



**RANZCO**

The Royal Australian  
and New Zealand  
College of Ophthalmologists

# Visual Standards Committee

## Terms of Reference

*The terms of reference stipulate the requirements and processes the Visual Standards Committee shall adhere to in order to accomplish its stated purpose.*

**Appointment under these Terms of Reference may only be accepted by completion and return of the *Appointment Acknowledgment and Agreement* section on the final page.**

Approved by: Board

Next Review:

Approval date:

## 1. TITLE

Visual Standards Committee

## 2. MANDATE

The Committee is a standing Committee of the College.

## 3. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Committee is to:

1. Provide advice to Fellows and external stakeholders on issues relevant to vision standards across Australia and New Zealand.
2. Develop and maintain high quality, evidence-based resources and guidance for use by Fellows, patients, carers, governments and the public.
3. Provide advice and direction to the Board on emerging issues relevant to visual standards across Australia and New Zealand.
4. Provide input into guidelines, position statements and RANZCO responses to submissions and inquiries that relate to:
  - visual standards for occupations and activities (e.g., standards for eye protection, aviation requirements, fitness to drive etc.).

## 4. MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT

The membership shall include at least 3 members, comprising:

- Fellows with sufficient expertise to provide advice on the major special interest areas; and
- Fellows from both public and private practice.

The President has a standing invitation to attend any meeting of the Committee. The President, or a delegated Director/s, are ex-officio on the Visual Standards Committee.

Ideally the Chair is to be elected by and from the members of the Committee, or if no suitable candidate is identified by appointment through the Board and is subject to Board approval.

Nominations are considered and appointments made by the Board following calls for expressions of interest for membership of the Committee.

Ideally, Committee members (including the Chair) will remain in the position for a term of 3 years, with the option of up to 3 further one-year terms.

In the event that the Chair is unable to continue the position as Chair due to

resignation or any other reason, the Committee should elect from its membership a Chair to fill the vacancy for the duration and completion of the remaining term and inform the Board accordingly. If no one is available to take up the Chair from current members, the Committee may co-opt a Fellow for this purpose and seek endorsement from the Board.

Any vacant non-Chair positions may be filled on a casual basis with consent of the Committee members for the remainder of the term.

## **5. QUORUM**

Half the number of members (or as otherwise determined by the Board) must be present in person or on tele/video conference for any determination to be made or business transacted by the Committee. The Chair need not be present to form a quorum and may assign a proxy.

## **6. MEETINGS, MINUTES AND REPORTS**

The Committee will meet at least once a year, face to face, ideally at the Annual Scientific Meeting. Additional meetings may be arranged via teleconference. Committee decisions may also be made out-of-session if majority support is reached. Where agreed, all out-of-session decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled Committee meeting.

Secretariat support will be provided by the College.

Only members have voting rights. If voting is tied, the Chair will have the deciding vote.

Minutes of meetings must be recorded and sent within 14 days for agreement by members. Any recognised or potential conflict of interest is to be declared and recorded in the minutes.

All formal correspondence with other parties should be conducted through the College.

## **7. SCOPE**

The Committee may:

- Inform and develop policies and guidelines.
- Establish working groups.
- Recommend projects for the College to undertake.
- Review and recommend the amendment of strategic priorities, purpose and/or objectives of the Committee in alignment with College Strategy.

The Committee may not:

- Approve expenditure.
- Initiate any medico-political action or communication orally or in writing any information on any such matter to any person or public authority.

## 8. RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members are expected to:

1. Attend Committee meetings and actively participate in discussion.
2. Read Agenda papers and Minutes of meetings.
3. Keep matters relevant to individual Fellows or specific cases of patient care confidential; and maintain confidentiality on matters of importance or that can affect the interests of RANZCO and/or the specialty of ophthalmology.
4. Act with care and diligence and in the best interests of the Committee and RANZCO.
5. Keep abreast of key issues, including bi-national & international developments that may impact on the work and areas of responsibility of the Committee.
6. Dedicate time outside of Committee meetings to undertake Committee-related activities such as drafting of documents, research, provision of advice and others as required.
7. Assist in the development of relationships with College partners and stakeholders.

Committee members' appointment shall cease if they:

- Resign from the Committee in writing.
- Fail to attend 3 consecutive meetings.
- Breach confidentiality.
- Act in a manner that is detrimental to the interests and objectives of the Committee or College.
- Are deemed by the Board to be consistently underperforming.

## 9. COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW

A report of the key objectives and achievements of the Committee for the previous financial year is to be provided by the Chair to the Board by 31 July each year for potential inclusion in the College's Annual Report. A plan for the year ahead noting key objectives is to be provided at the same time.

