



ANZCA
FPM



**Australian College
of Rural & Remote
Medicine**



RACGP
Royal Australian College
of General Practitioners

Rural Generalist Anaesthesia

Accreditation handbook

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1. Introduction

Accreditation is the process by which a credible, external body objectively assesses the best practice principles of a training site to implement Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training and provide assurance that it produces graduates that are competent to practise safely and effectively as specialist practitioners.

Using a five-yearly cycle, ANZCA, on behalf of the Tripartite Committee of Rural Generalist Anaesthesia (TC-RGA), accredits training sites throughout Australia to ensure minimum standards, while also promoting best practice, through information sharing and allowing sufficient flexibility in how standards are met to encourage innovation. Training for Rural Generalist Anaesthesia (RGA) may be undertaken only in training sites that are accredited for training by ANZCA and the RGA Accreditation Sub-committee. The exception is that trainees are permitted to undertake experience in rural areas outside accredited hospitals for up to a maximum of 4 weeks during training. This must be approved by the base hospital supervisor as per regulation 44.7.5.

Accreditation is a critical aspect of ensuring that Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training meets and exceeds the expectations set forth by our governing and regulatory bodies, health services and professionals, and the broader community. Before a training site is accredited for training, it is inspected to assess its ability to provide training and supervision to the required standard, and its degree of compliance with the RGA Accreditation Standards.

The Rural Generalist Anaesthesia Accreditation Sub-committee oversees the process and determines suitability for training, based on the inspectors' report. A department accredited for RGA training must meet training requirements as specified in the RGA handbook for training, regulation 44, college professional documents and ANZCA policies.

All accredited training sites are listed on the ANZCA website.

Enquiries about accreditation should be directed to the training accreditation department via email to RGA-accreditation@anzca.edu.au.

2. Roles

2.1. Accreditation team

The accreditation team will conduct the inspection of hospital departments for RGA accreditation as outlined below. The accreditation team trained Accreditation Visiting Officers who are fellows ANZCA, the RACGP and/or ACRRM, and Trainees of RACGP or ACRRM who have completed the training requirements of RGA. Where possible, one member of the accreditation visiting team will be an RGA accreditation visitor.

2.2. The RGA Accreditation Sub-committee (RGA-ASC)

The RGA-ASC implements the policies and procedures endorsed by the TC-RGA and ANZCA Council in relation to the accreditation of approved sites for rural generalist anaesthesia.

3. Accreditation standards

Departments are accredited using the RGA accreditation standards, which are:

3.1. Quality patient care

The department must demonstrate that they deliver safe and high-quality patient care.

3.2. Clinical experience

The department must provide trainees with access to a range and volume of clinical practice that enables them to complete the requirements of the training program.

3.3. Supervision

The department must provide trainees with adequate and appropriate supervision (as described in the [RGA Handbook for training](#)) for their level of training at all times.

3.4. Supervisory roles and assessment

The department must support trainees by providing access to qualified supervisors and assessors with sufficient resources including clinical support time to undertake their roles. Assessment of trainees must be undertaken in accordance with RGA training policies.

3.5. Education and teaching

The department must ensure that trainees have access to formal and informal educational programs that meet their training needs.

3.6. Facilities

The department must ensure that trainees have access to appropriate educational facilities and systems required for training.

3.7. Clinical governance

The facilities must be fully accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards or equivalent and have the governance structures to deliver and monitor safe patient care in a safe workplace.

Further detail on the accreditation standards can be found in [Appendix 1: Summary of the criteria underpinning each ANZCA accreditation standard as they apply to RGA training](#).

4. Types of accreditation inspections

An accreditation inspection may be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- 4.1. A site inspection of new departments.
- 4.2. Routine inspections which normally occur as part of a five-yearly cycle.
- 4.3. Out-of-sequence on-site accreditation inspections which are requested by a department, hospital, any committee of ANZCA, or by the RACGP or ACRRM via the Tripartite Committee for Rural Generalist Anaesthesia or the RGA-ASC. This type of inspection may be considered after review by the chair of the RGA-ASC which may lead to an urgent inspection.
- 4.4. A scheduled re-inspection arising out of concerns raised at a previous inspection or as part of the monitoring process.

5. Arranging an accreditation inspection of a new site.

Departments not currently accredited by ANZCA for RGA training must submit an application for accreditation, following the steps below:

- 5.1. The department submits an expression of interest (EOI) to the RGA-ASC including an overview of site data and plans for supporting RGA training.
- 5.2. The EOI is reviewed at the following RGA-ASC meeting and advice is provided to proceed with the application form and associated documentation to the RGA-ASC.
- 5.3. The chair of the RGA-ASC will review the application and may seek further clarification from the head of department, the relevant state support officer or other relevant stakeholders as required.
- 5.4. Additional documentation to support the application may be requested and must be submitted. The inspection cannot proceed until all required document is received.
- 5.5. A mutually convenient inspection date is determined. The head of department and supervisor(s) of training must arrange to be available on the day of the inspection.

- 5.6. An on-site accreditation inspection occurs, with the accreditation team assessing the department against the [RGA accreditation standards](#). This assessment occurs in the form of documents review, interviews with senior staff, trainees, departmental leadership (head of department and supervisor of training) and senior hospital management and a facilities inspection.

