ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF COURSES

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Accreditation of courses

A course that has been accredited by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) reflects a provider's commitment to delivering the highest standards of education to RACS' Fellows, Trainees, International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and prevocational doctors in accordance with RACS' best practice educational standards and criteria.

Courses accredited by RACS have permission to use the RACS accreditation logo on their promotional and marketing materials.

For the purpose of this document, RACS defines a "course" as an entire course, activity, event, workshop, and web resource or eLearning module.

Course accreditation is valid for two years.

Guiding principles

To encourage Fellows, Trainees, International Graduates (IMGs) and prevocational doctors to extend their skills by providing access to a range of education activities that have been recognised by RACS and therefore deemed educationally sound, appropriate and relevant.

To provide a quality assurance process to ensure compliance with RACS' education standards when reviewing and recognising activities for the purposes of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Education activities recognised in the CPD Program generally focus on maintenance of knowledge and skills and performance review.

To collaborate with educational providers and encourage them to engage with RACS to have their educational activities accredited.

Benefits

- Review by a panel of surgeons and educators
- Listing on Royal Australasian College of Surgeons website
- Listing in the JDocs Framework and on the JDocs website (where appropriate)
- Applicable courses forwarded for approval to accrue CPD points
- Use of the RACS accreditation logo on course materials, certificates and websites

How to apply

Applicants apply through the online course accreditation Provider Portal. The Provider Portal allows the applicant to securely manage course accreditation applications and approvals online.

Features include:

- All applications managed in one place
- Save function allows completion/submission of application at a later date
- Easy upload of supporting documents
- Easy access to due dates for renewal of accreditation
- Email alerts

To create a user account

1. Go to RACS Provider Portal
2. Select "Create Account"
3. Once you have created the account please email course.accreditation@surgeons.org to notify the course accreditation team who will provide access confirmation.

To lodge an application

1. Log on to the RACS Provider Portal with user details created above
2. Select "Course Accreditation Application"
3. Ensure all fields and appropriate documentation are completed and then submit your application

If you require assistance, please call the Course Accreditation team on +61 3 9249 1297 or email
course.accreditation@surgeons.org

Important information when applying

- Fees are published on the RACS website and payment must be made by credit card or PayPal.
- A separate application is required for each individual course. Nested courses cannot be reviewed through the one application.

Approval process

Once the application is Applications are supported by course documentation which is reviewed by the Accreditation Review Panel (ARP) and Dean of Education to ensure that the required educational standards and criteria are met and to verify that the teaching methods, learning aims and outcomes are sound. Where necessary, the Dean may seek expert advice from Fellows. Accreditation approvals are then ratified by the College Education Board Executive. Education providers are invited to apply for renewal of accreditation of their course/activity every two years, for which currently there is no fee.

Standards and criteria for accreditation

To be accredited by RACS, educational activities must meet the identified educational needs of Fellows, Trainees, IMGs and/or prevocational doctors (JDocs), and align to one or more of the **nine RACS competencies.**

RACS Nine Competencies

The College aims to facilitate safe, comprehensive surgical care of the highest standard to the communities we serve. To meet this standard, College training and development programs aspire to certify specialist surgeons with the following competencies:

- **Collaboration and Teamwork**
- **Communication**
- **Health advocacy**
- **Judgement - clinical decision making**
- **Management and Leadership**
- **Medical expertise**
- **Professionalism and Ethics**
- **Scholarship and Teaching**
- **Technical expertise**

JDocs Framework - is based on the College's nine core competencies, and describes the many tasks, skills and behaviours expected of the junior doctor during the early prevocational years (PGY1–PGY3+).

RACS uses twelve standards, supported by criteria for accreditation

1. **Organisation details**

   - Provide contact details for the person submitting the application
   - Provide full details of the organisation

2. **Needs/gap analysis**

   The purpose of a needs assessment is to discover what the target groups need to learn and why. There a number of ways to conduct a needs assessment, for example:

   - using questionnaires/surveys/focus groups
   - consulting other professionals
   - consulting expert bodies or community groups.

