



Royal Australasian College  
of Dental Surgeons

*Let knowledge conquer disease*

RACDS

# Accredited Training Program Trainee Selection Guide

ORAL MEDICINE, PAEDIATRIC DENTISTRY  
AND SPECIAL NEEDS DENTISTRY



## **INTRODUCTION**

This guide provides an overview of the process for selection into RACDS Accredited Training Programs in Oral Medicine, Paediatric Dentistry, and Special Needs Dentistry in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## **THE TRAINING PROGRAMS**

RACDS aims to produce dental specialist practitioners with a high level of knowledge and advanced clinical skills and attitudes in the specialty, who will provide the best quality and service to meet the healthcare needs of all communities of Aotearoa New Zealand. The dental specialist training programs aim to actively promote and improve the health of Māori and Pacific Peoples. The three-year training program is accredited by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible to apply for selection into the training programs, applicants must have completed the following pre-requisites before the commencement of accredited training:

- Dental degree with unconditional registration to practise dentistry in New Zealand.
- At least three years of experience in general dental practice. It is desirable that trainees have worked in a New Zealand hospital dental unit for at least one of those three years.
- Citizenship or permanent residence status of New Zealand.
- Completed the RACDS Primary Dental Sciences Examination.

It is highly desirable that applicants for Oral Medicine have unconditional registration to practise medicine in New Zealand.

## **SELECTION PANEL**

The Selection Panel shall consist of the following individuals:

- The Registrar of the Training Programs
- One Dental Specialists in Oral Medicine
- One Dental Specialists in Paediatric Dentistry
- One Dental Specialists in Special Needs Dentistry
- A Head of Department representing the Hospitals with Accredited Training Positions
- The Director of Training
- A Māori Representative who provides expertise in cultural safety, equity, and Māori health within the selection process.

A Specialist from each of the three specialties will be nominated by the Director of Training to serve on the Selection Panel. Where the College does not receive any

applications for a particular specialty, the Selection Panel will comprise only representatives from the specialist disciplines for which applications have been received.

The Selection Panel and overall process will be Chaired by the Registrar of the Training Programs who will oversee the anonymous collation of each selection tool.

All Selection Panel members share responsibility for assessing applicants' cultural safety and ability to deliver equitable care. The Māori representative provides specific expertise in this area but is not solely responsible for cultural assessment.

## SELECTION TOOLS AND WEIGHTINGS

The College ensures a transparent, fair and robust selection process by using valid and reliable tools such as the following:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV) (40%)
- Professional Performance Appraisal Referee Report (PPA) (20%)
- Structured Panel Interview (40%)

Applicants progress to the interview stage if they meet the benchmark of 25% for the combined CV and PPA scores. Furthermore, applicants who identify as Māori, Pacific Peoples, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and meet eligibility requirements automatically proceed to the interview stage.

## CURRICULUM VITAE SCORING GUIDELINES

The following tables outline the categories and points applicants can score in this section. To verify the below activities, appropriate documentation must be provided with your application.

### 1. Qualifications and Academic Achievements

Scoring includes higher degrees recognised by Australian and New Zealand universities, that are complete. Evidence of completion is required.

Type	Description	Points
Medical Degree (Oral Medicine only)	Awarded with honours / distinction / credit / Dean's commendation	1
Dental Degree	Awarded with honours / distinction / credit / Dean's commendation	1
Graduate Diploma	Completed post medical or dental school, in a medical	1

	or dental field	
Master's degree / M Phil		2
PhD / Doctorate		4
FRACDS or equivalent general fellowship	If applicants have completed a full fellowship	4
RACDS Primary Examination (or equivalent College) or have the MRACDS(GDP) program		2
<b>Maximum of 8 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

## 2. Dental Experience

Terms of duration that are shorter than 1 year are not scored. Terms already arranged for after the closing date in the year of application will not be scored.

Type	Description	Points
Dental house surgeon, or hospital dental officer in New Zealand	1-year minimum	6
MCNZ General Medical Registration (Oral Medicine only)		3
Dental registrar in a Hospital in New Zealand	1-year minimum	3
Dental house surgeon, dental registrar or hospital dental officer outside New Zealand	1-year minimum	3
General Dental Practice	1 point per year of practice	Up to a maximum of 3
<b>Maximum of 9 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

## 3. Special Achievements and Leadership

Type	Description	Points
Community involvement	Undertaking volunteer work with a registered community group or charity on a regular basis, for a minimum of 12 months duration	3
Committee work	Involvement in a position of responsibility on a	1 per position up to a maximum of 3

	university student committee, dental organisation or a representative on a committee	
Representation or leadership role	State, national or international representation or leadership role or a state or national award in a sporting field, music or arts, within the last 5 years	1 per position up to a maximum of 3
<b>Maximum of 5 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

#### 4. Awards and Scholarships

Type	Description	Points
Academic or prizes	University prizes, Scholarships, Post-Graduate Prizes	1 per prize
	College awards (e.g. Christense Prize)	3 per prize
<b>Maximum of 5 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

#### 5. Publications

Publications relevant to medicine & dentistry only and accepted in a peer reviewed publication (excluding abstracts). Each publication can only be scored once. Publications which have a sufficiently similar topic to that of a presentation listed on the application will only be scored once. For any papers in refereed e-journals, only evidence of the peer reviewed policy must be provided to be scored.

Type	Description	Points
Case report		1
Peer reviewed journal article or book chapter	Where the applicant is <u>not</u> the first author	2
Peer reviewed journal article or book chapter	Where the applicant is the first author	3
<b>Maximum of 6 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

#### 6. Presentations

Type	Description	Points
RACDS Regional Meeting or Hospital Dental Conference		1
Academy Meeting		2

International conference or Fine Edge of Dentistry	Related to medicine or dentistry	3
Poster	Related to medicine or dentistry	1
<b>Maximum of 4 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

## 7. Courses and Scientific Meetings

Only includes skills courses and scientific meetings attended in the past five years.

