

Vocational Training Program

Structure and duration of training

Trainees undertake basic training in structured terms in training hospitals in Australia and New Zealand. The trainee must demonstrate integrated clinical skills and knowledge in the Ophthalmic Sciences (OS) and Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge (OBCK).

Ophthalmic Sciences (OS)

- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Optics
- Clinical Ophthalmic Pharmacology and Emergency Medicine (COPEM Module 1 & COPEM Module 2)

Assessment in the first four subjects is by examination. The competencies which relate to each of the ophthalmic sciences subjects are covered in the [Curriculum Standards](#).

Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge (OBCK)

OBCK are assessed in a clinical exam which must be sat within the initial 12 months of training and covers:

- Mastery of clinical examination techniques
- Mastery of Ophthalmic instruments
- Interpretation of symptoms
- Recognition of common clinical signs
- Compulsory wet lab experience

* It does not cover diagnosis or management of ophthalmic conditions.

Basic training is underpinned by the six non-medical competencies outlined in the Social and Professional Responsibilities curriculum standard. Selection for advanced training takes place in the second half of each calendar year. Basic trainees are therefore required to pass all OS requirements by June of the second year (i.e. within 18 months of the commencement) of training, to be eligible to apply for advanced training. The OBCK exam must be sat within the initial 12 months training.

After selection to the Vocational Training Program, Anatomy must be sat at the first opportunity and COPEM Module 1 must be sat and passed prior to the commencement of training.

Advanced Training (Years 3 and 4)

Having been selected into advanced training, the trainee in years three and four must demonstrate integrated clinical and surgical skills and knowledge in each of the following clinical practice areas, as indicated in the curriculum standards:

- Cataract
- Clinical Genetics and Microbiology
- Clinical Refraction
- Cornea and External Eye
- Glaucoma
- Neuro-ophthalmology
- Ocular Inflammation
- Ocular Motility
- Oculoplastics and Orbit
- Ophthalmic Ultrasound
- Paediatrics
- Refractive Surgery
- Vitreo-retinal

The training is underpinned by the six non-medical competencies outlined in the social and professional responsibilities curriculum standard. Formal assessment comprises on-job assessments, the Ophthalmic Pathology Examination and the RANZCO Advanced Clinical Examination (RACE).

A trainee requires three years of satisfactory training progress (supported by term supervisor's reports for all terms, and records of surgical experience), and must demonstrate mature self-understanding of his or her specialist and professional development, to be considered fit to sit the RACE.

Final Year

Subject to passing RACE, and satisfactorily completing four years of training, the trainee may undertake the final year. The trainee is expected to broaden his or her specialist experience in final preparation for specialist qualification and to function in the community as an independent ophthalmologist.

The final year experience may be taken in Australia, New Zealand or overseas, preferably in an institution or network other than that in which the trainee completed the basic and advanced in-service component of their training. Trainees are required to obtain the Censor-in-Chief's approval for their final year program in advance of starting the year. There will be no retrospective recognition

of training time. On completion of the year the College requires detailed reports from the trainee and supervisors. Please refer to the trainee dashboard for the submission details.

A trainee must remain a financial member of the College at all times. Trainees intending to work or train overseas need to fully research the requirements with their sponsors or employers.

Research Requirement: Evidence-Based Ophthalmic Practice

Prior to applying for Fellowship of the College, trainees must meet the research requirement in Evidence-based Ophthalmic Practice. This can be achieved through:

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

Fellowship

Eligibility for Fellowship of the College is subject to:

- Successful completion of two years of basic training, two years of advanced training, and one year of final training in the Vocational Training Program; and
- the Censor-in-Chief's acceptance of the trainee's final year reports and performance demonstrating ability to practise as a specialist ophthalmologist.

The trainee is then eligible to apply for admission as a Fellow of the College, the highest professional membership category.

Be a [Fellow of RANZCO](#), the highest membership category.