

Selection Regulations Surgical Education and Training in Vascular Surgery 2025 Intake

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition of terms for the purpose of these Regulations

- 1.1.1 Applicant** means a person who has applied for the Surgical Education and Training (SET) Program in Vascular Surgery of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS).
- 1.1.2 BOVS** means the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Board of Vascular Surgery
- 1.1.3 ANZSVS or Society** means the Australian and New Zealand Society for Vascular Surgery.
- 1.1.4 Referee** refers to a person who evaluates the applicant's workplace competence.

1.2 Purpose of these Regulations

These Regulations describe the principles, terms, and conditions of the selection process for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons SET Program in Vascular Surgery for the 2025 intake. This document is a public document.

1.3 Administration and Ownership

The RACS is the principal organisation accredited to conduct surgical education and training in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. The Board of Vascular Surgery undertakes the development, delivery, selection and administration of the SET Program as an agent of the RACS. The Board of Vascular Surgery is responsible for communicating with the RACS regarding training and education.

1.4 Objective of the SET Program

The overall objective of the SET Program is to produce competent independent specialist surgeons with the experience, knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to provide the communities, health systems and professions they serve with the highest standard of safe, ethical and comprehensive care and leadership.

2 PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE SELECTION PROCESS

- 2.1** The aim of the selection process is to select the highest calibre trainees for the SET Program on the basis of merit through a fair, open, and accountable process.
- 2.2** The selection process will be documented, transparent and objective with applicants having access to eligibility criteria, information on the selection process, general selection criteria and an appeals process.
- 2.3** The selection process will be subject to continuous review to ensure its continued validity and objectiveness.
- 2.4** The SET Program will be advertised to create awareness of opportunity for all eligible applicants.
- 2.5** The selection process will conform to the requirements agreed by the RACS Board of Surgical Education and Training and will meet the RACS's generic eligibility requirements.
- 2.6** The number of trainees selected in any year will depend on the number of suitable applications and accredited SET 1 hospital training posts available.

3 ELIGIBILITY FOR APPLICATION TO THE SET PROGRAM

- 3.1** To apply to the SET Program, applicants must fulfil the following RACS generic eligibility criteria, available at www.surgeons.org.
- 3.2** Applicants who do not meet the generic eligibility criteria will not progress to the next stage of selection.
- 3.3** Applicants with any conditions or undertakings associated with their medical registration in any country or jurisdiction at the time of application, or in the five years immediately prior to the Closing Date for applications, are ineligible to apply.
- 3.4** Applicants who have been terminated, or received a finding of misconduct, or received two or more written warnings related to their employment, at the time of application, or in the three years immediately prior to the Closing Date for applications, are ineligible to apply.
- 3.5** In addition to the RACS generic eligibility criteria applicants must fulfil the following specialty specific eligibility criteria:
- 3.5.1** Successful completion of RACS Generic Surgical Sciences Examination (GSSE) by date of application.
 - 3.5.2** 8 weeks full time surgical rotation in General Surgery undertaken within the 7 years immediately prior to, and completed by, closing date of application.
 - 3.5.3** 16 weeks full time surgical rotation in Vascular surgery undertaken within the 7 years immediately prior to, and completed by, closing date of application.
 - 3.5.4** for the **2026** intake into the SET Program, Successful completion of the Clinical Examination by date of application.
- 3.6** No more than two rotations of at least four weeks can make up the minimum requirement in 3.5.2 or 3.5.3.
- 3.7** Vascular rotations must have at least two (2) Fellows of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons employed as a specialist surgeon, or one (1) vocationally trained surgeon employed as a specialist surgeon who works at the hospital on a weekly basis and one (1) Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons employed as a specialist surgeon.
- 3.8** Applicants may apply to the BOVS Chair in writing at vascular.selection@anzsvs.org.au for an extension to 3.3.2 and 3.3.3 for interruptions due to family leave or other personal circumstances, e.g. illness, research, or higher degree.
- 3.9** Rotations indicating leave cover, relief, or shift work will not meet the requirement of 3.5.2 or 3.5.3.
- 3.10** Rotations indicating Private Assisting will not meet the requirement of 3.5.2 or 3.5.3.
- 3.11** Rotations in part time positions will count towards the requirements on a pro-rata basis of a full-time position. For example, working 19 hours per week for 8 weeks will calculate to 4 full time weeks.
- 3.12** Evidence must be provided for all rotations listed on the application, including the minimum eligibility rotations. All evidence must be submitted at the time of application, no further evidence will be accepted following the application submission.
- 3.13** Applicants who do not meet the specialty specific eligibility criteria will not progress to the next stage of selection.

