

# Education Training Policy and Procedure

## Written Examinations



<b>Authorising Committee/ Department:</b>	RANZCP Board
<b>Responsible Committee/ Department:</b>	Education Committee
<b>Document Code:</b>	<b>POL PRC EDT-TRN Written Examinations Policy and Procedure (18.1)</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).

## Contents

### 1. Policy and procedure on the written examinations

This document sets out the requirements of the written examinations, which trainees and Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) who have been assessed as partially comparable must successfully complete in order to be eligible for Fellowship. Throughout this policy, trainees and partially comparable SIMG candidates are together referred to as 'applicants' or 'candidates' except where specific distinction is required.

### 2. Policy statement

The written examinations assess a candidate's knowledge of the theoretical and scientific underpinnings of psychiatry, critical thinking relevant to psychiatry, and clinical and ethical issues in psychiatry.

### 3. Purpose

The written examinations are mandatory summative assessment components of the RANZCP Fellowship Program. This document sets out the requirements for their successful completion.

### 4. Policy and procedure details

#### 4.1 Requirements and composition of the written examinations

The RANZCP Fellowship Program requires the successful completion of two independent written examinations: the Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination and the Essay-Style Examination.

#### 4.1.1 Standard

The standard of performance required for the written examinations is the demonstration of theoretical and applied knowledge 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

#### 4.1.2 Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination

The Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination comprises Extended Matching Questions (EMQs) and Critical Analysis Problems (CAPs). This examination will cover foundational knowledge in psychiatry sampled from the Stage 1 and Stage 2 syllabuses. This will include areas of knowledge such as (but not limited to) neuroscience, pharmacotherapy, experimental design and critical analysis, history and philosophy of psychiatry, common psychiatric presentations and principles of key psychotherapies. The examination is 190 minutes in duration. The total marks allocated are 180.

This examination will be a computer-based test from August 2015. All candidates will be required to undertake this examination on a computer at a Pearson VUE testing centre.

Multiple Choice (MCQ) Examination – 190 minutes

Question Type	No. of Questions	Marks per Question	Total Marks
Extended Matching Questions (EMQs)	140	1 mark each	140 marks
Critical Analysis Problems (CAPs)	2	~20 marks each	40 marks
<i>Total</i>			<i>180 marks</i>

#### 4.1.3 Essay-Style Examination

The Essay-Style Examination comprises Modified Essay Questions (MEQs) and a Critical Essay Question (CEQ). The Essay-Style Examination will have a clinical focus and will assess capacity for critical thinking about clinical practice and the application of clinical knowledge, as well as the capacity for critical thinking about issues relevant to the practice of psychiatry including sociocultural, models of illness, ethical and complex service issues. The examination is 180 minutes in duration, excluding reading time. The total marks allocated are 180. The CEQ component is allocated 40 marks; this component must be passed in order for candidates to be eligible to pass the examination.

This examination is currently offered as a paper-based test (only). All candidates will be required to undertake this examination at a Pearson VUE testing centre.

Essay-Style Examination – 180 minutes

Question Type	No. of Questions	Marks per Question	Total Marks
Critical Essay Question (CEQs)	1	40 marks	40 marks
Modified Essay Questions (MEQs)	4–6	up to 30 marks each	140 marks
<i>Total</i>			<i>180 marks</i>

## 4.2 Candidate eligibility for the MCQ Examination

In order to undertake the MCQ Examination, applicants must be registered as College trainees or as College SIMG candidates.

Additionally, all applicants must have current, valid registration as a medical practitioner in Australia or New Zealand when applying for and when sitting the examination and at the time of the result release date.

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 a place to be granted. Candidates must be familiar with the Examination Cancellation and Refund Schedule, particularly the refund cut-off dates.

#### **4.2.1 SIMG candidate eligibility for the MCQ Examination**

In addition to the above requirements, if partially comparable SIMG candidates are required to sit the MCQ Examination, they must have current comparability status with the College at the time of the application closing date to be eligible to apply for the MCQ Examination. 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 relevant Written Examinations Application Form).

