



Flexible Training Policy

Policy Name	Flexible Training
Department	Education Services
Approved By	College Education Committee
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1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1. This policy outlines the flexible training options available for RACP trainees (including Fellows in training) enrolled in Division, Faculty and Chapter training programs. The policy details provisions for part-time training and interruptions to training (including parental leave).
- 1.2. Underpinning this policy is the tri-partite relationship between the needs of the individual trainee, the workplace and the RACP. The flexible pathway adopted must take into consideration:
 - personal circumstances and professional objectives,
 - the College requirements for training, assessment and maintenance of competence and timely progression through training, and
 - workplace staffing requirements, service provision and continuity of care.

A satisfactory arrangement should be reached which considers the requirements of each party in the tri-partite relationship.

- 1.3. The RACP is committed to facilitating flexible training opportunities for trainees of all RACP education programs with the following key aims:
 - 1.3.1. To retain within the RACP physician education programs doctors who are unable to train on a full-time continuous basis.
 - 1.3.2. To enable trainees to pursue training whilst fulfilling concomitant obligations such as family commitments.
 - 1.3.3. To ensure continued training in programs on a time-equivalence (pro-rata) basis.
 - 1.3.4. To maintain a balance between less than full-time or interrupted training arrangements, educational requirements and service needs.



- 1.4. Equivalent training requirements will enable the College to ensure that the objectives of training and the required standard of knowledge, skills, and professional attributes are attained regardless of the mode of training and flexible training arrangements.

2. Meeting the standards of training

- 2.1. The overall length of certified training must be equivalent to the training requirements of full-time continuous training.
- 2.2. Trainees must meet all of the objectives in the training curriculum and obtain the same breadth of experience and pro-rata amount of allocated time for teaching and learning activities, supervision, study, special interest sessions, on-call commitments and various specialty rotations (as appropriate).

3. Applications for flexible training arrangements

- 3.1. Trainees are encouraged to plan as far in advance as possible if there is a need for flexible training arrangements (parental leave or interruption).
- 3.2. Approval of flexible training arrangements must be sought prospectively in writing from the relevant training committee with the applicable fee.
- 3.3. Flexible training applications may be made at any time during the training year.
- 3.4. Trainees may apply for flexible training as many times as they wish and for as long as they wish at any stage of training; however all training requirements must be completed within the parameters of the time limit to complete training as set out in the Progression through training policy.
- 3.5. Interruptions from training without prospective approval may be grounds for discontinuation of training.
- 3.6. In addition to the College's approval of flexible training arrangements, the employer must also be willing to provide appropriate employment conditions in order for such arrangements to occur.

4. Part-time training

- 4.1. Part-time training refers to training completed at a minimum of 0.4 full-time equivalent (FTE).
 - 4.1.1. Training at less than 0.4 FTE may be appropriate in some training programs. The relevant training committee has discretion to approve training periods at less than 0.4FTE if the educational requirements will be met. This may be particularly relevant in post-Fellowship training.
- 4.2. Part time training duties should be pro-rata to full time training duties provided that all educational requirements will be met.
- 4.3. Trainees undertaking part-time training are required to complete the same number of annual formative and summative assessment activities and teaching and learning tools as trainees undertaking full-time training.

5. Interruption during a training program



- 5.1. Interrupted training refers to any absence (full-time) from an approved training position in excess of the leave allowed from training.
- 5.2. During a period of approved interruption to training
 - 5.2.1. Training periods undertaken are not eligible for certification.
 - 5.2.2. Completion of formative assessments and teaching and learning tools is not required.
 - 5.2.3. Research projects or other written project requirements may be undertaken.
 - 5.2.4. An interruption fee is payable to remain in the training program.
- 5.3. If training is interrupted for part of a training year, formative assessment requirements for the remaining period will be determined on a pro-rata basis by the relevant education/training committee.
- 5.4. Trainees may interrupt their training for a continuous period of up to 12 months without being required to complete additional training requirements.
 - 5.4.1. If training is interrupted for more than 12 continuous months, additional formative assessments will, in most cases, be required during the first 6 months upon return to training. The requirement of additional formative assessments will be determined by the relevant training committee.
 - 5.4.2. If training is interrupted for more than 24 continuous months, the relevant training committee will, in most cases, require an additional period of training. Any additional requirements will be determined on a case by case basis and depend upon activities undertaken during interruption.
- 5.5. Interrupted training due to **parental leave**
 - 5.5.1. A maximum period of 24 months of approved full-time parental leave across each training program (Basic, Advanced, Faculty and Chapter) can be excluded from the time limit to complete training.
 - 5.5.2. Full-time parental leave in excess of 24 months may be taken; however it will not be excluded from the time limit to complete training.
 - 5.5.3. Part-time parental leave (i.e. part-time training) is not considered an interruption and will not be excluded from the time limit to complete training.

6. Interruption between Training Programs

- 6.1 A trainee who has completed Basic Training (Divisions) must commence Advanced Training (Divisions) within five years of the completion of Basic Training.
- 6.2 During a period of interruption between Basic Training and Advanced Training, a trainee is required to register annually with the College and pay the required fee.
- 6.3 If the interruption between Basic and Advanced Training is longer than five years, the trainee will no longer be eligible to enter a Divisional Advanced Training program.
- 6.4 In an exceptional circumstance, an application for special consideration must be provided by the trainee (or delegate thereof) in writing to the relevant education/ training committee, as promptly as the circumstance permits. The application must have the support of the Educational Supervisor or Training Program Director.



- 6.5** No more than two consecutive years may be spent away from clinical work during the interruption between Basic Training and Advanced Training to ensure currency of knowledge and skills.

7. Appeals

- 7.1.** Rights of reconsideration, review and appeal are set out in the College Reconsideration, Review and Appeals process (refer *College By-Law: Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process*).

I. Definitions

- i. Interrupted training** refers to any absence (full-time) from an approved training position in excess of statutory leave entitlements of more than 8 weeks (pro-rata) per year. Examples include extended holiday, extended illness, parental leave or postgraduate study (refer 5).
- ii. Parental leave** refers to an approved interruption (full-time) due to maternity, paternity or adoptive leave (refer 5.5).
- iii. Training program** refers to any education program of the College's Divisions, Faculties or Chapters. Basic Training and Advanced Training are considered separate programs for the purposes of this policy.

II. Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated by Education Services.

III. Related policies and other documents

- i.** *Progression through Training Policy*
- ii.** Appendix 1: Education/Training Committee Contact Information
- iii.** *College By-Law: Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process*
- iv.** *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy*

IV. Acknowledgements

The RACP would like to acknowledge and thank all those College members who participated in developing this policy, including the consultation process and the working groups.



Revision History					
Version	Date	Author	Approved by	Sections Modified	Details of Amendments
1	14/08/12	Education Policy Unit	Education Policy Unit	Appendix 1	Updated contact details
2	26/02/16	Education Policy Unit	CEC	Complete Policy Revision	Complete policy