a Basic Trainee must receive a minimum grade of '5' (satisfactory) for each of the key roles – Ophthalmic Skills, Clinical Knowledge, Surgical Skills, Communicator, Collaborator, Manager, Health Advocate, Scholar, and Professional.

- a) A Basic Trainee who receives a grade of '3' (not up to standard) or below in any key role in any Term will be required to undergo remediation.
- b) A Basic Trainee who receives two '4' (borderline) grades in any one key role within a 12-month period will be required to undergo remediation.
- c) The remediation period will be a minimum of six months divided into two periods.
- d) A Basic Trainee under remediation is not allowed to progress to Advanced Training.
- e) A Basic Trainee under remediation is allowed to sit the Ophthalmic Science (OS) examinations, the OBCK examination, and the Ophthalmic Pathology examination.
- f) A trainee who is not satisfactorily remediated will not be eligible to continue in the VTP and will lose his/her Trainee Associate Member status with RANZCO.

5.2.2. Advanced Training Work-Based Assessment

5.2.2.1. **End of Term Assessment:** In each Term, an Advanced Trainee must receive a minimum grade of '5' (satisfactory) for each of the key roles – Ophthalmic Skills, Clinical Knowledge, Surgical Skills, Communicator, Collaborator, Manager, Health Advocate, Scholar, and Professional.

- a) An Advanced Trainee who receives a grade of '3' (not up to standard) or below in any key role in any Term will be required to undergo remediation.
- b) An Advanced Trainee who receives two '4' (borderline) grades in any one key role within a 12-month period will be required to undergo remediation.
- c) An Advanced Trainee who receives a grade of '4' (borderline) or below in any one key role at the end of Advanced Training will be required to undergo remediation.
- d) The remediation period will be a minimum of six months divided into two periods.
- e) An Advanced Trainee under remediation is not allowed to progress to Final Year.
- f) An Advanced Trainee under remediation is allowed to sit the Ophthalmic Pathology (OP) examination but not the RANZCO Advanced Clinical Examination (RACE).
- g) A trainee who is not satisfactorily remediated will not be eligible to continue in the VTP and will lose his/her Trainee Associate Member status with RANZCO.

5.2.3. Final Year Work-Based Assessment

5.2.3.1. A Final Year Trainee who has completed a minimum period of 12 months training time is required to submit the following reports to the College:

- a) A Trainee Report detailing his/her training experience in each approved Final Year position.

- b) Two Supervisor Reports from each approved position, to provide an assessment of his/her performance against the seven key roles – Ophthalmic Knowledge & Skills, Communicator, Collaborator, Manager, Professional, Advocate, and Scholar.
- 5.2.3.2. The Censor in Chief's acceptance of a trainee's satisfactory completion of the Final Year of the VTP marks the trainee's eligibility to apply for admission as a Fellow of RANZCO (FRANZCO).
- 5.2.3.3. Final Year Trainee whose report(s) are not approved by the Censor in Chief will be required to repeat the Final Year, or part thereof in accordance with the Trainee Remediation Policy

5.3. Assessment Records

5.3.1. Basic Training Assessment Records

- 5.3.1.1. ***At the end of three months from the commencement of training***, a Basic Trainee must submit the following reports to the College:
- a) Core Induction Standards Assessment Record (Form 1A), and
 - b) Basic Ophthalmic Surgery: Pre-surgical Assessment Record (Form 1B).
- 5.3.1.2. ***Within two weeks following the end of each Term***, a Basic Trainee must submit the following reports to the College:
- a) Term Supervisor's Assessment of Trainee Report (Form 5) completed by the designated Term Supervisor, and
 - b) A minimum of one Theatre Performance Assessment Report (Form 3) per calendar month of the Term completed by a Clinical Tutor.
- 5.3.1.3. All Basic Trainees must ensure that his/her RANZCO online surgical logbook is up to date within two weeks from the end of each Term.
- 5.3.1.4. ***At the 18-month point from commencement of training***, a Basic Trainee must submit a copy of the RANZCO online surgical logbook summary signed by the trainee's Director of Training.
- 5.3.1.5. Unless an extension has been granted by the Censor in Chief in advance of the end of the Term, a Basic Trainee who fails to submit the full set of required reports to the College within the stipulated timeframe will be awarded a grade of '4' (borderline) for the key role of Manager by their QEC Chair.
- 5.3.1.6. All Basic Trainees on six-month rotations are required to submit the standard end of term assessments both at mid-term (at end of third month) and at the end of the rotation (end of sixth month).

