



The Royal
Australian &
New Zealand
College of
Psychiatrists



Certificate of Advanced Training in Youth Psychiatry

Syllabus

Version 0.1

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Preface

Training in youth psychiatry follows an apprenticeship model with extensive, well-supervised clinical and research experience as its foundation. Because youth psychiatrists work in complex environments with multiple patients, they require a broad appreciation of biological, psychological, developmental and sociocultural issues affecting young people and their families / whānau. Thorough knowledge and careful use of the principles of evidence-based practice and outcome evaluation must be accompanied by a humane and ethical approach to the young people and their families / whānau seeking care. Emphasis should be given to research-driven data and methods of practice, but trainees should nevertheless be encouraged to reflect on the culture of youth psychiatry and to examine historical continuities and discontinuities with the present understanding of youth psychiatry.

'Youth' means a young person (i.e. an adolescent and emerging adult) aged between 12–25 years old.

The syllabus intends to define, for trainees and educators, the knowledge base that underpins the acquisition of competencies in the specialist area of youth psychiatry and what is required for the RANZCP Certificate of Advanced Training in Youth Psychiatry. The content outlined below is intended to inform knowledge acquisition across clinical, informal and formal education settings and self-directed learning.

The syllabus is not intended to be prescriptive. Accordingly, to be consistent with the principles of adult learning and to reflect the richness and diversity of youth psychiatry, detailed content descriptions are intentionally excluded. This also allows for advances in psychiatric knowledge and changing paradigms. It is recognized that local training schemes and formal education courses (FECs) will provide greater levels of specification.

The syllabus is indicative of the breadth of knowledge required. All areas in the syllabus are important and need to be covered; however, not all areas could be expected to be learnt to the same level. To help trainees, FEC coordinators, supervisors and other educators, the rating system utilised in the Stage 1 and 2 syllabuses has been used to indicate the depth of knowledge expected.

Depth of Knowledge

Depth of knowledge as appropriate for Certificate training (not importance of knowledge):

Code	Definition
AC	Awareness of concepts
WK	Working knowledge
IDK	In-depth knowledge

It is expected the rating system also reflects the learning opportunities available to trainees in Certificate training programs.

Core Knowledge of Youth Psychiatry

Ethics and Professionalism

Capacity / competency and consent	IDK
Personal and interpersonal boundaries	IDK
Privacy, confidentiality, and disclosure of information to families and external services	IDK
Relationship with industry	IDK
Ethics of duality and conflicts of interest	IDK
Professional standards	IDK
Continuing professional development (CPD)	IDK
Advocacy for young people and their family / whānau	IDK
Human rights and protection of adolescents from maltreatment and exploitation; Respect for diversity – gender, sexual attraction, cultural and linguistic	WK / IDK
Self-care and reflective practice	IDK

Information Technology

Use of contemporary information technology	WK
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History

History of youth psychiatry as it informs current psychiatric practice	WK
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Basic Sciences

Epidemiology of youth mental health (including risk and protective factors, continuities and discontinuities)	IDK
Neurosciences (relevant to the clinical syndromes)	IDK
Neuroanatomy	IDK
Neurophysiology	IDK
Neurochemistry	IDK

Underlying principles of genetics and inheritance	IDK
Genetics relevant to psychiatric disorders that affect young people	WK
Genetics of physical conditions associated with mental health symptomatology	WK

Normal and Abnormal Development

Normal development throughout the life span	IDK
Developmental biology and genetics	IDK
Developmental psychopathology	IDK
Normal and abnormal cognitive development	IDK
Effects of illness, trauma, abuse and neglect on neurodevelopment; neurodevelopmental and neurocognitive models of disorders; childhood-onset disorders persisting into youth	IDK

Developmental Theories Relating to Attachment and Psychosocial Development

Attachment theory, attachment style and interpersonal relationships	IDK
Stages of psychosocial development and tasks of transition to adulthood	IDK
'Emerging Adulthood' as an extension of adolescence	IDK
Psychoanalytic developmental theory	IDK
Cognitive developmental psychology	IDK
Group theory and group dynamics	IDK
Impact of developmental trauma and illness; grief and loss; identity formation and disturbance; resilience	IDK

The Family and Society

Dynamics of family functioning	IDK
Cultural, social, religious and spiritual variations in family function	IDK
Family dysfunction and its effects on young people	IDK
Sociology and ethology relating to youth psychiatry	WK
Misfortune or disadvantage; discrimination; bullying and school refusal	IDK

