

# Education and Training

## Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)



<b>Authorising Committee/ Department:</b>	RANZCP Board
<b>Responsible Committee/ Department:</b>	Education Committee
<b>Document Code:</b>	<b>POL PRC EDT-TRN OSCE Policy and Procedure (18.5)</b>

### Targeted learning and show cause deadlines effective 1 January 2017

This policy has been updated to include the revised targeted learning and show cause deadlines as detailed in the Progression through Training Policy (6.1) and the Trainee Progress Trajectory.

As a result of concerns from trainees, supervisors and Directors of Training, the Board has approved a more accommodating Trainee Progress Trajectory by adjusting the specified targeted learning and show cause deadlines associated with each of the five centrally administered assessments.

The previous targeted learning and show cause deadlines have been removed from this document. These changes are effective from 1 January 2017.

#### Further assistance available

Contact the Training team at [training@ranzcp.org](mailto:training@ranzcp.org).

## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This document sets out the requirements of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), which trainees in the RANZCP Fellowship Program and Specialist International Medical Graduate (SIMG) candidates assessed as partially comparable on the RANZCP Specialist Pathway must successfully complete in order to be eligible for Fellowship.
- 1.2 Throughout this policy, trainees and partially comparable SIMG candidates are together referred to as 'applicants' or 'candidates' except where specific distinction is required.
- 1.3 The OSCE assesses a candidate's clinical competencies across a range of psychiatric practice areas in a standardised format. The examination includes the integration of general medical skills, knowledge and attitudes.

## 2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 The OSCE is a mandatory centrally administered summative assessment of the RANZCP Fellowship Program. This document sets out the requirements for its successful completion.

## 3 STANDARD

- 3.1 The standard of performance required for the OSCE is the demonstration of clinical competence at the level expected at the end of Stage 3. As per the definitions, the standard expected at the end of Stage 3 refers to a recently qualified Fellow of the College.

## 4 EXAMINATION TIMING AND DESCRIPTION

- 4.1 The OSCE is held twice per year at a rotating location across Australia and New Zealand. Notice of the city or region hosting the examination will be available on the Examination Timetable on the College website.
- 4.2 **OSCE format**
- 4.2.1 The OSCE comprises long and short station circuits that run parallel to each other as part of an examination stream. Candidates rotate through the stations in an examination stream over a period of approximately 3 hours and 40 minutes.
- 4.2.2 Each examination stream is made up of:
- one short station circuit (100 minutes); and
  - two identical long station circuits, of which candidates only complete one - Long A or Long B (100 minutes).
- 4.2.3 The short station circuit is made up of eight (8) short stations and two (2) bye stations, each of 10 minutes duration. Both bye stations in the short circuit will be inactive.
- 4.2.4 The long station circuit is made up of three (3) long stations, and two (2) bye stations, each of 20 minutes duration. The bye stations in the long circuit may be active or inactive.
- 4.2.5 In an active bye station, the candidate has reading or some other activity to complete, which will form the basis for the next examination station. In an inactive bye station there is no activity to complete.
- 4.2.6 Multiple identical examination streams will run concurrently at the examination site to accommodate the number of candidates sitting the OSCE. The stream, circuit and station in which a candidate commences the examination will be randomly assigned; therefore, some candidates start with the short station circuit while others will start with the long station circuit.
- 4.2.7 At the conclusion of the circuit, there will be a changeover between the short and long circuits during which candidates will be moved into two separate waiting areas for up to approximately 20 minutes. Each group will be guided by examination assistants to interchange between circuits. Candidates will be able to access the toilet during the changeover. Further detail on the procedures and examination rules during the OSCE are set out in sections **12.0 and 13.0**.
- 4.2.8 Examination timing will be governed by designated timekeepers and will be indicated to candidates through the use of a bell/whistle.

## 5 OVERARCHING AIMS

- 5.1 The OSCE is recognised as a reliable assessment tool at all levels of medical training as it enables sampling from a predetermined range of practice skills.
- 5.2 The OSCE aims to test a candidate's competency in psychiatry skills, knowledge and professional attitudes.
- 5.3 The OSCE is an integrated assessment task involving any aspect of primary, secondary or tertiary consultation relevant to the practice of psychiatry and covers a range of clinical, leadership and allied consultancy skills from the RANZCP Fellowship Program syllabi, including:
- the clinical practice of psychiatry

- the application of general medical knowledge in a psychiatric setting
- the practice of psychiatry in relation to areas such as:
  - ethical or medico-legal dilemmas
  - supervision and teaching of students and trainee psychiatrists
  - interprofessional communication
  - clinical governance
  - professionalism
  - clinical research governance and supervision of trainee research projects
  - advocacy
  - application of knowledge from population health to the individual, particularly in relation to health prevention and promotion
  - working with carer and other relevant community groups
  - cultural awareness.

5.4 The stations will be mapped to the OSCE Blueprint Descriptors, areas of practice accredited for the RANZCP Fellowship Program and the CanMEDS roles and Fellowship Competencies. The Blueprint descriptors areas covered in 11 OSCE stations reflect a range of disorders and scenarios that can be seen in clinical practice or key skills relevant to the practice of psychiatry. The descriptors are mapped to various Area of Practice (Specialties) such as Addictions, Adult, Child & Adolescent, Consultation-Liaison, Forensic, Old Age and Psychotherapies. The degree of testing based on each practice area will vary for each examination.

