



Election of RANZCOG Councillors Policy and Procedure

Purpose and scope

This policy confirms the procedures and requirements involved in the election of Councillors of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG). It details who is eligible to be elected as a RANZCOG Councillor and outlines the process for conducting Councillor elections.

This policy applies to Fellows of the College and College staff who are responsible for managing the election process.

The *RANZCOG Constitution* (clause 9) should be read in conjunction with this policy.

1. Policy

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that the election of RANZCOG Councillors, conducted by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG), is open and transparent, comprehensive, and scrutinised, and is managed in accordance with the *RANZCOG Constitution*.

2. Procedure

2.1 Eligibility

2.1.1 Nominees

Councillors for the next term of office (next three-year Council term) shall be elected from the Fellowship.

All financial Fellows are eligible to stand for election as a RANZCOG Councillor representing the region in which they reside.

All current Councillors eligible to stand for election for the subsequent Council term must re-nominate for election.

All nominees must be financial Fellows of the College and resident in the applicable region at the time of a nomination being submitted. For election purposes, to be deemed a financial Fellow, the individual will have no outstanding monies owing to the College, including the annual subscription fee for the relevant membership period. Where a nominee is not financial, the Nomination Form will be deemed invalid and shall not be accepted.

2.1.2 Proposers and Seconders

All proposers and seconders must be Fellows of the College and resident in the applicable region at the time of the nomination being submitted.

2.1.3 Provincial Fellows

All nominees, proposers and seconders for the Councillor representing Provincial fellows must be registered Provincial Fellows i.e. have formally made an application to the College to be recognised as a Provincial Fellow. In the event that a ballot is required, only registered Provincial Fellows may vote for the Councillor representing Provincial Fellows.

2.2 Timetable for elections

The election process shall begin in June and end in August of the Election Year.

2.3 Returning Officer

The Company Secretary shall be the Returning Officer and shall have the authority to appoint College staff (Election Office) to assist in the conduct of the elections.

2.4 Nomination process

2.4.1 Call for nominations

The Election Office will issue a call for nominations at least 42 days prior to the election date. The call for nominations shall indicate the close of nominations and the provisions for conducting the election.

2.4.2 Incomplete nomination forms

Where the Nomination Form is not completed or submitted properly, the Nomination Form will be deemed invalid. The Election Office will advise the nominee of any irregularities. The Election Office will offer the nominee the chance to resubmit their completed Nomination Form by the closing date for nominations. If the Nomination Form is not resubmitted by this date, the nomination shall not be accepted.

2.4.3 Unfinancial Nominees

Where a nominee is not financial (refer above), the Nomination Form will be deemed invalid. The Election Office will advise the nominee of any irregularities. The Election Office will offer the nominee the chance to make payment of outstanding monies owed to the College by the closing date for nominations. The nominee must settle outstanding payments by the closing date and provide evidence to the Election Office.

2.4.4 Close of nominations

The promoted date and time for the submission of nominations shall be strictly adhered to. The Election Office will not accept late nominations, irrespective of the reason. The closing date for nominations will be at least 28 days before the election date.

2.4.5 Acknowledgement of nominations

The Election Office will acknowledge all accepted nominations within two business days of receipt.

2.4.6 Withdrawal of nominations

Nominees may withdraw their nominations at any time up to the close of nominations. All notices of withdrawals must be in writing.

Nominees wishing to withdraw their nominations after this deadline must write to the Returning Officer outlining reasons for the request. The withdrawal of a nomination following nomination deadline will be at the discretion of the Returning Officer.

2.4.7 Promotion of nominees

Nominees will be kept confidential until the close of nominations.

2.4.8 Publicity

The College will not supply names and/or contact details nor distribute to members any material for publicity purposes by candidates.

2.5 Election of Council Members if a ballot is not needed

If the number of nominations received for a particular region does not exceed the number of vacancies to be filled, then a ballot will not be required and the nominee/s for that region will be advised accordingly. Nominees will be formally declared elected at the Annual General Meeting in that Election Year.