Diversity and Indigenous Mental Health

Scope of diversity including culture, gender-identity, sexual orientation, intellectual abilities and developmental stage	IDK
Working with First Nations and Rangatahi Māori young people	IDK
Normative gender / sexual development and diversity	IDK
Cultural and generational differences in the understanding of mental illness	IDK
Impact of migration, refugee status, disability and detention	IDK
Australian and New Zealand history of colonisation / invasion and the ongoing impact	IDK
Indigenous paradigms of youth mental health	IDK

Philosophy of Youth Mental Health Care

Rationale for dedicated and nuanced youth mental health care	IDK
Epidemiology of mental illness in young people	IDK
Aetiological models of youth mental illness	IDK
Impact of mental illness on young people	IDK
Barriers and enablers to young people accessing mental health care	IDK
Youth-friendly service delivery	IDK
Therapeutic principles in youth psychiatry	IDK
Engaging young people in the clinical setting	IDK

History taking and examination of a young person

Philosophy of Youth Mental Health Care

Youth-friendly and developmentally sensitive interviewing technique in an appropriate environment and location	IDK
Interviewing parent(s), family members and other informants	IDK

Family interviewing	IDK
Family needs assessment	IDK
Assessment of parenting capacity	IDK
Understanding the concept and challenges of interviewing and assessing the mental state of people with complex communication needs including intellectual, developmental, linguistic and other disabilities (e.g. cognitive, sensory and motor)	IDK
Utilisation of youth mental health assessment frameworks e.g. HEADSS	IDK
Strengths-based focus in assessment	IDK
Knowledge of structured interviewing and assessment methods, e.g. ADOS, DISC	WK
Clinical instruments in assessment including commonly used validated instruments	IDK
Developmental assessment including motor, speech / language and educational	WK
Mental status examination relevant to assessment of a young person	IDK
Risk assessment	IDK
Physical assessment including neurological examination	IDK
Psychometric assessment	WK
Motivational interviewing	IDK
Neurodiversity affirming approaches	IDK

Assessment and management of psychiatric emergencies

Crisis intervention	IDK
De-escalation	IDK
Serotonin syndrome	IDK
Neuroleptic malignant syndrome	IDK
Catatonia	IDK

Diagnosis, differential diagnosis, and formulation

Diagnosis

History of development of diagnosis and classificatory systems in psychiatry	WK
Taxonomic theory and methods, and current systems of classification (ICD, DSM, DCR 0-3)	IDK
Principles and problems of classification systems	IDK
Diagnostic instability	IDK

Differential diagnosis and formulation

Understanding the importance of synthesizing collateral information with direct assessment	IDK
Develop a comprehensive differential biopsychosocial diagnostic formulation for the young person	IDK
Develop a comprehensive management plan taking into account all relevant biological, psychological and sociocultural factors	IDK
Clinical staging of psychiatric disorders	IDK

Taxonomic theory and methods, and current systems of classification

International Classification of Diseases, Diagnostic and statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health	IDK
Principles of taxonomy relevant to youth	IDK

Clinical Syndrome

Trainees are expected to acquire knowledge of the following aspects of the disorders listed below (including those listed in the neurodevelopmental disorders and consultation–liaison psychiatry sections):

Definition, assessment, diagnostic criteria, clinical symptomatology and associated features, family, age, gender and culture-related features, epidemiology, aetiology (biopsychosocial, cultural), course, complications, outcome, differential diagnosis, prevention, assessment, management (biopsychosocial, cultural), psychiatric and medical comorbidities.

Organic psychiatric disorders (including psychiatric manifestations of common \ genetic and developmental disorders)	IDK
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Foetal alcohol syndrome	IDK
Substance dependence and abuse (alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, cannabis [including its relationship with psychosis], amphetamine-type stimulants, hallucinogens, opioids, inhalants, psychedelics, new and emerging drugs of abuse / dependence)	IDK
Substance-induced disorders (mood / psychosis, acute intoxication / withdrawal)	IDK
Pharmaceutical drug misuse / abuse / dependence (prescribed and over the counter)	IDK
Psychotic disorders including first episode psychosis	IDK
Affective disorders (depression and bipolar affective disorder)	IDK
Anxiety disorders (social anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, phobias)	IDK
Post-traumatic stress disorder	IDK
Personality disorders	IDK
Adjustment disorders	IDK
Somatoform disorders (see disorders of relevance to CL Psychiatry)	IDK
Functional neurological disorder	IDK
Dissociative disorders	IDK
Sleep disorders	IDK
Perinatal disorders	IDK
Eating disorders	IDK
Impulse control disorders	IDK
Gender dysphoria	IDK
Sexually inappropriate behaviour and sexual disorders	IDK

