

THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF DERMATOLOGISTS

National Trainee Selection Procedure¹

PREAMBLE

The Australasian College of Dermatologists recognises that a formal National Trainee Selection Procedure is essential to ensure that the selection of trainees is a transparent and equitable process, and that the most appropriate applicants are selected for dermatology training positions. The National Trainee Selection Procedure is based on the principles arising from the Medical Training Review Panel document on Trainee Selection in Australian Medical Colleges (The Brennan Report, January 1998). All State Faculties follow the procedures outlined in this document.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Australasian College of Dermatologists selects into its training program individuals who are able to demonstrate that they have the abilities, qualifications, experience, standard of work performance and personal qualities which will enable them to satisfactorily perform all the required duties of a dermatology trainee, achieve all the objectives of the training scheme as outlined in the College's *Training Program Handbook* and become a skilled and competent clinical dermatologist.

The principle of equal opportunity will apply.

Discrimination against any applicant on the grounds of age, gender, race, religion, marital status or pregnancy will be avoided. Applicants from all states will be given equal consideration. The selection process will be standardised and involve examination of curriculum vitae and referees reports and in some cases an interview. Interviews will be granted after assessment of curriculum vitae and referee reports. Normally at least twice as many interviews will be granted as the number of training positions available in a particular State. No trainee will be selected into a training program without an interview. The sole aim of all questions during the selection process is to select the best (and most appropriate) candidates for training programs in dermatology.

Questions will have no reference to any personal or domestic circumstances of the candidate unless they are relevant, or any other matters not directly relevant to the stated aim. The entire selection process will be open, transparent and accountable.

¹ This document describes selection policies and processes that the College used in 2006 to select trainees to commence training in 2007. The Training Committee is currently reviewing the College selection policies and processes. The College is likely to make changes to the policies and processes that will be used in 2007 to select trainees to commence training in 2008.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

ELIGIBILITY:

The minimum requirements for selection as a dermatology trainee in the training program of the Australasian College of Dermatologists are:

- Possession of a medical degree registerable in Australia
- Satisfactory completion, since graduation, of a minimum of two years of acceptable training, as defined in the *Training Program Handbook*, in a teaching hospital or equivalent recognised by the College
- Commitment to participate in, and complete, any accredited training position of the College as directed by the appropriate State Faculty committee during the training program.

ATTRIBUTES:

The desired attributes of a dermatology trainee occupying a training position in the College's training program are:

- To have a sound academic record, acceptable training (as defined) in general medicine, general surgery, the medical and surgical sub-specialties and psychiatry, and involvement, a history of involvement or a willingness to be involved in research projects.
- To demonstrate sound clinical ability and judgement in a wide range of clinical settings.
- To show a willingness to work hard and an ability to learn, assimilate, assess and evaluate knowledge in order to apply this to the care of patients with dermatological conditions.
- To demonstrate evidence of physical and mental capability to fulfil and complete all aspects of the training program, including the performance of the dermatological procedures and treatment modalities outlined in the curriculum.
- To perform all the duties associated with a training program conscientiously; to take responsibility for patient management whilst always being aware of personal limitations; and to recognise when to seek help and guidance from more experienced colleagues.
- To demonstrate a high level of interpersonal skills, with the ability to communicate with empathy and understanding.
- To demonstrate an ability to have good rapport with peers and other health professionals; and the ability to show respect for others' opinions.
- To show initiative and responsibility in the performance of all duties and in personal study programs and an ability to carry out realistic self-assessment, in order to recognise personal levels of competence and ability to perform specific tasks.
- To be punctual and readily available at all times during working hours and after hours, as required by roster.
- To demonstrate a commitment to ongoing, self-directed learning and self-improvement.
- To show continued support of and participation in the training of health care professionals, especially medical students, nurses and dermatology trainees.
- To show evidence of interests and activities in the broader community.

SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be open, transparent and accountable. Every applicant who fulfils the eligibility criteria will be given an opportunity to compete for available training positions.

ADVERTISING:

A general advertisement will be placed in the national press and in the *Medical Journal of Australia* advising potential trainees regarding dermatology training programs available throughout Australia and of the means by which applications can be submitted and closing dates for applications. Information will also appear on the College website.

APPLICATION:

Application can only be made online via the College website, www.dermcoll.asn.au. An application fee is charged for each State in which the applicant wishes to be considered for a training program.

As there is variation between States regarding the application process for hospital-based programs, candidates for dermatology training programs should contact the Department of Health of the State in which they are applying for a program, to inform themselves of any special local requirements.

Sufficient time will be allowed to enable all requirements of the application for to be completed and submitted. An initial meeting of the Faculty Selection Committee will occur to decide which candidates will be invited to interview. A subsequent meeting of an Interview Committee at which interviews are conducted will take place. This will usually occur within two to four weeks of the initial meeting of the Selection Committee and will fulfil the requirements of hospitals and/or health authorities as well as the College. The Selection Committee will again meet as soon as possible after the interviews to determine its recommendations regarding the final selection of candidates as well as the allocation of available training programs.

