

SPECIFICATION FOR ADVANCED VOCATIONAL REGISTRAR TRAINING IN PATHOLOGY

1.0 PREAMBLE

This specification describes the requirements for registrar training in Pathology and all its disciplines, including joint and concurrent training with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).

It is based on the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA) Handbook, and the RACP Training and Examination Handbook. Additional information has been provided by the RCPA, its members, Joint Special Advisory Committee (JSAC) members and other information sources.

In this specification, the term 'registrar' means registrar in training as defined in section 3.1 Registrar Eligibility.

Other terms are defined in the CTA Head Agreement and/or Service Agreement.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE

Training programmes in Pathology can be undertaken solely in laboratory pathology, leading to Fellowship of the RCPA, or in both laboratory pathology and its associated clinical discipline, leading to dual Fellowships of RCPA and RACP. Training may be commenced once full registration has been obtained, but a further year of clinical experience is considered desirable.

Training in laboratory pathology may be either in general pathology or one of the pathology disciplines. It is undertaken on an apprenticeship basis, and generally entails a five year minimum training programme in laboratories accredited by RCPA, with an approved supervisor.

The general aim of laboratory pathology training is to equip registrars with the knowledge and skills necessary to function as a specialist pathologist, and the scientific and management expertise to run a laboratory service.

Joint training schemes with the RACP are of four years duration post basic physician training, and are available in haematology and immunology. There is also a dual RACP / RCPA training in Metabolic Medicine, of six years minimum duration, where a period of time may be cross credited between the programmes and count for both. The aim of these programmes is to equip registrars with both the clinical and laboratory knowledge and skills to run an effective laboratory service, and to manage patients with diseases relevant to the discipline.

All registrars are expected to demonstrate knowledge of scientific and pathological principles and laboratory management (core subjects).

An important element of all pathology training is to develop effective communication skills to enable the Pathologist to have input into the clinical management of patients based on laboratory findings. This includes giving information and advice to general practitioners. Registrars are also expected to develop wider vocational skills including health leadership, management, policy, economics, and population health.

Learning is facilitated through interactions with all laboratory staff and clinicians, formal and informal teaching, teaching and sharing knowledge by registrars with others, use of library facilities, research, and continuing education activities such as journal clubs and departmental meetings provided by the employer for all staff.

Training is normally full-time but periods of part time (minimum 20 hours/week) training may be approved to make a total of five full-time years.

RCPA training is either in general pathology or one of the six disciplines listed below. In addition, *post Part I* training and the Part II examination may be slanted within any discipline, the more usual slants being listed below under the main headings.

General Pathology

- Morphological and Clinical Pathology
- any two single disciplines to Part I level
- one single discipline to Part I level plus either Morphological or clinical pathology *but not so as to overlap the Part I single discipline subject.*

Anatomical Pathology

- forensic pathology;
- cytology and cytopathology;
- neuropathology;
- paediatric pathology;

Chemical Pathology

Haematology

- Transfusion Medicine;
- Thrombosis and haemostasis;
- Blood, bone marrow and typhoid tissue morphology, and examination by molecular and immunological methods;
- Joint training in clinical haematology (RACP).

Immunology

Genetics

General experience in all areas is required for Part I while both general or a slanted Part II examination may be taken in the following areas:

- cytogenetics
- biochemical genetics
- molecular genetics

Microbiology

- virology
- infectious disease serology
- bacteriology
- parasitology

2.1 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Training occurs under supervision in laboratories approved by the RCPA, on the basis of both apprenticeship and more formal teaching

Educational activities are organised at a local level by the training institutions. Nationally coordinated training programmes are approved and may be supported by the RCPA Board of Education.

Knowledge is advancing quickly and training is directed towards acquisition of self-directed learning skills to enable registrars to continue to acquire knowledge and skills appropriate to developments in the discipline. This includes skills in critical appraisal of the literature.

The principles of cultural safety should be applied to relevant aspects of pathology practice.

Also, medico-legal and ethical principles must apply to pathology practice.

2.1.1 Laboratory Placements

General Requirements

The training experience in laboratory placements includes:

- An appropriate range of laboratory placements to gain sufficiently broad experience. This may include specialised laboratories and private laboratories.
- Supervision of day to day work.
- A level of supervision and responsibility appropriate to the registrars' seniority and experience.

- Laboratory management (including safety) experience.
- Release to attend formal training programmes tutorials and other educational activities as required to meet the registrars need.

Workplace safety issues are the responsibility of the service provider and will apply to all registrars.

Specific placement requirements

Specific requirements for training in the various disciplines are as detailed in the current edition RCPA Handbook.

2.1.2 Formal teaching programme

Teaching is organised by Supervisors and other staff at the training institutions. Programmes vary at each centre from a formal half day a week lecture series to tutorials arranged to meet local need.

