

REGULATION

Portfolio	Fellowship Engagement	Ref. No.	REG-3033
Department	Professional Standards		
Title	Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program – Participation and Compliance		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) includes the determination and maintenance of professional standards for the practice of surgery in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

This policy outlines the participation and compliance requirements for Fellows participating in the RACS Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program. This policy should be read in conjunction with the CPD Program Regulation and other associated policies and standards (see Associated Documents)

This policy does not apply to Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMG) and their CPD requirements which are addressed via a separate regulation and/or policy.

2. KEYWORDS

Continuing Professional Development (CPD), vocationally registered surgeons, compliance, Fellows.

3. BODY OF POLICY

All Fellows in active practice and who are not participating in another RACS approved CPD program have a requirement to participate in the RACS CPD Program.

A Fellow is defined as 'active' for the purposes of CPD if they are undertaking any form of medicine, surgery, medico-legal work or other non-clinical work (i.e. research, administration) that requires maintenance of medical registration with a requirement to comply with CPD regulatory standards.

3.1. Aims

The aims of the RACS CPD Program are:

- 3.1.1. To advance the individual surgeon's knowledge, skills, competence and behavioural awareness for the benefit of patients
- 3.1.2. To encourage a culture of life-long learning that promotes collaboration, peer review and reflective practice
- 3.1.3. To ensure compliance with regulatory authority standards

3.2. CPD and Area of Practice

Participation in CPD activities should reflect a Fellow's Area of Practice (AoP). An AoP - often used interchangeably with Scope of Practice - is self-defined by a Fellow and can be reviewed at any time throughout the year.

A Fellow's AoP for CPD is determined by their main surgical specialty or specialties. A list of defined AoP's is available for a Fellow to select, which were developed in consultation with specialty associations and societies. Fellows can also select other areas that form part of

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their practice outside of their specialty which may include teaching, supervision, medico-legal practice etc.

At least 50% of CPD each year must be relevant to a Fellow's AoP. The other 50% can relate specifically to an AoP, other medical interests or to pursue CPD in re-skilling or re-training.

3.3. Program Requirements and Categories

The RACS CPD Program requirements have been designed in accordance with regulatory standards set by the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) and the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ).

In accordance with these standards, all Fellows must comply with all requirements annually unless provided with an exemption from participation (see CPD Policy – Exemptions).

3.3.1. CPD Minimum Requirements

Fellows must meet the following annual CPD requirements:

CATEGORY	STANDARD	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
Learning Plan	Complete a Learning Plan	One (1) per annum
Audit	Audit of self/own practice	One (1) per annum
	Audit of Surgical Mortality (ANZASM)	As required
Performance Review	a) Performance of Self b) Performance of Others	At least one (1) activity At least one (1) activity
Education Activities	At least two (2) activities - minimum 40 hours per annum	

Table 1: RACS CPD Categories – 2021

3.3.2. CPD Categories

The minimum standard for each CPD category is outlined in the CPD Program Standards:

- Learning Plan
- Education Activity
- Audit
- Performance Review

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3.4. Participation and Compliance

Fellows must participate in and satisfactorily complete CPD for each calendar year - 1 January to 31 December.

As required by regulatory authorities in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, all Fellows must comply with the requirements of the CPD Program regardless of practice type. Fellows must participate in enough CPD to comply with the minimum requirements each year. Activities cannot be retrospectively applied unless in extraordinary circumstances and as approved by the Chair, Professional Standards and Advocacy Committee (PSAC) or Chair, Professional Standards Committee (PSC).

3.5. CPD Verification

Each year a random selection of Fellows is selected for CPD verification. Fellows who are selected to verify their CPD are audited and required to provide additional documentation to support their participation in activities (see CPD Policy – Verification).

3.6. Reporting CPD Participation

Fellows must report their CPD participation by no later than 28 February of the following year (i.e. for the 2022 CPD year, CPD must be reported by no later than 28 February 2023).

Fellows who are unable to complete their CPD can request an exemption from CPD participation (see CPD Policy – Exemptions).

All CPD should be reported through the RACS CPD Portfolio. In extenuating circumstances, paper-based submissions may be accepted.

Fellows who do not report their CPD participation, who provide insufficient reporting of CPD or who do not meet the minimum verification requirement (if selected) will receive a series of graduated reminders.

Fellows who do not respond to these reminders may be provided with notice that they are breach of the RACS Code of Conduct and sanctioned in accordance with the Professional Conduct Committee Terms of Reference Regulation.

At the discretion of PSAC, Fellows residing in Australia who do not comply with annual CPD requirements may be reported to the relevant regulatory authority in their jurisdiction.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, Fellows who do not comply will be reported to the MCNZ in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between RACS and MCNZ.

3.7. Fellows participating in other approved CPD Programs

RACS recognises other approved CPD programs that are comparable to the RACS CPD Program. The CPD Programs currently recognised by RACS are:

- Australian Orthopaedic Association
- New Zealand Orthopaedic Association
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO)

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Associations or Colleges recognised by RACS who do not hold Australian Medical Council (AMC) accreditation should provide regular updates of non-compliant Fellows of RACS to ensure accurate compliance report to the AMC. If this information is unavailable, RACS may ask the Fellow to provide a copy of their Certificate of Compliance with the other approved program.

3.8. Fellows residing overseas

Fellows of RACS in active practice who reside overseas are required to participate in either the RACS CPD Program or the equivalent CPD Program in the country in which they reside. This includes Fellows temporarily overseas (i.e. post-Fellowship training) and those residing overseas permanently.

Fellows who reside overseas may be subject to random verification selection (see CPD Policy – Verification)

For Fellows participating in an equivalent CPD Program in the country in which they reside, evidence of participation (i.e. CPD Certificate) should be uploaded into their CPD Portfolio.

3.9. Non-FRACS surgeons participating in the RACS CPD Program

RACS provides access to surgeons who are not FRACS in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (previously referred to as Maintenance of Professional Standards or MOPS).

Surgeons who choose to participate in the RACS CPD are required to pay an annual subscription which provides access to the CPD Portfolio and other RACS services including the College Library, the Morbidity Audit Logbook Tool (MALT) and online learning activities.

These surgeons are required to complete the same CPD requirements as Fellows and are eligible for selection for verification. While RACS will provide regular reminders to these surgeons, they will not be eligible for sanction if they fail to comply. If required by the MCNZ, RACS may report their non-compliance to this body.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Guide

Policy – CPD Participation and Compliance

Policy - CPD Verification

Policy - CPD Exemptions

CPD Standard - Audit and Peer Review

CPD Standard - Education Activity

CPD Standard - Learning Plan

CPD Standard - Performance Review

RACS Code of Conduct

RACS Surgical Competence and Performance Guide

RACS Surgical Audit and Peer Review Guide

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Regulation - Professional Conduct Committee – Terms of Reference

Regulation - Professional Standards and Advocacy Committee

Policy - Professional Standards Committee – Terms of Reference

Policy - Locum Evaluation and Peer Review Committee

Policy – Approval of Activities in the CPD Program

Position Paper – Interactions with the Medical Industry

Approver: Professional Standards and Advocacy Committee

Authoriser: Council