



AMC Response - Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists 2021 Progress Report

College Name: Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Date of last AMC accreditation decision: 2019 (via comprehensive report)

Periodic reports since last AMC assessment: nil

Next accreditation decision due: by 31 March 2024 (2023 accreditation assessment)

Explanation of findings

Under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, the AMC can accredit a program of study if it is reasonably satisfied that: (a) the program of study, and the education provider that provides the program of study, meet the accreditation standard; or (b) the program of study, and the education provider that provides the program of study, substantially meet the accreditation standard and the imposition of conditions will ensure the program meets the standard within a reasonable time.

The AMC uses the terminology of the National Law (meet/substantially meet) in making decisions about accreditation programs and providers.

Providers must satisfy conditions on accreditation to meet the relevant accreditation standard. The AMC provides feedback on the conditions using the following:

Unsatisfactory	The College may not meet the related accreditation standard and AMC should investigate further.
Not Progressing	No progress or overly slow progress given the timeframe on the condition.
Progressing	Indicates satisfactory progress against the condition, with further reporting necessary.
Satisfied	The College has satisfied all requirements and can cease reporting against the condition. Condition is marked as closed.

Please note that this response contains:

Part A	<i>Summary of the overall findings relating to the College's 2021 progress report.</i>
Part B	<i>Detailed responses to information reported against the standards, including feedback to support further reporting on remaining conditions on accreditation.</i>

Part A – Summary of the overall findings relating to the College’s 2021 progress report.

Overall Summary of Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists 2021 progress report

The College was flexible in delivering online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to use a hybrid format for their teaching and learning.

The College reported trainees awaiting examinations from 2020, due to COVID-19 disruptions. Although examinations are anticipated to be completed by end 2021, could the College please provide an update to the AMC on the delivery of all outstanding 2020 examinations, and effects on trainee progression, and skills training/simulation courses, **by 1 October 2021**.

Several new initiatives are being undertaken by the College including, Communication Skills Program, MOTHER program (Emergency Response), Mentoring Framework, and, Leadership Program. The AMC look forward to hearing about progress on these programs in the next report.

The College is commended for its increased support of Māori and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander trainees and its cultural competence training for trainees and specialists in New Zealand.

It was noted that no trainee survey was reported by the College and there is concern that feedback regarding bullying, harassment and discrimination is not being reported through traditional means, and has only been detected through the Medical Training Survey.

Concerns have been raised in the 2021 progress report around gynaecology procedure numbers in some training sites, the channels in which bullying, harassment and discrimination feedback is being detected, and the College’s requirement for Year 1 of training to be completed full-time. The College is thanked for providing additional information on this last issue, however, concerns remain that this is discriminatory against trainees who are parents, or who are intending on becoming parents, during training. The College has not provided justification as to why full-time training in the first year is an official requirement. As a result, the AMC has added new condition to the College’s accreditation, under Standard 7.

Due to some issues requiring reporting on in 2022, the College is asked to submit a full progress report to the AMC next year.

Standard	2019 Findings	2021 Findings
Overall	Met	Met
1. The context of education and training	Met	Met
2. The outcomes of specialist training and education	Met	Met
3. The specialist medical training and education framework	Met	Met
4. Teaching and learning methods	Met	Met
5. Assessment of learning	Met	Met
6. Monitoring and evaluation	Met	Met
7. Issues relating to trainees	Met	Substantially Met

8. Implementing the training program – delivery of educational resources	Met	Met
9. Continuing professional development, further training and remediation	Met	Met
10. Assessment of specialist international medical graduates	Met	Met

Part B – Detailed responses to information reported against the standards

Standard 1: The context of training and education

Areas covered by this standard: governance of the college; program management; reconsideration, review and appeals processes; educational expertise and exchange; educational resources; interaction with the health sector; continuous renewal.

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 1

The RANZCOG have reported several changes to its governance structure in the last 12 months, and the change of name of their Education Strategy Committee to “Education Standards Committee.” It is unclear from the documentation provided what the reporting structure is for a number of committees, including the Trainees Committee, which lies outside of the Education Standards Committee reporting structure. Could the College please provide further documentation in the next progress report on the reporting structures of the various committees, including the Trainees Committee, to the Council and Board.

The College has also reported that ‘*constitutional changes to decrease the length of terms on Council, the Board and Council Committees were promoted as a move to increase diversity and gender equality in leadership within the organisation*’.

