The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists

Trainee Performance Support Policy

Approved by: CEO **Version:** Current **Department**: Education	**Next review date: February** 2027 **Approval date**: February 2024 **Policy inventory number:** 175.2024.02 03

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We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures; and to their Elders past, present and emerging.
In recognition that we are a bi-national College, we also acknowledge the Rangatiratanga of Māori as Tangata Whenua and Treaty of Waitangi partners in Aotearoa New Zealand.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to establish clear processes and criteria to identify, support, and manage trainees in difficulty. It provides a structure to support the trainee as well as guidance for Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) Fellows and staff who are working with them to resolve training difficulties.

1.2. Who is it prepared for?

This is a RANZCO-wide policy.

1.3. Scope

This Policy applies to all trainees on the RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP) and:

- defines a trainee in difficulty;
- describes the actions RANZCO will take to support a trainee in difficulty to resolve the difficulties and satisfactorily complete the Vocational Training Program (VTP) requirements for their stage of training;
- describes the actions RANZCO will take if a trainee in difficulty who receives support is not able to satisfactorily complete the VTP requirements for their stage of training.

1.4 Definitions

Board means the RANZCO Board of Directors.

Censor-in-Chief (CiC) means the person appointed to oversee all aspects of training and assessment conducted as part of the RANZCO VTP.

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

Comprehensive Review of Training means a review conducted by the Progression Committee to decide if a trainee who has not satisfactorily completed the requirements the Vocational Training Program (VTP) requirements for their stage of training will be discontinued from training.

Delivery and Development Committee means the sub-committee of the REC whose purpose is to oversee the planning and delivery of RANZCO's Vocational Training Program (VTP) within the training networks.

Director of Training (DoT) means the person who has overall responsibility for the structure and quality of training in each hospital or department in their network, in line with the College policies and specific arrangements within their training network, and for providing Trainees with information and feedback on their progress.

Head of Department or equivalent means the person appointed with oversight and responsibility for a hospital department, or the training site.

IPAP means a tailored Improving Performance Action Plan

Progression Committee means the sub-committee of the REC whose purpose is to provide expert advice and support to the CiC on Trainee progression matters.

RANZCO Education Committee (REC) means the governing body chaired by the CiC responsible to the College Board for education and training policy and program management.

Term Supervisor means the person who has a clearly defined responsibility to oversee and manage an individual trainee's clinical training and performance within the department for a specified period or clinical placement.

Trainee means a medical practitioner enrolled in the RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP) and is not a Temporary Training Registrar (TTR).

Trainee in difficulty is a trainee who is not meeting the expected competence in training and/or not meeting the outlined requirements by designated milestones and/or is experiencing significant health or physical difficulties that impede their training.

RANZCO Vocational Training Program (VTP) means the training program offered by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists, accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) and Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ).

VTP requirements are the learning outcomes, training and/or assessment requirements documented in the VTP curriculum and/or notified by RANZCO which a trainee must complete within required timeframes.

2. Strategic Alignment

This policy has been developed to assist RANZCO to achieve its strategic priorities in Education, Training and Accreditation.

3. Background and issues

Previously, RANZCO applied the Trainee Remediation Policy and its associated processes to support trainees in difficulty. This policy and processes were evaluated and replaced by both the Trainee Performance Support Policy and Trainee Support and Development Pathway. The most recent review of this policy and pathway aligned them with the requirements of the new VTP curriculum implemented in 2023.

4. Objectives

The objective of this policy is to assist RANZCO trainers and staff to identify early a trainee who is in difficulty and initiate the Support and Development Pathway to support the trainee to overcome their training difficulties.

5. Policies

5.1 What is a Trainee in Difficulty?

A trainee in difficulty is one who:

5.1.1 is identified through RANZCO's internal or Committee processes as requiring "additional support" to satisfactorily complete the VTP requirements within required timeframes.

5.1.2 has been flagged by their Term Supervisor on the Term Report as requiring additional support or;

5.1.3 has not satisfactorily completed the VTP requirements by the stipulated key progression points.