5.3.2. Advanced Training Assessment Records

- 5.3.2.1. **Within two weeks following the end of a Term**, an Advanced Trainee must submit the following reports to the College:
- a) Term Supervisor's Assessment of Trainee Report (Form 5) completed by the designated Term Supervisor, and
 - b) A minimum of one Theatre Performance Assessment Report (Form 3) per calendar month of the Term completed by a Clinical Tutor.
- 5.3.2.2. All Advanced Trainees must ensure that his/her RANZCO online surgical logbook is up to date within two weeks from end of each Term.
- 5.3.2.3. **At the end of Advanced Training**, a trainee must submit a copy of the RANZCO online surgical handbook summary signed by the trainee's Director of Training.
- 5.3.2.4. Unless an extension has been granted by the Censor in Chief in advance of the end of the Term, an Advanced Trainee who fails to submit the full set of required reports to the College within the stipulated timeframe will be awarded a grade of '4' (borderline) for the key role of Manager by their QEC Chair.
- 5.3.2.5. All Advanced Trainees on six-month rotations are required to submit the standard end of term assessments both at mid-term (at end of third month) and at the end of rotation (end of sixth month).
- 5.3.2.6. An Advanced Trainee who has completed the minimum training time in accredited posts but has not commenced Final Year must continue to provide a three-monthly Term Supervisor's Assessment of Trainee Report (Form 5) to the College if he/she is employed. A trainee who is not employed during this time is required to provide their regional network Director of Training and the College with a written update of their status every three months.

5.4. Examinations

RANZCO examinations are formal summative assessments along the training pathway that each trainee needs to pass to be eligible to proceed to the next stage of the RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP).

A trainee on interrupted training is not allowed to sit RANZCO examinations except if on maternity/paternity leave.

5.4.1. Basic Training Examinations

- 5.4.1.1. Basic Trainees are required to sit and pass six RANZCO examinations:
- 1) Clinical Ophthalmic Pharmacology and Emergency Medicine (COPEM) Module 1
 - 2) Clinical Ophthalmic Pharmacology and Emergency Medicine (COPEM) Module 2
 - 3) Anatomy
 - 4) Optics

- 5) Physiology
- 6) Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge (OBCK)
- 5.4.1.2. **COPEM Module 1:** Accredited training time does not start until a trainee has passed COPEM Module 1 (Refer Item 5.1.2.).
- 5.4.1.3. **COPEM Module 2:** Basic Trainees must pass this examination within three months of commencing training.
- 5.4.1.4. **Anatomy:** Basic Trainees must sit the Anatomy examination at the first available opportunity after selection to the RANZCO VTP. A trainee who is unsuccessful at this sitting must re-sit the examination at the next available opportunity.
- 5.4.1.5. **OBCK:** Basic Trainees must sit the OBCK examination within 12 months of commencing training.
- 5.4.1.6. A Basic Trainee who fails to pass Anatomy, Optics, Physiology and the OBCK by the 18-month point will be referred to the Trainee Progression Committee for review.

5.4.2. Advanced Training Examinations

5.4.2.1. Advanced Trainees are required to sit and pass two RANZCO examinations:

- 1) Ophthalmic Pathology (OP), and
- 2) RANZCO Advanced Clinical Examination (RACE)

5.4.2.1.1 Ophthalmic Pathology Examination (OP)

a) A Trainee who has passed all basic training examinations and meets the examination registration requirements. is eligible to sit the Ophthalmic Pathology examination before he/she has successfully progressed to and commenced Advanced Training.

Furthermore, a Trainee is expected to sit the OP within the first 12 months of commencing Advanced Training. The rationale is that it is in the trainees' interest to enter the fourth year of training having only to concentrate on preparation for RACE.

b) An Advanced Trainee who has yet to pass OP approaching the end of their first year of Advanced Training will be referred to the Trainee Progression Committee for review.

