

AMC Findings - Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists 2022 Monitoring Submission

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: 2021

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 in order 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 2022 monitoring submission.</i>
Part B	<i>Acknowledgement, and responses to conditions that were satisfied in 2022 and have been closed</i>
Part C	<i>Detailed responses to information reporting 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 2022 monitoring submission.

Overall Summary of Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists 2022 monitoring submission

In 2022, the College has reported several positive initiatives including a review of the Advanced Training component of the Fellowship program, developing revised graduate outcome statements, reviewing all eLearning modules and training support resources, piloting Communication Skills programs and Emotional Intelligence and Sustained Well-being courses, and has commenced work on a central Evaluation Framework.

While the College has developed strategies and guidelines for training hospitals designed to improve gynaecological surgery procedure numbers, the COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted on the ability for trainees to meet requirements for training. This will be a point of interest in the 2023 reaccreditation assessment.

With the College amending its policy to now allow part-time training in Year 1 of FRANZCOG training, Condition 35 has been Satisfied and all accreditation standards are Met.

Standard	2021 Findings	2022 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	Substantially Met	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 – AMC feedback on conditions satisfied in 2022

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

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	Unsatisfactory	Not progressing	Progressing	Satisfied
				X
AMC commentary				
In the light of the Condition imposed in the 2021 Progress Report, the Board of the College has amended its Regulations to allow part-time training in Year 1 of FRANZCOG training and in Year 1 of subspecialty training without the need for the lodgement of an application for special consideration (i.e. flexible training now available to all trainees). The regulation changes were published in January 2022.				

Part C - Detailed feedback on standards, including remaining conditions

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
<p>The term of RANZCOG's Council has been changed from three to two years. Three permanent voting positions for First Nations members on the Council have now commenced.</p> <p>The College has provided details of its reporting structures, which have been reviewed extensively, to provide better oversight by the Board. All College committees and other bodies (71 in total), now report directly or indirectly to the Board. A revised governance chart has been produced to reflect these changes. Relevant personnel, receive information on the College's governance processes, policies, procedures, and functions as part of their induction. Provision has been made for increased trainee and consumer representation.</p> <p>The final Appeals Procedure outlined in the 2021 monitoring submission was provided. The processes appear to be thorough and comprehensive. Details were given of examples of SIMG cases where appeals were considered and overturned in 2019 and 2022.</p>

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 1
<p>Details were provided for the number of requests for reconsideration, review, and appeal in various categories. In all the majority were upheld.</p> <p>The fees associated with these processes were increased by 15.5% due to increased costs associated with the pandemic. It is stated that these were due to the rigorous process involved and the need to have two external consumer representatives as well as an independent Chair. Reconsideration fees increased from \$318 to \$367, while appeals fees increased from \$5,660 to \$6,537.</p> <p>The College is to be commended for its actions in providing cultural safety, unconscious bias, and respectful workplace training for staff, with the involvement of appropriate expert bodies, in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.</p> <p>As noted above the College has produced an updated College Governance Chart which reflects changes made to its reporting and governance processes.</p>

Summary of College performance against Standard 1

This Standard is 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

The College has received funding from the Department of Health to implement several projects that support training pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. The College is to be commended for its initiatives to encourage Indigenous students in Australia to enter the FRANZCOG program. Its advocacy and support programs in Aotearoa New Zealand are also worthy of commendation.

The Advanced Training component the Fellowship program is also being reviewed, and an Advanced Training Pathways Framework has been developed. There will be nine pathways to FRANZCOG: general, advanced obstetrics (with subspecialties maternal fetal medicine; O&G ultrasound), advanced gynaecology (with subspecialties reproductive endocrinology and infertility; urogynaecology; gynaecological oncology), sexual and reproductive health, and an academic pathway. Trainees in all pathways but the Generalist Pathway must complete essential training requirements to ensure a common O&G scope of practice for all fellows.

The College has provided detail on developments in the Advanced Obstetrics Pathway. It notes that improved access to operative gynaecology will not be immediately measurable, and the College will provide updates in future submissions. Further details on Gynaecological procedure numbers are provided under Standard 4.

