



C-Gen 19

Attributes of a RANZCOG Fellow

1. Purpose of this Statement

A newly elevated Fellow of RANZCOG is able to function at Consultant level in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (O&G) and possesses a number of key attributes and competencies.

These attributes as described in the RANZCOG Curriculum provide a framework to guide and support assessment and training that will equip specialists with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and professional qualities that are considered necessary to be a Specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in Australia and New Zealand. The Curriculum outlines the essential attributes and key competencies expected to be acquired for clinical competency across and within the three (3) domains of: Clinical Expertise, Academic Abilities and Professional Qualities.

The attributes that define a RANZCOG Fellow at the completion of training, help to inform the College in relation to matters such as the structure of the training program, the selection of trainees for entry into the FRANZCOG Training Program, the nature of the formative and summative assessments required during training and, ultimately, the life-long learning and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of a Fellow. These attributes also inform other recognised pathways to Fellowship, including the Specialist International Medical Graduate (SIMG) pathway and recognition of prior learning (RPL).

On attainment of FRANZCOG, all new Fellows will have, at a minimum, the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to independently manage a complex obstetric patient, common gynaecological conditions and gynaecological emergencies.

The new Fellow will also have acquired further generalist skills and/or one or more areas of special interest. These specific 'areas of special interest' will further define the scope of practice of a new Fellow. Following the awarding of Fellowship, Fellows will continue to develop professionally in their chosen scopes of practice and may elect to extend and enhance their scope of practice by undertaking further training in their area of special interest and/or towards a subspecialty certification.

2. Considerations in Defining the Attributes of a Fellow

The attributes of a Fellow are driven by the following societal (including workforce) considerations:

- A Fellow of the College is a medical practitioner specialising in O&G with a set of professional attributes appropriate to managing the specialist women's health needs of women in Australia and New Zealand, including Aboriginal and Torres' Strait Islander women, Maori women, and those from other cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups residing in different communities.
- A Fellow of the College is recognised by the health system to be able to function as the tertiary end point for the management of both common and complex women's health problems in O&G
- A Fellow of the College has well developed attributes in those areas of practice that are common or critical in importance. This objective has long been aided by the fact that those areas of high demand for specialist O&G services are those most readily available for experiential learning.
- Clinical practice for a Fellow of the College involves informed and effective partnerships with their patient, support group, specialist colleagues and other health care professionals.
- There are other workforce needs in specialist O&G practice that require additional knowledge, skills and attitudes in some, but not all, Fellows. The College has a role in defining these areas of practice and ensuring that the workforce needs of Australia and New Zealand are met, recognising that for some areas of practice, further training post-Fellowship may be necessary.

2.1. Attributes of a Fellow

The attributes are progressively acquired during FRANZCOG training as the trainee becomes more confident and competent and progresses from “novice” to “proficient”. To practice effectively, competency is required in the three overlapping but equally important domains that underpin the practice of a specialist obstetrician and gynaecologist.

a. Clinical expertise involving:

- i. Independent management of the medical and clinical conditions within both the common and selected scope of practice
- ii. Competency in surgical and procedural skills
- iii. Effective clinical communication with women, their partners and families and in professional relationships with medical, midwifery, nursing and other healthcare colleagues

b. Academic abilities comprising:

- i. An understanding of reproductive physiology and pathology and available assessment and management options in order to provide safe and effective care
- ii. Cognitive skills particularly in the area of clinical problem solving
- iii. Self-learning in O&G and other relevant areas of medical practice
- iv. Research abilities, especially in a clinical context
- v. The capacity to teach at both undergraduate and postgraduate level
- vi. An understanding of the principles and practice of evidence based medicine

c. Professional qualities encapsulating:

- i. Clinical leadership and management responsibilities
- ii. Commitment to practice review and audit development and maintenance of RANZCOG CPD program
- iii. An ability to work collaboratively with other health care providers with effective intra and inter-professional communication team skills
- iv. Ethical attitudes and conduct including: honesty, integrity, respect and compassion, patient confidentiality and maintenance of professional boundaries
- v. Health advocacy at both patient and institutional level
- vi. Engagement with colleges and other professional bodies relevant to the clinical practice of O&G
- vii. Recognition of obligations to courts, other legislative and regulatory bodies, and notification, when required
- viii. Responsibility for one’s health and fitness to practise

3. Scopes of Practice of a New Fellow

3.1. On completion of the FRANZCOG Training Program

All new Fellows will have acquired a common scope of practice, which includes at a minimum, the knowledge, skills and attributes required to independently manage obstetrics, office gynaecology and gynaecological emergencies. In addition to these essential skills, they will also have acquired further generalist skills and/or skills in one or more areas of special interest, which will further define their scope of practice as a new Fellow.