#### **4.2.2 Trainee eligibility for the MCQ Examination**

Trainees are eligible to apply for the MCQ Examination once they have successfully completed their first 6 months of full-time equivalent (FTE) training as demonstrated by their College Training Record. Applications will not be accepted before 6 months FTE has been accredited to the trainee's Training Record.

Trainees are eligible to apply for the MCQ Examination 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 MCQ Examination.

### **4.3 Candidate eligibility for the Essay-Style Examination**

In order to undertake the Essay-Style Examination, applicants must be registered as College trainees or as SIMG candidates.

Additionally, all applicants 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 for their results to be released.)

Successful completion of the MCQ Examination is **not** an eligibility requirement for sitting the Essay-Style Examination.

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 a place to be granted. Candidates must be familiar with the Examination Cancellation and Refund Schedule, particularly the refund cut-off dates.

#### **4.3.1 SIMG candidate eligibility to apply for and sit the Essay-Style Examination**

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 Essay-Style Examination. 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 relevant Written Examinations Application Form).

#### **4.3.2 Trainee eligibility for the Essay-Style Examination**

Trainees are eligible to apply for the Essay-Style Examination once they have successfully completed 18 months of FTE training, including 6 months FTE in Stage 2, as demonstrated by their College Training Record. Applications will not be accepted before 6 months of FTE training in Stage 2 has been accredited to the trainee's Training Record.

Trainees are eligible to apply for the Essay-Style Examination 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 Essay-Style Examination.

#### 4.4 Applying for the written examinations

To apply to sit a written examination, all examination applicants must complete the prescribed Written Examination Application Form for the relevant examination. There will be a separate examination application and fee for each examination; however, candidates applying for both examinations in the same round may apply for both simultaneously.

A new application must be submitted for each attempt at a written examination. There is no automatic enrolment of candidates (i.e. candidates are not automatically enrolled in the next examination round if they failed or withdrew from a previous round, or if they are nearing the deadline for successful completion as per the Progression through Training Policy [6.1]).

##### 4.4.1 The application

The Written Examination Application Form must be received by the Examinations Department, College Head Office by the Application Close Date as per the Examination Cancellation and Refund Schedule, together with the following items:

- a) a hard copy of the applicant's current medical registration certificate or annual practising certificate
  - Candidates 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 written examination must be available on the application closing date until the funds are deducted. Fees will be deducted within 10 working days of receipt of completed application.
  - The deduction of funds does not guarantee an applicant a place in the examination. Candidates not granted a place in the examination will be provided a full refund. However, candidates who withdraw or who become ineligible to sit a written examination 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).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to be familiar with the current Cancellation and Refund Schedule, which states the relevant application closing date and refund deadline for each examination.

Applications should be sent via registered post or courier and must be received at the College Head Office in Melbourne (RANZCP, Attention: Examinations – Writtens, 309 La Trobe St, Melbourne VIC 3000, Australia) on the date that applications close. However, applications postmarked by the Application Close Date will be accepted.

The College must receive the original version of the application. Therefore, faxed, scanned, or emailed versions of application forms will not be accepted.

#### **4.4.2 Trainee applications related to targeted learning**

Trainees who are undertaking or have undertaken targeted learning relevant to the MCQ Examination or Essay-Style Examination must comply with the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure (6.2). A brief reference to the requirements follows; however, applicants are responsible for being aware of all requirements of the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure.

Note that targeted learning must be specific to an identified examination; separate targeted learning plans would be required for the MCQ Examination and the Essay-Style Examination.

A targeted learning plan should be reviewed by the trainee, DOT and supervisor (where relevant) prior to the trainee attempting or re-attempting the relevant written examination.

A trainee who is required to undertake progression-based targeted learning (for not passing the MCQ or Essay-Style Examination by the targeted learning deadline on the Trainee Progress Trajectory) remains eligible to attempt the relevant written examination.