2.6 Ballot process

If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled for a particular region, the Election Office shall conduct an election by postal and/or electronic ballot.

2.6.1 Voting

At least 14 days before the election date, the Election Office will distribute ballot documentation to all Fellows within the applicable region for which a ballot is to be conducted. Ballot documentation shall include the following:

- The names and candidature statements of the nominees (reproduced verbatim and in alphabetical order);
- Notice of the method in which the ballot is to be conducted; and
- The ballot closing date and time.

Voting will be by the 'Preferential' method, with each Fellow in a particular region entitled to cast one vote. Fellows will be marked off the voting register upon the submission of their vote.

2.6.2 Counting of votes

The Returning Officer shall be responsible for appointing scrutineers to oversee the counting of votes.

Postal ballot

A voting paper and outer envelope, together with any voting papers contained within, shall be declared to be invalid by the Returning Officer in the opinion of the Returning Officer:

- the outer envelope or the ballot paper contained within have not been lodged by a Fellow entitled to vote;
- the name of the Fellow on the outer envelope cannot be read;
- a Fellow entitled to vote has submitted more than one outer envelope;
- a voting paper is marked in such a way that the intentions of the Fellow casting a vote are not clear; or
- the voting paper is received after the ballot closing date.

Electronic ballot

A ballot shall be declared to be invalid by the Returning Officer if in the opinion of the Returning Officer:

- a Fellow entitled to vote has submitted more than one vote; or
- a ballot is marked in such a way that the intentions of the Fellow casting a vote are not clear.

The candidate who has received the largest number of votes, after all preferences have been allocated, shall be declared elected.

In the case of two or more candidates receiving the same number of votes, the Returning Officer shall draw lots in the presence of scrutineers to determine which of the candidates is to be declared elected.

2.7 Term of office

Pursuant to clauses 9.2.11 and 9.2.15 of the *RANZCOG Constitution*, the elected Councillors shall assume office at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting in that Election Year.

2.8 Notification of results

The Returning Officer shall, as soon as practical after the results have been declared, advise the successful and unsuccessful candidates. The list of successful candidates will be published in *Collegiate*, *O&G Magazine* and on the College's website.

2.9 Casual vacancies

If a casual vacancy arises for any Councillor position, a call for nominations will be made to eligible Fellows within the particular region.

If the number of nominations received does not exceed the number of vacancies, then the nominee(s) will be declared elected following the close of nominations and ratification by the RANZCOG Board.

If no nominations are received for a vacant position a second call for nominations for that position will be issued. If, following a second call no nominations have been received, the RANZCOG Board may elect to canvass the particular region for a suitable Fellow to fill the position(s) or elect to keep the position(s) vacant.

Any Councillors appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office only until the next election of Councillors and shall be eligible for re-election in accordance with the [RANZCOG Constitution](#).

The period of time served filling this vacancy shall not be counted as a period of office.

2.10 Governance

2.10.1 Retention of records

The completed nomination forms and other records pertaining to the election shall be retained by the Returning Officer for a period of one year from the election date.

2.10.2 Invalidity

No election is to be invalid by reason of:

- any formal error or defect in any declaration or other instrument or in any publication made pursuant to these procedures or intended to be so made; or
- any such publication being out of time; or
- any delay in holding the election at the time appointed or in taking the poll; or
- any inadvertent failure to send to any eligible Fellow any notice or voting paper; or
- any defect of a merely formal nature.

2.10.3 Appeals

Where a candidate is aggrieved with a decision of the Returning Officer, they may seek a review of that decision in accordance with the [RANZCOG Appeals Procedures](#).

3. Related RANZCOG documents

- RANZCOG Constitution
- Council Members' Duties and Responsibilities Policy and Procedure
- RANZCOG Appeals Procedures

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