



RANZCO

The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Ophthalmologists

Trainee Selection Policy

Approved by: Board

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Department: Member Support

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

This Policy:

1. Outlines RANZCO's principles, criteria, and requirements for shortlisting applicants for selection into its Vocational Training Program (VTP).
2. Provides transparency for VTP applicants in terms of understanding RANZCO's VTP selection requirements.
3. Outlines the requirements Network Selection Committees must follow when completing their stage of the selection process.

1.2. Background

RANZCO delivers a VTP for medical practitioners who want to become specialist ophthalmologists in Australia and New Zealand. The objective of the VTP is to produce a specialist ophthalmologist who, on completion of training, is equipped to undertake safe, autonomous, comprehensive, general ophthalmology practice.

The process of being accepted onto the RANZCO VTP is a two-step process involving RANZCO and employers with accredited ophthalmology training posts e.g. State health departments, district health boards, and teaching hospitals/organisations

RANZCO is responsible for identifying applicants who are eligible for the VTP by:

- Defining the principles and standards for selection into the VTP including determining eligibility criteria and selection criteria.
- Administering the selection processes.
- Developing resources to guide trainee selection and support process implementation at the national and local level.
- Monitoring and evaluating processes to ensure compliance and continual improvement.

Using verified and evidenced-based tools, processes and weightings, RANZCO provides the Training Network Selection Committees with a shortlist of applicants who it believes are suitable for selection into the RANZCO VTP. The Training Network Selection Committees have autonomy to make their selection decisions using whatever processes, weightings, and tools they deem appropriate.

To be successfully selected onto the RANZCO VTP, an applicant must be short-listed by RANZCO and selected by a Training Network Selection Committee, including being extended an offer of employment. As such, applicants are advised to consider both the RANZCO weightings and those of their preferred Network(s) in making their application. The weightings and preferences of the Networks can differ from those of RANZCO to suit their local circumstances.

More broadly, RANZCO has a responsibility to support health jurisdictions' objectives for the ophthalmology workforce including, reducing geographic maldistribution of ophthalmology services and increasing the number of Indigenous medical practitioners who become Ophthalmologists. RANZCO's selection process addresses this responsibility through weightings for Indigeneity and Rural Background.

1.3. Who is it prepared for?

This Policy applies to the Selection Board, Selection Panel and VTP applicants and provides information for the training network jurisdictions, the Australian Medical Council, and Medical Council of New Zealand.

1.4. Scope

This Policy governs selection decisions made by the RANZCO Selection Board and Selection Panel on and from the date the Board adopts this Policy until the Board formally revokes, amends or repeals it.

1.5. Definitions

Vocational Training Program (VTP): a five-year vocational training program for medical practitioners wishing to pursue a career as a specialist Ophthalmologist.

College: The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO).

Board: College Board.

Trainee: a medical practitioner enrolled in the RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP).

Applicant: a medical practitioner who is applying for selection into the VTP.

Selection Board: As defined in the Selection Board Terms of Reference.

Selection Panel: As defined in the Selection Panel Terms of Reference.

Networks: A collection of RANZCO-accredited Training Posts.

1.6. Strategic Alignment

This Policy has been developed in accordance with the Australian Medical Council's and Medical Council of New Zealand's standards for accreditation of postgraduate medical education. It aligns with RANZCO's strategic objectives of producing comprehensive general ophthalmologists to serve the populations of Australia and New Zealand. RANZCO's application of this Policy is underpinned by its vision, mission, and values statements.

1.7. Policy Objectives

- Ensure transparency and fairness.
- Provide a consistent and robust trainee selection process.
- Ensure applicants entering the VTP have the potential to satisfactorily complete the VTP.
- Support the RANZCO-led centralised process using evidence-based tools to assess applicants' attributes against RANZCO's selection criteria.

2. Policies

2.1. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1.1 RANZCO Board

The RANZCO Board approves the weightings of tools and criteria used in the selection process.

2.1.2 Selection Board

The Selection Board is a bi-national group formed to implement the Qualifications and Education Committee (QEC) approved standardised policy and process to the selection of applicants to the VTP.

The Selection Board functions within the parameters of the RANZCO Conflict of Interest Policy.

2.1.3 Selection Panel

The Selection Panel is a bi-national committee of the Selection Board formed to implement the QEC approved standardised approach to the selection of applicants to the VTP.

The Selection Panel functions within the parameters of the RANZCO Conflict of Interest Policy.

2.1.4 Training Network Selection Committee

The Training Network Selection Committee of each training Network is solely responsible for selecting applicants for accredited ophthalmology training posts. Training Network Selection Committees have autonomy to make their selection decisions using whatever processes, weightings and tools they deem appropriate, including speaking with referees and conducting local interviews.

RANZCO facilitates the publication of Network Selection Committee criteria on our website. State health departments, district health boards, and teaching hospitals/organisations with accredited ophthalmology training posts are solely responsible for deciding which applicants to employ in these posts, offering employment to applicants and for employment arrangements with applicants who accept employment offers. Feedback to applicants who are at the network stage of selection is the responsibility of the networks.

