

Election of Diplomates Committee members Policy and Procedure

Purpose and Scope

This policy confirms the procedures and requirements involved in the election of Diplomat Representative onto the Diplomates Committee. It details who is eligible to be elected as a Diplomat Representative and outlines the process for conducting Diplomates Committee elections. This policy applies to diplomates of the College and College staff responsible for managing the election process. The [Terms of Reference for the Diplomates Committee](#) should be read in conjunction with this policy.

1. Policy

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that Diplomates Committee elections conducted by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) are open and transparent, comprehensive, and scrutinised appropriately.

2. Procedure

2.1 Eligibility

The Diplomates Committee shall comprise representatives from the Diplomat membership; the number of representatives to be elected to represent each category of practice and the associated eligibility criteria for nominees, proposers and seconders is outlined below. The nomination for each candidate must be formally supported by a proposer and seconder in the prescribed format.

2.1.1 Positions for Election

2.1.1.1 Intrapartum Care Diplomates

Three (3) Intrapartum Care (procedural) Diplomates are to be elected to represent intrapartum care. To be eligible to nominate for these positions, the candidate must be a registered Diplomat in intrapartum care and be deemed by the College as a financial Diplomat.

2.1.1.2 Shared Care Diplomates

Two (2) shared care Diplomates (not involved in intrapartum care) are to be elected to represent shared care. To be eligible to nominate for these positions, the candidate must be: a registered Diplomat in shared care; and be deemed by the College as a financial Diplomat.

For candidates nominating for any of these positions, their proposers and seconders must also be a registered Diplomates.

All current Diplomates on the Diplomates Committee eligible to stand for election for the subsequent membership term must re-nominate for election.

Where a nominee is not recognised by the College as a financial Diplomat or their nomination does not meet the relevant eligibility criteria for the position for which they are nominating, the Nomination Form will be deemed invalid and shall not be accepted.

2.2 Timetable for elections

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

2.3 Returning Officer

The Company Secretary is the Returning Officer and has the authority to appoint Collegestaff (Election Office) to conduct the elections.

2.4 Nomination Process

2.4.1 Positions for Election

A call for nominations will be issued in August. The call for nominations is to indicate the number of vacancies, tenure of office, the date and time for the close of nominations and the provisions for conducting the election.

2.4.2 Incomplete nomination forms

If any part of the nomination form is not completed or submitted properly, or the nominee or proposer are not financial (refer above), then the nomination form will be deemed invalid and not accepted. The nominee will be advised of the irregularities via e-mail by the Election Office and will be offered the chance to resubmit their completed nomination form within the designated timeframe.

2.4.3 Close of nominations

The promoted date and time for the submission of nominations shall be strictly adhered to. Late nominations, no matter what the reasons are, will not be accepted. The closing date will be three weeks after the Call for Nominations.

2.4.4 Acknowledgement of nominations

All accepted nominations will be acknowledged by email within two business days of receipt.

2.4.5 Withdrawal of nominations

Nominees may withdraw their nominations at any time up to the close of nominations, but may not do so after nominations have closed. All notices of withdrawals must be in writing via email to the Election Office and be signed by the nominee.

2.4.6 Promotion of nominees

Nominees will be kept confidential until after the closing date and time for the submission of nominations.

2.4.7 Publicity

The College will not supply names and/or contact details nor distribute to diplomates and members any material for publicity purposes by candidates. No party may utilise any College resources or lists for election or publicity purposes.

2.5 Election of Members if a ballot is not needed

If the number of nominations received for a particular position does not exceed the number of vacancies to be filled, then a ballot will not be required and the nominee/s for that position will be elected and advised accordingly, following ratification by the RANZCOG Board.

2.6 Voting

If the number of nominations received for a particular position exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, the Election Office will conduct an election by a secure online ballot. Postal ballots will be sent to any Diplomates who do not have an email address on file with the College. Only Diplomates in the relevant training program/region as applicable will be entitled to vote in the event that a ballot is required.

The online ballot will state: the names and candidature statements of the nominees (if applicable) reproduced verbatim and in alphabetical order; voting method – the candidate who receives the most votes will win the ballot; notice of the method in which the ballot is to be conducted; and the ballot closing date and time.

2.6.1 Counting of votes

Each Diplomate is entitled to cast one vote. The candidate with the most votes will win the ballot and will be elected.

If following the close of the ballot, two or more candidates receive an equal number of votes, the candidate deemed to have the higher number of votes will be determined by lot drawn by the Returning Officer.

Postal ballot received will be declared to be invalid by the Returning Officer if in the opinion of the Returning Officer:

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

2.7 Notification of results

The Returning Officer will, as soon as practical after the results have been declared advise the successful and unsuccessful candidates. The list of successful candidates for each Diplomat's representative position will be published in the next available issue of *Connect, O&G Magazine* and on the College's website. The number of votes submitted will remain confidential to the Returning Officer.

2.8 Casual Vacancies

If a casual vacancy arises for any Diplomate Representative position on the Diplomates Committee, a call for nominations will be made to eligible diplomates.

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, following a second call no nominations have been received, the Election Office will liaise with the Diplomates Committee coordinator to consult with their committee regarding the position.

The Diplomates Committee must make a recommendation to the RANZCOG Board regarding the status of the position until the next election of committee members; the relevant committee may elect to canvass the Diplomates for a suitable Diplomate Representative to fill this position or elect to keep the position vacant.

Any Diplomate Representative appointed to fill a casual vacancy will hold office only until the next election year for the Diplomates Committee and will be eligible for re-election in accordance with the [Terms of Reference for the Diplomates Committee](#) and this policy. The period of time served on the Diplomates Committee filling this vacancy shall not be counted as a period of office.

2.9 Governance

2.9.1 Retention of records

As per RANZCOG record-keeping policy, all records pertaining to the election are to be retained by the Returning Officer in digital format for at least 2 years after the relevant activity has ended.

2.9.2 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;
- any such publication being out of time;
- any delay in holding the election at the time appointed or in taking the poll;
- any inadvertent failure to send to any eligible diplomate or member any notice or voting paper; or
- any defect of a merely formal nature.

2.9.3 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

- Terms of Reference for the Diplomates Committee
- RANZCOG Appeals Procedures
- Tenure of appointment to RANZCOG Committees
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Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	September 2018	RANZCOG Board
v2	August 2020	CEO (Company Secretary)
v3	April 2021	CEO (Company Secretary)

Policy Version:	Version 3
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