



ANZTBCRS

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Australian and New Zealand Training Board in Colon and Rectal Surgery Policy Document:

Overseas Training as Part of the ANZTBCRS Training Program

In Australia and New Zealand, a formal colorectal surgical training program is run by the Australia and New Zealand Training Board in Colon and Rectal Surgery (ANZTBCRS) – a Conjoint Board formed by the CSSANZ and the Colon and Rectal Surgery Section, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. The purpose of the Post Fellowship training is to provide the structured educational and training experience necessary to achieve expertise in the understanding, diagnosis and management of diseases of the colon, rectum, small bowel and anus. This program has achieved a world class reputation for training specialist colorectal surgeons who have completed the RACS Fellowship in General Surgery.

Currently the Program requires a minimum of two clinical years in Accredited Australian and/or New Zealand Colorectal units, and may also involve one additional year in accredited full time research. It is possible to have one of the clinical years in a prospectively accredited overseas unit. The ANZTBCRS training units have all been formally accredited and are re-accredited at least every five years to maintain a minimum standard set by the Board. This accreditation involves a formal on-site inspection of the unit and hospital, a review of all services available to the trainee, a detailed review of recent past trainees' log book numbers and a review of the research output from the unit.

In recent years (prior to 2019) there have been a number of trainees who have undertaken accredited training in overseas units where the training experience has been less than is expected from the Australian and New Zealand units. The specific concerns raised include: a) low overall and colorectal-specific log book numbers, and b) more of an emphasis on "service provision" rather than specialist-level active training. It is not feasible for the ANZTBCRS to put each potential overseas unit through the same accreditation process that is applied to the Australian and New Zealand units. The underlying concern is that ANZTBCRS trainees may return from overseas training without meeting the minimum requirements set out for training under the ANZTBCRS.

The ANZTBCRS will now require a more detailed and formal assessment of any overseas training position when an Accredited Trainee requests prospective accreditation as part of the two clinical years. This will not be identical to the current assessment of the Australian and New Zealand training units however will mirror many of the same requirements. It will be the Trainee's responsibility to provide all the necessary information in an appropriate timeframe to allow an overseas training unit to be prospectively accredited as part of their training.

The ANZTBCRS will require:

1. An application letter outlining the reasons the Trainee is requesting overseas training rather than training in an ANZTBCRS unit. This should include a detailed explanation of what they expect to learn in that particular unit, what their training has involved up to that point in time, and how they see the proposed overseas training benefitting their long-term surgical practice.

2. A signed letter of appointment or agreement to appoint from the overseas unit, including the planned start and finish dates.
3. A detailed weekly schedule outlining the Trainee's activities and responsibilities while in the overseas job. If this is an existing job being filled by another trainee currently, then a copy of the existing schedule, or if this is a new job, then a clear schedule of what the Trainee will be expected and able to attend (not just a list of all the unit's activities).
4. A log book from the previous trainee(s)' incorporating a minimum of 12 months operative experience.

The above documents must be submitted to the Chairman of the ANZTBCRS no later than 31 May of the year prior to planned training to allow adequate time for the ANZTBCRS to consider accreditation prior to the following year's job placements being made in late July.

Accreditation of the proposed overseas post will be at the discretion of the ANZTBCRS.

The ANZTBCRS still requires the Trainee to complete all the same requirements as if they were placed in an Australian or New Zealand accredited training position (including a complete log book, Procedure Based Assessments (PBA's), mid-term and end of year assessments, research, submitting a paper for the Trainees' Weekend, and sitting the exam if in their second year of training).

Prospective accreditation does not guarantee the overseas year will be accepted as part of the two clinical years on the ANZTBCRS Program, particularly, but not only, if there have been any significant changes to the job completed compared to the information provided for prospective accreditation. If the overseas year is not accepted, the Trainee will be required to complete an additional 12 months (or equivalent) of training in an accredited Australian or New Zealand training unit.