Please note: Please only select the three most relevant competencies on your application

3. **Learning aims**

   Learning aim(s) reflect the broad purposes or goals of the course, and are generally presented as a statement of the intentions when designing or delivering the course.

   - Provide clear learning aim(s) that reflect the overall purpose and intention of the course

   - Provide a clear statement of what participants will achieve as a result of completing the course

4. **Learning outcomes**

   Learning outcomes are specific statements of intent that:

   - clearly define what participants will gain by attending the course

- describe what participants will be able to do at the end of the course; that is, the knowledge and/or skills they will gain and the change in behaviour that may occur

- have a clear link with the course aim(s)

- are realistic and achievable.

See Appendix B: Bloom's Taxonomy

5. **Course details**

Provide details of the**:**

- program/syllabus

- rationale – why the course was developed and how it meets the learning needs of the target audience

- title and topics

- target groups

- pre-requisites (knowledge, skills, qualifications)

- duration (number of days/weeks/hours)

- frequency of scheduled classes

- number of participants

- qualification or certification.

6. **Assessment**

Detail the assessment methods to ensure that:

- assessment tasks are valid, reliable, flexible, fair and achievable

- assessment tools are identified and clearly described

- assessments clearly demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome.

Detail the remediation process to show:

- support for participants who have not met the assessed standards.

7. **Teaching and learning strategies**

There are many different teaching and learning strategies that may be used to deliver educational programs. The course must use principles of adult learning and instructional methods appropriate for the participants, the activities and the venue.

- List the learning activities used (e.g. lectures, presentations, group discussion, role play)

- List the delivery methods used (e.g. face-to-face, online, clinical hands-on, blended learning)

- Specify strategies to maximise participant engagement (e.g. interactivity, structured feedback, self-assessment)

8. **Faculty**

Providers must demonstrate that the trainer's qualifications and experience are appropriate to deliver the course.

- Presenters/trainers/facilitators must have relevant expertise, knowledge and skills to deliver the course content identified in the program/syllabus.

9. Evaluation

Evaluation reviews the effectiveness of the teaching and learning activities, resources, and of the course overall, against the stated learning outcomes.

For the participants: learning is more effective if participants are given opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt and what further information on the topic they may need.

For the education provider: assessing whether or not the course was successful and what improvements may need to be made are essential for ongoing continuous improvement.

- Provide either accumulated or samples of individual participant evaluations; include evidence of changes to the course in response to evaluations, if such changes have occurred.
- Detail internal audit review processes to ensure ongoing continuous improvement

See Appendix A – Sample evaluation form

10. Compliance

Provide evidence of compliance with all criteria that affect the delivery of the course.

- Course organisers must ensure that the facilities used are suitable for conduct of the educational activities, and comply with relevant health and safety legislation
- Course content and promotional material must be accurate, up-to-date and free from unjustifiable claims or bias
- Where commercial sponsorship is obtained, there must be clear separation between the education and any promotion of products and/or services
- The course only promotes theories, techniques or products that are supported by scientific evidence or are generally accepted by the medical profession
- Providers must comply with current regulatory and legislative requirements
- Copyright clearance must be obtained for course content, where appropriate

11. Validity

RACS retains the right to withdraw accreditation for a course at any time if it believes an education provider is non-compliant with its accreditation criteria, as outlined in these Standards.

Reasons for non-compliance may include (this list is not exhaustive):

- significant changes to educational content and/or learning aims
- failure to disclose any conflict of interest on the part of the organiser, provider or speakers
- unauthorised use of the RACS accreditation logo.

12. Renewal of accreditation

Education providers will be notified by RACS 90 days prior to the expiration of their accreditation, to ascertain their intention to maintain ongoing accreditation status. Providers are asked to log in to the accreditation portal and submit evidence of ongoing quality assurance regarding:

- changes which affect the learning outcomes of the educational activities
- participant evaluation feedback/summary
- course certificate
- latest course program/syllabus

- changes to any regulatory agreements

- copy of current promotional material, e.g. flyer, brochure and/or link to website.

