

Election of RANZCOG Trainees' Committee Members Policy and Procedure

Purpose and Scope

This policy confirms the procedures and requirements involved in the election of Trainee Representatives onto the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG) Trainees' Committee. It details who is eligible to be elected as a Trainee Representative and outlines the process for conducting Trainees' Committee elections. This policy applies to trainees of the College and College staff responsible for managing the election process. The *Terms of Reference for the Trainees' Committee* should be read in conjunction with this policy.

1. Policy

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that Trainees' 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 Positions for Election

The Trainees' Committee comprises representatives from the various RANZCOG training programs, listed below:

FRANZCOG Training Program Representatives

- Australian Capital Territory (ACT) – One (1) Representative
- New South Wales (NSW) – Two (2) Representatives
- Aotearoa New Zealand – Two (2) Representatives (one (1) from the North Island and one (1) from the South Island)
- Queensland (QLD) – Two (2) Representatives
- South Australia/Northern Territory (SA/NT) – One (1) Representative
- Tasmania (TAS) – One (1) Representative
- Victoria (VIC) – Two (2) Representatives
- Western Australia (WA) – One (1) Representative

CWH/PTP/APTP Representative

- One (1) Representative

PTP/APTP Representatives

- Two (2) Representatives (or three (3) such representatives if the elected trainee above is a Certificate of Women's Health trainee)

Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) Representative

- One (1) Representative

2.2 Eligibility Requirements

All Trainees who are financial and registered in the FRANZCOG Training Program (either Basic or Advanced) are eligible to stand for election to the Trainees' Committee.

All nominees, proposers and seconders must be registered in the FRANZCOG Training Program (either Basic or Advanced), in a prospectively-approved training position (or period of extended leave), be in the relevant training region (i.e., prospectively approved region),¹ and be financial trainees of the College at the time of a nomination being submitted.

For election purposes, to be deemed a financial trainee or SIMG, the member will have no outstanding monies owing to the College, including the annual training fee for the relevant financial period. Where a nominee, proposer and/or seconder is not financial, the nomination form will be deemed invalid and shall not be accepted.

2.1.1.1 Integrated Training Programs (ITP)

It is not necessary for the proposer, nominee and/or seconder to be from the same ITP.

Members of the Trainees' Committee elected to represent NSW, QLD, and VIC must be from different Integrated Training Programs (ITPs).

2.1.1.2 CWH/PTP/APTP Representative

One (1) Trainee Representative is to be elected to represent the Certificate of Women's Health (CWH) and Associate Training Programs (Procedural (PTP) and Advanced Procedural (APTP)). To be eligible to nominate for this position, the candidate must be a registered trainee in the CWH, PTP or APTP training program; and be deemed by the College as a financial trainee.

For candidates nominating for this position, their proposer and seconder must be a registered and financial trainee in the same training program as the nominee (CWH, PTP or APTP).

2.1.1.3 PTP/APTP Representatives

Two (2) or three (3) Trainee Representatives, as may be required, are to be elected to represent the Associate Training Program (Procedural) (PTP) and Associate Training Program (Advanced Procedural) (APTP)). To be eligible to nominate for this position, the candidates must be registered trainees in the PTP or APTP and be deemed by the College as financial trainees.

For candidates nominating for this position, their proposer and seconder must be a registered and financial trainee in the same training program as the nominee (PTP or APTP).

2.1.1.4 Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) Representative

One (1) Representative is to be elected to represent SIMGs. To be eligible to nominate for this position, the candidate must have been assessed by the College as being partially comparable to an Australian-trained specialist obstetrician and gynaecologist and be undertaking a period of in-hospital training to meet SIMG requirements for Fellowship of RANZCOG and be deemed by the College to be a financial SIMG.

For candidates nominating for this position, their proposer and seconder must also be a financial SIMG undertaking a period of in-hospital training to meet SIMG requirements for Fellowship or be

¹ For candidates nominating for the SA/NT Trainee Representative position, proposers and seconders will have to be in the relevant state or territory training region (i.e., SA or NT, as applicable) in which the nominee is in.

For candidates nominating for the Aotearoa New Zealand Trainee Representative position, proposers and seconders will have to be in the relevant training region of Aotearoa New Zealand only as the nominee.

a registered and financial Trainee in the FRANZCOG Training Program in the same region in which the candidate is working.

All current Trainee Representatives on the Trainees' Committee are eligible to stand for election for the subsequent membership term must re-nominate for election.

Where a nominee is not considered by the College to be a financial Trainee 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.

2.3 Timetable for elections

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

2.4 Returning Officer

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

2.5 Nomination Process

2.5.1 Call for nominations

A call for nominations is to 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 elections.

2.5.2 Incomplete nomination forms

If any part of the nomination form is not completed or submitted properly, or the nominee, proposer or seconder are not financial (refer to section 2.2), 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.

2.5.3 Close of nominations

The promoted date and time for the submission of nominations will 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.

2.5.4 Acknowledgement of nominations

All accepted nominations will be acknowledged by email within two (2) business days of receipt.

2.5.5 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.

2.5.6 Promotion of nominees

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

2.5.7 Publicity

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

2.6 Election of Trainee Representatives 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.

2.7 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 Trainees who do not have an email address on file with the College. Only Trainees in the relevant training program/region as applicable will be entitled to vote in the event that a ballot is required.

2.7.1 Counting of votes

Each Trainee 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 Trainee entitled to vote;
- the name of the Trainee on the outer envelope cannot be read;
- a Trainee 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 Trainee casting a vote are not clear.

2.8 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 Trainee 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.

2.9 Casual Vacancies

If a casual vacancy arises for any Trainee Representative position on the Trainees' Committee, a call for nominations will be made to eligible trainees within the particular region/training program.

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 Trainees Committee coordinator to consult with their committee regarding the position.

The Trainees 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 relevant Trainees region/training program for a suitable Trainee to fill this position or elect to keep the position vacant.

Any Trainee Representative appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office only until the next election year for the Trainees' Committee and will be eligible for re-election in accordance with the *Terms of Reference for the Trainees' Committee* and this policy. The period of time served on the Trainees' Committee filling this vacancy shall not be counted as a period of office.

2.10 Governance

2.10.1 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.

2.10.2 Invalidity

No election is to be invalid by reason of:

- any formal error of 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 trainee or member 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

- Terms of Reference for the Trainees' Committee
- Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of Decisions Policy
Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of Decisions Policy Tenure of appointment to RANZCOG committees and external Policy and Procedure

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	September 2018	RANZCOG Board
v2	August 2020	Chief Executive Officer (College Secretary)
v3	April 2021	Chief Executive Officer (College Secretary)
v4	August 2023	Removal of overseas and subspecialist trainee positions from election process as per the Committee's ToR
v5	September 2023	Addition of two (2)/three (3) PTP/APTP representatives
V6	January 2024	Policy revised to reflect change in nomenclature.

Policy Version:	Version 6
Policy Owner:	RANZCOG Office of President and CEO
Policy Approved by:	Chief Executive Officer (College Secretary)
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