A trainee who is required to undertake assessment-based targeted learning (for two failures of the MCQ Examination or two failures of the Essay-Style Examination) will be eligible to re-attempt the relevant written examination once they submit the Commencement of Targeted Learning Form to the College Training Department. If a trainee applies to sit the examination 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. A trainee will not be allotted a time slot and allocation for the relevant examination 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 examination if this process is not completed by the required date.

#### **4.4.3 Applications for special consideration**

Candidates requesting special consideration for either of the written examinations must apply in writing to the CFE for approval, in accordance with the Special Considerations Policy (18.2).

Requests for special consideration must accompany a candidate's MCQ or Essay-Style Examination 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).

A separate application for special consideration must be submitted for each examination and for each reattempt (if any). However, trainees are only required to resubmit the supporting documentation if there is a change in circumstances.

## **4.5 Confirmation**

### **4.5.1 Confirmation of receipt of application**

Applicants should receive an email confirming receipt of their application within 2 working days of its receipt by the Examinations Department, College Head Office. It is an applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application has been received by the College by contacting the Examinations Department (preferably by email) if they have not received an email confirming receipt of their application within 2 working days of the estimated time of receipt.

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.

### **4.5.2 Confirmation of eligibility to sit the examination**

The College will inform applicants via email whether they are eligible to sit the relevant written examination 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). This email will also provide eligible applicants with an electronic link to the Pearson VUE – RANZCP portal which should be used to create an account and register for a place at the examination.

### **4.5.3 Registration with Pearson VUE for a place at the examination**

Once an applicant has received confirmation of eligibility from the College as above, they must use the link provided to register to sit the written examination(s) during the registration period. Applicants will be informed of the dates of the registration period via email. Applicants must use their College ID and their email address recorded on the College database in order to register.

At the time of registration, applicants will be required to agree that they understand the rules governing the written examination (this Policy and Procedure and other relevant Fellowship Regulations, and the College Code of Ethics).

Pearson VUE will list the locations and availability of local testing centres relative to the applicant's address. Applicants may also browse the locations across Australia and New Zealand and may request a place across multiple test centres by order of preference. Places at the test centres will be allocated in the order in which registrations are received. Pearson VUE will confirm whether an applicant has received a place at an examination testing centre and the location on completion of the registration process. Should an applicant need to change their test centre location, they are able to do so during the registration period.

Applicants should contact the Pearson VUE call centre if they have difficulty registering for a place at a testing centre. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they have registered with Pearson VUE during the registration period, and that they have been confirmed for a place by Pearson VUE. Any refunds due to a lack of registration with Pearson VUE will be made in line with the Examination Cancellation and Refund Schedule.

The College and/or its providers reserve the right to change the location of an applicant's testing centre where required in exceptional circumstances.

## **4.6 Preparation and advice for written examinations**

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 techniques.

Candidates should also familiarise themselves with the examinations practice content available on the College website.

### **4.6.1 Candidate advice for the MCQ Examination**

Look and feel of computer-based testing:

- Candidates are advised to review the example online test available via the College website so that they are familiar with the format and layout of the computer-based test.

#### Extended Matching Questions (EMQs):

- Candidates are likely to find that one or more texts that cover, for example, neuroscience, psychological and social theories of mental illness, basic psychopharmacology and descriptive psychopathology will be helpful to their preparation for this examination.
- Candidates are strongly advised to review the Trial Examination Papers and Previous Papers available on the College website in various formats.

#### Critical Analysis Problems (CAPs):

- Candidates are advised to review the Guidelines for Critical Analysis Problems available on the College website.
- Candidates are strongly advised to incorporate critical analysis activities into their regular journal club meetings.
- Candidates are advised to study the recommended texts.