If the above information is not provided prior to the expiration of accreditation, reference to the course will be removed from the RACS website. The provider must also remove all references to RACS from the course outline, as well as cease to promote or list their course using the RACS accreditation logo.

Appendices

13. **Appendix A:** Course evaluation form

14. **Appendix B:** Bloom's taxonomy

Appendix A: Course evaluation form

Please rate your response to each question on the following scale of 1–5 by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

1 = Strongly disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Unsure   4 = Agree   5 = Strongly agree

Question	1	2	3	4	5
The aims of the training were clearly explained					
The learning outcomes were explicit and attainable					
The assessments matched the learning outcomes					
The prerequisite learning resources were useful					
The facilitators were organised and prepared					
The facilitators had an excellent knowledge of the content					
The facilitators were informative and engaging					
The facilitators responded to questions with in depth answers					
The facilitators provided effective feedback					
The training venue was appropriate for the activities					
The resources were relevant and adequate for the activities					
There was a suitable balance of learning activities					
The course uses appropriate online resources and technologies					
The content was comprehensive, informative and relevant					
Demonstrations were clear and informative					
The concepts were presented in a way I understood					
It was easy to login and access eLearning (where applicable)					
Each eLearning quiz tested my knowledge (where applicable)					
I liked receiving feedback and results after each activity					
Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the course					
I feel confident I can transfer the learning to my surgical practice					

Please comment on areas of the course that you found most relevant**.**

Please comment on areas of the course that you think need modifying.

We appreciate your feedback; this information will be used to improve our courses.

Appendix B: Bloom's taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy revised for clinical training

Low level thinking skills ← → High level thinking skills

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Recall facts, terms, basic concepts and answers without understanding.	Demonstrate a basic understanding of facts and ideas.	Apply knowledge and skills in a new situation. Solve problems by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way.	Examine in detail and break information into parts by identifying causes, making inferences and finding evidence to support a clinical diagnosis.	Change or create something new. Compile information together in a different way by combining observation, test results and consultation to propose an alternative clinical diagnosis.	Present and defend opinions by making judgements about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on clinical criteria.
Key words Choose, Define, Duplicate, Gather, Find, History, Identify, Label, Locate, Match, Memorise, Name, Observe, Omit, Recall, Recite, Recognise, Record, Relate, Remember, Repeat, Reproduce, Retell, Select, Show, Tell, Write	**Key words** Classify, Demonstrate, Describe, Discuss, Explain, Express, Give examples, Illustrate, Indicate, Infer, Interpret, Observe, Outline, Predict, Relate, Report, Restate, Review, Show, Summarise	**Key words** Act, Administer, Apply, Calculate, Categorise, Choose, Connect, Demonstrate, Develop, Identify, Illustrate, Interpret, Interview, Manage, Make, Organise, Perform, Plan, Practise, Relate, Respond, Select, Simulate, Solve, Summarise, Take a history, Take part in, Teach, Test for, Use	**Key words** Analyse, Appraise, Categorise, Choose, Communicate, Compare, Consider, Contrast, Differentiate, Diagnose, Discover, Discuss, Distinguish, Establish, Examine, Find, Focus, Gather, Group, Highlight, Interpret, Investigate, Organise, Prioritise, Question, Reason, Recognise, Research	**Key words** Change, Choose, Combine, Construct, Design, Develop, Devise, Discuss, Elaborate, Extend, Formulate, Hypothesise, Implement, Improve, Innovate, Integrate, Model, Modify, Plan, Predict, Produce, Reframe, Revise, Solve, Substitute, Test, Think, Transform, Visualise	**Key words** Agree, Appraise, Argue, Assess, Choose, Collaborate, Compare, Consider, Contribute, Convince, Debate, Decide, Deduct, Defend, Determine, Disprove, Give reasons, Infer, Influence, Interpret, Judge, Justify, Lead, Measure, Perceive, Prioritise, Prove, Rate, Recommend, Reflect, Select, Support

Reference – Bloom's Taxonomy; Teacher Planning Kit