Childhood onset disorders

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (see neuropsychiatric disorders)	IDK
Conduct disorders	IDK

Separation anxiety disorder	IDK
Selective mutism	IDK
Attachment disorder	IDK
Tic disorders and Tourette syndrome	IDK

Other clinical presentations

	IDK
Problematic behaviors:	IDK
Self-injurious behavior	IDK
Aggression and violence	IDK
Bullying	IDK
Fire-setting	IDK
Gambling	IDK
Pathological internet use / gaming	IDK
Psychological and psychiatric manifestations of trauma	IDK
Paraphilias	IDK
Problematic social media use	IDK
School refusal	IDK

Neurodevelopmental disorders and psychiatry of intellectual and developmental disabilities

Autism spectrum disorder	IDK
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	IDK
Pervasive developmental disorder	IDK
Specific developmental disorders	IDK

Intellectual disability	IDK
Specific issues of assessment of people with intellectual disabilities, including mental health and behavior, relevance of severity of intellectual disability	IDK
Consideration of the aetiology of the disabilities in the patient, whether congenital and / or acquired, and relevance to the clinical presentation	IDK
Specific issues of management, including adapted psychotropic drug regimens and importance of long-term developmental perspective	IDK

Consultation–liaison psychiatry

Models of care in youth CL psychiatry and the role of the CL youth psychiatrist	IDK
Psychiatric and neuropsychiatric sequelae of physical illness	WK
Normal and abnormal illness behavior	IDK
Working in acute medical settings in supporting the treating doctor / team to provide youth-friendly holistic care	IDK

Disorders of particular relevance to CL youth psychiatry

Adjustment disorders (e.g. following serious injury, diagnosis of T1DM in a young person)	IDK
Psychological factors affecting medical illness	IDK
Delirium	IDK
Epilepsy	WK
Acquired brain injury	IDK
Psychiatric illness due to general medical conditions (including side effects of treatments)	IDK
Pain disorders and analgesia Somatoform order	IDK
Somatization disorder Functional	IDK
Hypochondriasis	IDK
Factitious disorder, factitious disorder by proxy and alinging	IDK
Responses to trauma and medical illness (including chronic medical illness) disorder	IDK

Neurological disorder	IDK
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Youth who have parents with mental health disorders

Understanding the issues / problems facing young people who have parents with mental illness and / or addiction	IDK
Knowledge of strategies to assist young people who have parents with mental illness and / or addiction	IDK

Management

Plan, implement, monitor and evaluate a wide range of therapies in individual, family and group modalities

Therapeutic principles of youth psychiatry (connection, empowerment, frame, competence)	IDK
Evidence-based practice in youth psychiatry	IDK
Early intervention frameworks	IDK
Transdiagnostic models of care	IDK
Family inclusive practice across the spectrum of emerging adulthood	IDK
Consent and ascent	IDK

Inpatient and residential care

Principles of inpatient / residential treatment	IDK
Culture and milieu	IDK
Advantages and disadvantages of inpatient mental health care in different ages and presentations	IDK
Principles of partial hospitalization and day patient treatment	IDK
Home-based interventions and outreach for initial engagement of youth and families	WK
Day programs to support and provide care to young people	WK
Principles of inpatient / residential treatment	WK

Social

Strengths-based practice	IDK
Principles of the recovery philosophy in the youth mental health setting including promotion of resilience	IDK
Principles of stigma, mental health literacy, the role of public education initiatives	IDK
School-based primary mental health interventions	WK
Working with welfare agencies	IDK
Working with disability services	IDK
Working with educational / employment agencies; supporting individual placement and support models	IDK
Role of consumer and advocacy groups	IDK
Role of social support services (housing, accommodation, non-governmental organization [NGO] sector, cultural, individual and group support)	IDK

Biological

Psychopharmacology in young people and drug-naive individuals	IDK
Principles of prescribing psychotropic medications in young people, including in specific settings such as in CL or inpatient groups (e.g. IDD)	IDK
Side-effects and discontinuation syndromes in young people	IDK
Legislative requirements as relevant to medication	IDK
Off-label prescribing	IDK
Alternative and complementary medications and interventions, including any potential benefits, interactions and toxicity	WK
Antipsychotics including long-acting injectables	IDK
Antidepressants	IDK
Mood stabilizers	IDK
Anxiolytics	IDK