The RANZCOG have established new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori positions on Council. Both are voting positions and will be inherited by the Chairs of their respective Committees (He Hono Wāhine and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women’s Health Committee). The AMC supports the move to increase diversity and looks forward to further information on the strategies to increase gender equality and diversity in leadership in future progress reports.

New changes to the review, reconsideration and appeals processes were outlined in this report, could the College please provide the revised Appeals Procedure in the next progress report.

In 2020, RANZCOG were unable to deliver educational and training function due to COVID-19 disruptions and reports there are trainees who are still awaiting examinations from 2020. Examinations are anticipated to be completed by end 2021, with increased frequency of online oral examinations in 2021. **Could the College please provide an update to the AMC on the delivery of all outstanding 2020 examinations, and effects on trainee progression, and skills training/simulation courses, by 1 October 2021.**

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 1

The College provided data on reconsideration, review and appeals. SIMG assessments were the most likely to be overturned on Reconsideration with 4/5 overturned in 2019 and 2/7 overturned in 2020. The College is asked to comment on the high number of overturned SIMG assessment decisions in the next progress report.

Training requirements decisions were also overturned in 25% of cases for both reporting periods.

Requests to overturn decisions at Review during in 2019 & 2020 were unsuccessful by all applicants, including one hospital to upgrade its accreditation status.

Only one appeal was lodged in 2019 with outcome in favour of the appellant.

In 2020 two of four appellants were successful in having decisions overturned.

Throughout this reporting period (2019 – 2020) there were no successful applications for examination results to be overturned.

Summary of College performance against Standard 1

This standard remains met.

Standard 2: The outcomes of specialist training and education

Areas covered by this standard: educational purpose of the educational provider; and, program and graduate outcomes

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 2

Initiatives to increase supports for Māori trainees and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander trainees are applauded. These initiatives start at selection and continue through training. Support via creation of the Aboriginal Advisory role within the college, to review and ensure college activities meet the needs of trainees, members of the college and the community. For Māori trainees there is creation of a Māori Advisory role within the college – as above for their Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander counterpart the role appears to function more to check and advise on college activities than provide direct support for trainees or members.

The current strategic curriculum and training program review project is developing graduate outcomes for each program to CanMEDS structure. Please see standard 3 for additional comment.

New pathways are in development including the 'Advanced Obstetrics' which has been highlighted as increased opportunity in operative gynaecology. The AMC looks forward to further information on this new pathway developments and delivery in future reports, including any successes in increasing access to operative gynaecology using this new Advanced Obstetrics pathway.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

Summary of College performance against Standard 2

The College continues to perform well against this standard and it remains met.

Standard 3: The specialist medical training and education framework

Areas covered by this standard: curriculum framework; curriculum content; continuum of training, education and practice; and curriculum structure

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 3

The College is undergoing commendable work towards aligning all graduate outcomes to the CanMEDS framework. This is ongoing and planned to be completed by 2023. Movement to date includes enabling the Education Standards Committee to own and run the project, approval of a Curriculum Structure Design and creation of specific measurable outcomes of the project.

Commendable progress on the Medical Education Advanced Training Module, follow-on of the (Basic Training) Clinical Educator Training Program. Pilot-site roll out to be completed. This program is being designed to be equivalent to a Postgraduate Certificate in Health Professional Education.

The College has provided a response to request for further information from the 2019 report regarding feedback from the College's Trainee Committee about how the 3 and 6-monthly assessments could be more useful. The College has reported that it has:

- Increased scope of which health professionals can complete multi-source feedback to include Anaesthetists, midwives, and 'other'.
- The "Failure to Submit a 6 monthly assessment" regulation were revised, with a change from loss of training credit to an automatic "Not Satisfactory". This is to close the loop and ensure trainees in difficulty are flagged for early intervention.
- Uncoupled the "additional requirements" from 6 monthly assessments to ensure it did not trigger an automatic "Not Satisfactory".

From this response, it is unclear how the change to automatic "Not Satisfactory" result when a trainee fails to submit a 6 monthly assessment is beneficial to trainees. Additionally, the description of how time spent between deadline of "additional requirements" and completion of "additional requirements" is not credited towards training. The AMC requests further information from the College in the next progress report on how these changes are benefitting trainees if there has been any feedback on the implementation from the Trainee Committee.

The College is commended for its moves to increase cultural competence training for trainees and specialists in New Zealand.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

Summary of College performance against Standard 3

The College continues to meet the standard.

