

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title of Committee

Professional Standards Committee (PSC)

1. Reporting

The Professional Standards Committee reports directly to the RANZCOG Board.

2. Date of Establishment

The PSC was established in June 2019 from an amalgamation of the Professionalism and Ethics Advisory Committee and the Standards and Complaints Committee.

3. Functions and Responsibilities

The PSCs' responsibilities include the following:

- Lead and champion the work and implementation of the College's Organisational Values that will have a lasting positive impact on the College;
- Develop a list of key themes to form the basis of a proposed set of organisation values;
- Wide consultation with the membership and the College Staff;
- Make recommendations to the RANZCOG Board for approval concerning the making, amending and repealing of RANZCOG Regulations (Section A: Governance, relating to the following) for approval;
 - Categories of membership, Professional Standards Committee, and academic misconduct
- Recommend to the RANZCOG Council and Board on a proposed set of Organisational Values;
- Recommend to the RANZCOG Council and Board on launch and implementation of the College's Organisation values;
- The promotion of accepted standards of practice and ethics by members of the College through the consideration and adjudication of conduct that may breach the RANZCOG Code of Conduct or related College objectives. Such considerations may include matters received through complaints from College members in regard to the personal and/or professional conduct of other members, and notifications from recognised authorities (including employers), but does not include complaints received from members of the public in respect of the personal and/or professional conduct of College members;
- When a matter is referred to the Committee for decision, the Committee shall have the power to deliberate on the matter and to make a decision within the limits outlined in its Terms of Reference, and then report such decision to the RANZCOG Board and any other bodies as required;
- Examine ethical issues identified by the RANZCOG Board which impinge on obstetrical and gynaecological practice;
- Monitor the developments affecting the field of obstetrics and gynaecology which have ethical impact, including societal attitudes to such developments;
- Prepare discussion papers as a basis for College and/or public debate on issues where the Committee recommends that the College take a lead in the community;
- Liaise with the Australian Health Ethics Committee (AHEC) and any other appropriate ethics committee on relevant issues;
- Evaluate and approve where appropriate research projects referred by the College, with additional research expertise co-opted as required;

- Regularly review the College's Code of Conduct and update where appropriate; and
- The Committee shall report to the RANZCOG Board on a regular basis. Where a matter is referred to the Committee for decision, the Committee shall have the power to deliberate on the matter and to make a decision within the limits outlined in its Terms of Reference and associated Regulations, and then report such decision to the RANZCOG Board and any other bodies as outlined.

The Committee shall have the power to appoint from time-to-time ad hoc working groups to undertake particular tasks relating to the development/research of policy and related issues being considered by the Committee. If deemed appropriate, terms of reference for a working party will be developed.

Any recommendations to the RANZCOG Board regarding initiatives or modifications to the functions and responsibilities that require resources not already funded must be accompanied by:

- the source of funding and how the funding will be raised; and
- a budget detailing all expenses involved.

4. Membership

All appointments to the PSC will be made by the RANZCOG President for a period of two (2) years, that is, the full Council term, and in accordance with RANZCOG Policy *Tenure of Appointment to RANZCOG Committees and External Bodies*. Members who serve the maximum number of consecutive terms may be eligible for membership of the Committee following an absence of one (1) term.

Membership of the Committee must include representatives from New Zealand and Australia. The membership of the committee may include but not be restricted to:

- One (1) RANZCOG Board-appointed nominee, who shall Chair the Committee;
- Two (2) RANZCOG Councillors, who are not members of the RANZCOG Board;
- One (1) Fellow;
- One (1) RANZCOG Associate (Procedural or Advanced Procedural) representative, who is not a member of the RANZCOG Board;
- One (1) Community Representative, who is not a Fellow of the College;
- One (1) College legal advisor, who is not a Fellow of the College; and
- One (1) Trainee Representative.

The Committee shall have the ability to co-opt up to two (2) extra individuals with specific expertise, knowledge or background as considered necessary in order to expedite specific matters. Such individuals may or may not be Fellows of the RANZCOG and will be nominated following discussion between the Chair of the PSC and the Chief Executive Officer.

In accordance with Section 9 of this document, the Committee can invite attendees as visitors or observers to consult widely with appropriate stakeholders.

All Committee members have voting rights.

The ex officio member will be the RANZCOG CEO, who will not have voting rights.

By accepting the invitation to be a member of the PSC, individual members must comply with the RANZCOG *Code of Conduct* and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the standard of professional and ethical behaviour expected by the College, and agree to abide by the following College policies, procedures and guidelines:

- *Attendance Policy and Procedure for Members of RANZCOG Bodies;*
- *College Organisational Values;*
- *Confidentiality Policy: Board, Council and Committees;*
- *Conflict of Interest Policy;* and
- *Conduct of Meeting Policy.*