2.1.3 Access to resources

Access to general resources for the purposes of training include:

- Laboratory facilities.
- Library facilities.
- Audiovisual equipment.
- An office or other workspace.
- Computer equipment (laboratory data).
- Adjacent clinical facilities (may not be required for specialised or limited time posts).

A broad range of staff is expected to contribute to the registrar's training experience.

2.2 SUPERVISION

2.2.1 Laboratory/Clinical Supervision

Supervision is provided by a Fellow of the RCPA or by a New Zealand registered specialist pathologist approved as a supervisor by the RCPA, and nominated by the registrar on the registrar's annual registration form, which must also be signed by the supervisor and sent to the Board of Censors.

The supervisor will:

- Formulate training objectives for the registrar for each placement, in consultation with the registrar.
- Monitor the registrar's progress against training objectives by personal observation and discussion, with delegation of these responsibilities where appropriate, e.g. during rotation through laboratories of a single employer. Supervision is normally transferred to another appropriate specialist pathologist when a registrar transfers to another laboratory.
- Ensure the registrar is provided with an adequate educational programme, and assist the registrar to learn from the experience available in the laboratory.
- Advise the registrar on deficiencies in his or her performance and provide assistance to overcome these.
- Ensure that the registrar has completed any required check lists before presenting for examination, certify competence where relevant and detail omissions with reasons.
- Help the registrar to interpret and act on examiners' comments, particularly in cases of failure.
- Notify the *New Zealand representative of the Board of Censors* of any problems which may be relevant in consideration of a registrar's suitability for admission to Fellowship.
- Arrange appropriate alternative supervision if the Supervisor is absent for more than two months and request approval of the Board of Censors for such substitution.
- *(Prospective approval of a specific training programme is not currently required by the Board of Censors.)*
- Maintain contact as required, and at least annually, with the New Zealand Education Committee, the *New Zealand Representative of the Board of Censors* and, where necessary, the appropriate JSAC committee regarding the training, availability of education programmes, and any problems emerging from these.

Normal lines of clinical service accountability shall apply to registrars.

2.2.2 Educational Supervision

Educational supervision is undertaken as part of clinical supervision.

As registrars prepare for examinations, Supervisors are expected to provide additional tuition and coaching, aimed specifically to enhance success in examinations.

Educational supervisors will report on registrars' progress annually by the end of October for all registrars. A report is required one month prior to the oral examination for final year registrars. The supervisor should either discuss the report with the registrar or indicate to the Board of Censors the reasons why this has not been done. Although the report is confidential, it is strongly recommended that the registrar is made aware of its nature, particularly if the report is adverse.

Information submitted should include dates of supervised training relevant to the examination being taken and for part-time registrars, the time to be credited as equivalent full-time supervised training in that discipline.

The report should indicate if the approved training programme for the year has been followed satisfactorily to that date. The supervisor should also indicate any positive or negative aspects of the registrar's performance and comment on any additional worthwhile contributions the candidate may have made to the training programme or working environment. Any prolonged absences from training must be detailed.

For registrars taking the Joint FRCPA/FRACP training programmes in Immunology or Haematology copies of the Supervisor's reports are returned to both the Secretary, Joint Specialist Advisory Committee, and the Registrar of the Board of Censors, Royal College of Pathologists of Australia.

The supervisor may also be asked to discuss the registrar's performance in detail with the Chief Examiner.

2.3 PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATION

Programme co-ordination is provided nationally by the New Zealand representative of the Board of Censors and the Regional Councillor, RCPA. The duties of those holding this position are:

- To assist, advise and inform prospective registrars regarding training and examination requirements and options, career prospects, educational programmes and laboratories approved for training.
- To assist registrars with problems relating to training and examination, in association with supervisors, members of the New Zealand Education Committee and the Registrar of the Board of Censors.
- To assist supervisors in fulfilling their role, particularly in cases in which problems arise.
- To investigate complaints from registrars or supervisors in specific instances.
- To establish as far as is reasonably possible, the suitability of registrars for ultimate Fellowship of the College and to place any problems before Council.
- To interview candidates after examination, where necessary, especially after failure, discussing areas of weakness indicated by the examiners.

- To oversee educational programmes at the local level through the State or New Zealand Education Committee.
- Reporting to CTA (refer to Schedule 1 Part C of the CTA Head Agreement).

2.4 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Admission to Fellowship of the RCPA requires:

- Five years of approved training in approved pathology laboratories or other posts approved by the RCPA (or part-time work equivalent to five years).
- An application for Fellowship accepted by the BOC (RCPA)
- A pass in the examinations as determined by the BOC or Council, RCPA.

Admission to the joint RCPA/RACP Fellowship requires all the above except that the time for training is four years in posts approved by the JSAC, RCPA/RACP.

The Part II examination must be completed within five years of a pass in the Part I examination. If this is not the case, there may be a requirement to resit the Part I examination.

The milestones and associated criteria are summarised in the following table. Detailed requirements are given in the RCPA Handbook, and the current edition of the handbook is the definitive information source for training criteria.