4 APPLICATION TO THE SET PROGRAM

- 4.1** Prospective Applicants who wish to apply for the SET Program must first register in accordance with the RACS Regulation: Registration for Selection into SET available on the RACS website.
- 4.2** Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all necessary evidence is included in their application at the time of submission. No additional evidence will be accepted once an application has been submitted.
- 4.3** Evidence that was accepted in the past will not be accepted on the basis that it has been accepted previously. All evidence must comply with the Regulations and CV Scoring Guidelines for the current selection year.
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- 4.4** Applications open at 12:00 AEDT on 27 February 2024 and must be submitted via the ANZSVS online application system at www.vascularsurgeryapplications.com.au. Applications will close at 12:00 AEDT on 26 March 2024. Late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances. An application is considered submitted once payment process is complete.
- 4.5** Information collected as part of the application and during the selection process will be used to assess the applicant's suitability for the SET Program. Information may be disclosed to other parties or where required to do so by law. The BOVS may verify the information provided within the application with external institutions or individuals. By submitting an application, the applicant is consenting to the collection, use, disclosure and storage of the information by the BOVS, RACS or its agents. Failure to provide the information requested by the BOVS will deem the applicant ineligible for selection and their application will be withdrawn.
- 4.6** By submitting an application, the applicant is consenting to members of the BOVS and other persons appointed by the BOVS Chair, in accordance with these Regulations, conducting the selection process and making decisions relating to their application and selection despite having made decisions previously that may be adverse to the applicant. This includes decisions made during the current and previous selection processes and other training and assessment matters.
- 4.7** By submitting an application, applicants certify that the information provided is correct and in accordance with these Regulations. If it is discovered that the applicant has provided incorrect or misleading information the applicant may be withdrawn from the selection process and their application will not be considered further. This may occur at any point during the selection process.
- 4.8** Applicants will be allowed a maximum of three attempts at selection into the SET Program in Vascular Surgery. Any application submitted after 2020 is considered an attempt. Any application that has been assessed will count as an attempt.
- 4.9** Applicants who have reached the maximum number of attempts will be notified by email they are deemed ineligible and will not be considered further in the application process. The application fee will be refunded.

5 SELECTION COMMITTEE

5.1 The selection committee may include:

5.1.1 Members of the BOVS; and

5.1.2 Members of ANZSVS; and

5.1.3 Fellows of the RACS; and

5.1.4 Other persons as deemed appropriate by the BOVS.

5.2 The selection committee is bound by these Regulations and will be held accountable for their processes and decisions in all forums.

6 SELECTION PROCESS OVERVIEW

6.1 On completion of the relevant components of the selection process eligible applicants will be classified as:

6.1.1 **Successful** is an applicant who ranked high enough to be made an offer of a position.

6.1.2 **Unsuccessful** is an applicant who does not rank high enough to be made an offer of a position, but is suitable for training.

6.1.3 **Unsuitable** is an applicant who does not rank high enough to be offered an interview. They will be advised of their performance in the selection tools completed.

6.2 Applicants who progress through to interview will be ranked by applying the following weightings to the selection tools, providing an overall combined score out of 100 (rounded to the nearest whole number).

6.2.1 Structured Curriculum Vitae 25%

6.2.2 Structured Referee Reports 35%

6.2.3 Semi-Structured Vascular Surgery Panel Interview 40%

- 6.3** Allocation to available positions will be according to applicants' final ranking in the selection process.
- 6.4** All applicants will be notified of the outcome in writing.

7 STRUCTURED CURRICULUM VITAE

The Structured CV (included in the online application form) captures an applicant's information on experience, other qualifications (degrees, Masters, PhD etc.), research, publications, presentations, skills courses and scientific meetings, teaching, professional development, and non-medical achievements.