### 4.6.2 Candidate advice for the Essay-style Examination

#### Critical Essay Questions (CEQs):

- Candidates must read the question thoroughly.
- Candidates should practise the techniques involved in writing critical essays.
- Candidates should consider the broader context of a question, including an awareness of relevant sociocultural issues, and broader models of illness (not limited to the medical model).
- Candidates should write a response specific to the question asked rather than a generic essay.
- Candidates should respond with structure and clarity.
  - While a reliance on bullet points is not recommended for the CEQ, bullet points are allowed within an essay where they may aid structure and clarity.

#### Modified Essay Questions (MEQs):

- It is important for candidates to read the instructions, scenarios and questions thoroughly and to address the questions asked with specific reference to the patient in the scenario. All information provided in a scenario is considered important.
- Candidates should pay attention to the specific tasks required to answer the question, for example, they may be asked to *outline*, *describe* or *discuss* topic areas as opposed to *listing* them, or vice versa.
  - A 'list' contains keywords or phrases without elaboration.
  - 'Outline' is a list with some justification.
  - 'Describe' is a list with more justification.
  - 'Discuss' is a more comprehensive answer.
  - Where details and/or justification are required, marks will not be awarded for topic headings without elaboration (lists).
  - Bullet points may be used; however, candidates should ensure they include the justification required to effectively answer the question where required.
- Information that is provided outside of that asked for will not score marks.

- Candidates should endeavour to present concise and well-structured answers including justification for their responses.
- Candidates are advised to draw on their clinical experience when answering questions.

## 4.7 Examination rules

Candidates are responsible for being familiar with this policy, as well as all other RANZCP Fellowship Regulations 2012 and the RANZCP Code of Ethics. Candidates must adhere to the rules presented in these documents.

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 Procedure (18.3-4).

The written examinations are managed by Pearson VUE test administrators. College Fellows and staff may attend in order to observe that the correct examination protocol is followed and the environment is in accordance with RANZCP standards. Candidates must observe and comply with all instructions and/or directions given by Pearson VUE test administrators.

### 4.7.1 Examination arrival

Each candidate must present for an examination in person. It is a serious offence for a candidate to allow any other person to present for an examination in their place. It is also a serious offence to aid and abet a candidate to arrange for any other person to present for an examination in the candidate's place.

Candidates will not be admitted to an examination room if they appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Candidates must be present in the examination registration area a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the scheduled commencement of the examination. Forty-five minutes prior is recommended.

- Generally, candidates may not enter the examination room once the examination has commenced.
- **In exceptional circumstances**, a test administrator may grant a late candidate access to the examination; however, late entrance **will not be permitted** more than 30 minutes after the scheduled commencement time of the examination.

Candidates are required to present a primary photographic proof of identity and a secondary proof of identity to the test administrator prior to being admitted to the examination room. The list of valid forms of primary and secondary proofs of identity will be available through a link on the College 'MCQ Exam' and 'Essay-style Exam' web pages.

Candidates must sign an attendance record, which acknowledges that they have read the Written Examinations Policy and Procedure and the Pearson VUE terms and conditions. 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.

A photograph will be taken of each MCQ Examination candidate upon their arrival at the testing centre.

### 4.7.2 Items permitted in examination room

Candidates will be checked by test administrators to ensure they do not bring items into the examination room that are not permitted. All permitted items brought into the examination room must be in a clear zip-lock bag (where relevant) and will be inspected by test administrators. Items are to be placed on the examination desk prior to commencement of the examination.