To achieve these skills, Trainees may select in their Advanced Training years to complete a “Generalist Pathway”, “Subspecialist Pathway” or an “Academic Pathway”. The chosen pathway will determine the scope of practice of the Fellow at the time of elevation to FRANZCOG.

3.1.1. Generalist Pathway

Advanced trainees undertaking the “Generalist Pathway” will have the following Scopes of Practice at the time FRANZCOG is awarded:

a. The Generalist Scope of Practice

This includes general O&G with a broad base of skills suitable for practice in an urban or provincial setting. The Generalist Scope of Practice includes all of the Common Scope of Practice (as defined in 3.1.2) with the addition of aspects of general obstetrics and gynaecology that a non-generalist would not necessarily be able to perform independently at consultant level.

The new FRANZCOG with a Generalist Scope of Practice will be able to undertake at consultant level: Antenatal clinics, Gynaecology Outpatient clinics, Emergency O&G, Caesarean section lists and Gynaecological theatre lists.

Trainees will achieve the Generalist Scope of Practice by satisfactory completion of Core Training and an Advanced Training program that includes at a minimum the Generalist Advanced Training Module (ATM).

AND (optional)

b. Special Interest Scope(s) of Practice

The New Fellow who has selected the Generalist Pathway may have areas of special interest that will extend his/her scope of practice. These will usually be defined by completion of an ATM in an area of special interest.

Examples of Special Interest Scopes of Practice may include but are not limited to:

- i. Pelvic floor disorders
- ii. Hysteroscopic and laparoscopic gynaecological surgery
- iii. Sexual and reproductive health (S&RH) including family planning, abortion care, menopause

3.1.2. Subspecialist Pathway

Advanced Trainees selecting this Pathway” will have the following Scopes of Practice at the time FRANZCOG is awarded:

a. The Common Scope of Practice

The Common Scope of Practice includes those O&G skills considered necessary to independently manage at consultant level: Obstetrics, Emergency Gynaecology and Common Office Gynaecology. These attributes are defined within the Compulsory Essential O&G Skills ATM which all trainees progressing from Core Training to FRANZCOG are required to complete, including those undertaking Subspecialty training.

The new FRANZCOG with a Common Scope of Practice will be able to undertake at consultant level: Antenatal clinics, Gynaecology Outpatient clinics, Emergency O&G with ‘back up’ for the more complex surgical cases and Caesarean section lists.

Trainees undertaking the Subspecialist pathway will have performed many procedures under supervision during their core training that are outside the Common Scope of Practice. For these procedures, they will have reached a level of competence of a trainee embarking on advanced training but will generally not have reached a consultant level of competence with respect to these procedures.

Trainees will achieve the Common Scope of Practice by satisfactory completion of Core Training and an Advanced Training program that includes either the Essential O&G Skills ATM or the Generalist ATM (which includes all training in the Essential O&G Skills ATM).

AND

b. Satisfactory progress during Subspecialty Certificate Training

It is not a requirement that a Subspecialty trainee will have finished subspecialty training at the time the FRANZCOG is awarded. Therefore, in order to be awarded FRANZCOG, the subspecialty trainee will need to have undertaken:

A minimum of TWO years of satisfactory completion of Subspecialty training in one of the Colleges five Certificate programs plus the Essential O&G Skills ATM OR a minimum of ONE year of satisfactory completion of Subspecialty Training in one of the five Certificate programs plus the Generalist ATM.

3.1.3. Academic Pathway

Advanced Trainees selecting the “Academic Pathway” will have the following Scopes of Practice (as a minimum) at the time FRANZCOG is awarded:

a. The Common Scope of Practice

Those O&G skills considered necessary to independently manage at consultant level: Obstetrics, Emergency Gynaecology and Common Office Gynaecology.

AND

b. The Academic Scope of Practice

Research, teaching and academic leadership as defined by the Academic Pathway regulations.

3.2. On Completion of the SIMG Assessment Pathway towards FRANZCOG

SIMG applicants applying for assessment of comparability to an Australian or New Zealand trained O&G specialist may also apply for entry into one of the three pathways to the FRANZCOG, the “Generalist Pathway”, “Subspecialist Pathway” or an “Academic Pathway”. Additional eligibility requirements must be met for SIMGs applying for entry to the Academic or Subspecialties pathways.

The SIMG pathway completed will determine the scope of practice of the SIMG at the time of elevation to FRANZCOG.