The revised graduate outcome statements for all training programs appears to be a positive development which merits commendation.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

Summary of College performance against Standard 2

This Standard is 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 Board approved that the Medical Education Advanced Training Module (ATM) would be mandatory for all trainees undertaking the Academic Pathway from 2025.

The Board approved mandating educational exposure to medical and surgical abortion for FRANZCOG trainees, with relevant curriculum updates being made. In 2021, work commenced to develop an Advanced Training Pathway in Sexual & Reproductive Health (SRH). This pathway is due to be operational in 2023.

Since the change to the “Failure to Submit a 6 monthly assessment” to automatic “Not satisfactory” policy, the College has reported no trainee has failed to meet this requirement. Changes have been made to ensure that trainees who are struggling are supported and penalties avoided, when there are delays in the submission of additional requirements. In 2021, the College also uncoupled failure to submit additional requirements on time and automatic ‘not satisfactory’ 6-month assessment and reports that 28 trainees across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand benefitted from this change. The College received no feedback on this change from the Trainees’ Committee.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

Summary of College performance against Standard 3

This Standard is met.

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 has made some interesting and positive developments against this standard. It has piloted two online Communication Skills Courses to support trainees in effective communications with colleagues, patients and their families. Based on feedback from these pilots, further courses will be developed in 2022. It is also working to ensure alignment of the program content with the

communication aspects of the OSCEs. In 2021, the College piloted two Emotional Intelligence and Sustained Well-being courses. Trainee feedback was positive and more courses are scheduled for 2022.

The College has begun a major review of all eLearning modules and training support resources.

The Recognition of Prior Learning policy was reviewed in 2021 and provided by the College.

The Advanced Obstetrics ATM was provided and approved by the Board for the 2022 training year.

The College has developed strategies and guidelines for training hospitals designed to improve gynaecological surgery procedure numbers. Details of the revised FRANZCOG Accreditation Standards were documented in Appendices provided by the College (guidelines on gynaecological surgical training and strategies to improve gynaecological surgical procedures). While these strategies are a positive addition, COVID-19 has further impacted on the ability for trainees to meet requirements for training. This will be an area requiring an update in the College's 2023 reaccreditation assessment.

The College has updated its Statement of Understanding, which from 2022 will be signed yearly by FRANZCOG trainees.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

Summary of College performance against Standard 4

This Standard is 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

All FRANZCOG oral examinations were held successfully online in 2021, this included additional candidates who were unable to sit in 2020. To meet the increase demand, the College held four examinations (up from the usual two). No examinations were postponed in 2021.

All exam candidates receive written feedback on their exam performance. The Examination Verbal Feedback Policy has been reviewed and updated. From 2021, unsuccessful candidates are eligible for verbal feedback after any attempt of a written or oral examination (previously this was available only after their second unsuccessful attempt). It is encouraging to read that trainees have indicated improved levels of satisfaction (51% satisfaction for RANZCOG respondents vs. 34% overall in the Australian MTS) regarding the quality of examination feedback.

The College established an Examination Review Group to reflect on the recent low pass rate in Certification in Urogynaecology (CU). Standard setting education and training was provided to those who participated in the standard setting process for Subspecialty examinations. In 2021 6 out of 7 candidates passed (86%), up from 33% in 2020.

Following the 2022 monitoring submission being completed, the College notified the AMC that it has delayed the FRANZCOG Oral Online Examination from June 2022 to August 2022 due to unexpected College staffing turnover and shortages. The College is asked if it could please continue to provide the AMC with updates regarding staffing, and any impacts to examinations. A copy of any communications sent to examination candidates would also be useful for the AMC to be copied into.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 5

The College provide data on its 2021 summative assessment activity. No concerns to report.

Summary of College performance against Standard 5

This Standard 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

Due to the high level of development work during the year, stakeholder engagement has been confined to relevant College committees. However, it is stated that all relevant committees include trainee representatives and a number of members are supervisors. It is intended that wider consultation will occur in 2022.

The College has commenced work on a central Evaluation Framework to help capture all college evaluation activities. The Framework is due for implementation in the second half of 2022.

Details on the Accreditation Intervention Framework processes are outlined. This is to address issues arising outside normal accreditation processes and mechanisms and includes a hierarchy of responses and decision-making approvals. Special provision to escalate issues is made for sites with a small number of trainees.