The following items are permitted in the examination room without a requirement for a candidate to apply for special consideration and will be inspected prior to the candidate's entry:

- MCQ and Essay-style Examinations:
  - throat lozenge/cough drop – must be unwrapped and not in a container
  - pills – must be unwrapped and not in a container (unless they must remain in the packaging due to air exposure)
  - bandages/braces/casts/slings
  - mobility devices (eg. canes, crutches, motorised scooters/chairs, wheelchairs, walkers)
  - eye drops
  - eye patches
  - eye glasses without case
  - handheld magnifying glass (non-electronic and without a case)
  - hearing aids
  - inhalers
  - medical alert bracelets, including those with USB ports
  - medical devices attached to a person's body
  - medical/surgical face masks
  - pillows/cushions
- MCQ Examination:
  - Candidates will bring an ID into the examination room.
  - Candidates **are not permitted to bring** any items other than the above, including personal stationery (e.g. pencils), wristwatches/timers or water bottles, into the MCQ examination room. A personal whiteboard and erasable pen will be provided to each MCQ candidate.
- Essay-Style Examination:
  - Candidates **must bring** their own blue or black pens for this examination.
  - Highlighters and a ruler may be brought into the examination if desired.
  - Candidates **are not permitted to bring** any wristwatches (both analogue and digital) into the examination room. A visible clock will be available in the examination room.
  - Candidates will bring an ID into the examination room.

#### 4.7.3 Restricted and prohibited items

Candidates must not bring the following items or any other personal item that a test administrator deems as unsuitable into the examination room. Candidates who require an exception must apply to the CFE for special consideration as per point 4.4.4 and the Special Consideration Policy (18.2):

- pencils, pens, highlighters, rulers for the computer-based MCQ examination (these are permitted for the Essay-Style examination)
- timing devices, clocks and wristwatches (both analogue and digital) will not be permitted in both the MCQ and the Essay-Style Examination. (A timer will be available on the MCQ Examination computer screens and a clock will be in view in the Essay-Style Examination room.)

- pencil cases
- notes
- books or dictionaries (including religious texts)
- mobile phones
- electronic or recording devices capable of storing, receiving or transmitting information
- bags
- wallets
- car keys
- calculators (Calculators are not required at any time during the examination.)
- outerwear (coats or jackets)
- scarves of any kind except those for religious or medical reasons
- hats or head coverings except those for religious or medical reasons
- 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
- earplugs
- headphones
- weapons
- food or beverages, including water (water will be available at the examination venue).

All candidates must bring a bag in which to store items not permitted in the examination room. Candidates must turn off their mobile phones and place all prohibited items in their bag prior to entering the examination room. Bags will be stored away from the candidates' examination desks. At the conclusion of the examination, candidates will be able to collect their prohibited items.

Should a candidate anticipate requiring access to specific belongings at any time during the examination, they must apply for special consideration as per point 4.4.4 and the Special Consideration Policy (18.2). Access to belongings without special consideration will only be considered in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the test administrators. If access is permitted, it must be supervised and candidates will not receive any extra time to make up for their unscheduled break during the examination.

The RANZCP and Pearson VUE and its associates do not accept responsibility for the loss of any candidate's personal property.

#### **4.7.4 Conduct during the examination**

Candidates are not permitted to communicate with, or provide any assistance to, other candidates once in the examination room.

Candidates are not permitted to accept assistance from any other candidates once in the examination room.

Should a candidate wish to speak to a test administrator, the candidate is to raise their hand.

Candidates are responsible for immediately notifying a test administrator if:

- if they experience any malfunction or technical issue with their computer (in the case of the MCQ Examination)
- the correct examination paper has not been provided or if the examination paper is missing or has duplicate pages (in the case of the Essay-Style Examination).

Candidates are not permitted to look at another candidate's examination papers or computers for any reason.

Candidates are not permitted to disturb other examination candidates in any way.

Candidates must raise their hand if they wish to leave the examination room and will not receive extra time to compensate for any unscheduled breaks. The candidate's ID will be checked prior to their re-admission to the examination room. For the MCQ Examination, their screen will be locked while they are out of the examination room.

Candidates may not be dismissed from the examination in the last 30 minutes of examination time under any circumstances.

Candidates must remain seated until a test administrator has given the direction for candidates to leave the examination room.

