

# Education Training Procedure

## Scholarly Project



<b>Authorising Committee/ Department:</b>	Education Committee
<b>Responsible Committee/ Department:</b>	Education Committee
<b>Document Code:</b>	<b>PRC EDT-TRN Scholarly Project Procedure (13.1)</b>

### Targeted learning and show cause deadlines effective 1 January 2017

This policy has been updated to include the revised targeted learning and show cause deadlines as detailed in the Progression through Training Policy (6.1) and the Trainee Progress Trajectory.

As a result of concerns from trainees, supervisors and Directors of Training, the Board has approved a more accommodating Trainee Progress Trajectory by adjusting the specified targeted learning and show cause deadlines associated with each of the five centrally administered assessments.

The previous targeted learning and show cause deadlines have been removed from this document. These changes are effective from 1 January 2017.

#### Further assistance available

Contact the Training team at [training@ranzcp.org](mailto:training@ranzcp.org).

### Background

This procedure provides operational instructions to manage the processes related to the Scholarly Project. Trainees must successfully complete the Scholarly Project as an assessment component of the RANZCP Fellowship Program to be eligible for Fellowship under the RANZCP Fellowship Regulations 2012.

The Scholarly Project will contribute to the trainee's ability to meet the Fellowship Competencies, particularly in the CanMEDS Framework role of Scholar, by facilitating the attainment of learning outcomes related to the role. These include, but are not limited to:

- Critically evaluate academic material (mapped to Stage 1).
- Demonstrate knowledge of research methodologies (mapped to Stage 2).
- Generate research of peer-review quality (mapped to Stage 3).

### Purpose

This procedure specifies the high-level operational activities underpinned by the Scholarly Project Regulation and Policy.

### Process

#### 1. Scholarly Project Planning and Topic

##### 1.1 Planning

Trainees are advised that completing a successful Scholarly Project requires effective project planning as well as research-related knowledge. Trainees are encouraged to refer to the [‘Research in psychiatry’](#) page on the College website.

Trainees should plan ahead as early in training as possible, considering both the time it will take them to complete their Scholarly Project and the availability of their proposed Scholarly Project supervisor.

- Trainees should engage their Scholarly Project supervisor at the earliest possible stage of project development.
- As the Scholarly Project must be satisfactorily completed prior to admission to Fellowship, it is the trainee’s responsibility to submit their Project with enough time for assessment and any necessary revisions to be undertaken. (See Policy 6.1 – Progression through the Stages of Training for more information on submission deadlines.)

### **1.1.1 Topic**

Trainees are encouraged to select a Scholarly Project topic based on their own interests in an area relevant to psychiatry.

- There may be research opportunities within particular training rotations.
- Trainees should consider the research requirements of the Certificates of Advanced Training when planning their Scholarly Project, as they may only need to complete one project to satisfy both requirements. The satisfaction of Certificate of Advanced Training research requirements with a successful Scholarly Project, however, is not guaranteed.

The Scholarly Project must contain original work. This could be a:

- new original question, e.g. questions and/or hypotheses not previously addressed
- question that adds depth to current knowledge (e.g. a different view of current knowledge)
- replication study.

## **2. Supervisors and Supervision**

### **2.1 Selecting a Supervisor**

The principal supervisor or co-supervisor must have appropriate expertise in the area of study.

- The principal supervisor is required to be a College-accredited supervisor.
- Trainees may seek an additional project co-supervisor (who is not required to be a College-accredited supervisor) per the Scholarly Project Policy.

The College Committee for Research can assist trainees in locating Scholarly Project supervisors and can be contacted through the Examinations Department at the College head office.

### **2.2 Supervision**

Supervision should be regular but may vary in frequency (for example, between weekly and monthly) depending on the stage of project development. (It is anticipated that supervision will be most frequent in the initial and final stages of the project.)

#### **2.2.1 Supervision in Considering Project Options**

The Scholarly Project supervisor must be involved in considering the most appropriate form for the project.

### **2.2.2 Supervision of the Scholarly Project**

Supervision of the Scholarly Project could take the form of regular meetings and discussions with the trainee. The supervisor's role could include:

- guiding the trainee to pertinent literature to be reviewed
- helping with the development of a scholarly question(s) or hypothesis(es)
- advising the trainee about the timeframe for completing the project
- providing advice and guidance in the conduct of the research and its writing up.

The supervisor may also assist the trainee with data collection and/or analysis but should not undertake or subsume the project tasks for the trainee.

The Scholarly Project supervisor or co-supervisor should be contactable by the Scholarly Project Subcommittee and the Branch Training Committee (BTC).

## **3. Authorship**

A trainee must be a major author of the project. Any assistance provided by the supervisor/co-supervisor or any third party must be acknowledged by the trainee in a signed statement attached to the submission form (see point 12.2).