#### **5.4.1 Assessment focus**

- 5.4.1.1 The focus of assessment is judged against the CanMEDS roles and Fellowship Competencies. For example, this includes the candidate's:
- attitude towards the simulated patient, carer, team member or consultee
  - communication and collaboration skills
  - demonstrated skill, completeness and orderliness in eliciting history, mental state and physical signs
  - demonstrated capacity to interpret the information, signs and investigations in the determination of diagnosis or therapy
  - proposed management of the patient/carer/team or consultee, particularly its safety, appropriateness and competence
  - ability to approach governance, organisational and medico-legal aspects of care
  - demonstrated capacity to participate in teaching, learning and research
  - ability to advocate on behalf of the patient and community
  - general medical skills.

#### **5.4.2 Clinical competence**

5.4.2.1 Clinical competence is assessed under broad headings, such as:

- reasoning, skills and attitudes in assessment and management of patients with a range of psychiatric disorders across the age spectrum
- professional attitudes and capability in interacting with patients, carers, individuals and groups
- the practice of general medicine as it relates to psychiatry
- the application of basic sciences, relevant to psychiatric practice
- communication, relatedness and leadership in the multidisciplinary team
- communication, relatedness and leadership in the community.

### **5.4.3 Station development**

5.4.3.1 The OSCE station format provides an objective, repeatable and reliable assessment process. It ensures consistency and uniformity of simulated patient and examiner roles, candidate assessment and marking. The stations replicate the setting relevant to the scenario as much as possible, for example, a standard consulting room.

5.4.3.2 There are generally two types of stations, although other types may also be used:

- a role play scenario
- a viva based on a vignette.

## **6 KEY ROLES**

6.1 In addition to the examination candidates, there are a number of other roles involved in each examination.

### **6.2 Managers and support**

6.2.1 The OSCE is managed by the Chief Examination Coordinator, Local Hospital Coordinator, Fellows and College staff to ensure that the correct examination protocol is followed.

6.2.2 College staff and other volunteers also act as examination assistants during the OSCE. Examination assistants are involved in the various supporting roles for the examination, including candidate/examiner/role player registration, guiding candidates during the changeover, collecting mark sheets and timekeeping duties.

### **6.3 Examiners**

6.3.1 Candidates are assessed by a single examiner in each short station.

6.3.2 Long stations have two examiners who mark independently, each completing a separate mark sheet without conferring.

6.3.3 Examiners undergo calibration training and evaluation prior to the day of the examination.

## 6.4 Role players

- 6.4.1 Stations may use role players to act as patients, carers or others, for example, a medical practitioner, another health practitioner or community provider. Role players undergo standardisation training prior to the day of the examination.
- 6.4.2 In some stations, an examiner may also act as a role player in addition to marking the candidate's performance in that station.
- 6.4.3 Stations may also incorporate actual or role-played patients through video or other recorded presentations.

## 6.5 Observers

- 6.5.1 Observers may also be present in an examination room to contribute to the evaluation and quality assurance of the stations and the examination as a whole.
- 6.5.2 Observers may complete feedback forms; however, observers' feedback and observations will not be included in a candidate's scores. A station observer will not confer in any way with the examiner(s) about the performance and marking of any candidate.

## 7 CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY FOR THE OSCE

- 7.1 In order to undertake the OSCE, an applicant must be identified by the College as a registered College trainee or SIMG candidate.
- 7.2 Additionally, each applicant must have current, valid registration as a medical practitioner in Australia or New Zealand when applying for and when sitting the examination. Candidates must also have current medical registration at the time of the result release date in order for their results to be released.
- 7.3 The successful completion of other centrally administered summative assessments is not an eligibility requirement for sitting the OSCE.
- 7.4 Submitting an examination application does not grant an applicant automatic eligibility to sit the exam. The requirements for eligibility must be fulfilled in order for an examination place to be granted. Applicants must be familiar with the Examination Cancellation and Refund Schedule, particularly the refund cut-off dates.

### 7.5 SIMG candidate eligibility to apply for and sit the OSCE

- 7.5.1 SIMG candidates assessed as partially comparable must have current comparability status with the College at the time of the application closing date to be eligible to apply for the OSCE. The comparability status must cover the examination period including the time required for declaration of results (the scheduled release date can be found on the Examination Timetable).

### 7.6 Trainee eligibility for the OSCE

- 7.6.1 Trainees are eligible to apply for the OSCE once they have successfully completed 30 months of FTE training, including 18 months FTE in Stage 2, as demonstrated by their College Training Record. Applications will not be accepted before 18 months of FTE training in Stage 2 has been accredited to the trainee's Training Record at the College head office.

- 7.6.2 Trainees are eligible to apply for the OSCE while on an approved break in training. A trainee who has interrupted their training but is not on an approved break in training (i.e. is accruing not-in-training time) is not eligible to apply for the OSCE.
- 7.6.3 Information on trainee eligibility to sit the OSCE in relation to targeted learning is detailed in section 8.4

## 8 APPLYING FOR THE OSCE

8.1 Applicants must complete the prescribed OSCE Application Form.

8.2 A new application must be submitted for each attempt. There is no automatic enrolment of candidates (i.e. candidates are not automatically enrolled if they are nearing the deadline for successful completion as per the Progression through Training Policy [6.1] nor are they automatically re-enrolled in the next examination if they failed or withdrew from a previous OSCE).