#### **4.7.5 Procedures for the MCQ Examination**

- a) As the MCQ Examination is a computer-based examination from August 2015, candidates will be led to their allocated computer desk upon entering the examination room. A personal whiteboard and erasable pen will be available on each candidate's desk.
- b) Three hours and 10 minutes are allotted to answer the questions.
- c) In this examination, **all** questions should be attempted.
- d) The examination is not negatively marked.
- e) Candidates may flag or skip questions and go back to them later.
- f) As candidates select answers and return to change them, answers are saved automatically.
- g) Candidates who complete their examination before the time limit and wish to exit the examination room will be asked to confirm their early completion of the examination. Their session will be terminated and they will not be permitted to access their examination again.
- h) At the conclusion of the examination time limit, the computer screen will lock automatically.
- i) The whiteboard and erasable pen will be collected by the test administrators.
- j) All examination materials must be left in the examination room. No material (including the whiteboard provided) is to be removed.

#### **4.7.6 Procedures for the Essay-style Examination**

- a) Examination papers will be placed face down on candidates' allocated desks prior to candidates entering the examination room/area.
  - Examination papers comprise:
    - examination book/s (contains questions and pages for writing answers)
    - stimulus (contains duplicate questions)
    - note paper
    - supplementary sheets for writing longer answers are available.

- b) At the appointed time, candidates are asked to turn over their examination papers and are given 10 minutes to read. During reading time, candidates may only peruse the examination books. Candidates **may not pick up** their writing or highlighting implements for any reason. Candidates are not permitted to make any notes or highlight any text in either the examination books, the stimulus or on the note paper provided during that time.
- c) After the 10 minutes reading time, a further 3 hours are allotted to answer the questions.
- d) Once candidates are given instructions to commence the examination, they are to sign their name and write the date on the front page of the examination book.
- e) Candidates should use their own pens to answer the questions.
- f) In this examination, **all** questions should be attempted.
- g) Candidates are advised that if their handwritten script is illegible, their answer will not be marked.
- h) Handwritten responses are to be **contained within the lines and pages applicable to that question or on the supplementary sheets provided**. Candidates are advised that **marking is not guaranteed if answers are written in a place other than on the relevant allocated lines and pages**.
  - Note: the answer to each question within an MEQ is to be written on a separate page.
- i) The candidate is to write their College ID number, question type and question number details on any supplementary sheets. Candidates may answer only one question per supplementary answer sheet.
- j) Any incorrect words or phrases that the candidate does not wish the examiner to take into consideration are to have a horizontal line drawn through them.
  - Examiners have been instructed to ignore any such words or phrases that have been treated this way.
- k) After completion of a multiple line answer, should the candidate deem their response unsatisfactory, they are to place a diagonal slash through the response.
  - Examiners have been instructed to ignore text that has been treated this way.
  - Should there not be enough room to complete a revised answer, candidates are to request supplementary sheets from a test administrator.
- l) At the conclusion of the examination time, candidates **must stop writing** immediately.
- m) No pages are to be torn out of, or removed from, the examination books
- n) Before all examination papers are collected, candidates should ensure they have signed the declaration statement on the front cover of the examination paper.
- o) All examination materials must be left in the examination room. No material (including the note paper provided) is to be removed.

#### 4.8 Results

De-identified pass/fail results for the written examinations are scheduled to be released onto the College website at 5:00 pm AEST on the date listed on the examination application form. Candidates may obtain their results from the College website using their College identification number.

#### **4.8.1 Results breakdown**

All candidates will also be notified of their results by email, which will confirm their pass/fail outcome.

Each question has been categorised according to the diagnostic category and to the question type. Candidates will be advised of their aggregate score in each of these categories.

A review of a candidate's performance across these categories indicates relative strengths and weaknesses in their knowledge or skill base, thus highlighting areas that may require further development.

This information may provide a useful basis on which a candidate can discuss their progress with their supervisor or DOT. A copy of each candidate's results and results breakdown will be sent to their DOT.