Type	Description	Points
Attendance at courses	Does not include hospital-based courses, meetings, or activities less than five hours in duration  Includes courses related to professional development in clinical and technical competencies	0.5 per course
Attendance at scientific meetings	National (Australia or New Zealand) or international level  Where a score has been given for a presentation or course that forms part of a meeting program, no further points will be awarded for attendance at that meeting	0.5 per scientific meeting
<b>Maximum of 3 points can be awarded in this category</b>		

## 8. Indigenous Identification

Applicants must submit a letter of support from an Indigenous organisation or a senior community member with their application. Alternatively, a statutory declaration can be submitted.

Type	Description	Points
Indigenous identification	Applicants who identify as Māori, Pacific Peoples, Aboriginal, or Torres Strait Islander	2

## PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL GUIDELINES

In addition to the marking guide specified below, assessors will consider the following general factors:

- Number of referee reports received - each applicant had four (4) or five (5) references requested.
- Duration of time the referee has known the applicant - less weight for shorter periods e.g. < 1 year.

### 1. Marking Guide

Points	Description
<b>16 – 20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good reference in all aspects</li> <li>• Good number of above average scores in relevant sections</li> <li>• Fully supported to commence dental specialist training with no concerning comments</li> <li>• Clinical skills or manual dexterity noted to be above average for level of training</li> <li>• Where a cultural, community or non-clinical referee is provided, comments strongly attest to the applicant's mana, integrity, and commitment to service to whānau, community and profession, including leadership or contribution within Māori, Pacific or other community contexts. Such feedback reinforces the applicant's character, cultural engagement and overall suitability for specialist training.</li> </ul>
<b>11 – 15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound candidate</li> <li>• Majority of satisfactory scores with some above average scores</li> <li>• No negative comments about potential to commence training</li> <li>• Clinical skills or manual dexterity noted to be appropriate for level of training</li> <li>• Where a cultural, community or non-clinical referee is provided, comments support the applicant's professional conduct, respect for others, and contribution to whānau and community, demonstrating values consistent with the responsibilities of specialist training.</li> </ul>
<b>ANY APPLICANTS WITH MULTIPLE BORDERLINE OR POOR SCORES AUTOMATICALLY SCORE BELOW 10.</b>	
<b>6 – 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weaker candidate</li> <li>• Borderline scores</li> <li>• Referees have reported concerns about or would NOT recommend applicant for specialist training, would like to discuss further and comments added</li> <li>• Negative comments about insight, communication, teamwork and ability to learn/follow instructions</li> <li>• Where a non-clinical referee is provided, comments support the applicant's professional conduct, values, community engagement or character and are consistent with the overall positive</li> </ul>

	assessment of suitability for specialist training.
<b>0 – 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak candidate</li> <li>• Borderline / poor scores</li> <li>• Referees have reported concerns about or would NOT recommend applicant for dental specialist training, would like to discuss further and comments added</li> <li>• The number of referees that have concerns about commencing training is greater than those recommending</li> <li>• Negative comments about insight, communication, teamwork and ability to learn/follow instructions</li> <li>• Any negative comments about dental skills or dexterity</li> <li>• Where a non-clinical referee is provided, comments may indicate concerns about professionalism, judgement, interpersonal conduct or community engagement that align with other referee concerns.</li> </ul>

## 2. Structured Panel Interviews

The Selection Panel will be split into two panels per discipline to conduct the Structured Panel Interviews:

### Panel One

- One Dental Specialist from each of the specialties.

### Panel Two

- The Director of Training
- The Head of Department
- Māori Representative

Each panel shall conduct interviews with all applicants.

## 3. Selection Process

The Selection Panel will be split into two panels per discipline to conduct the Structured Panel Interviews. Cultural representation within the selection panel is intended to ensure that cultural perspectives inform decision-making, rather than being considered solely as an adjunct to the process.

Stage	Outline
Application for Eligibility for Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants submit a completed application form with curriculum vitae and other certified supporting documents.</li> <li>• Selection Panel reviews the eligibility of applicants.</li> <li>• Selection Panel reviews and marks the CVs following the CV Scoring</li> </ul>

	<p>Guidelines.</p>
Collection of Referee Reports for PPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Officer e-mails the individual professional performance appraisal (PPA) online form to nominated and selected referees.</li> <li>• Referees complete the PPA reports by the due date.</li> <li>• Selection Panel reviews and marks the PPA referee reports following the PPA Scoring Guidelines.</li> <li>• Board of Studies Reviews the CV and PPA scores of applicants.</li> <li>• Education Officer notifies applicants by e-mail if eligible for invitation to attend selection interview.</li> </ul>
Structured Panel Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Officer notifies applicants by e-mail if invited for an interview and provides resources in preparation for the interview. Applicants are responsible for travel and accommodation costs incurred when attending a face-to-face interview.</li> <li>• Selection Panel conducts interviews. Interview format and length are subject to change depending on applicant numbers and whether they are held face-to-face or via Zoom.</li> </ul>
Announcement of Offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection Committee / Board of Studies ranks applicants according to their combined CV, PPA and interview scores. Successful applicants will be matched according to their rank and preferred training centre.</li> <li>• As the College is not the employing body, the Director of Training will e-mail and offer training positions to successful applicants. Applicants have two (2) days to accept or decline the offer.</li> <li>• Education Officer notifies unsuccessful and unsuitable applicants by e-mail.</li> </ul>



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