### 8.3 The application

8.3.1 The OSCE Application Form must be received by the Examinations Department, College head office by the Application Close Date as per the Examination Timetable, together with the following items:

- a) a hard copy of the applicant's current medical registration certificate or annual practising certificate
  - Applicants must have current, valid registration at the time of application and of sitting the examination. Applications will not be processed without a current medical registration certificate.
  - If an applicant's medical registration expires before the examination period, they must submit a copy of their current medical registration and then forward their new medical registration once received.
- b) a hard copy of the current Specialist Pathway Final Outcome letter/Progression to RANZCP Fellowship letter in the case of SIMG candidates, which should be current at the time of application and of sitting the examination
  - Applications will not be processed without evidence of current comparability status (where relevant).
- c) a colour passport photograph of the applicant taken within the last 12 months
  - The applicant's name must be clearly written on the back of the photograph.
  - The photograph must be stapled to the application form.
  - A new photograph of the applicant must be submitted with each application (the College does not hold photographs from previous applications).
- d) the prescribed examination fee in full
  - Full funds for the OSCE must be available on the application closing date until the funds are deducted. Fees will be deducted within 10 working days of receipt of a completed application.
  - The deduction of funds does not guarantee an applicant a place in the examination. Applicants not granted a place in the examination will be provided a full refund. However, applicants who withdraw or who become ineligible to sit the OSCE after applying for the examination will be refunded in accordance with the Cancellation and Refund Schedule.
- e) payment of any outstanding fees to the College

- Applicants who have monies outstanding to the College at the time of application, including training fees, will not have their examination application processed.
  - f) any special consideration request and the required documentation (where relevant)
  - g) signed Commencement of Targeted Learning Form (if required – note this form can be provided by the 50 per cent refund date). More detail is available in section 8.4.
- 8.3.2 Applications should be sent via registered post or courier and must be received at the College head office in Melbourne (RANZCP, Attention: Examinations – OSCE, 309 La Trobe St, Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia) by the date that applications close. However, applications postmarked by the Application Close Date will be accepted.
- 8.3.3 The College must receive the signed, original version of the application. Therefore, faxed, scanned or emailed versions of application forms will not be accepted.

#### 8.4 Trainee applications related to targeted learning

- 8.4.1 Trainees who are undertaking targeted learning relevant to the OSCE must comply with the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure (6.2). A brief reference to the requirements follows; however, trainees are responsible for being aware of all requirements of the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure.
- 8.4.2 Rotational targeted learning does not affect a trainee's eligibility to attempt the OSCE.
- 8.4.3 A trainee who is required to undertake progression-based targeted learning for the OSCE remains eligible to attempt the examination.
- 8.4.4 A trainee who is required to undertake assessment-based targeted learning for the OSCE (i.e. for two failures) will be eligible to re-attempt the examination once they submit the Commencement of Targeted Learning Form to the College Training Department.
- 8.4.4.1 If a trainee applies to sit the OSCE prior to submission of the Commencement of Targeted Learning Form, their enrolment will be pending until they submit this form or until the 50 per cent refund date stated on the Examination Timetable, whichever is earlier.
- 8.4.4.2 A trainee will not be allotted a time slot and allocation for the OSCE if the College does not have notification that the trainee has commenced Targeted Learning by the 50 per cent refund date. A trainee will not be eligible for the relevant OSCE sitting if this process is not completed by the required date.

#### 8.5 Applications for special consideration

- 8.5.1 Applicants requesting special consideration for the OSCE must apply in writing to the Committee for Examinations (CFE), in accordance with the Special Considerations Policy (18.2).
- 8.5.2 Requests for special consideration must accompany an applicant's OSCE Application Form, unless exceptional circumstances apply (such as the candidate experiencing a significant change in personal circumstances or medical condition(s) that occur after the examination Application Close Date). Requests for special consideration received after application closing date may not be accommodated.
- 8.5.3 A separate application for special consideration must be submitted for each examination and for each re-attempt (if any). However, applicants are only required to resubmit the supporting documentation if there is a change in circumstances.

- 8.5.4 Note: If during the course of the examination, a candidate who has commenced the examination is unable to complete a station due to a medical reason, the CFE Chair, in consultation with Chair of the OSCE subcommittee, will accommodate the needs of the candidate as best as practicable, taking into consideration the candidate's circumstances and the potential impact on other candidates and the exam process as a whole.

## **9 CONFIRMATION**

### **9.1 Confirmation of receipt of application**

- 9.1.1 Applicants should receive an email confirming receipt of their application within 2 working days of its receipt. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application has been received by contacting the Examinations Department (preferably by email) if they have not received confirmation of receipt of their application within 2 working days of the estimated time of receipt.
- 9.1.2 The confirmation of receipt of an application by the College does not confirm that the applicant is eligible for or has been granted a place at the examination.

### **9.2 Confirmation of eligibility and place at the examination**

- 9.2.1 The College will inform applicants via email whether they are eligible to sit the OSCE once all eligibility requirements have been verified and their fee payment has been deducted (payments are deducted within 10 working days of the application's receipt).
- 9.2.2 Candidates will be randomly scheduled for the OSCE at a single session, which will run for approximately 4 hours. Sessions are usually held in the morning and the afternoon. The College head office will advise OSCE candidates in writing of their specific examination site, arrival time and other necessary information (e.g. access and parking) approximately 4 weeks prior to the examination date.
- 9.2.3 The College reserves the right to change the time or location of an applicant's examination centre where required.
- 9.2.4 Candidates must be present in the examination registration area 60 minutes prior to the scheduled commencement of the examination.
- 9.2.5 In order to maintain examination integrity, all candidates from an earlier exam session will be required to wait in a designated area until after the registration of all candidates for the following session. This takes approximately 1 hour but may be longer if required. Candidates are reminded to plan for this when making any travel arrangements.