As per the Scholarly Project Policy, a major author is defined as an author who has made a substantial contribution to each of the following areas:

- project design
- data collection
- analysis and interpretation of data
- writing of the manuscript.

### **3.1 Co-authorship and Co-research**

Two trainees may co-author a shared Scholarly Project; however, the intention to collaborate must be noted in the project proposal.

Trainees can apply to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via the Examinations Department for approval to co-author a shared project of more than two trainees (maximum three trainees). Approval will be granted on a case-by-case basis and must be obtained in advance. Trainees who co-author a shared Scholarly Project will be awarded the same result.

Trainees may co-research a Scholarly Project with a person from another discipline; however, the trainee must substantially contribute to all areas of the project (as per the authorship requirements specified in section 3.0) and the trainee's role must be clearly articulated and detailed in the project proposal and submission.

- Co-research typically involves major research projects or being part of other large projects.

#### **3.1.1 Signed Statement**

In the case of two or more trainees collaborating as co-authors on a Scholarly Project, the trainees must submit a signed joint statement detailing their respective contributions to the project.

Similarly, if a trainee works with a researcher from another discipline (co-research), a signed statement from the principal researcher must be submitted detailing the trainee's contribution to the project.

## **4. Scholarly Project Proposal**

### **4.1 Prior to the Proposal**

Before submitting a Scholarly Project proposal, a trainee must have:

- decided upon a project topic
- identified and engaged a project supervisor (see point 2.0)
- chosen the most appropriate project option (see points 5–10)
- considered whether local ethics committee approval is required.

### **4.2 Requirements of the Proposal for the BTC**

The proposal should provide a clear and detailed description of:

- the aim of the project
- the project question and/or hypothesis
- the proposed research methodology and ethics requirements
- the proposed supervisor's name and credentials.

### **4.3 Submitting the Proposal**

Trainees will submit their Scholarly Project proposal to their BTC for review and approval using the appropriate form for their project format (see below).

For projects requiring ethics committee approval, trainees must include evidence of their ethics application with the proposal but it is not necessary to wait for the ethics committee approval in order to submit the proposal.

- If an ethics application has not been submitted, trainees must provide a statement justifying why ethics committee approval is not required, signed by their supervisor. This statement must be submitted with the Scholarly Project proposal.

A completed Scholarly Project Proposal Form must accompany a proposal submission.

- Trainees who plan to co-author a project (see point 3.1) should submit the same Proposal Form (and evidence of local ethics committee application/approval, if relevant) to their local BTC.
- Trainees are responsible for engaging with their BTC and local ethics committee regarding the Scholarly Project proposal and should consider the time this may require.
- BTCs may delegate the responsibility of reviewing and approving proposals at a local level.
- Should a BTC provide substantial feedback on a Scholarly Project proposal, the trainee must resubmit a revised or new proposal to the BTC.

BTCs will notify trainees of the outcome of their proposal submission and forward approved Scholarly Project Proposal Forms to the Examinations Department at the College head office.

- The BTC may **conditionally approve** a Scholarly Project proposal pending ethics committee approval. The final approved Scholarly Project Proposal Form should only be forwarded to the College after ethics committee approval has been granted.
- BTCs or a delegated review body should offer support by ensuring that trainees are aware of the local resources available.
- BTCs or a delegated review body should seek advice from local researchers or the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via the Examinations Department if they are unsure about a Scholarly Project proposal.

Trainees may not (later) apply for exemption for a project that has a BTC-approved proposal.

## 5. Scholarly Project Options

All Scholarly Projects will be assessed according to the same domains (see point 14.1).

### 5.1 Project Options

Trainees have five different format options for their Scholarly Project:

- a quality assurance project or clinical audit (see point 6.0)
- a systematic and critical literature review (see point 7.0)
- original and empirical research (qualitative or quantitative) (see point 8.0)
- a case series (see point 9.0)
- or an equivalent other project as approved by the Scholarly Project Subcommittee (see point 10.0).

### 5.2 Exemptions from the Scholarly Project

Trainees who have completed a doctoral thesis, Masters thesis or Honours thesis in a field relevant to psychiatry or mental health or who have had an article of which they were a major author (as defined in point 3) accepted for publication by a recognised peer-reviewed English-language journal relevant to psychiatry or mental health may apply to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee (via the Examinations Department) for exemption from the Scholarly Project (see point 15).

### 5.3 Selection of Format

Trainees should consider (in consultation with their supervisor) which project option is most appropriate for their proposed research.

Selection of the appropriate option will require the trainee to clarify:

- the question being posed
- the resources available to them (most importantly time and access to their proposed supervisor)
- the particular research skills they would like to develop
- their understanding of the relevant literature.