Stimulants and other agents used in the management of ADHD	IDK
Somatic treatments including electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS)	IDK
Management of physical sequelae and complications of psychiatric illnesses	IDK
Monitoring and managing treatment adherence	IDK
Screening and managing the impact of psychotropic medications on metabolic risk and sexual health	IDK
Psychopharmacology in pregnancy and the perinatal period	IDK
Perinatal care for young parents	IDK
Anxiolytics	IDK

Psychological treatments and psychotherapy

Core psychotherapeutic skills for working with young people	IDK
Historical perspective and context of different schools of psychological interventions for youth and their family/whānau	IDK
Principles of psychological interventions including non-specific factors including rapport building, therapeutic alliance, frame and contract setting	IDK
Principles of assessment for all psychotherapy approaches	IDK
Psychoeducation	IDK
Family therapy across the spectrum of emerging adulthood	IDK
Supporting healthy intimate relationships	IDK
Enhancing social connectedness	IDK
Core psychotherapeutic skills for working with young people	IDK
Historical perspective and context of different schools of psychological interventions for youth and their family/whānau	IDK
Principles of psychological interventions including non-specific factors including rapport building, therapeutic alliance, frame and contract setting	IDK
Principles of assessment for all psychotherapy approaches	IDK

Psychoeducation	IDK
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Understanding the theories, role of, and evidence-based indications for, the major modalities of psychotherapy

Supportive therapies	IDK
Parent counselling and education	IDK
Behavioral interventions	IDK
Cognitive therapies	IDK
Adherence Therapy	IDK
Interpersonal therapy (IPT)	IDK
Cognitive-behavioral therapy	IDK
Dialectical-behavior therapy	IDK
ACT and mindfulness-based approaches	IDK
Psychodynamic therapies (major schools)	IDK
Family and systems therapy (major schools)	IDK
Open Dialogue	WK
Couples therapy	IDK
Group therapy (major schools)	IDK
Mother–infant therapies for young mothers	IDK
Digital / App based therapies	IDK
Vocational and educational interventions	IDK

Youth psychiatry and the law

Understanding relevant national and local legislation as it applies to adolescents and young adults including:	IDK
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Act • Education • Welfare and protection • Youth and family court • Disabilities 	
Principles underpinning mental health regulations in youth and their families	IDK
Responsibilities under the Mental Health Act	IDK
Relevant common law principles, e.g. capacity, necessity, duty-of-care, duty-to-warn	IDK
Knowledge of mandatory reporting requirements (including ethical considerations and health practitioner's context)	IDK
Understanding the role of an expert in legal proceedings (including report writing and giving expert evidence)	IDK
Assess the young person as witness, victim and offender within the justice system	IDK
Youth of separation and divorce	IDK

Forensic youth psychiatry

Forensic issues in youth mental health	IDK
Forensic risk assessment / tools	IDK
Principles of psychiatric defenses and fitness to plead / stand trial	IDK
Forensic mental health systems and services	IDK
Juvenile Youth detention and alternatives in correctional psychiatry	WK
Forensic issues in youth mental health	WK

Youth Protection

Role of protection legislation and the role of statutory agencies	WK
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Protection from maltreatment and neglect	IDK
Parenting assessment	IDK
Adoption and fostering	IDK
Mental health needs of youth in care	IDK

Education

School consultation and liaison	IDK
School refusal and truancy	IDK

Research and evaluation

Employ relevant research methodology in youth psychiatry	IDK
Employ relevant outcome evaluation and quality assurance methodology	IDK
Critically appraise research papers in youth psychiatry and employ evidence-based methods in clinical practice	IDK
Carry out continuous quality improvement strategies including peer review and clinical review	IDK

Administration and supervision

Clinical and corporate governance	WK
Clinical leadership and characteristics of good leaders	IDK
Roles and responsibilities of multidisciplinary team and its members	IDK
Role of youth psychiatrist in a multidisciplinary team	IDK
Supervision and performance management of multidisciplinary team members	IDK
RANZCP Fellowship and Certificate training supervision	IDK
Population-based mental health interventions	WK
Principles of promotion, prevention and early intervention strategies	IDK

Government policy pertaining to the mental health and wellbeing of youth	AC
Healthcare economics and ethical distribution of healthcare resources	AC

Public health arena, policy and service

Population-based mental health interventions	WK
Principles of promotion, prevention and early intervention strategies	IDK
Government policy pertaining to the mental health and wellbeing of youth	AC
Healthcare economics and ethical distribution of healthcare resources	AC