#### **4.8.2 Examination outcome**

The pass score is determined for each examination, depending on the degree of difficulty of the examination and, hence, may vary from paper to paper. The degree of difficulty of each examination is rated by the CFE together with Fellows who are familiar with the expected level of performance of a candidate undertaking the written examination. This ensures a consistency of standard and takes into account the variation that is inherent between all examination papers past and present. This rating is determined prior to the examination using educationally valid standard-setting methodology (the modified Ebel method), and is used to determine the pass mark for the components of the examination and hence the overall pass score.

- The actual pass score for an examination will not be released. The pass score in itself is not of educational merit nor does it assist unsuccessful candidates in preparation for subsequent sittings.

The Essay-Style Examination has both an aggregate pass score and a specific CEQ component pass score. Candidates must obtain marks greater than both the aggregate and CEQ pass scores in order to pass the Essay-Style Examination.

#### **4.8.3 Feedback**

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 breakdowns have been released.

#### **4.8.4 Results withheld**

The College reserves the right to withhold any candidate's results.

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.

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 Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3-4).

### **4.9 Incident report**

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

#### **4.10 Failure to adhere to examination rules**

If a test administrator believes that a candidate has breached the examination rules in this policy, the candidate will be officially warned by the test administrator. An Essay-style examination candidate will have their paper marked at that point with the time, date and test administrator's signature. If relevant, the test administrator must confiscate any suspicious material or articles from the candidate. The candidate will be advised that the matter will be reported to the Chair, CFE via the College's Manager for Assessments.

Following any incident, the test administrator will provide a written report of the incident(s) to the Chair, CFE, along with any confiscated material as per the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Policy (18.3-4).

The test administrator may require a candidate to change seats during the examination.

If a candidate causes any disruption to the examination or continues to breach examination procedures following a warning by a test administrator, the administrator may request the candidate to leave the examination room immediately. For the MCQ Examination, the candidate's computer will be locked with no further access to their examination permitted.

An alleged breach of the Written Examinations Policy will follow the protocols in the Examination Incident Report and Breach Review Procedure (18.3-4).

#### **4.11 Cancellations and refunds**

Candidates must log on to the Pearson VUE – RANZCP portal in order to cancel their place at an examination. Refunds will be made in accordance with the Cancellation and Refund Schedule.

#### **4.12 Failure to present at an examination ('no show')**

Candidates must log on to the Pearson VUE – RANZCP portal if, for any reason, they will not be attending the examination.

Candidates who have not informed Pearson VUE of their non-attendance will have their result recorded as a failure for that examination attempt.

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.

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).

#### **4.13 Trainee deadlines and relation with progression through training**

Candidates must pass the written examinations within the time required to be eligible for Fellowship. (See the Progression through Training Policy (6.1) for more information on assessment deadlines.)

The deadlines for successfully completing the written examinations are detailed in the Policy on Progression through Training (6.1). A brief reference to these requirements 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.

##### **4.13.1 Deadline for the MCQ Examination**

The MCQ Examination is expected to be attempted and passed by the time the trainee has completed 36 months of FTE accredited training.

- 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).

#### **4.13.2 Deadline for the Essay-Style Examination**

The Essay-Style Examination is expected to be attempted and passed by the time the trainee has completed 60 months of FTE accredited training.

- 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 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).

#### **4.13.3 Targeted learning requirement for multiple failures**

Should a candidate fail the same written examination twice (i.e. two failed attempts at the MCQ Examination or two failed attempts at the Essay-Style Examination), the candidate must undertake assessment-based targeted learning for the relevant examination as per the Policies and Procedures on Targeted Learning (6.2) and Progression through Training (6.1).

#### **4.13.4 Requirement to show cause**

Should a candidate fail the same written examination three times (i.e. three failed attempts at the MCQ Examination or three failed attempts at the Essay-Style Examination), 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).

### **4.14 SIMG candidate deadlines**

SIMG candidates assessed as partially comparable are expected to successfully complete the Essay-style Examination and the MCQ Examination (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](#).