## 6. Quality Assurance Project or Clinical Audit in Detail

A clinical audit is used to measure the true quality of an aspect of a service. It is dependent on setting explicit, realistic standards for the care given. In addition to measuring quality, there must be a commitment to change practice where the results of the audit show that improvements should be made. The audit cycle involves:

- a cycle of assessment
- the implementation of a change
- a review of the impact of the change.

### 6.1 Requirements of the Audit

To meet the requirements of this option, the expected standard would be a project that encompasses the whole of the clinical audit cycle. For larger audits, a project limited to a defined section of the audit cycle may be considered but the commitment to changing practice, where necessary, must be demonstrated.

Trainees must adhere to their local research ethics requirements per the Scholarly Project Policy.

### 6.2 Subject of the Audit

The trainee may define a practice that they believe is worthy of auditing. There may or may not be an existing policy or guideline against which the audit is made. If there is no such standard, the trainee might look at national practice standards or options from comparable services. Alternatively, the trainee may develop a set of standards as a result of the audit conducted and compare and contrast these with the literature.

*Topics for audit may include the following:*

- *clinical care, for example acute, chronic and preventive care, prescribing, referrals, investigations, length of stay, readmission rates*
- *access to service, for example appointments, premises, telephone, out of hours*
- *communication with patients, carers, team members outside the service*
- *interface, for example discharge planning, letters, records*
- *professional values, for example education, workload.*

#### 6.2.1 Examples of an Audit

*An example of a clinical audit as a Scholarly Project could be as follows.*

*The trainee may be concerned about the diagnosis of women with postnatal depression. This is a common and significant problem and non-diagnosis leads to poorer outcomes. There is literature on this topic and established prevalence using various assessment tools.*

*The trainee may be concerned that in their service, a number of women with postnatal depression are not being diagnosed. Or, the trainee might be interested in the tool(s) used to diagnose postnatal depression, if any, or might be interested in how current tools are being used and if any of these influence outcomes.*

- *Therefore, the trainee may review service data to confirm such an impression or to establish what tools are used and the skill with which they are applied. The trainee may conclude that there is a problem and offer suggestions for improvement.*
- *The trainee may enter the audit cycle at a later point in the audit cycle, for example, after an instrument such as the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale is introduced.*

*The trainee could design and conduct a review of this strategy to improve the diagnosis of postnatal depression in the service.*

*Each of these project examples require the trainee to define suitable measures for the performance indicator or outcome being examined.*

## **7. Systematic and Critical Literature Review in Detail**

A literature review may be an organised narrative review or a formal, systematic review with or without meta-analysis. The topic area will be introduced and the context of the question presented. This will usually include summary statements (supported by references).

- *For example, if the topic is treatment of panic disorder, the current epidemiology, burden and outcome of panic disorder will be summarised.*

### **7.1 Background**

The background will refer to current and relevant literature and critical appraisal of the same, such that deficiencies in the present state of knowledge leading to the objectives and specific aims of the review are clear to the reader.

- *For example, 'It is evident that while there are several published meta-analyses of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) antidepressant treatment for panic disorder, these are now dated (in the most recent the search date was to 2004) and none has included studies of more recently introduced antidepressants. The objective of this present review is to evaluate the efficacy of more recently developed antidepressants in the treatment of panic disorder. The specific aims are to evaluate the efficacy of antidepressant Y compared to placebo pharmacotherapy and when compared to SSRIs, in the treatment of adults with panic disorder.'*

### **7.2 Questions**

Questions asked commonly are of treatment efficacy, but there are many other areas of inquiry.

- *For example, 'What are predictors of long-term outcome of disorder Z?'*

Questions may also refer to broader areas of psychiatry beyond clinical practice. However, trainees should ensure their questions are focused, concise and specific.

- *For example, with regard to the psychological health of adolescents following parental separation as a broad area of psychiatry, reading might give rise to the question: 'What is the evidence for increased rates of school drop-out in Australasian adolescents following parental separation?'*

### **7.3 Knowledge Synthesis**

A simple summary of the current literature is insufficient to meet the requirements of the Scholarly Project. There must be critical appraisal of the literature. The trainee must demonstrate an ability to formulate a research question and synthesise knowledge in the chosen area.

### **7.4 Literature Review Linked to a Higher Degree**

Trainees proceeding to a higher degree (PhD or Masters thesis) may submit their literature review leading to a description of testable hypotheses and the methodology intended to test these. (These usually comprise the first two or three chapters of a thesis). Such trainees should provide clear evidence of their intention to proceed to the higher degree. Pilot data should be included where possible.

A literature review linked to a higher degree as described above is considered an exception to the requirement for Scholarly Projects to be 3000–5000 words in length.

## 8. Original and Empirical Research in Detail

An original and empirical Scholarly Project is a more formal research option and could involve undertaking either quantitative or qualitative research.

In both quantitative and qualitative projects, it is essential for the discussion to include a thorough examination of the strengths and limitations of the research.