- 7.1** All CVs will be scored by two BOVS members using a structured scoring system. Discrepancy in any of the scores which cannot be resolved between the scorers will be reviewed by the BOVS Chair, or appointed representative to determine the correct score.
- 7.2** The CV will be scored out of a maximum of 50 points. The components scored are:
 - 7.2.1** Surgical and Medical Experiences
 - 7.2.2** Skills Courses
 - 7.2.3** Qualifications
 - 7.2.4** Publications
 - 7.2.5** Presentations
 - 7.2.6** Teaching
 - 7.2.7** Professional development
 - 7.2.8** Achievement, Leadership and Management
 - 7.2.9** Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety
 - 7.2.10** Rural or Regional Residency, Training or Employment

8 STRUCTURED REFEREE REPORTS

- 8.1** Confidential references are collected to obtain information about the workplace behaviour and personal attributes of the applicant.
 - 8.2** The applicant must provide at least one (1) and a maximum of three (3) supervising consultants who have had the greatest period of supervision for each surgical rotation listed on the application.
 - 8.3** Applicants must nominate a minimum of seven (7) and a maximum of ten (10) supervising consultants to act as referees.
 - 8.4** A minimum of two (2) referees must be vascular surgical consultants (FRACS) at the time of the rotation listed as a referee.
 - 8.5** All other referees must be surgical consultants (FRACS) or vocationally registered surgical specialists at the time of the rotation listed as a referee.
 - 8.6** A referee cannot be a current RACS SIMG on a pathway to Fellowship.
 - 8.7** If an applicant elects not to provide details for referees in accordance with these Regulations, or it is discovered that the applicant has provided incorrect or misleading information, the applicant may be withdrawn from the selection process and their application will not be considered further in the selection process.
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- 8.8** It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all potential referees are aware their contact details have been included on the application and have consented to being contacted. No attempt should be made to canvas the referee's intended response.
- 8.9** The referee must have a valid email address. The referee report is an online application and cannot be filled out manually. It is the applicants' responsibility to ensure the referee is aware of the process.
- 8.10** The BOVS will select five (5) referees to be contacted as part of the selection process. The remaining referees will be considered alternative referees.
- 8.11** Reports completed by alternative referees will only be used as part of the selection process if the BOVS has not obtained at least four (4) valid reports by 8 May 2024.
- 8.12** Where required the alternative referee reports will be used in order of their submission date.
- 8.13** The percentage scores for the first five (5) individual reports submitted will be averaged to provide an overall percentage score.
- 8.14** Where the BOVS has not obtained at least four (4) valid reports by 22 May 2024 the candidate will be deemed unsuitable.
- 8.15** On the report the referee will be asked to rate each of the twenty assessment areas which they believe best describes the applicant. The selection criteria which will be scored within the reports can be generally categorised as:
- 8.15.1** Medical expertise
 - 8.15.2** Judgement- clinical decision making
 - 8.15.3** Communication
 - 8.15.4** Collaboration
 - 8.15.5** Management and Leadership
 - 8.15.6** Health Advocacy
 - 8.15.7** Scholar and teacher
 - 8.15.8** Professionalism
 - 8.15.9** Cultural Competency and Cultural Safety
- 8.16** The response for each assessment area will be converted to an associated numeric score using a predetermined scoring system as follows:
- a. Unsatisfactory is scored at 0 points.
 - b. Basic is scored at 2 points.
 - c. Intermediate is scored at 4 points.
 - d. Advanced is scored at 6 points.
- 8.17** The maximum score is 120 points.
- 8.18** The referee report will be converted to a percentage score calculated by dividing the total score of the report by the total number of questions for which the referee has provided a response.
- 8.19** If a referee has provided a response for less than 80% of the report, the report will be invalid.
- 8.20** Referee reports close on 22 May 2024. No additional referee reports will be accepted following this date.
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9 SEMI-STRUCTURED VASCULAR SURGERY PANEL INTERVIEW