Where a SIMG has satisfactorily completed the requirements of the respective SIMG pathway, they may be awarded the FRANZCOG with a scope of practice as follows:

3.2.1. Generalist SIMG Pathway

The Generalist Scope of Practice

SIMGs completing the “Generalist Pathway” will have as a minimum the Scopes of Practice as defined in 3.1.1 at the time FRANZCOG is awarded.

3.2.2. Subspecialist SIMG Pathway

SIMGs completing the “Subspecialist Pathway” will have as a minimum the Scopes of Practice as defined in 3.1.2 at the time FRANZCOG is awarded.

3.2.3. Academic SIMG Pathway

SIMGs completing the “Academic Pathway” will have as a minimum the Scopes of Practice as defined in 3.1.3 at the time FRANZCOG is awarded.

4. Scopes of Practice of an Established Fellow

An established Fellow will have a scope of practice that is determined by:

a. Training

i. FRANZCOG training

Including both Core Training (same curriculum for all trainees) and Advanced Training (will differ amongst trainees except for the essential skills required for common scope of practice).

OR

Recognised international specialist O&G training

International training and experience that has been assessed by the SIMG Assessment Committee to be either partially or substantially comparable to FRANZCOG training and which may have required completion of a specified period of oversight or training.

ii. Post-FRANZCOG training

This might be:

- Training completed immediately after FRANZCOG training e.g. completion of a subspecialist training or at any subsequent time
- A formal training programme (e.g. subspecialty training), an ATM, a mentorship, workshops & courses or other self-directed learning.

b. *Currency*

Training must be complemented by maintenance of the knowledge and skills within the scope of practice and acquisition of new knowledge and skills to evolve practice in line with contemporary standards. This is commonly achieved through:

- Recency of Practice – performing the activity at a frequency sufficient to maintain and further enhance practice
- Continuing Medical Education – ensuring that practice is abreast of contemporary improvements as they evolve.
- Participation in Audit of Outcomes

Where an established Fellow has elected not to maintain 'Currency' in an area of practice in which he/she has been trained, this will affect the scope of practice of the Fellow.

5. Credentialing and Scope of Practice

Credentialing is the process by which a Fellow, SIMG or trainee is assessed for suitability to practise a specific scope of practice in a geographical or health service context. As such, a Fellow's scope of practice may in some situations be both location-dependent and determined by an appropriately constituted credentialing committee (see College Statement: [Credentialing in Obstetrics and Gynaecology \(WPI 23\)](#)). The credentialing committee should take into account Training (both FRANZCOG & post-FRANZCOG) and Currency including Recency of Practice, Continuing Medical Education and Participation in Audit of Outcomes.

6. Acquiring, Certifying and Maintaining the Attributes of a Fellow

6.1. A Fellow attains the necessary attributes through:

- Inherent abilities (determined at a competitive selection process), such that acquisition of the necessary attributes is feasible within a defined training programme.*
- A training programme comprising a series of learning modalities including:*
 - Experiential learning
 - Self-directed learning, including e-Learning
 - Courses, Workshops, Seminars, Lectures, Tutorials, Scientific Meetings and other group learning activities
 - Audit, critical assessment against the curriculum and focused training to meet specified competencies and standards.
 - Completion of a research project to a set standard

6.2. A Fellow is determined as having attained the necessary attributes through:

- a. A group of assessment modalities in the course of FRANZCOG training including (but not exclusively) in-house assessments, log-books, experience in approved training positions, written and structured oral examinations*
- b. An equivalent group of assessment modalities in an international O&G specialist training program*
- c. A combination of international and RANZCOG assessments*

6.3. A Fellow maintains and enhances the attributes through clinical experience and a compulsory CPD program that includes:

- a. Continuing Medical Education*
- b. Practice Audit and Review activities as appropriate for the chosen scope of practice*
- c. Other CPD activities as defined by the College*

A Fellow of many years standing will have his/her specialist attributes enhanced by the experience of clinical practice aided by CPD activities.

References

Consensus Statement: Medical Professionalism, Medical Professionalism in a changing context: beyond specialties and beyond borders. RACP, RACS and RCPSC

Disclaimer

This information is intended to provide general advice to practitioners, and should not be relied on as a substitute for proper assessment with respect to the particular circumstances of each case and the needs of any patient.

This information has been prepared having regard to general circumstances. It is the responsibility of each practitioner to have regard to the particular circumstances of each case. Clinical management should be responsive to the needs of the individual patient and the particular circumstances of each case.

This information has been prepared having regard to the information available at the time of its preparation, and each practitioner should have regard to relevant information, research or material which may have been published or become available subsequently.

Whilst the College endeavours to ensure that information is accurate and current at the time of preparation, it takes no responsibility for matters arising from changed circumstances or information or material that may have become subsequently available.