Standard 4: Teaching and learning methods

Areas covered by this standard: teaching and learning approach and methods

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 4

The College described several new programs and frameworks under development and yet to be rolled out. These include the Communication Skills Program, MOTHER program (Emergency Response), Mentoring Framework, and, Leadership Program. One program was described as in the pilot phase – the Respectful Workplaces Program – to be rolled out more broadly via a webinar platform.

The Research Toolkit webinar was piloted in December 2020 and further webinars are in the planning phase for 2021 rollout.

Major change to training dates to align the New Zealand and Australian training years occurred at the start of 2021. Trainees were expected to apply for prospective approval of training for time worked in the period between the usual end of year and the new (delayed) start of the training year invoked by the college.

The College has provided a response to request for further information from the 2019 report regarding if there is a strategy around gynaecology procedures in public hospitals, and how it links to graduate outcomes and the accreditation of sites. The College reports it is currently strengthening accreditation requirements for sites. The College has plans to write statements addressing the issue of gynaecology procedure numbers in training sites. The College is asked to provide further detail about the statements, and any changes to accreditation criteria or standards, in the 2022 progress report to the AMC.

The College is commend for its flexibility to provide learning in an online format during the COVID-19 pandemic and the commitment to continue to deliver teaching and learning in a hybrid format.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

Summary of College performance against Standard 4

The standard remains met.

Standard 5: Assessment of learning

Areas covered by this standard: assessment approach; assessment methods; performance feedback; assessment quality

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 5

The College has completed a review of the FRANZCOG Written Exam, changing standard setting to Modified Anghoff for Borderline Candidates, replacing Minimum Acceptable Passing Standard candidates. This pilot is being applied to all RANZCOG examinations in 2021.

The College reports it provides either verbal or written feedback to unsuccessful examination candidates. The AMC would appreciate further detail on the decision-making around which unsuccessful candidates will receive written versus verbal feedback.

There are exam candidates for the 2020 FRANZCOG and Subspecialty examinations who have yet to complete their examinations. There are not yet dates provided for the completion of the 2020 examinations.

The College has made the commendable move to provide mock examinations in 2020 to provide candidates the opportunity to experience the new online platform prior to their exam. In addition, the College is commended for facilitating a webinar in 2020 with educational psychologist to provide support to exam candidates with a recording of this webinar is available online for future exam candidates to view.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 5

Examination pass rates were provided for the 2019 – 2020 reporting period.

Written FRANZCOG examination had an increase in the 2020.2 sitting which coincides with introduction of the new standard-setting by Modified Anghoff Borderline Candidate, from 59% in 2019.2 and 53% in 2020.1 to 95% passing in 2020.2. It is too early to determine whether this is due to the new standard setting or a reflection of a single cohort.

There was a similar increase in pass-rates for the Oral FRANZCOG Examination in 2020.2 to 93% pass rate from 78% (2019.2) and 72% (2020.1).

The AMC notes the CU written exam had a low pass rate of 33% from 15 candidates. The College is asked to reflect on the factors contributing to this low pass rate and to continue monitoring this in the future.

Could the College please include the full names and acronyms of the subspecialties in the Glossary of terms / Appendix in future reviews.

Summary of College performance against Standard 5

The College performs well against this standard and it is met.

Standard 6: Monitoring and evaluation

Areas covered by this standard: program monitoring; evaluation; feedback, reporting and action

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 6
<p>The College has reported that the CREAP (Curriculum Review Expert Advisory Panel) recommended moving curricula to CanMEDS framework, and, increased dependence on WBAs and integration of the final examination to be included in the competency model. Input from supervisors and trainees has not been commented on. Could the College please comment on how trainees and supervisors have the opportunity to contribute to the Curriculum Review in the next progress report.</p> <p>No trainee survey was reported by the college. Separately the College describes pathway to use evaluation from 6 monthly trainee feedback in short- and long-term curriculum review.</p> <p>The College report that Trainee Evaluation of sites from 3 and 6 monthly assessment surveys is utilised to inform site accreditation visits, and to inform changes to accreditation standards.</p> <p>There was a major change in process regarding complaints handling during the 2019-2020 reporting period. A new Accreditation Interventions Framework described for managing and investigating complaints and issues raised with the College regarding training sites without triggering an early site accreditation/review. Description of which complaints/factors lead to utilising this pathway vs triggering early site review not described. Could the College please comment further information on these processes and pathways for the next report.</p> <p>The College has reported that due to COVID-19, online activities were held for selection interviews, SIMGs interviews, examinations and accreditation visits. Surveys of these activities in the online format were performed and will be used to for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Please see Standard 7 for comments on the reported changes to the Training Support Unit.</p>