- 9.1** Interviews will be offered based on a ratio of three (3) applicants to one (1) available accredited SET 1 post (i.e. a ratio of 3:1). Applicants will be invited to interview based on ranked order of the combined CV and referee score. Applicants at the cut-off with identical ranked scores will be invited to interview.
- 9.2** All applicants will be notified 10 business days prior to interview. It is the applicants' responsibility to make the appropriate travel arrangements and to meet costs incurred in attending the interview. Information about the interview process will be included in the letter inviting applicants to interview.
- 9.3** Applicants must make themselves available at the scheduled interview time. Applicants' requests for a specific interview time will be considered if the applicant contacts the Executive Officer before the interview offers are sent out. Times will not be changed after offers have gone out. Applicants who do not present for the interview at the scheduled time will not be considered further in the selection process and their applications will be withdrawn.
- 9.4** The interview will be conducted by six (6) interview panels, consisting of two interviewers per panel. An observer may also be present.
- 9.5** The total time for each interview will be approximately sixty minutes. (10 minutes per panel)
- 9.6** Applicants will be asked the same question/s per panel. The follow-up probing questions will explore the breadth and depth of each applicant's experience and insight. These questions may vary based on applicant responses.
- 9.7** The interview will seek information on the RACS core competencies and the following attributes:
- 9.7.1** Ability to perform realistic self-assessment
 - 9.7.2** Ability to contribute effectively as a member of a health care team
 - 9.7.3** Ability to act ethically, responsibly and with honesty
 - 9.7.4** Capacity for caring, concern and sensitivity to the needs of others
 - 9.7.5** The ability to interact effectively with peers, mentors, members of the health care team, patients and their families
 - 9.7.6** Ability to demonstrate Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety with respect to the healthcare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori peoples, and people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
 - 9.7.7** Effective spoken communication/Preparation for Vascular training/Overall impression
- 9.8** Each panel member will score each applicant individually and the scores will be added to form the total points awarded.

10 MINIMUM STANDARD FOR SELECTION

- 10.1** Applicants who attend the semi-structured Vascular Surgery panel interview must achieve a weighted interview score of 25/40 or greater to meet the minimum standard for selection.
- 10.2** Applicants who attend the semi-structured Vascular Surgery panel interview and achieve a weighted interview score of less than 25/40 will be considered ineligible and not proceed further in the selection process.
- 10.3** Applicants who attend the semi-structured Vascular Surgery panel interview will be notified the outcome no later than 10 business days after the interview.
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11 ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SELECTION INITIATIVE

11.1 RACS Council has approved the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Selection Initiative Policy for the purpose of addressing the low participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the SET Program. The BOVS will implement this initiative as follows:

11.1.1 Under this initiative the BOVS will make one (1) post available for the 2025 intake.

11.1.2 An Applicant will be considered for the post if the following criteria are met:

- a. They have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the registration process, and
- b. They have met the eligibility requirements for membership of Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association, and
- c. They have met the minimum eligibility requirements as per section 3.
- d. They have scored a combined CV and Referee score to be invited to interview (10.1)
- e. They have met the minimum standard for selection as per section 10.

11.1.3 In the circumstances of more than one applicant meeting the above criteria, the post will be allocated to the highest-ranking applicant.

12 FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

12.1 Applicants who are unsuccessful in the selection process will be notified in writing of the following:

12.1.1 That they have been deemed suitable for selection but have not ranked high enough to be offered a position.

12.1.2 Applicants will not be provided with individual scores from structured referee reports.

12.1.3 Applicants will be provided with their overall interview score. Applicants will not be provided with a detailed breakdown of interview scores according to panel, additional performance feedback or a copy of interview scoring sheets.

12.1.4 Applicants will be provided with an aggregate breakdown of individual sections of the CV. More detailed feedback will not be provided.

12.1.5 Applicants wanting to challenge a decision made in conjunction with these Regulations should refer to the RACS Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Regulation.

13 FEEDBACK TO SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

13.1 Applicants who are successful in the selection process will be notified in writing of the following:

13.1.1 That they have been successful in the selection process and are being offered a position on the SET Program, including conditions associated with the offer.

13.1.2 A signed SET Trainee Agreement.

13.2 Acceptance of the offer to the SET Program will be conditional on the following:

13.2.1 Applicants must be prepared to be assigned to a training position anywhere in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand throughout their SET Program. The RACS is not the employing body; applicants must also satisfy the employment requirements of the institution in which the allocated training position is located.

13.2.2 Agreement to abide by the SET Program and RACS Regulations at all times.

13.2.3 Acceptance of the SET Program offer prior to the communicated offer expiry due date.

13.3 Applicants who do not satisfy any of the above conditions, or who decline the offer, will automatically forfeit the offer.

13.4 Forfeited offers will be made available to the next highest scoring eligible applicant.

14 SELECTION PROCESS REVIEW

14.1 Applicants may be asked to complete evaluation form/survey as part of the selection process.

14.2 The selection process will be reviewed and feedback to the BOVS on potential improvements and other relevant information.

14.3 Long term data will be kept and monitored as part of the review process including completion rates, withdrawal rates, performance levels and dismissal rates.

14.4 New selection tools may be developed and piloted during the selection process. Any data collected will not be used in the current selection process but may be used to analyse and validate the tool piloted.