5.2 Trainee Support and Development Pathway

A trainee in difficulty who meets Criteria 5.1.1 and/or 5.1.2 will be supported on the Trainee Support and Development Pathway (Appendix 1).

A trainee who meets criteria 5.1.3 will be referred to the Progression Committee for a Comprehensive Review of Training (see 5.8).

A trainee can also self-identify at any time that they require "additional support" and request support through the Trainee Support and Development Pathway.

5.3 Improving Performance Action Plan

Trainees who meet criteria 5.1.1 and/or 5.1.2 and their trainers will develop a tailored Improving Performance Action Plan(s) (IPAP, Appendix 2). The IPAP will document the actions/tasks each party will take to support the trainee to address the difficulties and the expected outcomes of each action/task.

The trainee's progress will be reviewed against the IPAP actions/tasks at 3-monthly intervals.

5.4 Trainee Support and Development Pathway - Local Support

A network Director of Training (DOT) and/or Term Supervisor who identifies a trainee at risk of not completing the VTP requirements within the required timeframes can:

1. initiate a locally monitored IPAP or
2. refer the trainee to RANZCO for RANZCO Monitored Support (see 5.5).

The decision to initiate local or RANZCO Monitored Support is a discretionary decision. When making the decision, the network DOT and/or Term Supervisor are advised to contact the Learning Delivery Unit at RANZCO to discuss the situation and the appropriate course of action to take.

The decision to implement a locally monitored IPAP is not open to any form of reassessment.

5.4.1 Period of Local Support

The minimum period for Local Support will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the network DOT or Term Supervisor.

The maximum period for Local Support is six (6) months. If a trainee remains in difficulty after six (6) months of Local Support, the Term Supervisor must flag in the Term Report that the trainee requires “additional support” and RANZCO Monitored Support will be implemented.

5.5 Trainee Support and Development Pathway - RANZCO Monitored Support

The Delivery and Development Committee will oversee the development, delivery and outcomes of Improving Performance Action Plan(s) developed to support trainees who meet criteria 5.1.1 and/or 5.1.2 and are referred to the committee for RANZCO Monitored Support.

The decision to implement RANZCO Monitored Support is not open to any form of reassessment.

5.5.1 Period of RANZCO Monitored Support

The minimum period of RANZCO Monitored support is six (6) months.

The maximum period of RANZCO Monitored Support will be determined by the Delivery and Development Committee on a case-by-case basis. The Delivery and Development Committee will base their decisions on the three monthly IPAP reviews, Term Reports and associated assessments. The Delivery and Development Committee may also request additional written information from the trainee, their trainers and RANZCO staff to inform their decisions.

5.6 Accredited training

Training continues to be accredited whilst on the Support Pathway EXCEPT between training stages, ie:

- A Basic trainee on the RANZCO monitored Support Pathway cannot progress to Advanced training until successfully remediated.
- An Advanced trainee on the RANZCO monitored Support Pathway cannot progress to the Final Year until successfully remediated.

Any training undertaken between stages will be unaccredited.

Such periods will not be retrospectively accredited, and the training shortfall will need to be made up.

5.7 Exiting the Trainee Support and Development Pathway

At the end of each six (6) month period of support the Delivery and Development Committee will review the 3-monthly IPAP reviews, Term Reports and associated assessments and decide if the trainee:

1. has satisfactorily completed the agreed actions/tasks and expected outcomes documented in the IPAP and will return to the standard training pathway or
2. has not satisfactorily completed the agreed actions/tasks and expected outcomes documented in the IPAP and will:
    - allow the trainee another six (6) month period of support on the Trainee Support and Development Pathway or
    - refer the trainee to the Progression Committee for a Comprehensive Review of Training.

5.8 Comprehensive Review of Training

The Progression Committee will conduct a Comprehensive Review of Training for every trainee who meets criteria 5.1.3.

