

INFORMATION ABOUT SELECTION INTO RANZCP TRAINING

Selection Process for New Entrants

Psychiatry is a fascinating and important profession. The mind is complex, as are people's social and cultural interactions, and the brain - the body's most complex organ - is now far better understood and continues to be explored by researchers and modern techniques. Psychiatry offers a particularly holistic approach to medical work, taking all aspects of the person and their social setting into account. Training is possible in general psychiatry and in several subspecialties, and a range of skills is taught, including assessment skills, and interventions such as the evidence-based use of psychotherapies and psychotropic medication. Psychiatry raises complex issues linked with philosophy and ethics, and involves work within multidisciplinary teams in consultation with other professionals. The selection process for psychiatry training aims to determine whether new applicants have the necessary qualities, skills and experience to become psychiatrists.

Fairness and transparency

- The selection process is very similar in each Training program, and follows a standardised RANZCP selection protocol.
- We have provided an outline of the criteria and process here, so that all applicants can see this.

How is the selection process organised?

- A Selection Committee is convened and is orientated about the selection process, and the criteria and issues as described below. These panels aim to have a mix of genders, to include a trainee representative and often have an advisor with HR experience. They are often members of Branch Training Committees or local Training Program Committees.
- You are assessed in a number of ways:
 - Your written application and CV
 - Referee reports
 - Your performance at interview.
- Plus, before qualifying for an interview, you have to meet the essential criteria of having completed at least your intern year after leaving Medical School, and of having the necessary type of medical registration either for Australia or New Zealand (see appendix at end). This is checked by the Chair of the Selection Committee.
- Members of the panel generally take turns to ask you several questions or to discuss your approach to a clinical vignette. The questions relate to 8 criteria, for which weightings have been determined:

Weighting

Advantageous

The criterion is *advantageous* to the ability to perform the requirements of the post

Important

The criterion is *important* to the ability to perform the requirements of the post

Very important

The criterion is *very important* and the applicant must achieve or satisfy this criterion

What is regarded as important?

There are eight criteria used to identify the most important qualities, skills or experience wanted in applicants taking part in the selection process:

Criterion	Assessment Tool	Weighting
1. Above average performance academically	CV	Important
2. Above average performance from past employment history	CV and Referee reports	Very Important
3. A good level of competence in general medicine	Referee reports	Important
4. Experience working in a psychiatric setting	Interview, CV and Referee reports	Advantageous
5. Proven ability to work in teams	Interview and Referee reports	Important
6. An understanding of psychological factors in medicine and psychiatry	Interview and Referee reports	Very Important
7. Good interpersonal and communication skills	Interview and Referee reports	Very Important
8. Other useful experiences and skills: e.g. ability or experience working with indigenous people. Experience of other cultures, work in rural areas, and language skills. Other useful interests.	Interview and CV	Advantageous

How should you answer questions that you may be asked by the panel?

- Honesty is best. Selection panels are more impressed with applicants having insight into any areas they feel they need to work on, than if they pretend that they have no problems or doubts at all. Similarly, selection panels are more reassured to hear how you generally cope with stress than to be told that you never experience this.

How are the decisions made about which applicants are offered which posts?

- The criteria areas in the proforma are rated from the CV, Written Application and Referee Reports, and on the impression formed during the Selection Interview. Each member of the Selection Committee makes their own notes, using the proforma. In some programs numeric scoring is also used, where there is competition for posts.
- Once all the interviews are concluded, a final ranking for each applicant is determined.
- The Selection Committee determines:
 - a) Overall suitability of applicants to undertake RANZCP training at all;
 - b) For those suitable, the ranking system determines which applicants are offered posts first, in situations where there are more suitable applicants than there are posts.
- There is a subsequent process where allocation of successful applicants to specific posts within the program is decided. This is often explained at the Selection Interview.

NB: There are also local criteria, in that NZ graduates and applicants from NZ, especially those with Maori or Pacific heritage, will be ranked higher if other factors are equal