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**College of Intensive Care Medicine  
of Australia and New Zealand**

ABN: 16 134 292 103

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF TRAINEES**

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## INTRODUCTION

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The College of Intensive Care Medicine's *Guidelines for the Selection of Trainees* are based on the recommendations of the Australian Medical Training Review Panel (MTRP) in their report *Trainee Selection in Australian Medical Colleges 1999*. The MTRP was requested by the Federal Government to identify and describe policies and practices of Colleges in trainee selection, and to derive a best practice framework that applies selection standards in a transparent and consistent manner.

The MTRP recommends that the selection of trainees should be a joint undertaking by the local health authority or employer and the College of Intensive Care Medicine. The MTRP also recommends that the Selection Committee should include at least one Fellow of the College (see *Process for the Selection of Trainees in Intensive Care*). Appointments of successful candidates are made by the local health authority or employer, using the principles detailed in this document.

These guidelines apply to candidates who wish to be appointed as accredited trainees in College training programs (i.e. new trainees).

The guidelines include:

- A *Statement of Principles* that underpin the selection process.
- The *Eligibility Criteria* that apply to candidates.
- The *Selection Criteria* that address academic achievements and capacity, previous and potential clinical performance, and desirable personal attributes that relate to the practice of intensive care.
- The *Processes for Selection* that outlines steps to be taken in selecting trainees.

## Statement of Principles

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The College of Intensive Care Medicine strives to foster the highest quality patient care through the advancement of education, professional standards, and the science and practice of intensive care medicine. The following principles of selecting trainees for the College's training program are based on the commitment of the College to realize this goal.

1. The College supports a selection process that will result in enrolling the best possible candidates into its training program.
2. The selection process should be based on equal opportunity without prejudice, regardless of gender, race, religion, age, or other personal attributes provided that they do not impair the candidate's professional and clinical performance.
3. The selection process should follow documented procedures, with candidates having access to published criteria on eligibility and selection, and to an appeal process.
4. The selection process should be subject to an on-going evaluation.
5. The selection process is an integral part of the College's endeavour to produce the best possible specialists in intensive care medicine.

## **General Procedure**

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- 1. The College of Intensive Care Medicine accredits Intensive Care Units for training.**
- 2. Hospitals and other institutions select and appoint junior medical staff to their units and departments.**
- 3. The College of Intensive Care Medicine registers trainees for its vocational training program.**

Note: Training posts in Intensive Care Units are frequently occupied by trainees from other disciplines e.g. internal medicine, surgery, who have no intention of completing specialty training in intensive care.

### **Accreditation of Units for Training in Intensive Care**

The College reviews Intensive Care Units on a regular basis to ascertain their suitability for training in intensive care medicine. Inspections are carried out according to Policy Document IC-3 "Guidelines for Intensive Care Units Seeking College Accreditation for Training in Intensive Care Medicine".

Units meeting the specified criteria are approved for training. The duration of training in a given unit may be restricted based on case load, case mix, severity of illness and specialist supervision. The number of training posts in a unit accredited for training is normally unrestricted.

Appointments to training positions in accredited units are made by the Hospitals or institutions. The College expects that the following principles will be incorporated into the selection and appointment process.

## Eligibility Criteria

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The College of Intensive Care Medicine considers as eligible candidates for selection into its vocational training program, any medical practitioner:

1. Who is registrable with the medical licensing authority of the region in which accredited College training will be undertaken, and
2. Who has completed 12 months of general hospital experience after graduation, according to the College Regulation 5.2, and
3. Who is free from alcohol and chemical abuse, and
4. Who is willing to comply with the rules and procedures of College.

Note: A medical practitioner can register and commence basic training with the College as a Trainee on completion of 12 months whole time rotating duties in a hospital (general hospital experience) after graduating from a medical school.

## Selection Criteria

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Candidates for the College's vocational training program should be selected based on principles as stated in the section *Statement of Principles*, eligibility as stated in the section *Eligibility Criteria*, and the following *Selection Criteria*:

### 1. Professional Standards

- 1.1 Commitment to pursue a career in intensive care medicine and the capacity to complete the training program.
- 1.2 Past academic record, work experience, and performance.
- 1.3 Professional expertise required to practise as a competent, caring specialist in intensive care. Desirable abilities to consider include:
  - 1.3.1 Excellent clinical skills.
  - 1.3.2 Good management skills.
  - 1.3.3 An aptitude to cope with stress.
  - 1.3.4 A motivation to behave professionally in a manner that earns respect.
  - 1.3.5 An understanding of medical ethics.
- 1.4 Commitment to undertake continuing education and quality assurance activities.