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 6
<p>The College has reported on its evaluation data and have highlighted issues arising in evaluations and its response to these. Of note is the areas identified for further attention in the 6-monthly assessment survey responses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Access to regular teaching sessions2. Research opportunities3. Consultant feedback in clinics and ward rounds4. Consultant presence during gynaecology ward rounds <p>It is of concern that feedback regarding bullying, harassment and discrimination is not being reported through traditional means, and has only been detected in the Medical Training Survey data. This raises concerns about the traditional reporting methods being robust enough to detect issues within training sites.</p>

It is stated in the report that *'in particular, the College is focusing its efforts on the significant issue of bullying, harassment and discrimination. The College's Code of Conduct and policy on Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination were both updated in 2020. The College has also developed and updated its organisational values, with the aim of improving organisational culture. These values have been incorporated in the Code of Conduct and other College policies. The College will also be looking at addressing these issues through strengthened accreditation mechanisms where possible, and by working with hospital training sites to inculcate appropriate workplace culture.'*

In the 2022 progress report the AMC requests the College provide a more detailed response on the progress to address these issues through site accreditation.

Summary of College performance against Standard 6

The standard remains Met.

Standard 7: Issues relating to trainees

Areas covered by this standard: admission policy and selection; trainee participation in education provider governance; communication with trainees; trainee wellbeing; resolution of training problems and disputes

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 7

The College has provided a response to request for further information from the 2019 report regarding how the College is advocating on behalf of its trainees at their training site, or working with training site, to ensure access to part time training and parental leave.

The College progress report details that there is access to part-time training after the first 12 months of full-time training, and that trainees are then able to access part-time training subject to staffing levels and the requirements of the hospital. The College has also reported it has identified that trainees delay commencing training due to the College's preference to be full time in the first year of training.

The AMC has concerns that the College's policies may not be supportive of trainees who require part-time, interrupted or flexible training for example those who are parents, or who are intending on becoming parents, during training. The AMC wrote to the College on 23 April to for further details on this issue. The College responded to this request on 12 May. The College reports that *Full-time training for Year 1 FRANZCOG and subspecialty trainees, unless extended leave is approved, remains the College's official requirement.* The College also advises that *flexible arrangements for part-time training opportunities are available through the College's Exceptional Circumstance, Special Consideration and Reconsideration Policy and Procedure and that part-time training arrangements can be accessed at larger hospitals where job-sharing can be accommodated more easily.*

Concerns remain regarding the College's policies and it is not clear why full-time training in the first year is an official requirement. Case by case exemptions based on 'Exceptional Circumstances' is not consistent with a supportive learning environment that supports trainees' interests. The AMC recognises the challenge of workforce planning in smaller training sites and it considers that the College has a key role in working with and across training sites to create flexible arrangements that support trainees.

As the AMC standards require that training programs allow for part-time, interrupted and other flexible forms of training, as well as for the education provider to promote strategies to enable a

supportive learning environment, a new condition on the College's accreditation was approved on 17 June by AMC Directors, on the recommendation of the Specialist Education Accreditation Committee.

New Condition:

Condition 35 - Develop policies and strategies to support trainees access part-time training, flexible training and parental leave throughout training, including in the first year of training. This should include advocating for trainees and working with accredited training sites to develop supportive learning environments that enable access to part-time and flexible training and parental leave. (Standards 3.4.3, 7.4.1 and 8.2.2)

This condition is due to be satisfied in 2022.

The College reported Training Support Unit changes:

- New position of Wellbeing Coordinator 1.0FTE filled in January 2020.
- Training Support Liaison FTE decreased to 0.6 from 1.0.
- Wellbeing & Support hub page provides information on services & resources, adverse outcomes and mandatory reporting.
- Increase of Converge sessions from 3 to 4 per 12-month period.

The College is commended on the establishment of a Wellbeing Working Group. It would be useful to include detail on membership of this Working Group in the next progress report.

The College has reported on its planned activities:

- Research Curriculum Review Group to address trainee concerns
- development of a trainee support plan for trainees in difficulty
- supports for training supervisors is under review

Reported changes due to COVID-19:

- Selection to training interviews were had online
- SIMG interviews were completed online
- Extensions provided to training where educational activities were unattainable.

The College has reported its extended leave allowable has been increased from 104 weeks to 156 weeks.