SELECTION:

The selection process will utilise information from the following sources in order to select trainees for dermatology training programs:

- . ■ The curriculum vitae
- . ■ Referees reports
- . ■ The interview

CURRICULUM VITAE:

Specific requirements for the curriculum vitae are outlined in the application form. In general, these encompass academic record, research experience, publications, medical and dermatological experience.

REFEREES REPORTS:

These will be standardised with the view to achieving:

- . ■ Objectivity
- . ■ Comparability
- . ■ Quantification

Applicants must supply the names of two primary medical referees who will be contacted by the College to provide a verbal reference as part of the initial short-listing process. The names of a further three referees, including the medical administrator of a hospital at which the applicant has worked, must also be supplied. These additional referees may or may not be contacted. Candidates will be asked on the application form to give their permission to contact their referees in keeping with privacy legislation.

Other persons may be contacted to obtain further information relevant to their application. Referees' reports will be handled in an open reference system. The policy of the College is that candidates selected for interview are made aware of any adverse comment(s) in any referees' report(s), although they are not told specifically which particular referee made the adverse comment(s), nor are they told whether the adverse comment(s) is/are derived from more than one referee. If any adverse comment(s) is/are made, then this will usually be conveyed to the candidate prior to interview with reasonable time given for the candidate to adequately prepare a response. It is **not** the policy of the College to confront candidates with adverse comments on the day of the interview without prior notice.

INTERVIEW:

Each State Faculty will determine the size and composition of its Selection Committee. However, this committee will include the Heads of Departments (or their nominees) of the training institutions in that State, the State Director of Training, an independent representative from another medical specialty or training institution and a layperson, as well as the Chairperson of the Faculty who will act as the Chair of the committee. A representative of local health jurisdictions will also be involved.

If a potential conflict of interest exists between a committee member and a candidate, then the committee member will declare this and absent himself/herself from the committee. In situations where there is some doubt as to whether a real conflict of interest exists, then the State Faculty Chairperson, as Chair of the Selection Committee, will make a decision as to whether that committee member should absent himself/herself from the committee.

If a committee member is excluded from the Selection Committee for any reason, the Chair has the prerogative to select a replacement on the committee. This person, however, will be as near equivalent as possible to the person being replaced and should have the full confidence and approval of all members of the Selection Committee.

Guidelines for Selection Committee members have been developed and are provided to all committee members by the Chairperson of the State Faculty.

The Selection Committee will meet and consider all applications with reference to the candidates' curriculum vitae and reports, both written and verbal, from referees and other persons if applicable. The committee will decide which candidates are selected for interview. All applications will be considered purely on merit.

The Interview Committee will include a layperson who will have the right to vote. The Interview Committee will usually be chaired by the State Faculty Chairperson. The interview will be conducted in a manner that is objective and free of bias. Interviews will be of approximately the same duration for each candidate.

Any matter covered in the candidates' curriculum vitae, referees' reports or reports from other persons (if applicable) is subject to review during the interview. In general, the interview will aim to establish the candidates':

- . ■ Academic abilities and cognitive skills
- . ■ Qualities of self motivation, social responsibility and ethics
- . ■ Clinical and practical skills
- . ■ Patient communication and care skills
- . ■ Communications skills with colleagues and ancillary staff
- . ■ General communication skills
- . ■ Future potential in dermatology

Each State Selection Committee will prepare a set of questions each year as the basis for each interview. However, each interview will be structured in such a way as to allow the candidate to demonstrate any personal or academic quality which might influence the decision as to their suitability for a dermatology training program.

Written records are kept of the interviews. The proceedings of each meeting of the Selection and Interview Committees are minuted with a record of decisions made, with appropriate reasons for those decisions.

At the end of the interview, each candidate will be given the opportunity to ask questions and to express an opinion as to whether he/she is satisfied with the selection and interview process. These responses will be recorded.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

The final selection of trainees will take into account all aspects of the selection process, namely the curriculum vitae, referees' reports and reports from other persons (if applicable), and the interview. A meeting of the full Selection Committee will take place as soon as possible after the interviews to determine the Committee's recommendations of candidates for available training programs. The final selection may be made by a hospital committee/administrator or health authority.

After final selections are made and individual training programs assigned, successful candidates will be advised by the relevant hospital and/or health authority. Local jurisdictions will be advised as appropriate.

Information about the outcomes of the selection process will also be published on the College website.

DOCUMENTATION:

A record of proceedings of both the Selection and Interview Committees will be kept for a minimum period of six years in a secure manner at the College premises, with access only by the President, Censor in Chief or the Honorary Secretary of College.

EMPLOYMENT:

The College participates in the trainee selection process, in cooperation with the relevant hospitals and/or health authorities. However, trainees are employed by hospitals or health authorities, not by the College. In some circumstances, including cuts in funding, a trainee position may cease to be available or be terminated. Unfortunately, the College is not in a position to ensure that a trainee affected by a loss of his or her trainee position, for whatever reason, can be placed in another trainee position.