2.1.5 National Ophthalmic Matching Program (NOMP) Coordinator

The NOMP Coordinator matches each Training Network's selections and rankings of applicants for employment in the network's training posts to applicants' employment preferences. If an applicant is shortlisted for employment by more than one Training Network, they are matched to the Network they ranked as their highest preference for employment. If an applicant ranked several networks as equal preference, they are matched to the Network that ranked them highest.

2.1.6 Applicants

Applicants to the VTP are required to complete all application forms in full and honestly, meet published deadlines and provide payment as outlined in the published forms. Applicants are

advised to ensure the information they provide is complete and not misleading. A requirement of application is to sign a statutory declaration to this effect. Applicants waive their right to privacy should RANZCO deem it necessary to investigate claims made by the applicant during the selection process. Applicants who believe a Conflict of Interest exists can access the RANZCO Conflict of Interest Policy and corresponding Concerns Notice Form.

2.2 VTP Application Eligibility Criteria

Medical practitioners are eligible to register for selection if they meet all RANZCO prerequisites:

- a) Medical degree with full registration to practice medicine in either Australia or New Zealand at the time of applying.
- b) Citizenship or permanent resident status of Australia or New Zealand. An applicant's Citizenship or residency status must be confirmed by 1 April of the year/s they apply to enter the VTP. The selection application fee is not refundable at the time of application.
- c) Completion of a minimum of two years full time post graduate prevocational experience, (including the intern year), when they enter the VTP, which must include a minimum of 18 months of broad experience in medical, clinical and surgical settings other than ophthalmology.

All applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria above and apply through the RANZCO application process will be considered. Meeting the RANZCO eligibility criteria does not guarantee selection into the VTP.

There is no limit to the number of times an applicant can apply to the VTP.

2.3 VTP Selection Criteria

Selection of RANZCO VTP trainees depends on academic and non-academic requirements. RANZCO expects a medical practitioner entering the VTP to have the potential to complete the program successfully. Selection is based on demonstrable evidence of the following criteria:

- Meet Section 2.2 of this Policy.
- Sufficient academic achievement to meet the requirements of the VTP.
- Competence in each of the seven key roles of the specialist ophthalmologist:
 - Medical Expert
 - Scholar
 - Communicator
 - Collaborator
 - Manager
 - Health Advocate
 - Professional (incl. cultural safety)
- Demonstrates a commitment to pursuing a career in ophthalmology.
- A basic knowledge of the VTP.
- Willingness to rotate to different hospitals, including any mandatory rural attachments.

The VTP Selection Criteria are not subject to reconsideration, review, or appeal.

2.4 Selection methods and weightings

RANZCO uses a multi-method approach to selecting applicants to enter the VTP.

To ensure transparency, the Selection methods and weightings are made available on the RANZCO website prior to the commencement of selection for each given year. RANZCO reserves the right to change the selection methods and weightings from year to year.

The Selection methods and weightings for the 2022 selection year are:

Curriculum vitae	
Scholar 8 pts	
Ophthalmic expert 4 pts	
Indigeneity 8 pts	
Regional exposure 8 pts	
Other attributes 4 pts	
	32 pts
References	
Medical expert 11%	
Professional attributes* (used to identify red flags) 2	
	13%
Situational Judgement Test*	
	20 pts
Multiple Mini Interview*	
	35 pts
TOTAL	100 pts

* Professional attributes include the key roles scholar, communicator, collaborator, manager, health advocate, and professional.

2.4.1 Selection Tools

The tools include a structured CV assessment, reference assessment, results from a Situational Judgement Test (SJT) and performance at Multiple Mini Interview (MMI). These tools enable RANZCO to measure a wider range of applicants' skills and attributes and to assess their abilities, skills and thought processes through value-added metrics. The process provides consistent assessments creating a final pool of applicants for Australian and New Zealand training networks to select from. In the current environment the pool of applicants is likely to be much greater than the number of training posts offered by employers.

Structured curriculum vitae (CV)

The following aspects are assessed:

Scholar: Published research and higher degree, scholarships and grants, presentation to state, national, or international meetings and academic performance.

Ophthalmic expert: Proof needs to be provided for previous and/or current ophthalmic experience.

Indigeneity: Documentation confirming indigenous status is provided through membership of AIDA or Te Ora.

Regional background: Schooling, upbringing, and work experience in an area designated as MM2 in Australia. In New Zealand, rural upbringing is defined as outside the main urban areas of Auckland (Central, Northern, Western and Southern), Wellington (includes Upper and Lower Hutt, Porirua and Kapiti) and Christchurch. Rural work experience is outside of the above main urban areas and also Hamilton, Tauranga and Dunedin.

Other attributes: Significant achievements in sports, art, music, and other relevant attributes from an adult age onwards.

Applicants are required to provide certified proof of employment from the last two years.

The percentage weightings for the CV are made available on the RANZCO website prior to the commencement of selection for each given year. RANZCO reserves the right to change the CV weightings from year to year.

