

Training Support Policy

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Version 1

This should be read in conjunction with the College's Training Support Policy and Training Support Process.

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Purpose & Scope and Background items

What is the Purpose & Scope of the Training Support policy?

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to support trainees who encounter difficulties during RACP training. This policy addresses what it means to be a trainee in difficulty, and defines the principles to be employed by the trainee, the supervisor and the College when enhanced support is required when a difficulty is identified, and the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved.

This policy applies to all RACP Division, Faculty and Chapter trainees in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Why is this policy being introduced?

The College identified there was no clear system of support and remediation for trainees who were experiencing difficulties during their training. The policy is intended to introduce a clear framework for trainees and their supervisors to follow and to assist them in a range of difficulties that may be encountered during training.

When will the policy be introduced?

The Training Support policy is in effect from 1 January 2016, replacing the interim training support pathway.



Definitions and Elements of trainees in difficulty

What is the definition of a trainee in Difficulty?

A trainee in difficulty (TID) is a trainee who is not making the expected progress in training, performing in line with expected standards, or who is experiencing health or physical difficulties that are impeding their progress and therefore needs enhanced support in order to maintain their capability to undertake RACP training.

Someone who is exhibiting notifiable conduct is not a trainee in difficulty, these matters are to be referred to AHPRA.

What are the elements of capability to undertake RACP training?

The elements of capability to undertake RACP training are:

Health	The trainee's physical and mental health enables fulfilment of expectations for the training position, appropriate to the stage of training.
Competence	The trainee's application of knowledge, skills and professional behaviour is appropriate for the stage of training. This is directly linked to the relevant training program curricula
Compliance	The trainee complies with College training program requirements and adheres to College policies

Failure to demonstrate capability to undertake RACP training is grounds for discontinuation from the training program.



Roles and Responsibilities

What role do trainees play?

Trainees will need to have a comprehensive understanding of the policy and process, their responsibilities as adult learners, the ability to manage their professional development and willingness to meet College requirements. Trainees in difficulty will need to complete and submit Improving Performance Action Plans (IPAP), Meeting Records and additional documentation as required and communicated to them by their supervisors and/or supervising committee (via the College).

Who can trainees contact if they are experiencing difficulty?

If you are experiencing difficulty during your training program you should contact your supervisor in the first instance. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your supervisor about the difficulty, for example you are new in your rotation and have not developed a relationship with your supervisor yet, you can approach your Director of Physician/Paediatric Education (or another senior Fellow), or contact the Training Support Unit directly to seek advice.

What steps should be taken if I realise my trainee can be classified as a TID?

Once you have identified that a trainee is experiencing difficulty, you may try remediation at a local level first – this is recommended for minor issues that are easily remediable. All local remediation is to be documented using IPAPs and meeting records. If local remediation is unsuccessful, you can then escalate to the College. If you are not sure whether local remediation is appropriate, you can contact the Training Support Unit for advice

What role do the training program committees play?

The relevant training program committees play an active role in overseeing the progress of trainees. The new policy also provides a framework for the committees to facilitate fair and transparent evidenced based reviews of trainees and empowers the committees to make progression decisions.

What role does the Training Support Unit play?

The Training Support Unit is the central repository of information relevant to the progress of all trainees in difficulty. Concerns or queries pertinent to trainees in difficulty will be channelled to the Training Support Unit for appropriate referral and advice.

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Training Support Process

What are the main steps of the training support pathway?

STAGE 1
Local training setting support
(Supervisor, DPE)

Identify, assess and diagnose, support and manage (in the case of trainee performance/progression difficulties this will be through development of an Improving Performance Action Plan)

STAGE 2
Committee monitoring and review
(Relevant training program committee or in the case of training setting difficulties the accreditation subcommittee or equivalent)

Unresolved difficulties are referred to the relevant committee for appropriate action, for example the initiation of a site accreditation visit. In the case of unresolved trainee performance/progression difficulties the training program committee will review the relevant documentation and make a progression/certification decision which may require an additional period of support to be delivered in the local training setting

STAGE 3
Comprehensive review of training
(Relevant training program committee)

This evidence based review will be undertaken by the relevant training program committee to determine whether a trainee with significant or persistent performance/progression difficulties should continue in the training program.

Will being identified as a Trainee in Difficulty put a “black mark” against my name?

No, the aim of this policy is to provide a clear support structure for trainees in difficulty to help them progress through RACP training. Successful exit from the pathway will mean your training will revert back to the normal pattern and there will be no requirement for you to communicate to future supervisors that you have been on the pathway (unless you encounter further difficulties in the future).

Does being referred to the Trainee in Difficulty pathway mean I have failed my term?

Not necessarily. It will depend on what stage of your term you have been referred (the earlier the better), how hard you work to remediate the issues raised, and how well you can document your successful remediation.

The relevant training program committee will consider all documents submitted whilst you are on the TID pathway such as IPAPs, supervisor reports, PREP tools etc. when considering certification of your training. This will assist the committee in deciding whether your performance is now at a satisfactory level (enabling certification of all or a portion of the period) as a result of remediation.



In what circumstances will the College pass on information about my difficulty to subsequent rotations?

If your completed progress reports and Improving Performance Action Plans are rated as “below the expected standards” in specific performance areas, the Training Program Committee may decide to refer your difficulty to your next supervisor for a further attempt at remediation, which will involve the completion and submission of new Improving Performance Action Plans and further 3 monthly progress reports.

What happens if I exhaust all of my exam attempts?

As per the Progression through Training Policy, you will be ineligible to continue in training and will be exited from training without committee review.

Can I appeal a decision?

Yes, the College Reconsideration, Review and Appeals process is available for all eligible Decisions, as defined by the College By-Law: Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process.