### **4.15 Review of decisions**

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

## **5. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The Education Committee shall implement, monitor and review this document and report on anomalies and issues as these arise.

This document will be reviewed biennially and updated as required.

## 6. Associated Documents

**6.1 Regulation:** 18.1 Written Examinations Education Training Regulation

**6.2 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

**6.3 Forms :** Written Examination Application Form

**6.4 Other:**

- Cancellation and Refund Schedule
- RANZCP Code of Ethics
- RANZCP Code of Conduct
- Guidelines for Critical Analysis Problems
- Written examination venue map
- Pearson VUE Terms and Conditions

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Contact:		Senior Policy Officer, Education	
Date	Version	Approver	Description
06/09/13	v.1.0	RANZCP Board	Reviewed by Written Exams Subcommittee 22/07/13. Reviewed by TRC 20/08/13. Approved by CFE 23/08/13. Approved by EC 28/08/13. Approved by CGRC out of session 02/09/13. Approved by RANZCP Board B2013/4 R7.
08/02/14	v.2.0	RANZCP Board	Updates to reflect FAC & EC decision that a 'no show' at an exam will be considered a failure and to clarify application, MCQ purpose and candidate advice. Reviewed by TRC 28/11/13. Approved by CFE 11/12/13. Approved by EC out of session 17/12/13. Approved by CGRC with minor wording change in 4.7.1 Exam Arrival on 23/01/14. Approved by RANZCP Board B2014/1 R14.
30/08/14	v.3.0	RANZCP Board	Updated to reflect EC March 2014 decision (from CFE recommendation) to set both an aggregate and CEQ component pass score for the Essay-style Exam. Approved CFE. Approved EC 8/8/14. Approved CGRC 14/8/14. Approved Board B2014/5 R13.
14/02/15	v.4.0	RANZCP Board	Updates based on examinations team advice related to eligibility to apply for the essay-style exam vs eligibility to sit to align with the exam schedule/rotation timing and how the MCQ is done. Noted by CFT 4/12/14. Approved by CFE 10/12/14. Approved by EC 16/01/15. Reviewed by CGRC



			22/01/15. Approved by Board 2015/1 R17.
<b>21/03/15</b>	v.5.0	RANZCP Board	Updates to reflect computer-based testing for MCQ Examination (from August 2015) and to align with the Leave & Interruptions to Training Policy. Reviewed by the CFE 23/2/15. Reviewed by the TRC 23/2/15. Reviewed by CGRC 24/2/15. Approved by EC with minor changes from CFE Chair 27/2/15. Approved by Board 2015/2 R13.
<b>22/08/15</b>	v.5.1	N/A	Minor rephrasing of applications related to remediation and amendments to 'results withheld' section to align with wording approved in OSCE policy. Clarification that exam cancellations should be made by contacting the Pearson VUE call centre.
<b>20/07/16</b>	v.6.0	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 and that candidates must log on to the Pearson VUE – RANZCP portal if they wish to cancel their place at, or will not be attending, the exam. 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>11/02/17</b>	v6.1	RANZCP Board	Removal of Satisfactory Progress in a Targeted Learning Program Form and clarify a trainee's eligibility is dependent on the completion of the targeted learning program. Reviewed CGRC 19/1/16. Approved by EC 27/01/17, RANZCP Board B2017/1.
<b>19/05/17</b>	V6.2	Education Committee	Clarifying eligibility to apply for the MCQ and Essay-Style examination, and aligning 'Standard' section with OSCE Policy wording for level expected at end of Stage 3. Approved CFE 10/05/17 and CFT 11/05/17. Approved by EC 19/05/2017.
<b>15/09/17</b>	v.6.3	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) that were approved by RANZCP Board 13/08/17 B2017/5 R16.
<b>20/04/18</b>	v.6.4	Education Committee	Aligning the wristwatch rule with the previously approved rule in the Clinical Examination Regulation. Previously 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. Approved EC 20 April 2018.

**April 2020**

**NEXT REVIEW**