The appropriate standard is that of a formal report suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

### 8.1 Quantitative Research

A quantitative Scholarly Project should typically involve a series of steps as follows:

- a) Review of relevant literature leading to development of one or more hypotheses.
- b) Development of an appropriate research methodology.
- c) Data collection for either a pilot or more definitive project.
- d) Data analysis yielding a set of results.
- e) Discussion and conclusion.

### 8.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative methodologies are most suitable for exploring areas or constructs that are poorly defined and not well understood. Typically, ‘in-depth’ data are collected from a small number of subjects often using recorded interviews. Data analysis often involves the identification and elucidation of recurring themes. This can be done manually or, in more sophisticated studies, by computerised analysis of transcribed interviews. Results and discussion focus on how these recurring themes (which may include emotions, cognitions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) further our understanding of the topic under study.

#### 8.2.1 Supervision of Qualitative Research

Trainees should be mindful that supervisors may have a more limited knowledge of qualitative methodologies and seeking co-supervision may warrant consideration.

#### 8.2.2 Characteristics of Qualitative Research

It is acknowledged that qualitative research may differ from quantitative investigations in terms of the following characteristics:

- Problem statements rather than *a priori* hypotheses are utilised.
- Questions may be refined and reformulated as the project progresses and, on occasion, the research may be redirected as new understandings emerge.
- Sample sizes will be considerably smaller. Non-probability sampling is usual and sample size may not always be defined *a priori* although an approximate estimate can usually be made.
- A wide range of methodologies can be utilised depending on the objectives of the research. These include phenomenological, hermeneutic, grounded theory, ethnographic/participant observation and others.



- Concepts such as objectivity, reliability and validity are much less clear-cut than in quantitative research. However, the notion of rigour is applicable and each project must address how rigour is to be established.
- Findings may not be generalisable from the sample to a larger population; however, they should be transferable to similar groups in similar situations.
- Results may be presented in narrative rather than numerical form.

### **8.2.3 Issues to be Addressed**

In preparing a proposal for a qualitative Scholarly Project, trainees should endeavour to address the following issues:

- Reasons for adopting a qualitative approach.
- What is the significance of the research and to whom is it significant? An argument must be presented to support the utility of the project.
- What methodology is proposed and what is the rationale for this choice?
- The rationale underlying the sampling strategies should be clearly stated and appropriate for the project's objectives. Recruitment should be explained as well as approximate sample size.
- The means of data generation must be specified. Data may derive from interview, participant observation, examination of documents, etc.
- Ethical dilemmas which may arise in the course of the project should be addressed.
- There is a tendency in this area for novice researchers to contemplate overly ambitious projects. The feasibility of the project must be addressed in terms of time constraints and available resources.

### **8.2.4 Requirements**

Trainees preparing a qualitative Scholarly Project should consider the following:

- An understanding of the relevant methodology including its historical and philosophical origins and the controversies surrounding its use should be demonstrated.
- The literature relevant to both the specific subject area and the methodological framework must be reviewed in some depth. Where applicable, trainees should demonstrate knowledge of the various computerised data analysis techniques (for example, NUDIST or Ethnograph).
- The context in which the research takes place should be described and taken into account.
- The strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the research must be discussed in depth. For example, in the case of grounded theory, the extent to which data saturation has been achieved should be discussed (i.e. the extent to which a point in data collection has been approached where no new major themes emerge). Where appropriate, the notion of transferability should be raised, (i.e. whether another informed person following the same decision trail would arrive at similar conclusions. Related notions of auditability, credibility, trustworthiness, etc. may also warrant consideration.

## **9. Case Series**

Trainees may submit a Scholarly Project based on case histories or clinical vignettes, provided it has a unifying theme, identifies and attempts to answer a suitable research question or hypothesis, and is presented in the context of current knowledge in the relevant field.

It is a desirable objective that the case series report would be of a standard likely to be accepted for publication in an appropriate professional journal or publication.

## 9.1 Requirements

The case series must contain the following:

- an introduction that identifies the unifying theme of the cases, summarises current relevant literature, and describes the reason why the cases are being presented, e.g. a hypothesis or research question
- a description of at least three (depending on complexity/theme) cases
  - While the minimum requirement is to describe three cases, it is expected that more cases would be described if they were less complex.
  - All cases described must be managed by the trainee.
- a discussion that reflects on the theme, including consideration of current relevant literature and any clinical (or other) implications.

Trainees must obtain valid consent from all patients for use of patient information. Ethics committee approval is likely to be required.

## 9.2 De-identification and Confidentiality

All information which could potentially identify a patient must be removed with a statement concerning de-identification included in the report.

As part of de-identification, the name of the trainee submitting the case must not appear anywhere on the Scholarly Project (see point 12.2) nor the name of any College Fellow or other staff involved in any aspect of the cases.