A trainee in difficulty may also be referred to the Progression Committee at any time by the network DOT or Delivery and Development Committee for a Comprehensive Review of Training. This is a discretionary decision and the reasons for the referral will be clearly documented and communicated to the trainee.

The decision to refer a trainee for a Comprehensive Review of Training is not open to any form of reassessment.

RANZCO expects that, in most cases, trainees in difficulty will have been identified and supported on the Trainee Support and Development Pathway before they are referred for a Comprehensive Review of Training.

The Progression Committee will review the trainee's training and support history including but not limited to all training records, IPAP/s and three monthly IPAP reviews and may request additional written information from the trainee, their trainers and RANZCO staff to inform their decisions. The possible outcomes of the Comprehensive Review of Training are:

1. The trainee is allowed to remain in the VTP subject to satisfactorily attaining the milestones, satisfactorily completing the outstanding training and assessment requirements and meeting any other conditions set by the Progression Committee by a specified date.

Training time will be unaccredited from the end of the trainee's current stage of training until all set conditions are met (refer to Trainee Performance Support Policy). There is no retrospective accreditation of this period of training.
If the trainee does not meet the set conditions by the specified date, they will be discontinued from the VTP without another Comprehensive Review of Training being conducted.

2. The trainee is discontinued from training. A trainee whose training is discontinued by the Progression Committee will not be able to continue in the VTP and will lose their Trainee Associate status with the College.

6. Temporary Training Registrar (TTR)

Should a TTR require support whist relieving in an accredited position, the case will be assessed on its own merits and actioned accordingly.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated in accordance with RANZCO's Policy Development Process. The effectiveness of the policy and impact on trainee progress outcomes will also be evaluated.

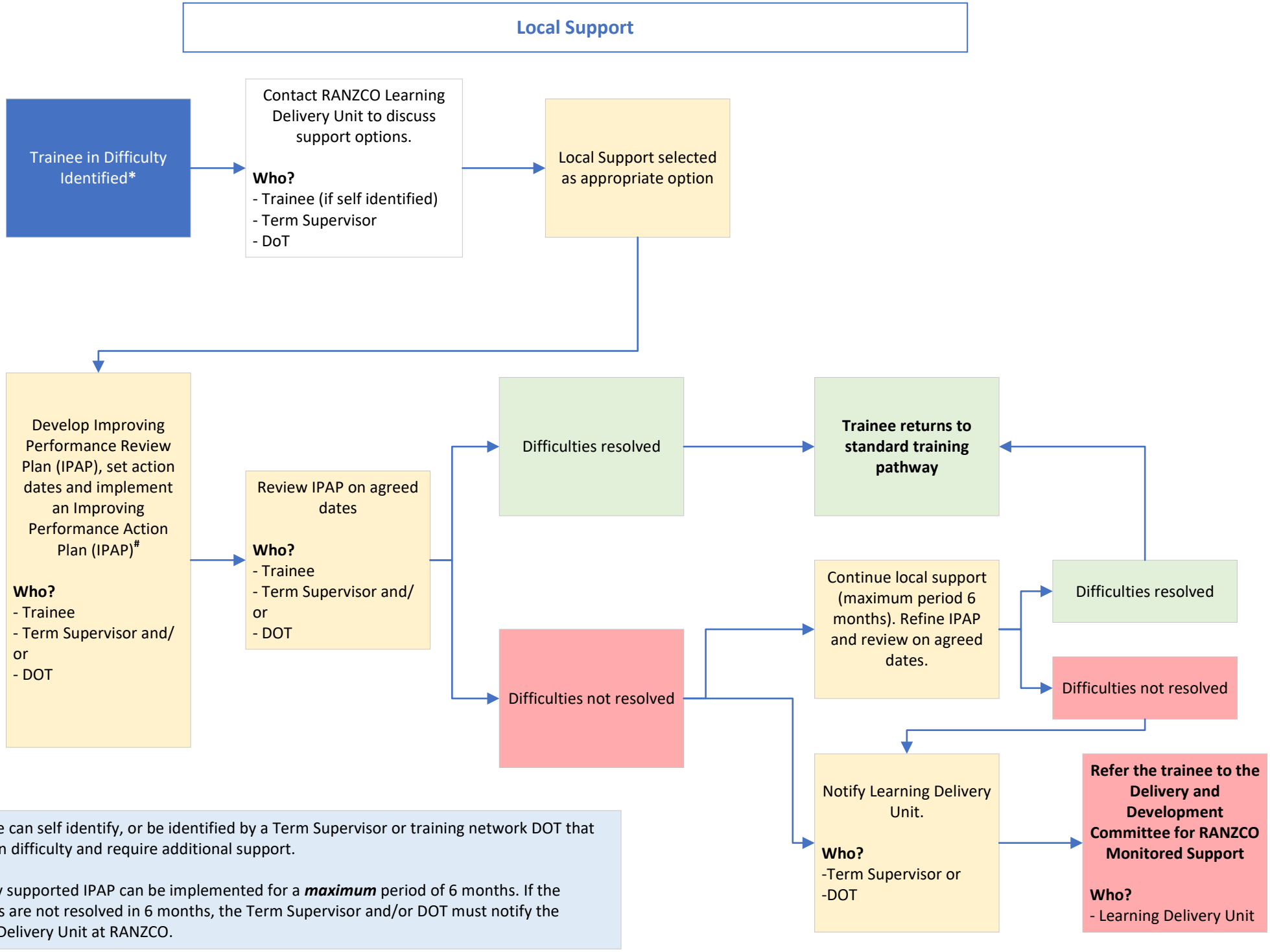
8. Relevant Policies and other documents