### 2. Personal Attributes

- 2.1 Health and conduct - the ability to function professionally without seriously endangering oneself or others.
- 2.2 Interpersonal and communication skills – the ability to relate to and communicate positively and appropriately with patients and others.
- 2.3 Reliability and responsibility - the ability to be accountable and dependable with regard to oneself and others.
- 2.4 Team work - the ability to understand one's responsibilities and to work effectively and co-operatively with patients and colleagues.
- 2.5 Insight - the ability to accept feedback about oneself, and to seek help and advice when needed.
- 2.6 Altruism - the ability to attend to the needs of others, with an awareness of their rights and equal opportunities.

## **Process for the Selection of Trainees in Intensive Care**

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The College of Intensive Care Medicine supports a non-discriminatory selection and appointment process that conforms to national and regional standards in human resource management and complies with relevant legislation. It accepts that there will be differences in detail between processes for the selection of trainees in the States of Australia and New Zealand. It also notes that it does not employ trainees. Trainees have service obligations to their employer as well as training obligations to the College.

A fair and transparent selection and appointments process, incorporating procedural fairness and natural justice, must be underpinned by the following principles :

1. Training posts must be advertised in regional and preferably national newspapers and, when appropriate, in professional journals. Electronic media advertising may also be considered. A nationally consistent timetable for the placement of advertisements and closure of applications, prior to a major round of annual appointments is recommended.
2. A position description should be available to all applicants. It should include eligibility and selection criteria and be consistent with College requirements. It should also detail such professional matters as:
  - duty patterns
  - sub-specialty experience and rotations
  - leave entitlements
  - tuition patterns
  - the form of the required application

The closing date must allow reasonable time for applications to be completed and submitted.

3. For appointments that require a Selection Committee, that committee should:
  - (a) remain unchanged for any given round of appointments;
  - (b) include at least one Fellow of the College of Intensive Care Medicine;
  - (c) endeavour to have gender balance;
  - (d) include employer representative(s);
  - (e) include departmental representative(s)
  - (f) independent community representative(s)
4. Formal instruction of Selection Committee members by the convening authority as to their tasks will normally be necessary. Principles and suggested criteria as set out above must be known to all committee members and followed for all

candidates being considered at each appointments round. Selection criteria should be objective and consistent with the requirements of the employer and the College.

5. The process to be followed by the Interview Committee must be prospectively set out and followed for all candidates. Interview Committees should not be large. Three to five members will ordinarily be appropriate.
6. When development of a 'short list' of candidates is necessary, this must be undertaken by the Selection Committee. The criteria for its development must be prospectively established, but in general terms will involve all applicants with adequate academic records (as determined from the curriculum vitae) and references. Unsuccessful candidates must be notified as soon as possible that they will not be considered further.
7. All short listed candidates should be interviewed. Candidates must be given sufficient notice of interview to allow them to be present and to prospectively consider their responses to the selection criteria.
  - 7.1 Questions should be pre-determined and should be put to all applicants. They should only relate to the selection criteria.
  - 7.2 Interviews should be of approximately the same duration.
  - 7.3 As necessity requires, interviews may be face-to-face, by telephone or a combination, although face to face is preferred.
  - 7.4 There should be opportunity for applicants to ask questions and to comment on matters related to process.
8. The appointments process followed by the Selection Committee must take account of information obtained from the application, from referee reports and from the interview. The decision making process including the weighting of these components should be prospectively established. It should be based on material relevant to the matter at hand.
9. A record of proceedings should be kept, as should all official documents used by the Committee in arriving at its decision until it is clear that there will be no challenge to decisions made by the Committee.
10. Unsuccessful applicants should be offered feedback when advice could be given under one of the following headings:
  - 10.1 Suitable for appointment and training but no post available at present.
  - 10.2 Not suitable now, but prospects of meeting selection criteria make future appointment possible.
  - 10.3 Not suitable for appointment and unlikely to achieve selection criteria.
11. In the case of re-appointment of existing trainees, the following matters should be noted:

- 11.1 It is **not** permissible to use information obtained as part of the College In-training Assessment program in the selection process.
- 11.2 Those applicants who are already within the training program should have indicators of satisfactory progress. They would then normally be given priority for re-appointment.
- 11.3 It remains the responsibility of the trainee to seek out and apply for training positions to meet College training requirements.
12. Consideration must be given to specific training requirements of the College as detailed in Regulation 5 relating to Training and Examinations. For example:
- Training periods less than six months require prior approval from the Censor. A period of not less than three months may be approved when it is part of an approved training program.
  - Part-time training is available and is subject to specific College requirements.
13. Candidates must know that an appeals mechanism is available which would follow the regulations of the employing authority or the College. Grounds for appeal might include:
- 13.1 Evidence that the established process was not followed.
- 13.2 Evidence that relevant information, available at the time of application, was not considered by the Selection Committee.
- 13.3 The existence of new and relevant information, which was not available to the candidate on the closing date for applications.