



**College of Intensive Care Medicine**  
of Australia and New Zealand  
ABN: 16 134 292 103

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE IN-TRAINING ASSESSMENT OF TRAINEES IN INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE**

### **1. Introduction**

In-training assessment (ITA) is an invaluable assessment tool that facilitates the ongoing education of Trainees. It complements other methods of evaluation, such as examinations. ITA is a joint process of evaluation and goal setting by the Trainee and the Supervisor of Training (SOT), and requires active participation by the Trainee. It is essential that the assessment is conducted in accordance with sound educational principles, and that the principles of natural justice are observed.

Assessment may be formative or summative. Formative assessment is personal and aims to be supportive of the Trainee. Summative assessment is an external validation of the trainee's development measured against objective criteria. The College's ITA is mainly a formative process, but does have some summative aspects. For example some or all of a period of training time may not be accredited in the face of an unsatisfactory ITA, resulting in an increase in overall training time (refer T-13 (2010) Guidelines for Assisting Trainees with Difficulties).

### **2. Objectives**

The objectives of ITA are to:

- 2.1 Provide ongoing formative feedback to Trainees for the purposes of guiding further learning experiences.
- 2.2 Provide ongoing formative feedback to SOTs for the purpose of choosing or modifying subsequent learning experiences for Trainees, or prescribing remedial activities for Trainees.
- 2.3 Ensure all Trainees receive regular formative and some summative assessment in association with all terms and rotations throughout their training.

It should be noted that the failure to fully achieve the objectives will not invalidate the process.

### **3. Process**

Each Trainee must maintain a training portfolio throughout their training. It should include originals or copies of formal documents related to training and courses passed, as well as voluntary documentation such as a log-book. It **MUST** contain a copy of the signed ITA form from each final assessment with an SOT, and should contain all self evaluation performance forms. It may be necessary for the trainee to produce the copies of final assessment forms when undergoing future assessments. The relevant form for the appropriate component of training must be used.

### 3.1 Initial Assessment Interview

Formal assessment meetings **MUST** occur between the SOT and each Trainee at the commencement of each six month training period (or sooner if the attachment is less than six months). Additional meetings between the Trainee and SOT should occur as appropriate. The purpose of such an early interview is to review the Trainee's previous performance, and set appropriate goals for the next training term. This may involve review of the Trainee's Training Portfolio. The agreed goals need to be written down and kept in the portfolio using the ITA goals form.

There should also be regular group meetings between the SOT and the Trainees together with the Head of Department if appropriate. Any Trainee experiencing difficulty should bring this to the attention of the SOT as early as possible.

### 3.2 Final Assessment Interview (for each three or six month training period)

Prior to the final interview, the Trainee may be asked to complete section C of an ITA form as self evaluation. This information can be used to discuss the past term and to establish goals for the term to follow.

At the final assessment interview, the SOT and Trainee will review and discuss performance during the completed attachment. This may be assisted by an assessment by additional senior staff and/or a consensus meeting of senior staff of the Department, which can be used by the SOT to complete the definitive ITA form.

There are specific ITA forms for each component of training, available on the College website. The completed final ITA form must be signed by the Trainee and the SOT, after the Trainee has had an opportunity to add comments.

If the Trainee is continuing at the same institution for the following six months, then the final interview can be joined with the initial interview for the next term.

#### 3.2.1 Final In-training Assessment Form (FITA)

This form is completed when a trainee is completing the Advanced Training period. Before Fellowship can be awarded, the Supervisor of Training for the last period of core Intensive Care training must certify that the Trainee is a competent intensivist, capable of providing a high standard of intensive care practice without supervision. This interview may be used to discuss career options and employment opportunities for the Trainee.

If the last CICM supervisor of training is unable to complete the assessment process then application may be made to the Censor for an assessment. The Censor may after enquiry of the previous supervisors of training, either recommend a further period of training or certify that the Trainee is a competent intensivist, capable of providing a high standard of intensive care practice without supervision.

### 3.3 Destination of forms

3.3.1 The signed original copy of the ITA form should be submitted to the Training Department of the College by the SOT within two weeks of the assessment. These forms will become part of the Trainee's central record and will be reviewed by the Censor.

3.3.2 A copy of the signed ITA form will be retained by the Trainee, along with any self evaluation forms the Trainee completed, and should be retained in the Trainee's portfolio.

3.4 The following points may assist senior staff and SOTs in situations where the Trainee's performance is not at the level indicative of a satisfactory assessment.

- 3.4.1 If there is a performance less than that “consistent with level of experience” in any of the skills/attitudes/abilities listed on the ITA form (indicative of a consensus view of the senior staff involved), then this matter must be discussed with the trainee with a view to establishing remedial strategies. An isolated “unsatisfactory” attribute does not necessarily constitute an unsatisfactory assessment.
- 3.4.2 A consistent unsatisfactory attribute over more than one assessment or multiple unsatisfactory attributes on the one occasion must be discussed with the Trainee and remedial strategies drawn up. The Trainee should be told in writing that his/her future performance will be specially monitored and planning for the next term should take that requirement into account.
- 3.4.3 Continued performance during serial assessments which is globally less than “consistent with level of experience” may be indicative of a situation which should be discussed with the Head of Department, and reported to the Training Department of the College.
- 3.4.4 Advice as to remedial strategies can be obtained from the College Censor via the Training Department.

#### 4. **Unsatisfactory ITA Performance**

When a Trainee consistently performs at a level which is considered to be below that acceptable for a developing intensive care medicine specialist, notwithstanding repeated documented attempts at correction, then the provisions outlined in the Document T-13 (2010) Guidelines for Assisting Trainees with Difficulty should be considered. This will require that processes in addition to In-Training Assessment are invoked. Advice can be obtained from the Censor or the Training Department of the College.

Trainees may appeal against a College decision on a matter of process. The appeal will be considered according to the appeals procedure.

#### 5. **Privacy**

Information collected in relation to Trainees will be held, used and distributed as provided in the College’s Privacy Statement and as permitted by law.

Ordinarily each ITA will only be considered by the College, and used for the purposes of the Training Program. It will not ordinarily be provided to the hospital/employer – unless the College believes it is appropriate to do so in the interests of patient safety. An ITA is not intended to be used for employment purposes, and is intended solely for use in the training program in accordance with the above objectives. ITAs may be shared with SOTs in subsequent rotations, especially to assist in the supervision, remediation and assessment of progress of Trainees.

These guidelines should be interpreted in conjunction with the following Documents of the College of Intensive Care Medicine:

- T-13 Guidelines for Assisting Trainees with Difficulty
- T-14 Trainee Performance Review
- T-33 Education Module – *Trainees Experiencing Difficulty*

*Promulgated: 1995  
Reviewed: 2002, 2003  
Reviewed and republished by CICM: 2010*

*This policy document has been prepared having regard to general circumstances, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to have regard to the particular circumstances of each case, and the application of this document in each case.*

*Policy Documents are reviewed from time to time, and it is the responsibility of the practitioner to ensure that the practitioner has obtained the current version. Policy Documents have been prepared having regard to the information available at the time of their preparation, and the practitioner should therefore have regard to any information, research or material which may have been published or become available subsequently.*

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