The first time a pseudonym is used, it must have an asterisk (\*) after it, indicating that it is a pseudonym. Each case series must contain a de-identification disclaimer (and statement concerning the use of asterisks) stating that all data identifying the patients has been removed. It is not sufficient to simply use a pseudonym for the patients and trainee. Location, names of hospitals, hospital units, supervisors and dates of admission must also be modified.

- The de-identification disclaimer is not included in the word count.
- Trainees are advised to seek their supervisor's input regarding de-identification to avoid potential breaches of patient confidentiality and to refer to principle four of the RANZCP Code of Ethics.

### 9.2.1 Examples of De-identification Disclaimers

All data which could potentially identify the patients, their families and other individuals has been removed from this Scholarly Project. The locations, names of hospitals, supervisors and dates of assessment have been modified and replaced with a pseudonym\* (e.g. Jane\*) the first time they appear in the text.

Pseudonyms\* are used for all names in this Scholarly Project and are marked with an asterisk (e.g. Jane\*). All data that could potentially identify the patients has been removed from this Scholarly Project to ensure confidentiality.

### 9.2.2 Proofreading Following De-identification

Trainees are reminded to carefully proofread their Scholarly Project following de-identification. Inconsistent ages, dates or names make it difficult to understand the timeline of events within the Project and can distract from its true essence.

## 10. Other Research Options

Trainees may apply to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee for approval to complete an alternative equivalent project.

## 11. Projects Focussed on Indigenous Participants

Any Scholarly Project that has a focus on Indigenous participants should follow the relevant principles of research with Indigenous people, such as Kaupapa Māori research methods when working with Māori. The National Health and Medical Research Council publish guidelines for research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### 11.1 Helpful resources

Trainees should note the following relevant resources.

- 'Values and ethics: Guidelines for ethical conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research' published by the National Health and Medical Research Council 2003.
- 'Guidelines for researchers on health research involving Maori and Te Ara Tika. Guidelines for Maori research ethics: A framework for researchers and ethics committee members' published by the Health Research Council of New Zealand.

## 12. Writing the Scholarly Project

### 12.1 Length

The Scholarly Project must be 3000–5000 words in length (with the exception of a literature review linked to a Higher Degree as outlined in point 7.4).

Scholarly Projects found to be outside the prescribed range will be returned by the College unmarked.

The total word count should appear on the cover page.

The word count will exclude all headings, footnotes, tables and appendices, any de-identification disclaimer, index/table of contents and references/bibliography. Figures and diagrams are also excluded from the word count.

- Trainees are advised to format their references in a separate reference list/bibliography at the end of the Scholarly Project and to use superscript numbers in the body of the Scholarly Project, as these can be excluded from the word count.

### 12.2 Project de-identification

All information which could potentially identify a patient must be removed from the Scholarly Project, including from all appendices and acknowledgements.

The trainee's name is not to appear anywhere on the Scholarly Project. The trainee's name must only be recorded on the Submission Form and on the accompanying CD (see point 13.0). Scholarly Projects found to have the trainee's name on them will be returned unmarked by the College.

As part of de-identification, the name of the trainee's supervisor/co-supervisor or any third party who provided assistance must not appear in the project.

Trainees must acknowledge any assistance provided by the supervisor/co-supervisor or any third party in a signed statement attached to the submission form.

- Within the project, trainees should acknowledge the 'external assistance' they received, for example 'I received external assistance with the statistical analysis.'

### **12.3 Presentation**

Trainees should present their Scholarly Project according to the following requirements:

- a) The Scholarly Project is well presented with a clear layout.
  - The font must be 12 point in size.
  - The font used is to be consistent throughout the report, for example Arial or Times New Roman.
  - The report must be double-spaced.
  - Pages must be numbered and should be printed double sided when possible.
- b) The Scholarly Project should be carefully proofread (by supervisor and/or third party, as well as by the trainee).
  - It is recommended that trainees seek advice in relation to the style of expression, use of language, structure and organisation of content, which could be provided by a colleague or a professional editor.
  - Trainees are reminded that they are required to submit work that is their own independent undertaking. The Scholarly Project Subcommittee encourages and supports the formative process that occurs when trainees and supervisors/Directors of Training review draft submissions. Careful proofreading by a third party is recommended; however, for a professional editor or supervisor/Director of Training to substantially modify the content of the report would be considered unauthorised collaboration.
  - Trainees are reminded to adhere to de-identification and confidentiality requirements before seeking advice from a third party non-clinician.
- c) Each project must be bound securely, for example, spiral binding. Projects that are not bound securely will be returned unmarked.
  - The Submission Form is not to be bound within the project.
  - Stapling, the use of bulldog clips, paper clips, ringed binders or tube or metal file fasteners, (i.e.: no hole punching) are insufficient.