2 Activity against conditions

Condition 35 – new in 2021		To be met by: 2022
Develop policies and strategies to support trainees access part-time training, flexible training and parental leave throughout training, including in the first year of training. This should include advocating for trainees and working with accredited training sites to develop supportive learning environments that enable access to part-time and flexible training and parental leave. (Standards 3.4.3, 7.4.1 and 8.2.2)		
Finding	Nil – new condition	
AMC commentary		
Please note commentary under Standard 7.		

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 7

The College has reported the following selection to training policy / procedural changes:

- Situational Judgement Test were removed / 'put on hold'.
- Online interviews – surveys revealed 91% of panellists were satisfied with the online platform, 80% of interviewees were satisfied.
- CV Scoring guide – free text option for prospective trainees to include information regarding areas of leadership and altruism.

The College is to provide data on trainee numbers. There are 628 trainees currently undertaking training, of which one is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and one is Māori. 82% of current trainees are female.

Summary of College performance against Standard 7

The PRSC requested additional information from the College to determine a finding against this standard.

Standard 8: Implementing the training program – delivery of educational resources

Areas covered by this standard: supervisory and educational roles and training sites and posts

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 8

The College reported that its Supervisor Foundation Training Program was delivered at the ASM and there was very positive feedback from supervisors who attended. Under consideration for development is further course to describe approaches to more difficult supervisor-trainee interactions. The College is commended for the initiatives in supervisor training.

The College has provided a response to request for additional information regarding the Trainee Committee statement that due to issues with accessing data, trainee feedback on supervision is unable to be acted on by the College. The progress report details that there is planned developments to increase agility and responsiveness regarding 6-monthly feedback from trainees and ad-hoc complaints from trainees at sites. This is incorporated within the Accreditation Intervention Framework new development. Further information on this has been requested under Standard 6.

The College reports that virtual accreditation site visits will continue in future following the evaluation of the conduct outcomes of virtual visits were evaluated by the Training Accreditation Committee after being implemented in 2020 due to the pandemic.

The College states that this process will address remote sites with few issues. The AMC notes that College rules remain in place that every training site must be visited physically at least once every two cycles, which is once in eight years.

The College has revised the accreditation standards. Of note is:

- now able to use intrastate 'examiners' or surveyors to complete accreditation site visits
- pre-visit interviews with consultants and training program coordinators
- where visits are delayed accreditation can be extended

Could the College please include a copy of the revised standards in the next progress report.

In 2019 the college renamed the Hospital Accreditation Process Review Working Group to "Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Evaluation Project Group". Membership includes representatives from Australia and NZ, including trainee reps from both nations, and specialist advisors in accreditation, as well as college accreditation staff. Roles and TOR were provided.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 8

NZ sites all accredited. Provisional accreditation for 2 years provided to one site in August 2020 – unclear if this was due to virtual nature of review, due to COVID, or due to issues at the site. Australian sites visited all re-accredited.

Summary of College performance against Standard 8

The College continues to perform well against this standard and it remains met.

Standard 9: Continuing professional development, further training and remediation

Areas covered by this standard: continuing professional development; further training of individual specialists; remediation

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 9

The College is commended on the new CPD Framework in line with AHPRA and MCNZ requirements, and the improved CPD approval for educational activity providers.

It is reported that a new online platform for ease of entry of activities, and access, in preparation for new requirements going live in July 2022, is in development.

CPD for 2020 put on hold, and due date for triennium was extended after confirmation from AHPRA/MBA and MCNZ.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 9

Data was provided which shows ongoing high compliance with CPD for Australian and New Zealand fellows.

Summary of College performance against Standard 9

The College is commended for developments against this standard and it remains Met.

Standard 10: Assessment of specialist international medical graduates

Areas covered by this standard: assessment framework; assessment methods; assessment decision; communication with specialist international medical graduate applicants

1 Significant developments underway or planned that relate to the accreditation standards

AMC commentary – significant developments against Standard 10

The College has made notable developments and changes against this standard, including the review of the online application format which has been reported as being more user friendly.

Changes to process include online videoconference interviews instead of face to face in single centre, and appointment of clinical SIMG Advisor. This is an interesting development, could the college please comment on the Advisor role and the reporting structure for this position in future reports.

MBA Good Practice guidelines update of RANZCOG regulations and standards are to be completed and the AMC looks forward to updates on this in future reports.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 10

Statistics were provided for the reporting period of 2016-2020.

Summary of College performance against Standard 10

The Standard remains met.