5.4.2.1.2 RANZCO Advanced Clinical Examination (RACE)

a) An Advanced Trainee is eligible to sit RACE if he/she has commenced second year of Advanced Training, is not under remediation, passed Ophthalmic Pathology examination, and meets the examination registration requirements.

b) The RACE comprises two components – a written examination and a clinical examination. To pass RACE overall, a trainee must pass both these components.

c) All Advanced Trainees must sit both components of RACE at first sitting. A trainee who has passed only one component at first sitting will be credited with a

“Pass” for the successful component. Such a trainee will be required to re-sit only the examination component that he/she has not passed.

- d) An Advanced Trainee who fails to pass any component of RACE at first sitting must re-sit both components in the second sitting.
- e) A trainee who fails to pass RACE overall at second sitting will be referred to the Trainee Progression Committee for review.
- f) A trainee is required to pass RACE to be eligible to progress into Final Year.
- g) Some trainee’s start times are such that their progression through the program does not fit neatly within the exam timetabling. A trainee in this situation may apply to the Censor-in-Chief to sit the RACE up to three months in advance of the start of their fourth year with the approval of their regional QEC Chair and DOT (supported by a letter of support from his/her DOT to the Censor-in- Chief).

5.4.3. Final Year Examinations

5.4.3.1. There are no examination requirements for Final Year Trainees.

5.4.4. Multiple Failures of Examinations

5.4.4.1. RANZCO trainees are allowed three attempts to pass any examinations.

- a) A trainee who fails to pass an examination at second and third sitting will be referred to the Trainee Progression Committee for review.
- b) For Basic Trainees, any examinations sat after selection but prior to commencement of training is excluded from the three attempts allowed

5.5. Research Requirement

5.5.1. The College requires a trainee to demonstrate involvement or acquire skills in ophthalmic research. The College regards this as practical preparation for both the professional application of evidence-based medicine and for professional lifelong learning to be maintained through continuing professional development.

5.5.2. To accommodate the range of research activities carried out by trainees, the College recognises a variety of research options including the following:

- a) A publication in a peer-reviewed journal as first author.
- b) Being first author and a significant contributor to a paper presented at a meeting for which abstracts are subject to peer review and selection, for example: The Colleges Annual Scientific Congress, the Australian Visual and Ophthalmic Science Conference, or a State/New Zealand Branch Scientific meeting.
- c) An approved period of full-time research (confirmed by a written report from a RANZCO Fellow).
- d) A higher degree gained by research or thesis. (A higher degree by course work alone is not sufficient.)

5.5.3. All trainees must have met this requirement by the time they complete Final Year.

6. Notification of Discontinuation of Training

- 6.1. A trainee whose training is discontinued due to failure to progress will be notified in writing within seven days.
- 6.2. College notification advising a trainee of discontinuation of training will contain the following information:
 - a) The effective date of discontinuation of a trainee's training on the VTP and Training Associate Member status with RANZCO,
 - b) The reason(s) for the discontinuation, and
 - c) The Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy.

7. Record of Amendments

Page	Details of amendment
5	Created 5.2. Work-Based Assessment: 5.2.1.3.(b) & 5.2.2.1.(b),
7	Amended 5.3. Assessment Records: 5.3.1.4.(b) & 5.3.2.3.(b)
9	Amended 5.4.1. Basic Training Examinations: 5.4.1.1. & 5.4.1.5
10	Created 5.4.4. Multiple Failures of Examinations: 5.4.4.1.(c)
7	Created 5.3.1.6.
8	Created 5.3.2.5.
5	Amended 5.2.1. Basic Training Work-Based Assessment: 5.2.1.3. (a) &(b)
6	Amended 5.2.2. Advanced Training Work-Based Assessment: 5.2.2.1 (a), (b) &(c)
7	Amended 5.3.1. Basic Training Assessment Records: 5.3.1.2. (c) & 5.3.1.4.
8	Amended 5.3.2. Advanced Training Assessment Records: 5.3.2.1. (c) & 5.3.2.3.