### **13. Submitting the Scholarly Project**

Scholarly Projects may be submitted for assessment at any time; however, the Scholarly Project Subcommittee will mark projects and release results in designated time periods as specified on the College website. Trainees must be actively training or on an approved break in training in order to be eligible to submit their Scholarly Project. Trainees who have interrupted their training without approval for a break in training are considered to be not in training as per the Leave and Interruptions to Training Policy (23.1), and are not eligible to complete or submit their Scholarly Project during that time. A trainee's status will be assessed in line with the relevant final submission date as per the published examination timetable.

In order for trainees to have their projects assessed in a designated marking period, projects must be received by the Examinations Department at the College head office by the relevant submission cut-off date.

When submitting a Scholarly Project, trainees must complete the Submission Form and forward it as a hard copy to the College together with their printed project, electronic copy (on CD), a hard copy of

their current medical registration and the prescribed fee. Applications will not be accepted by any other method.

- Submissions received after the relevant cut-off date will be held over until the next submission date; however, submissions that are postmarked before submission cut-off will be accepted.
- Scholarly Projects will not be processed without the electronic copy, payment or signed Submission Form. In these instances, the Scholarly Project will be returned by the College unmarked.
- The trainee's name is not to appear anywhere on the Scholarly Project. The trainee's name must only be recorded on the Submission Form, the accompanying acknowledgement statement and on the CD itself. Scholarly Projects found to have the trainee's name on them will be returned unmarked by the College.
- Projects will be returned unmarked if there is no BTC-approved proposal at time of submission (see point 4.3).
- Trainees who have co-authored a Scholarly Project must submit only one copy of the project with one submission form listing the details of each co-author. Each trainee must pay the Scholarly Project fee in full; therefore, each co-author must include their own payment details as well as a hard copy of their current medical registration with the submission.

### **13.1 Electronic Copy**

A Microsoft Word version (not PDF) of the Scholarly Project must be saved to a CD and submitted with the printed project. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure files are correctly saved to the disc. Applications without correctly saved files will be considered incomplete and will not be accepted.

- The word count stated by the trainee on the Submission Form (and cover page) will be verified.
- The project should be saved as one file, not as separate files (cover page, table of contents, project, and references).
- The CD must be labelled with the trainee's name and date of submission.

### **13.2 Trainee submissions related to targeted learning**

Trainees who are undertaking or have undertaken targeted learning relevant to the Scholarly Project must comply with the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure (6.2). A brief reference to the requirements follows; however, applicants are responsible for being aware of all requirements of the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure.

A targeted learning plan should be reviewed by the trainee, DOT and supervisor (where relevant) prior to the trainee submitting or re-submitting a Scholarly Project.

A trainee who is required to undertake progression-based targeted learning (for not passing the Scholarly Project by the targeted learning deadline on the Trainee Progress Trajectory) remains eligible to submit their project.

A trainee who is required to undertake assessment-based targeted learning (for two failures of the Scholarly Project) will be eligible to re-attempt once they submit the Commencement of Targeted Learning Form to the College Training Department. A trainee's re-submission will not be accepted if the College does not have notification that the trainee has commenced targeted learning by the final submission date.

## 14. Assessment

The Scholarly Project will be assessed to Fellowship standard (regardless of when it is submitted).

### 14.1 Assessment Domains

Adjudicating Fellows will consider each project according to the domains below. The domains are the same for all forms of Scholarly Project.

- a) The project is pertinent to the theory or practice of psychiatry.
- b) The presentation and content are clear and concise.
  - Professional English is used with appropriate spelling and grammar. (Trainees should have their project proofread.)
  - The project is 3000–5000 words.
  - Evidence of Ethics Committee approval is provided where relevant.
  - The content conforms to the requirements for the type of project submitted.
- c) There is a clear statement of the objectives of the project.
  - Hypotheses are well formulated and appropriate to the methodology.
- d) The literature review is comprehensive, contemporary and critical.
- e) All references cited in the text are listed in an accepted reference style, e.g. Vancouver style.
- f) The project uses methodology (and analysis) suitable to its format.
- g) Relevant results are presented appropriately.
- h) The discussion provides a concise summary of the main findings.
  - The discussion should include a critical review of the methodology and methods used.
  - The discussion should include a statement about how the project contributes to the field.
- i) Conclusions relate to the research question and are supported by the project results.

### 14.2 Assessment Marking

Projects will be passed outright, passed subject to revisions (conditional pass) or failed.

#### 14.2.1 Conditional pass

In the event that a project is awarded a conditional pass (i.e. passed subject to revisions), the trainee will receive written feedback indicating what matters need to be addressed. Trainees must revise their manuscript and submit it to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee, with a covering letter outlining how the matters have been addressed, for consideration within the timeframe specified. Trainees should highlight the revised text/sections of their manuscript (do not use Track Changes). Trainees are not required to pay the Scholarly Project fee when they submit their revised manuscript for consideration.