### **9.3 Examiner–candidate assignments**

- 9.3.1 Examiner–candidate combinations are not automatically excluded on the basis of professional or previous examination circumstances. The use of multiple stations and examiners for each candidate, as well as the examination standardisation process, addresses potential concerns of bias towards individual candidates. However, once examiners are provided with candidate information (generally 4 weeks prior to the examination), they are asked to contact the College immediately with any perceived conflict of interest, such as a close personal or significantly problematic circumstance between an examiner and a candidate.
- 9.3.2 Examiners are not excluded from examining on the basis of having supervised a candidate, unless the supervision has occurred within the past six months or there has been a significantly problematic relationship. Therefore, candidates may encounter an examiner who has been a previous supervisor.



- 9.3.3 Candidates are not permitted to seek advance information from any source regarding the likely identity of their examiners or on which examiners are examining at a specific venue.
- 9.3.4 There is to be no communication between examiners and candidates in relation to the examination or results before or after the examination. As with any breach of this policy, a violation of these rules will be reviewed and potentially escalated by the CFE in line with the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3–4).

## **10 PREPARATION AND ADVICE**

- 10.1 Sample short and long station scenarios, including past examination questions, are available on the College website. Candidates are encouraged to use these samples to practise the examination format within their training group and/or during supervision.
- 10.2 Candidates are reminded to carefully read the instructions for each station to determine how to complete the specific tasks required, including whom to address in the examination room (e.g. the examiner, a 'doctor' or the simulated 'patient').
- 10.3 Candidates are encouraged to practise time management as it relates to the station format.
- 10.4 Candidates are advised to be familiar with the College journals and College treatment guidelines, to attend journal clubs and mock examinations and to work on improving their examination technique.

## **11 ARRIVAL RULES, PERMITTED AND PROHIBITED ITEMS**

- 11.1 Each candidate must present for an examination in person. It is a serious ethical breach for a candidate to allow any other person to present for an examination in their place or to assist any candidate to do so.
- 11.2 Candidates will not be admitted to a circuit or an examination room if they appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 11.3 The interior of the examination venue will be off limits to all candidates from midday the day prior to the examination.
- 11.4 College staff will be setting up the venue during this time and any candidate presence will be considered an ethical breach.
- 11.5 Examination arrival**
- 11.5.1 Candidates must be present in the examination registration area 60 minutes prior to the scheduled commencement of the examination in order to complete all administrative procedures.
- 11.5.1.1 A candidate who arrives late to an OSCE after the registration has closed may be excluded from the examination.
- 11.5.1.2 Under no circumstance will a candidate be admitted to the examination once candidates have moved from the registration area to the examination rooms.
- 11.5.2 Candidates are required to present a government issued photographic proof of identity at registration (e.g. Passport or drivers licence).

- 11.5.3 Candidates are required to sign an attendance record, which acknowledges that they have read the OSCE Policy and Procedure. Their signature will indicate that they agree to sit the examination according to this policy, related examination policies and the College Code of Ethics. These documents will be available at the examination site for any candidate who has not read them prior to arrival; however, it is the candidate's responsibility to be familiar with them.
- 11.5.4 Upon arrival and registration, candidates will be given a name tag that will indicate their stream, starting circuit and station. Candidates must wear their name tags for the entire examination.
- 11.5.5 Once registered, candidates must wait for their directions. Candidates will be briefed by the OSCE Subcommittee Chair, Deputy Chair or delegate. Following this, examination assistants will group candidates together according to their stream and starting circuit and will lead them to a designated area.
- 11.5.6 Each candidate will be provided with an individual notepad on which to take notes during the examination. The notepad and all pages must be handed to the examination assistants at the conclusion of the examination.

## 11.6 Permitted items

- 11.6.1 Candidates must provide their own of the following items for the examination. The items will be inspected at registration:
- pens
  - clipboard
  - personal timer if desired (timers must not contain recording or any electronic communication features; therefore, mobile phones or watches of any kind cannot be used as timers)
  - stethoscope if desired (however, all necessary equipment will be provided).

## 11.7 Prohibited items

- 11.7.1 Upon arrival and registration at the examination site, candidates will be checked by examination assistants to ensure they are not carrying prohibited items.
- 11.7.2 If candidates bring prohibited items with them, they should bring one small bag or they will be given a labelled plastic bag in which to store these items.
- 11.7.3 Bags will be stored away from the examination stream locations. At the conclusion of the examination, candidates will be able to collect their stored items. The College does not accept responsibility for the loss of any candidate's personal property.
- 11.7.4 The following list of items are prohibited past the registration area:
- pencil cases
  - notes
  - paper (other than the notepaper supplied)
  - books, dictionaries or other written materials (including religious texts)
  - mobile phones (must be turned off before storage in plastic bag)
  - electronic or recording devices capable of storing, receiving or transmitting information