RANZCO notifications regarding assessment, examination and training requirements
RANZCO Progression Policy
RANZCO Examinations Policy
RANZCO Delivery and Development Committee Terms of Reference
RANZCO Progression Committee Terms of Reference
RANZCO Vocational Training Program Curriculum

9. Record of amendments to this document

Page	Details of amendment	Date approved
	New Policy	DATE
6	Alignment of outcomes of a Comprehensive Review of Training with the outcomes for a Comprehensive Review of Training Specified in the Progression Policy.	

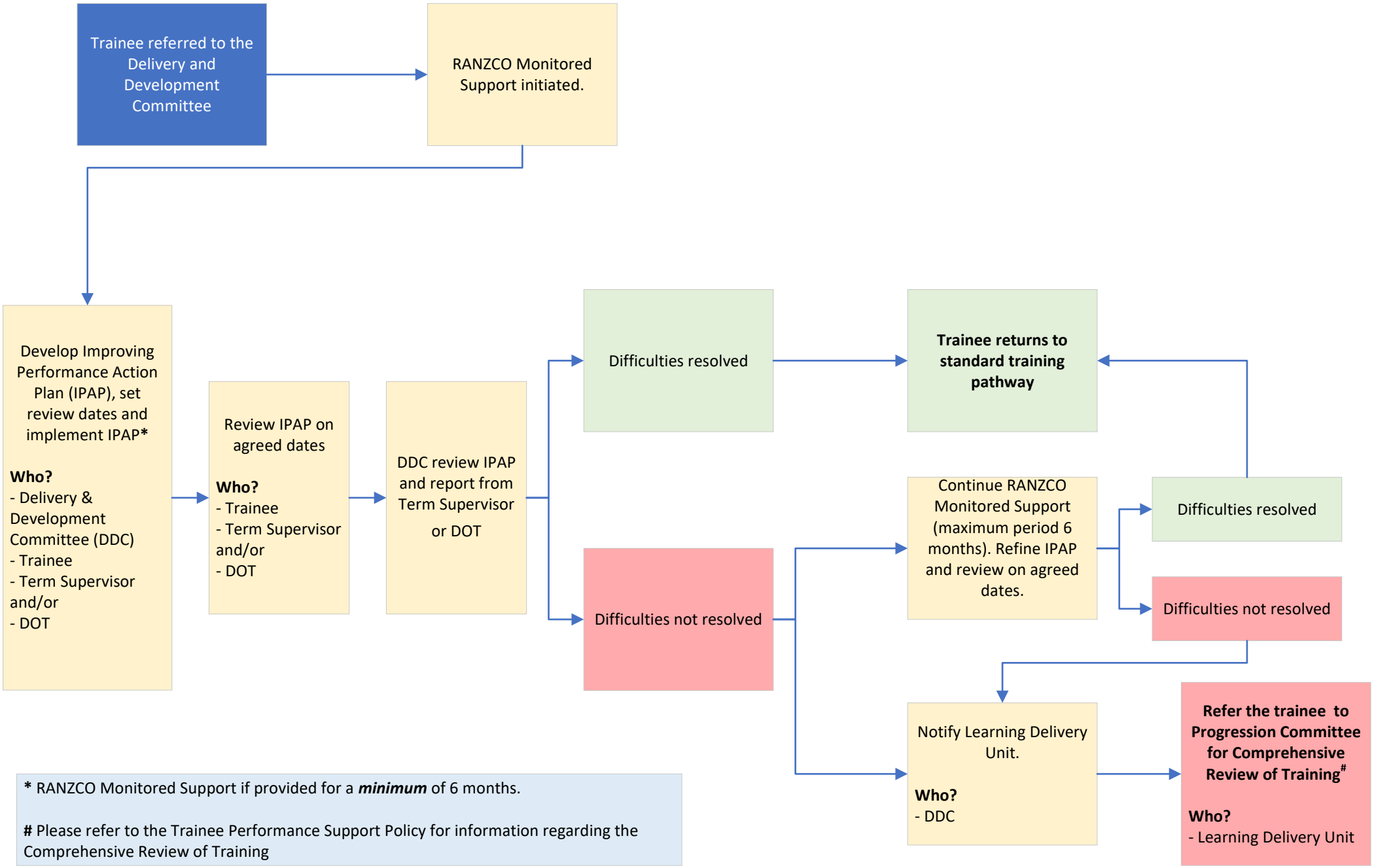
Appendix 1



*A trainee can self identify, or be identified by a Term Supervisor or training network DOT that they are in difficulty and require additional support.

A locally supported IPAP can be implemented for a ***maximum*** period of 6 months. If the difficulties are not resolved in 6 months, the Term Supervisor and/or DOT must notify the Learning Delivery Unit at RANZCO.

RANZCO Monitored Support



* RANZCO Monitored Support if provided for a ***minimum*** of 6 months.

Please refer to the Trainee Performance Support Policy for information regarding the Comprehensive Review of Training

Appendix 2

RANZCO
The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