5. Proceedings of the Committee

- Upon referral of a matter or complaint pursuant to the Regulations, the PSC will decide whether, prima facie, there is a case to answer in respect of such matter or complaint.
- If it is decided that there is a prima facie case to answer, the PSC will forward appropriate details of the matter or complaint to the member concerned who will be entitled to receive sufficient details of the nature and circumstances of the allegations in the matter or complaint as will allow them to fully respond to the allegations and as the rules of natural justice may require.
- At the meeting of the PSC held to consider the matter, the member is to be given an opportunity to be heard, and the Committee will give due consideration to any written or oral submissions made by the member. The member may be accompanied by another person, but is not be entitled to have an advocate or be legally represented before the PSC, unless the Committee has given its prior consent.
- Any member of the PSC who was involved in the matter or complaint, or who had previously made a decision in relation to the matter or complaint, or who is a partner or has any other family or professional relationship or other conflict of interest, whether actual or perceived, with the member or complainant concerned, will not participate in any consideration of the matter or complaint by the Committee. In such circumstances the President is to nominate a replacement for that Committee member.
- The PSC is not bound by the rules of evidence and, subject to the rules of natural justice, may inform itself on any matter and in such manner as it thinks fit. Any information which is material to the allegations made in relation to the member is to be disclosed to the member, and they will be given sufficient opportunity to make submissions in relation to that information.
- The PSC is entitled to consider all relevant information which it thinks fit and may invite any person to appear before it or to provide information.
- The PSC is to conduct its affairs with as little formality as possible, but otherwise has full power to regulate its conduct and operation, including convening and adjourning any meeting as it may require. In considering any matter or complaint, the PSC is to act as expeditiously as the circumstances permit, and may make its own enquiries and seek legal or other professional advice in relation to any matter or complaint under consideration.
- Decisions of the PSC:
 - After consideration of a complaint or matter the PSC may:
 - dismiss the matter or complaint and exonerate the member;
 - counsel the member and/or require the member to participate in any relevant College program or activity;
 - censure the member;
 - refer the matter or complaint to the Board for consideration (including suspension or termination of the membership, removal of subspecialty certification or other College award, or removal from the FRANZCOG Training Program);
 - refer the matter or complaint to an appropriate Authority:
 - The PSC may decide to refer the matter or complaint to an appropriate Authority at any time after receipt of the matter or complaint.

6. Management and Coordination

Management of the day-to-day operations of the Committee will be undertaken by RANZCOG, with the activities of the Committee coordinated through the Office of the President and CEO Directorate.

7. Chair

The Chair and Deputy Chair shall be appointed for a period of two (2) years. The Chair shall have delegated authority to deal with committee matters of a routine and administrative nature. The Chair can serve a maximum of two (2) two-year terms subject to any additional provisions in the *Tenure of Appointment to RANZCOG Committees and External Bodies Policy*, as well as clauses 10.4 and 11.4 of the *RANZCOG Constitution*, which governs the terms of office of RANZCOG Councillors and RANZCOG Board members, if

applicable.

Matters dealt with by the Chair will be tabled at each committee meeting. Matters on which no precedent has been established, matters of policy, new issues, specific referral matters and matters that require the benefit of full committee discussion will be considered by the full committee. The Committee shall have the power to appoint from time-to-time ad hoc working groups to undertake particular tasks relating to the development/ research of policy and related issues being considered by the Committee.

8. Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be half of the core membership plus one (1). Ex-officio members can be included in the quorum if in attendance at a meeting. If Ex-officio members are not in attendance, then they do not need to be included in the number required for a quorum. Any questions and/or motions arising from meetings shall be decided by a majority of votes 'for' and 'against'. The Chair shall have a deliberative vote in addition to a vote as a member of the Committee. If a quorum is not present, the meeting will not go ahead.

9. Observers and Visitors

Observers and visitors must have received the prior permission of the Chair to attend meetings. Observers and visitors must leave the meeting if any matters are to be considered in camera.

10. Meeting Papers – Agenda and Minutes

Requests for agenda items/reports for any scheduled meeting of the Committee may be sent to committee members 21 working days prior to a scheduled meeting date.

All Committee agenda items may be forwarded to the Committee Co-ordinator by close of business 14 working days prior to the next scheduled meeting. The Chair has the right to refuse to list an item on the formal agenda, but members may raise an item under 'Other Business' if necessary and as time permits.

The Committee agenda and meeting papers will be distributed to all Committee members at least seven (7) working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

Accurate Minutes will be kept of each meeting, including decisions of any determination made in relation to any matter or complaint before it. The Minutes may be confined to a report of the resolutions and any recommendations. Draft Minutes are to be completed no later than 10 working days following each meeting and passed to the Chair for approval. It is expected that the Chair of the meeting shall approve the Minutes within five (5) working days upon receipt.

The Draft Minutes and Action List shall be provided to all Committee members no later than 15 working days following the meeting.

Recommendations and reports to the RANZCOG Board are to be drawn up by the Committee Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Chair, and provided to the RANZCOG Board Coordinator for inclusion on the next meeting agenda of the RANZCOG Board.

The Minutes shall be submitted to Committee members for ratification at the next meeting of the Committee.

By agreement of the Committee, majority approved out of session decisions will be deemed acceptable. Where agreed, all out of session decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled Committee meeting.

11. Frequency of Meetings

The Committee will meet as required, via teleconference or videoconference, in order to consider conduct issues.

Members of the Committee may also meet in person, or via teleconference or videoconference, for the purposes of carrying out their functions to consider external ethical issues and to progress a review of the Code of Conduct.

12. Review of Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference should be reviewed every two (2) years.

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	July 2019	
v2	October 2020	
v3	October 2021	
v4	August 2022	Amendments to the Membership to include trainee representative
v5	March 2023	Update on the functions and responsibility of the PSC following Board delegation
v6	February 2024	Revised to reflect change in nomenclature

Policy Version:	Version 6
Policy Owner:	RANZCOG Governance and Legal
Policy Approved by:	RANZCOG ELT
Review of Policy:	February 2026