The Committee Chair shall also report to the Board by 31 July each year on the adequacy of contributions made by members. The template reporting form is at **Attachment A**.

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed every three years or as otherwise directed by the Board.

## **10. CONFIDENTIALITY**

All RANZCO Visual Standards Committee materials, documents, deliberations, discussions, case notes, file notes, minutes and communications, undertaken or prepared by Committee members in connection with Committee activities or disclosed to a Committee member in connection with those activities are strictly confidential (Confidential Information). Confidential Information may only be used by a Visual Standards Committee member for and in connection with authorised Visual Standards Committee activities during the term of the appointment of the member and must not be disclosed by a Committee member to a non-Committee member without express Visual Standards Committee approval. Where Confidential Information is to be disclosed to a non-member, such disclosure must be on agreed terms approved by the Chair and restricted to a specific purpose and specified duration. All Confidential Information held by a Committee member must be securely destroyed or returned to the Committee upon conclusion of the appointment.

## **11. UNAUTHORISED COMMUNICATION**

Communicating about Committee matters to those outside the Committee without the express endorsement or permission of the CEO or Board is referred to as unauthorised communication. Committee members must be cognisant of their implied authority to 'speak' on behalf of the Committee or RANZCO when communicating to non-Committee members about issues pertaining to the Committee. This is because unauthorised communication may damage the reputation of RANZCO and give rise to liability on the part of the College.

When communication is necessary with stakeholders other than those normally engaged in the course of Committee activities, i.e., relevant government departments, other colleges, key stakeholder groups, the Chair of the Committee must seek approval from RANZCO's CEO before undertaking communication.

Under no circumstances shall the Committee or any of its members conduct any unauthorised communication (written or oral) concerning any proposed or current legal action or political lobbying.

All media communications (print, electronic, radio, television etc) must be coordinated by the RANZCO Manager of Communications.

Where a Committee member makes representations to the media in their personal capacity, the Committee member must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the representations are not attributed to or taken to be endorsed by RANZCO.

## **12. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Conflicts of interest arise when an individual prioritises, or gives equal weight to, a secondary interest over a primary interest. Where conflicts of interest exist, or are

perceived to exist, they undermine the credibility, reputation and efforts of the College, its committees, and its work. As such, all Visual Standards Committee members must strictly comply with the Conflict-of-Interest Policy while engaged in Committee activities. All Committee members must complete the declaration form in the Policy and all Committee meetings must begin with the declaration of relevant interests and the management of any relevant conflict of interest in accordance with the Conflict-of-Interest Policy.

### **13. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Visual Standards Committee members shall be appointed having consideration to the aims and intent of the RANZCO Diversity and Inclusion Policy and RANZCO's commitment to achieving a goal of 35% female representation on all committees and leadership bodies. Individual Committee members shall have regard to the aims and intent of the RANZCO Diversity and Inclusion Policy and adopt an inclusive approach to all Visual Standards Committee and RANZCO-wide activities.

### **14. CODE OF CONDUCT**

The RANZCO's Code of Conduct (the Code) reflects RANZCO's values, the College Oath and prevailing community expectations concerning the practice of ophthalmology. The Code has been adopted by the RANZCO Board to ensure the highest standards of ophthalmic practice and care by RANZCO members. As a condition of RANZCO membership, all members must abide by the Code at all times, including when conducting activities as a member of the Committee. These Terms of Reference are RANZCO policy. To meet the Code's required Standard of Collegiality, members of the Committee must not engage in conduct that represents a serious breach of RANZCO policy. Alleged breaches of the Code shall be determined in accordance with the Code of Conduct Procedure Policy.

## **Attachment A: Appointment Acknowledgement and Agreement**

To confirm your appointment under these Terms of Reference, please specify your full name, sign and date where indicated below and return.

I, the undersigned, agree and state upon acceptance of the appointment that:

I will comply with these Terms of Reference (as amended or replaced):

- Compliance with these Terms of Reference is a condition of my ongoing appointment;
- I am not subject to any perceived or real conflict of interest with the activities of the Visual Standards Committee at the date of appointment; and
- A breach of these Terms of Reference may constitute a serious breach of College Policy under the Code of Conduct.

Print Name:

Signature:

Date

**Attachment B: Annual Committee Reporting Form**

Committee Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Key objectives at year start:
2. Key achievements at year end:
3. Have members' contributions been adequate? List key contributions by members.
4. Further comments (e.g. underperformance by members):
5. Plan for the new year, noting key objectives:

Chair signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_