THE LEADERS IN COLLABORATIVE EYE CARE

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
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Improving Performance Action Plan (IPAP)

For review on a monthly basis

☐ **Stage 1 IPAP** ☐ **Stage 2 IPAP**

Trainee Name:		**Trainee Year:**	
Network:			
Term Start:		**Term End:**	
Director of Training:		**QEC Chair:**	
Term Supervisor:		**RANZCO Education Manager:**	

Clearly identified performance concerns:

Trainee's comments - notes:

Agreed Actions/Tasks	Expected Outcomes	Review Date	Satisfactory Yes	Satisfactory No
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
			☐	☐
SMART - **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**ime-Framed				

Agreed:

Date:

Trainee:

Term Supervisor:

Director of Training:

QEC Chair:

Three Month Review

Discussion notes:

☐ **Resolved – return to normal training pathway**

☐ **Not resolved – continue Stage 2 IPAP**

Agreed:

Date:

Trainee:

Term Supervisor:

Director of Training:

QEC Chair:

Six Month Review

Discussion notes:

☐ **Resolved – return to normal training pathway**

☐ **Not resolved – progression to CiC review *(please refer to to the Trainee Performance Support Pathway, Section 3.5(b))***

Agreed:

Date:	
Trainee:	
Term Supervisor:	
Director of Training:	
QEC Chair:	