References

Five referee reports linked to the applicant's work history where the referees provide answers to structured questions on the applicant's medical expertise and other areas of the CanMEDS criteria.

The number of references and referee questions are made available on the RANZCO website prior to the commencement of selection for each given year. RANZCO reserves the right to change the number of references and referee questions from year to year.

RANZCO reserves the right to seek information on the applicant from anyone relevant to their application.

Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

The situational judgement test assesses important professional attributes required for success during clinical practice such as the applicant's awareness about what is effective behaviour in work-relevant contexts in important interpersonal domains. There are no practice sessions for SJTs.

The SJT is conducted annually at RANZCO-approved venues in major centres across Australia and New Zealand. Applicants must ensure they are available to attend a RANZCO-approved venues to sit the SJT.

RANZCO reserves the right not to publish the questions in advance of the SJTs.

Multiple Mini Interview (MMI)

Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) stations comprise a series of scenarios and associated questions or tasks focusing on an applicant's relevant personal qualities. The interview questions assess the competencies of the CanMEDS roles of communicator, collaborator, manager, health advocate, professional and cultural safety.

Applicants must ensure they are available to attend MMIs in whatever format (e.g. online or in person) is prescribed by RANZCO on the RANZCO website.

RANZCO reserves the right not to publish the questions in advance of the MMIs.

2.5 Application Process

The progression of applicants through the application process is managed by RANZCO staff.

RANZCO reserves the right to change the process due to unforeseen and catastrophic circumstances. Should this occur, all reasonable steps will be taken to inform applicants of changes.

RANZCO reserves the right to reduce the pool of applicants at any stage during the centralised Selection Process.

RANZCO will run exams, such as the SJT and MMI, from a limited number of examination centres, regardless of the location of selection applicants.

Applicant requests to deviate from the established process will generally not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances to consider. In this case, the Selection Board Chair, in consultation with the CEO and Censor-in-Chief, will make a determination on the special request. The decision is to be documented and not subject to reconsideration, review, or appeal. Please refer to the RANZCO Examination Policy regarding Special Considerations.

During the application process, if RANZCO obtains information about an applicant from a third party that could reasonably affect the outcome of their application, RANZCO will provide it to the applicant.

The applicant waives their privacy and allows RANZCO to investigate if it considers false claims may have been made by the applicant. In all investigations, RANZCO will adhere to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. The burden of proof is beyond a reasonable doubt.

2.6 Application Outcomes

Selection results are not subject to reconsideration, review, or appeal.

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will receive an offer of employment in a RANZCO-accredited training post from the training network/employing authority they are matched with. The training network/employing authority will inform RANZCO which applicants accept employment offers.

If the appointee is not able to commence training in the training year to which they are selected to commence training, they must relinquish the training position and re-apply for Selection at another time. Please refer to the RANZCO Temporary Training Registrar (TTR) and Trainee Progression Policies for more information.

Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed by RANZCO that they were not selected for an accredited training post and will receive feedback about their performance in the RANZCO short-listing process to inform their future applications to enter the VTP.

Feedback will be general feedback and no further feedback will be provided by RANZCO. Training Networks can provide feedback at their discretion, and this is not subject to review by RANZCO.

Eliminated Applicants

Applicants who have been found to be in breach of this Policy will be eliminated from the Application Process. A notation of this outcome remains on their file for all future applications and the Training Network Selection Committees will be informed.

Additional Training Positions

Employers may have vacancies that arise after the NOMP process is complete (e.g. a new training post is accredited). The employer must seek approval from the Censor in Chief before job offers are made. Please refer to the TTR Policy under 6.6 on how eligible doctors can be appointed to these additional training posts.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

RANZCO seeks to work in a partnership of consultation and co-operation with all ophthalmology training networks, hospitals and health systems, government agencies, College Fellows and others involved in the selection and education of ophthalmology specialists in Australia and New Zealand. Compliance with this Policy will be monitored through the process for accreditation of RANZCO training posts.

- This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Chair of the Selection Board.
- Feedback on the Policy is sought from the Selection Board annually.
- RANZCO's Risk Register and complaints from VTP applicants will be used to assess the Policy.
- Monitoring and evaluating processes to ensure compliance and ongoing improvement.

4. Related Documents

Trainee Progression Policy
Examination Policy
Temporary Training Registrar Policy
Selection Board Terms of Reference
Selection Panel Terms of Reference
Conflict of Interest Policy

5. Record of amendments to this document

Page	Details of amendment	Date approved
2	1.1 taken out processes	Nil
4	2.1.5 added equal preferences to the NOMP	13 Dec 2021
6	2.4 updated weightings	13 Dec 2021
6	2.4.1 updated Selection Tools	13 Dec 2021
7-8	2.5. updated Application Process and 2.6 Application Outcomes	13 Dec 2021
9	4. updated Related Documents	13 Dec 2021

6. Action Plan

This Policy is available on the RANZCO website and is supplied to all VTP applicants.