Milestones	Criteria
<p>All Trainees Pathological Sciences examination</p>	<p>Taken by all trainees. Can be taken at any time, but usually within the first three years. Pass required to sit Part II examinations.</p>
<p>Single Discipline Trainees Part I single discipline examination</p> <p>Part II single discipline examination</p>	<p>Usually taken in the third year of training. Can be taken after a minimum of 18 months training for all except Anatomical Pathology, which requires 30 months training.</p> <p>Usually taken in the fifth year of training. Must be completed within five years of a pass in the Part I examination.</p>

<p>General Pathology (single discipline) Assessments include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Morphological Pathology – Clinical Pathology – individual practical assessments 	<p>Must also take Pathological Sciences examination.</p> <p>Exams have written and oral parts.</p>
<p>General Pathology (2 discipline) Assessments include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – two single discipline Part I examinations; or – one single discipline exam and either Morphological or Clinical Pathology exam. – relevant practical assessments 	<p>Must also take Pathological Sciences examination.</p> <p>Practical assessments are usually taken within one year of the written examination.</p> <p><i>When taken in conjunction with general pathology the single discipline is not permitted to overlap the morphological or clinical pathology components.</i></p>
<p>Joint RCPA/RACP Training Basic Physician Training complete, including pass in the FRACP Part I examination</p> <p><i>Pathological Sciences examination</i></p> <p>Part I Pathology examination</p> <p>Part II Pathology examination</p>	<p>At least three years post graduation.</p> <p><i>Take at any time pre Part II</i></p> <p>Minimum 18 months Pathology laboratory training.</p> <p>Total at least four years pathology training.</p>
<p>Concurrent RCPA / RACP Training As per single discipline pathology training.</p>	<p>Must also fulfil criteria for RACP training as in these specifications.</p>

3.0 ELIGIBILITY

3.1 REGISTRAR ELIGIBILITY

Registrars must

- Be accepted by the RCPA into the training programme; and
- Be a graduate in Medicine and Surgery of a Medical School recognised by the Medical Council of New Zealand; and
- Have general registration as a medical practitioner from the Medical Council of New Zealand.

Medical graduates who do not meet the above criteria may be considered on a case by case basis.

3.2 PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

A laboratory approved by the RCPA for training of pathologists.

Approval of laboratories may be granted for the full range of training experience, or for specified periods of training or specialised areas of training only.

4.0 LOCATION AND SETTING

Any secondment of a registrar to another location for further training experience must comply with Part 9 of the CTA Head Agreement.

5.0 ASSOCIATED LINKAGES

The provider will have established linkages with:

- The RCPA and its New Zealand representatives (incorporating the New Zealand Society of Pathologists).
- JSAC of RCPA/RACP.
- Other laboratories providing training.
- Providers of teaching programmes if available.
- School of Medicine.
- Clinical facilities (if not part of the organisation).

6.0 PURCHASE UNIT

An eligible registrar in an RCPA approved training post for pathology training.

The Purchase Units are as follows:

- Pre Part 1
- Post Part 1

(Please refer to Section 2.4 – Expected Outcomes, for classification of the above).

Part-time registrars who are funded under this contract will be funded on a pro rata training unit basis.

7.0 PROGRAMME SPECIFIC QUALITY STANDARDS

*This section should be read in conjunction with Schedule 1 Part 3 of the CTA Head Agreement, which specifies **generic** quality standards for all programmes provided under this contract.*

The provider will demonstrate their commitment to training by:

- Having policies in place detailing the roles, responsibilities and limitations of registrars within the organisation.

The laboratory supervisor will:

- Produce, in collaboration with registrars, the training objectives for each placement.
- Report to the Board of Censors on registrars progress (as required by RCPA).

Educational supervision will be provided to a standard that ensures:

- Reports on registrars are provided one month prior to each examination and by the end of October each year for non-examination registrars.
- Registrars are supported in their preparation for examinations.

Programmes will be coordinated to a standard that ensures:

- Supervisors understand and fulfil their role.
- Arrangements of educational programmes at a national level are suitable for their stated purpose.
- Fellows participate actively in registrars overall training experience.

8.0 PROGRAMME SPECIFIC REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

*This section should be read in conjunction with Schedule 1 Part 1 of the CTA Head Agreement, which specifies **generic** reporting requirements for all programmes provided under the contract.*

8.1 PROGRESS REPORTING

Section 2.4 of the specification details the expected outcomes of the training programme purchased.

8.2 QUALITY REPORTING

Reports as described in Schedule 1 Part 1 of the CTA Head Agreement require a summary of the programme. Schedule 1 Part 3 of the CTA Head Agreement requires that you have a quality plan in place for the ongoing monitoring of the training provided. The summary should refer to the outcomes of this internal quality management and make reference to the service specific quality standards in Section 7.0 above, particularly supervision.