The College also provided details of support offered to trainees, supervisors and SIMGs by the Training Support Unit.

Considerable detail is provided on how the College addresses bullying, harassment and discrimination issues. Information is collected by an independent outside organisation with the outcomes being considered by a high-level working group, independent of the College Board, with opportunities for members to contribute submissions and other groups being consulted. The processes appear to be comprehensive and appropriate. They include revision of accreditation standards.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 6

The College provided details on its evaluation of its six-monthly assessment survey responses. 2020 MTS results were discussed with College committees in 2021. Main areas for improvement included competing with others for access to opportunities, exam feedback, work/life balance and bullying, harassment and discrimination. 2021 MTS results are currently being analysed by the College.

MTS results and plans on how the College will use the results will be of interest in the 2023 reaccreditation assessment.

Summary of College performance against Standard 6

This Standard is 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

It is reported that work is underway to grow the Māori O&G workforce, including barriers to recruitment and retention. From March 2022, there are revised criteria for scoring CVs for

FRANZCOG applicants in the areas of leadership and altruism to include recognising contributions to Māori health or local marae, hapū, iwi, or wananga.

The College introduced a new research requirement policy in 2022, to make the research requirement more achievable for trainees.

The Wellbeing Working Group appears to be comprehensive in its membership and its processes and scope appear to be appropriate. The intention to seek Local Wellbeing Advocates late in 2021 is a worthwhile initiative. It will be interesting to learn how successful this was and how it has progressed.

The College have introduced Organisational Values Awards for those who demonstrate values of advocacy, education, excellence, integrity, kindness and respect.

Processes to cope with the training impacts of COVID-19 in 2021 appear to be comprehensive and appropriate.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 7

The College has provided statistics on trainees entering and completing training. In 2021, a total of 79 people complete the FRANZCOG training program and six FRANZCOG trainees exited the training program for other reasons.

While the actual fees are not provided there was a 15.5% increase in all trainee, member and workshop fees in 2021 (note the 2022 fees are publicly available on the RANZCOG website). Trainees were notified in writing and a Q&A session was arranged where trainees could question the responsible senior officers of the College and where the Head of Finance presented a report on what costs are covered by trainee fees.

Summary of College performance against Standard 7

The remaining condition against this standard has been met and Standard 7 is now met.

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

The revised *Accreditation Standards and Guidelines for Hospitals in the FRANZCOG Training Program* have been provided. Bullying, harassment and discrimination is now addressed through

a separate criterion. Sites must also provide information to the College when requested as part of the accreditation standards.

It is worthy of note that additional training has been provided to Supervisors through the Foundation Supervisor Training Program for new supervisors and the Refresher Supervisor Training Program for existing Supervisors. A key focus is discussing and practising feedback models. This is a commendable initiative.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

At

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 8

The College provided a summary of its training site accreditation activities in 2021. 17 sites were visited, 12 accredited/reaccredited and 2 at risk of losing accreditation (1 has no trainees).

Summary of College performance against Standard 8

This Standard is 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 Colleges CPD Triennium comes to an end in June 2022. No major changes have been made to the CPD Framework.

CPD information webinars were also held in November and December 2021.

COVID-19 continues to disrupt the Aotearoa New Zealand practice visit program. In 2021, cultural safety aspects of the program were reviewed to include more self-reflection.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 9

The College provided the number and proportion of college fellows participating in CPD programs. Detailed information on work to meet the Medical Council of New Zealand's requirements is given.

Summary of College performance against Standard 9

This Standard is 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 reported on the new role of Clinical Advisor who is an ex officio member of the SIMG Assessment Committee. The role allows preliminary outcomes decisions to be made which would previously be sent to the SIMG Assessment Committee Chair for approval. This seems appropriate and reduces problems with conflict of interest.

SIMG interviews will continue to be held online in 2022.

2 Activity against conditions

Nil remain.

3 Statistics and annual updates

AMC commentary – statistics and annual updates against Standard 10

Data was provided for the number of SIMG applications in 2021.

Summary of College performance against Standard 10

This Standard is met.