- watches – both analogue and digital (note: personal timers are permitted as above)
  - bags
  - wallets
  - car keys
  - calculators (calculators are not required at any time during the examination)
  - outerwear (e.g. overcoats)
  - scarves of any kind except those for religious or medical reasons
  - hats or head coverings except those for religious or medical reasons (note: candidates must be identifiable at all times during the examination)
  - hairbands or hairclips that are wider than 1 cm
  - jewellery that is wider than 1 cm unless the item cannot be physically removed
  - lip balm
  - tissues (tissues will be available in each examination room)
  - earplugs
  - headphones
  - food or beverages, including water (water and sweets will be available in each examination room)
  - any other items that RANZCP examination staff, examination assistants or members of the CFE instruct may not be taken into the examination.
- 11.7.5 For any medication, medical devices or mobility devices, including inhalers, eye drops, wheelchairs, crutches or hearing aids, candidates must apply to the CFE for special consideration as per section 8.5 and the Special Consideration Policy (18.2). Candidates who are approved for use of an item due to special consideration must bring a copy of their notice of successful application with them to the examination. All approved item(s) will be inspected and must be in a clear zip lock bag (where relevant).
- 11.7.6 Candidates must not bring travel luggage to the examination site. One small handbag/document satchel per candidate will be accepted for storage by examination staff. Local security protocols prohibit any baggage being left unattended.

## **12 EXAMINATION RULES**

- 12.1 Candidates are responsible for being familiar with this policy, as well as all relevant RANZCP Fellowship Regulations 2012 and the RANZCP Code of Ethics. Candidates must adhere to the rules presented in these documents.
- 12.2 Any breach of these rules is a serious ethical matter which will be investigated. Due to the serious nature of any breaches, outcomes are determined in accordance with the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3–4).
- 12.3 Candidates must observe and comply with all instructions and/or directions given to them.

## 12.4 Conduct during the examination

- 12.4.1 Candidates are not permitted to disturb, communicate with or provide any assistance to other candidates once they have been led out of the registration area.
- 12.4.2 Candidates are not permitted to give or accept assistance from any other candidates at any time.
- 12.4.3 Candidates are not permitted to record or receive any information in any format that could be taken with them.
- 12.4.4 Candidates may not enter a station until directed and must remain in each individual examination room until directed. Directions will be provided by the sound of a bell or whistle or as otherwise advised.
- 12.4.5 Candidates who turn toward their station, attempt to read or commence reading the instructions for any station prior to the bell/whistle may be excluded from the examination. This includes instructions posted for a different station within view.
- 12.4.6 Note paper must be handed over to the examination assistants at the changeover, conclusion of the examination or on request. No material (including the note paper provided) is to be removed from the examination site.
- 12.4.7 Candidates are not permitted to make notes in any form or upon any surface, including clothing and body parts during the changeover period.
- 12.4.8 During the changeover, examination conditions still apply. There is to be no communication between candidates in any form.
- 12.4.9 A violation of these requirements is a breach of this policy and will be reviewed and potentially escalated by the CFE in line with the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3–4).

## 13 PROCEDURES FOR THE OSCE

- 13.1 Candidates in the short station circuit will rotate through each of the eight short stations and two short bye stations within the designated timeframe.
  - 13.1.1 Each short station is allocated 10 minutes – 2 minutes of reading/travel time followed by 8 minutes of actual assessment time.
  - 13.1.2 The short bye stations will be inactive and there will be no reading or activity to complete (see section 13.10 for further detail).
- 13.2 Candidates in a long station circuit will rotate through each of the three long stations and two long bye stations within the designated timeframe.
  - 13.2.1 Each long station is allocated 20 minutes – 5 minutes of reading/travel time followed by 15 minutes of actual assessment time.
  - 13.2.2 The bye stations in the Long circuit may be active or inactive (see section 13.10 for further detail).
- 13.3 Stations will be clearly marked with a number on the door, as well as the stream and circuit information. Instructions for each station will be posted on the wall next to the station door.
  - 13.3.1 Each station will have a cross taped on the floor to mark the spot on which candidates stand to read the instructions for that station.

- 13.4 To assist candidates in moving from station to station, there will be a taped line on the floor with directional arrows.
- 13.5 Candidates must stay within their position in the circuit sequence. Depending on the rooms made available by the hosting venue, movement from station to station may not always be in a circular pattern.
  - 13.5.1 Candidates must familiarise themselves with the direction of the circuit when they are directed to their start station and must look for the directional arrows as they leave each station.
  - 13.5.2 Examination assistants will be allocated to assist candidate movement through the circuit where possible.
- 13.6 Prior to the commencement of the examination, candidates will be placed outside their relevant starting stations with their back to the station's instructions posted on the wall.

### 13.7 **Reading time**

- 13.7.1 A bell will indicate the commencement of reading time, at which point candidates may turn around to face their station and begin reading the station instructions.
- 13.7.2 Each station is allotted a set amount of reading time (2 minutes for each short station and 5 minutes for each long station), which also includes the time needed to travel between stations.
- 13.7.3 The task required at each station will be explicitly detailed in the station instructions. Candidates are expected to perform only the designated task within the framework of the given information. The station instructions will provide sufficient information for the candidate to apply the appropriate level of detail to meet the required standard in planning their approach, commencing their task and appropriately focusing their assessment or intervention.
- 13.7.4 Candidates may make notes on the note paper supplied during reading time. This paper should be held by the candidate until handed over to the examination assistants at the end of each examination circuit or when requested.