If the Subcommittee does not believe that the revisions address the feedback provided, the trainee is informed that the project has failed.

Only the first submission of a Scholarly Project can be awarded a conditional pass.

#### 14.2.2 Determination of a Failed Scholarly Project

In the event that a project is failed by the first marker, the Chair of the Scholarly Project Subcommittee will arrange for a second independent marker who will be unaware of the

initial failure of the project. If the second marker awards a pass, the Chair will also mark the project and have the deciding vote. If the second marker also fails the project then the trainee is informed that the project has failed.

#### **14.2.3 Failed Scholarly Project**

Trainees will receive written feedback indicating which domains were not met and why. Failed Scholarly Projects are retained on file with a copy of the feedback provided to the trainee.

Written feedback will indicate general areas requiring revision; however, this is not intended to be a detailed critique or step-by-step guide to rectify the project and other areas may need attention.

- The following disclaimer will appear on the bottom of each page of feedback:

*This feedback is provided for educational purposes only and is not a basis for appeal. All submitted Scholarly Projects have been marked according to the domains detailed in the Assessment Framework. The marker has provided feedback to highlight areas of the project requiring revision; however, this is not intended to be a step-by-step guide to rectify the project and other areas may need your consideration. You may amend the project in light of these comments or submit a completely new project. On resubmission, a project will be marked as a whole. In some instances, markers may advise trainees that the failed project is unsuitable for resubmission.*

#### **14.2.4 Submission following a failed Scholarly Project**

Trainees may revise their project to address the feedback provided and resubmit to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee or submit an entirely new Scholarly Project (a new project proposal will be required, see point 4.3). In some instances, markers may advise trainees that the failed project is unsuitable for resubmission.

- Trainees are reminded that feedback is a guide to the resubmission process. On resubmission, a Scholarly Project will be marked as a whole.
- The projects are identified by the College as 'First submission', 'Second submission' or 'Third submission' and all previous feedback is made available to the marker.
- Second submissions are marked by the original marker.
- Third submissions are marked by the Chair of the Scholarly Project Subcommittee.
- A trainee is not permitted to resubmit a Scholarly Project for a third time (i.e. a fourth submission) without approval from the CFE that it is acceptable for them to do so. Trainees must also have adhered to the overarching requirements of the Failure to Progress Policy (19.1).
- The accompanying Submission Form does not need to be signed by the trainee's Scholarly Project supervisor (second or third submission).

If a trainee elects to submit a new project, the marker will not need to refer to earlier submissions.

- A new Submission Form (complete with Scholarly Project supervisor's signature) is required.

#### **14.2.5 Multiple failures of the Scholarly Project**

Trainees who fail the Scholarly Project twice must complete a targeted learning plan as per the Policies and Procedures on Targeted Learning Plans (6.2) and Progression through Training (6.1).

Trainees must adhere to the overarching requirements of the Policy on Progression through Training (6.1) and the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1). Trainees required to submit a Training Review application for the Scholarly Project are not eligible to apply for further attempts at the Scholarly Project unless a Training Review outcome is received and provides the trainee with further attempts or time to complete the Scholarly

Project.

## 15. Exemption

Trainees may be exempt from undertaking a Scholarly Project if they have completed a doctoral thesis, Masters thesis or Honours thesis in a field relevant to psychiatry or mental health, or if they have had an article accepted for publication in a recognised peer-reviewed English-language journal relevant to psychiatry or mental health. The thesis or article must have been completed or published within the past 10 years in order to be eligible for exemption and the candidate must have been a major author (see Section 3.0).

Exemption may be granted where the trainee has demonstrated competency with a substantially comparable project.

Projects will be considered for exemption in the form in which they were accepted for degree or publication.

Trainees may not (later) apply for exemption for a project that has a BTC-approved proposal.

### 15.1 Application for Exemption

Trainees should submit the Application for Exemption Form, relevant required documentation and exemption fee to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via the Examinations Department at the College head office. Trainees may not submit more than four items for consideration per application form. Applications for exemption are valid for 12 months from submission.

#### 15.1.1 Applications based on prior study

- Trainees are required to submit original or certified copies of their academic record (or alternative official correspondence from the institution) certifying successful completion of the degree.
- Trainees are required to submit an electronic copy of their full thesis.
- If submitting prior study that was completed in a language other than English, the required documentation must be submitted with English translations prepared and signed by the translator. The translator's identification number or seal, printed name, address, telephone number and signature must appear on each translated page.
  - If the translation is made in Australia, the translator must be accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI).
  - If the translation is made in New Zealand, the translator must be a member of the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters (NZSTI).
  - If the translation is made outside Australia or New Zealand, the translator must be approved by an authority in the country where the translation is made.