### 13.8 **Assessment**

- 13.8.1 At the conclusion of the reading time, a bell or whistle will signal the start of actual assessment time, at which point candidates should enter the station.
- 13.8.2 On entering the examination room, the examiners will quickly check the identity of the candidate to confirm that this matches the candidate they are expecting.
- 13.8.3 Candidates should regard all role players as having the attributes described in the station instructions (for example, as being of a certain age) and should relate to the characters and conduct themselves as they would in real clinical practice.
- 13.8.4 A copy of the same instructions for the station task that was posted outside the room will be available inside the examination room for reference. Candidates are expected to manage their time and will not be given any time prompts during the course of the assessment.
- 13.8.5 Candidates will not be required to perform, nor will they benefit from performing, a compressed entire assessment or intervention. The capacity of candidates to manage a detailed complete psychiatric interview is not an assessment objective of the OSCE as it is assessed separately throughout the RANZCP Fellowship Program.

### 13.9 **Completion of station**

- 13.9.1 Candidates who complete a station to their own satisfaction prior to the conclusion of the actual assessment time must remain in the examination room until a bell or whistle has indicated the end of the assessment time for that station. Examiners are trained to ask a candidate who finishes early if they are satisfied that they have completed the task(s). This question is not an indication of the candidate's performance. This does not preclude candidates from resuming the station should time allow.
- 13.9.2 Candidates are not permitted to ask for feedback on their performance from examiners, role players or other individuals involved in the examination at any time including during or after the examination.
- 13.9.3 After the assessment time is complete (8 minutes for a short station and 15 minutes for a long station), a bell or whistle will indicate the conclusion of the station and the start of reading time for the next station.
  - 13.9.3.1 No further marks will be allocated for any performance after this time.
  - 13.9.3.2 Candidates must leave all examination material except their own notes inside the station and must exit the examination room at the sound of this bell. If any examination material is taken from the room by mistake, this must be handed to an examination assistant outside the room immediately.
  - 13.9.3.3 The candidate must then follow the directional arrows and proceed to the cross on the floor outside the next station in order to immediately start reading the next station's instructions.

## 13.10 Bye stations

- 13.10.1 Candidates will be directed to enter a bye station immediately for the entire station duration (i.e. they do not stand outside the room during reading time). Examiners will not be present in a bye station.
- 13.10.2 Candidates will be informed whether the bye stations are active or inactive by the Chair OSCE subcommittee (or their delegate) at the candidate briefing after registration.
- 13.10.3 During an active bye station, the candidate will be provided with reading or other material that relates to the following long station. They may take notes during this time. At the third bell/whistle, denoting the conclusion of the time in an active bye station, they must leave all station material behind with the exception of their own notes.
- 13.10.4 An inactive bye station can be seen as a rest period as there is no activity or reading to complete. Candidates will be permitted to use the toilet during this time, but they need to be able to complete this within the time frame of the bye station.
- 13.10.5 An inactive bye station may not always be in a separate room but will always be in an area separated from view of the other examination stations.
- 13.10.6 Upon leaving a bye station (active or inactive) at the completion of the station duration, the candidate must proceed to the next station to read the station instructions during the allocated reading time. As with all stations, the candidate must not enter the next examination room until the second bell or whistle, denoting the completion of reading time.

## 13.11 Facilities and other

- 13.11.1 There is no designated rest break during the examination.
- 13.11.2 Each examination room will have water, sweets and tissues available.
- 13.11.3 There will be access to toilets during the changeover between circuits and during an inactive bye station, if relevant.

- 13.11.4 If a candidate needs to leave an examination room or circuit in extraordinary circumstances, they will not receive extra time to compensate for the unscheduled break. Candidates will be escorted and strictly supervised during any unavoidable breaks during the examination.

## **14 SCORING**

- 14.1 A candidate's performance is scored on a structured mark sheet with the relevant individual aspects of each station specified under broad headings that are based on the CanMEDS roles and Fellowship Competencies.
- 14.2 Where there is more than one examiner at a station, including a role-playing examiner, each examiner will mark independently and submit their marks with no conference. The scores are averaged across the two examiners from these stations. Scores for each station are added together to achieve a candidate's total OSCE score.
- 14.3 The examiners will mark candidates' performances during the reading time immediately following their assessment at each station. The examiners will place the completed mark sheets (in envelopes) under the station doors before reading time is complete, at which time they will be collected by the examination assistants.

## **15 RESULTS**

- 15.1 De-identified pass/fail results for the OSCE are scheduled to be released onto the College website at 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the date listed on the Examination Timetable. Candidates may obtain their results from the College website using their College identification number.
- 15.2 Candidates are prohibited from contacting examiners and/or CFE members before or after the examination in relation to their results or the examination. Candidates who are concerned about their results are encouraged to discuss their concerns with a College supervisor and/or their Director of Training (DOT) (where applicable) in the first instance or to formally write to the CFE.
- 15.3 **Examination outcome**
- 15.3.1 The pass score is determined by the aggregate of the cut scores for each station. The cut scores are derived from the mean score of all candidate performances that were marked globally as 'marginal' by the examiners.
- 15.3.2 This ensures a consistency of standard and allows for the pass score to vary according to the variable degree of difficulty of the stations.
- 15.4 **Letter of notification**  
All candidates will also be notified of their results by email, which will confirm their pass/fail outcome. Result letters are emailed to the candidates once the de-identified results have been released on the College website.
- 15.4.1 The letter of notification will include:
- the candidate's overall result for the OSCE – pass or fail
  - the candidate's aggregate score
  - the pass mark for OSCEs
  - the candidate's scores for each station
  - the cut scores for each station

- the candidate's scores on each curriculum area tested as compared to the cohort mean scores.
- 15.4.1.1 A marked discrepancy in one or two stations may indicate that further preparation is required in the content covered in the station(s).
- 15.4.1.2 This information may provide a useful basis on which a candidate can discuss their progress with their supervisor or DOT. The College will send a copy of each candidate's results to their DOT (where applicable).
- 15.4.1.3 No further information will be given to any candidate regarding individual performance in the OSCE, either in writing or by telephone.

## 15.5 Feedback

- 15.5.1 General feedback and advice from the CFE regarding the overall performance of the examination cohort will be released on the College website once the candidates' individual results have been released.
- 15.5.2 Candidates are encouraged to read the overall feedback together with the published station information.

## 15.6 Results withheld

- 15.6.1 The College reserves the right to withhold any candidate's results.
- 15.6.2 Candidates who have any outstanding training or examinations fees owed to the College at the time of the result release will have their results withheld until such fees are paid in full.
- 15.6.3 Results may also be withheld for various other reasons such as:
- medical registration or comparability status not being current
  - an alleged breach of this policy or of the RANZCP Code of Ethics under investigation as per the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3–4).

## 16 INCIDENT REPORT

- 16.1 Should a candidate wish to report an incident that they believe may have unfairly affected the outcome of an OSCE, the candidate must follow the processes outlined in the Incident Report and Examination Breach Review Policy (18.3–4).

## 17 FAILURE TO ADHERE TO EXAMINATION RULES

- 17.1 If an examiner, examination assistant or CFE member believes that a candidate has breached the examination rules in this Policy, they must provide a written incident report along with any evidence or confiscated material to the CFE as per the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3–4). The candidate will be advised that the matter is being reported to the Chair, CFE via the College's Manager for Assessments.
- 17.2 If a candidate causes any serious disruption or behaves in a way that impacts or potentially impacts on the safety and wellbeing of another person or themselves, an examination assistant, observing examiner or CFE member may intervene. This may include terminating the examination for that candidate in response to their behaviour.
- 17.3 An alleged breach of the OSCE Policy will follow the protocols in the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3–4).



## **18 CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS**

- 18.1 Candidates must contact the Examinations Department at the College head office in order to cancel their place at an examination. Refunds will be made in accordance with the Cancellation and Refund Schedule.
- 18.2 Candidates who need to cancel their examination place within two weeks of the date of the examination must contact the Examinations Department as per the contact information sent to them with the examination arrival, parking and access information.

## **19 FAILURE TO PRESENT AT AN EXAMINATION ('NO SHOW')**

- 19.1 Candidates who have not informed the College Examinations Department of their non-attendance will have their result recorded as a failure for that examination attempt.
- 19.2 A candidate will have 5 working days after the date of the examination to provide a written explanation for their lack of attendance to the College head office, which the CFE will consider on a case-by-case basis. Should the CFE determine that the candidate was unable to attend the examination due to reasons beyond the candidate's control (e.g. hospitalisation) their result will be recorded as a withdrawal rather than a failure of the examination.
- 19.3 A failure of the examination due to lack of attendance will be considered a failure in relation to the requirements of the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure (6.2), Progression through Training Policy (6.1), and Failure to Progress Policy (19.1).

## **20 TRAINEE DEADLINES AND RELATION TO PROGRESSION THROUGH TRAINING**

- 20.1 RANZCP Fellowship Program trainees must pass the OSCE within the time required.
- 20.2 The deadline for successfully completing the OSCE is detailed in the Policy on Progression through Training (6.1). A brief reference to this requirement and those of the Policy on Failure to Progress (19.1) follow; however, trainees are responsible for knowing the requirements of these and other policies.
- 20.3 **Deadline for the OSCE**
- 20.3.1 The OSCE is expected to be attempted and passed by the time the trainee has completed 60 months of FTE accredited training.
- 20.3.2 Failure to do so will result in a requirement for the trainee to undertake progression-based targeted learning and may lead to a requirement for the trainee to show cause in writing to the Committee for Training (CFT) as to why they should be able to continue towards Fellowship. Further detail, including information on exceptional cases, can be found in the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1). Targeted learning requirement for multiple failures
- 20.3.3 Should a trainee fail the OSCE twice, the trainee must undertake assessment-based targeted learning as per the Policies and Procedures on Targeted Learning (6.2) and Progression through Training (6.1).
- 20.4 **Requirement to show cause**
- 20.4.1 Should a trainee fail the OSCE three times, the trainee must show cause in writing to the CFT as to why they should be able to continue towards Fellowship as per the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1).

## 21 SIMG CANDIDATE DEADLINES

- 21.1 SIMG candidates assessed as partially comparable are expected to successfully complete the OSCE (where applicable) within their stipulated time period on the specialist pathway. Information on their progression requirements are available on the College website at: [Progression requirements: Partial Comparability requirements for RANZCP Fellowship policy](#).