#### 15.1.2 Applications based on previous publications

- Trainees are required to submit a certified copy of their letter of acceptance for publication (if the article is not already published).
- If a trainee was not the **sole author**, they must submit a signed statement which provides comprehensive detail about their contribution to each domain of the project, as per the authorship requirements specified in section 3.0.
- In addition, if a trainee was not the **first author**, they will need to submit a letter from the first author which confirms the trainee's contribution to each domain of the project.

## Associated Documents

1. Regulation: 13.1 Scholarly Project Education Training Regulation



2. Policy: 13.1 Scholarly Project Education Training Policy  
6.1 Progression through Training Education Training Policy  
19.1 Failure to Progress Education Training Policy and Procedure  
6.2 Targeted Learning Plans Education Training Policy and Procedure  
14.1 Recognition of Prior Learning Education Training Policy  
18.2 Special Consideration Education Training Policy  
2.1 Reviews and Appeals Education Training Policy
3. Forms: Scholarly Project Proposal Forms  
Scholarly Project Submission Form  
Scholarly Project Assessment Framework  
Application for Exemption Form
4. Other: [‘Research in psychiatry’](#) page of the College website  
Examination timetable

## REVISION RECORD

<b>Contact:</b> Projects Officer, Education and Training			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Approver</b>	<b>Description</b>
30/07/12	v.1.7	Board of Education	Approved by BOE
18/11/12	v.1.8	Board of Education	Minor edits made as recommended by the Scholarly Project Subcommittee and inclusion of reference to Progression through Training/Failure to Progress Policies. Approved by Scholarly Project Subcommittee 26/09/12. Approved by BOE.
10/05/13	v.2.0	Board of Education	Edits made by Scholarly Project Subcommittee to clarify submission, noted by CFE, approved by BOE 10/5/13.
17/10/13	v.3.0	Education Committee	Edits recommended by Scholarly Project Subcommittee to clarify 10 year limit and translation requirements for exemption submissions (point 15) and minor amendments at advice of CFE, approved by Subcommittee 12/09/13. Reviewed by CFE 3/10/13. Approved by EC 17/10/13. Reviewed by CGRC 18/10/13.
21/05/14	v.3.1	N/A	Minor additions to clarify that submissions and contact re: the Scholarly Project should be made via the Examinations Department.
08/08/14	v.4.0	Education Committee	Edits to clarify the submission requirements for co-authored projects and for applications for exemption, and to refer trainees to the College ‘Research in psychiatry’ web page. Minor clarifications to de-identification disclaimer examples and reference requirements. Approved by CFE 25/06/14. Corrected ‘supervising Fellow’ to a ‘College-accredited supervisor’, noted by CFE Chair. Approved by EC 8/8/14.

<b>18/03/15</b>	v.4.1	N/A	Minor alignments to rules approved in Leave & Interruptions to Training Policy (Board approved 14/2/15). The Scholarly Project (& Research & Proposal) can be submitted while a trainee is on an approved break in training but not if they are 'not in training' (i.e. not actively training nor on an approved break in training).
<b>02/06/16</b>	v.4.2.8		<p>Revised to reflect targeted learning/targeted learning plan (formally remediation/remediation plan) and standard expected at end of stage 3 (formally junior consultant standard) terminology changes. Approved EC 29/04/2016. Reviewed CGRC 28/04/2016. Approved Board B2016/4.</p> <p>Revised to reflect updates to the targeted learning and show cause points for the five centrally administered assessments, effective from 1/1/2017. Approved EC 03/06/2016. Reviewed CGRC 17/06/2016. Approved Board B2016/5.</p> <p>Edits recommended by Scholarly Project Subcommittee to allow BTCs to conditionally approve proposals pending ethics committee approval. Clarification that the Chair of the Subcommittee will mark third submissions. Changes to applications for exemptions requiring trainees to submit full thesis and provide detailed accounts of their contribution to project if not sole authors; first authors to confirm trainee contribution. Clarification of original work, that literature reviews must include critical appraisal of literature and that a Masters thesis is required to apply for an exemption. Approved by CFE 06/07/16. Approved EC 22/07/16. Reviewed CGRC 21/07/16. Approved Board out of session 25/08/2016</p>
<b>01/09/17</b>	v.4.3	N/A	Alignment with Targeted Learning Policy & Procedure updates (that Commencement of TL form required for eligibility to attempt exam after two failures only) that were approved by RANZCP Board 13/08/17 B2017/5 R16.
<b>29/11/2022</b>	v.4.4	Education Committee	<p>New addition to 14.2.5 where Trainees are now required to submit a Training Review application for the Scholarly Project are not eligible to apply for further attempts at the Scholarly Project unless a Training Review</p> <p>outcome is received and provides the trainee with further attempts or time to complete the Scholarly Project. EC approved (11/11/2022)</p>

**August 2023**

**NEXT REVIEW**