## 22 REVIEW OF DECISIONS

- 22.1 Any request by candidates for review of a decision in relation to the OSCE should follow the formal education review process (X.X) and may be subject to the RANZCP Reconsideration and Appeals Policy.

## 23 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- 23.1 The Education Committee shall implement, monitor and review this policy and report on anomalies and issues as these arise.
- 23.2 This policy will be reviewed biennially and updated as required.

## 24 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 24.1 Regulation: 18.1 Clinical Examination Education Training Regulation
- 24.2 Policy: 6.1 Progression through Training Education Training Policy  
6.2 Targeted Learning Education Training Policy  
18.2 Special Consideration Education Training Policy  
18.3-4 Examinations Incident Report and Breach Review Policy  
19.1 Failure to Progress Education Training Policy  
2.1 Reviews and Appeals Education Training Policy
- RANZCP Code of Ethics
- 24.3 Forms: OSCE Application Form
- Other: Cancellation and Refund Schedule  
RANZCP Code of Ethics  
RANZCP Code of Conduct  
OSCE venue map  
Examinations Timetable

## 25 REVISION RECORD FOOTER

Contact: Senior Policy Officer, Education

Date	Version	Approver	Description
22/08/15	v.1.0	RANZCP Board	First draft of policy and procedure. Reviewed by TRC 18/6/15. Approved by CFE 24/6/15. Approved by EC 24/7/15. Reviewed by CGRC 31/7/15. Approved

<b>20/07/16</b>	v.2.0	RANZCP Board	Minor rephrasing to state SIMG comparability status (formerly exemption status). Updates to clarify that partially comparable SIMG candidates are no longer required to complete a remedial plan. Revised to reflect targeted learning/targeted learning plan (formerly remediation/remediation plan) and standard expected at end of stage 3 (formerly junior consultant standard) terminology changes. Approved EC 29/04/2016. Reviewed CGRC 28/04/2016. Approved Board B2016/4. Revised to reflect updates to the targeted learning and show cause points for the five centrally administered assessments, effective from 1/1/2017. Approved EC 03/06/2016. Reviewed CGRC 17/06/2016. Approved Board B2016/5.
<b>18/11/2016</b>	v.2.1	N/A	Minor amendment to remove reference to the exams centre webpage as this has been removed from the College website. Removed reference to curriculum coverage document as this is not available on the website. Clarified that one form of ID is required at registration in line with current practice.
<b>11/02/17</b>	v.2.2	RANZCP Board	Removal of the Satisfactory Progress in a Targeted Learning Program Form and clarify a trainee's eligibility is dependent on the completion of the targeted learning program. CGRC reviewed 19/01/17, EC approved 27/01/17 RANZCP Board B2017/1.
<b>19/05/17</b>	v.2.3	Education Committee	Clarifying eligibility to apply for the OSCE. Approved CFE 10/05/17 and CFT 11/05/17. Approved by EC 19/05/2017.
<b>15/09/17</b>	v.2.3.1	N/A	Alignment with Targeted Learning Policy & Procedure updates (that Commencement form rather than Completion form required for eligibility to attempt exam after two failures; and that Rotational Targeted Learning is no longer a barrier to sitting the OSCE effective 15 September 2017) which were approved by RANZCP Board 13/08/17 B2017/5 R16.
<b>18/11/17</b>	v.3.0	RANZCP Board	Updating to reflect OSCE bye station additions (2 bye stations in short circuit & 2 bye stations in long circuit) to allow for increased candidate numbers at exam sitting, inclusion of whistle as method of display of time during exam, removal of watches as a permitted item, clarification that a trainee may be examined by a previous supervisor if more than 6 months later, changing communication prohibition by examiners and candidates about the exam to go both ways, rule that candidates cannot enter interior of exam venue after midday the day prior to the exam or it is an ethical breach, clarification of prohibited items (removal of restricted items category), clarification that candidates should hold note paper until handed over to exam assistants, and other minor examination updates as recommended by CFE and EC (reviewed by CFE 9/8/17, approved by EC with changes 1/9/17), reviewed by CGRC 26/10/17, approved by RANZCP Board 18/11/17 B2017/7 R30.
<b>24/09/18</b>	v.3.1	Education Committee	Amendments in 12.4.7 and 13.10.4 to allow note taking during inactive bye stations. Approved by CFE 10/10/2018, approved by EC 26/10/2018. Minor update of 2012 Fellowship Program to RANZCP Fellowship Program.
<b>12/04/2019</b>	v.3.2	Education Committee	Addition in 8.5.2 Requests for special consideration received after the application closing date may not be accommodated. Amendments in 13.8.4 which now states Candidates are to manage their time and will not be given any time prompts during the course of the assessment. Reviewed by the CFE 20/03/19, approved by EC with changes 12/04/19.

**November  
2019**

**NEXT REVIEW**

## APPENDIX

### 26 OSCE FORMAT

#### 26.1 Long station circuit (100 minutes)

26.2 An example of how long stations may be organised is given below:

- Bye 1
- STN 1
- BYE 2
- STN 2
- STN 3

#### 26.3 Short station circuit (100 minutes)

26.4 An example of how short stations may be organised is given below:

- STN 4
- STN 5
- STN 6
- BYE 7
- STN 7
- STN 8
- STN 9
- BYE 10
- STN 10
- STN 11

26.5 Depending on the venue configuration, the placement of bye stations in the short circuit may change and will not follow the same order every time.