6. Arranging an accreditation inspection

Departments currently accredited by ANZCA for Anaesthesia training *and* Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training, or Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training only that require an inspection as outlined in items [4.2](#), [4.3](#) and [4.4](#) above, will need to follow the steps below:

- 6.1. ANZCA, on behalf of the RGA Accreditation Sub-committee (RGA-ASG) will write to your department to initiate the inspection and will request completion of required documentation.
 - 6.1.1. For sites currently accredited by ANZCA for Anaesthesia training *and* Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training and are not due for an accreditation visit before May 2025 will be required to complete and submit documentation to the RGA-ASC to confirm ongoing accreditation to deliver RGA training until the next scheduled accreditation visit.
- 6.2. The department submits the required documentation to the ANZCA Training Assessment Committee (TAC) or the RGA-ASC, as requested.
 - 6.2.1. Visits to sites accredited for both ANZCA Anaesthesia training and Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training will be coordinated on behalf of TAC and will include an Accreditation Visitor from the RGA-ASC to assess the site against the RGA Accreditation Standards.
 - 6.2.2. Visits to sites accredited for Rural Generalist Anaesthesia training only will be coordinated on behalf of the RGA-ASC and will include at least 2 Accreditation Visitors from the RGA-ASC.
 - 6.2.3. Where possible, one member of the accreditation team will be an RGA.
- 6.3. The chair or deputy chair of the relevant assessment committee assesses the documentation. Further clarification may be sought from the head of department, the relevant state support officer, the relevant advanced skills coordinator or the Rural Generalist Co-ordinating unit.
- 6.4. Additional documentation to support the application may be requested. The inspection cannot proceed until all required documentation is received.
- 6.5. A mutually convenient inspection date is determined. The head of department and supervisor(s) of training must arrange to be available on the day of the inspection.
- 6.6. An on-site accreditation inspection occurs, and the accreditation team assesses the department against the [accreditation standards](#).

7. Requesting a change to existing accreditation

If a department wishes to request a change in their existing accreditation, they must submit an application in writing to the chair of RGA-ASC setting out the reasons for the change. Additional information and a reinspection may be required.

8. Preparing for the inspection visit

8.1. Completion of the hospital accreditation record:

8.1.1. The department will be provided with documentation to undertake a self-assessment of its performance against the accreditation standards and associated criteria. This assists the department in understanding its performance and flags areas for further review by the accreditation team during the on-site inspection.

Copies of the relevant documents that demonstrate compliance with the accreditation standards should be provided to support the accreditation inspection.

8.2. Trainee opinion survey

The trainee opinion survey assists the inspectors to assess how the department is meeting relevant accreditation standards.

The survey also seeks trainees' views of the training experience provided by the department, as required by the [relevant accreditation standards](#). These are confidential to the inspection team, ANZCA and RGA accreditation committees, and are not shared with the head of department, the supervisor of training and other members of the department. Themes from the survey will be communicated to head of department and supervisor of training.

A trainee opinion survey may also be requested in other circumstances, for example if concerns have been raised about the training experience in a department as part of regular monitoring processes.

8.3. The accreditation inspection program

The hospital is required to draft a program for the accreditation inspection and submit it to ANZCA, as instructed and as per the identified dates. A template for this will be made available to the department when the inspection arrangements are confirmed. The program will be finalised by the lead inspector and forwarded to the department prior to the inspection.

9. Outcome of the inspection visit

At the conclusion of the inspection visit, the RGA accreditation sub-committee team meets with director/head of department and supervisor(s) of training, and then with senior hospital management, to outline their assessment and discuss the likely recommendations that the team will make to the relevant accreditation committee, along with the next steps and timeline. This information should be used as a guide only by the training site.

The RGA accreditation sub-committee team will prepare a draft inspection report and include recommendations that relate to published [accreditation standards](#) and [ANZCA professional documents](#).

The RGA accreditation sub-committee teams' report will be considered at the next accreditation meeting, unless an issue is identified that requires more urgent consideration for which a teleconference will be arranged. Further amendments to the recommendations may be made by the accreditation committee, following additional consultation with the accreditation team and the department, as necessary.

A letter incorporating the final recommendations will then be sent to the Director of Medical Services/Chief Medical Officer and senior hospital management and copied to the director/head of department and the supervisor(s) of training with the outcome, which may be one of the following:

9.1. Unconditional accreditation.

Once all accreditation standards and criteria have been met, the hospital department or other training site is accredited for five years from the date of the inspection and may employ RGA trainees from the beginning of the next hospital employment year. A certificate of accreditation is provided to the hospital.

9.2. Conditional accreditation.

The hospital department or other training site is granted full accreditation subject to the corrective actions being made in relation to [accreditation standards](#) and criteria within a specified timeframe and sometimes subject to reinspection.

9.3. Accreditation not approved.

For new applications, or applications for a change in status, where accreditation is not approved, feedback will be given to the hospital department or training site about what conditions would need to be met for approval to occur. A new application and reinspection would be required to determine whether the department could be granted accreditation once all conditions have been met.

9.4. Withdrawal of accreditation.

If a hospital is unable to comply with RGA accreditation standards and criteria, and where this has a significant impact on the quality of training or professional standards, accreditation may be withdrawn from that hospital or other training site. Accreditation can only be withdrawn by ANZCA Council.

10. Types of Accreditation sites

There are training sites that provide valuable training experience, but do not provide the entire Volume of Practice and experience for trainees to complete RGA training. Hospitals have the opportunity to partner with already accredited “parent sites” as a satellite site or additional campus. A parent site can be any site that **already** has full accreditation **approved** for RGA Training. Accreditation of satellite sites and additional campus is aligned with the accreditation of the parent site including:

- Status of accreditation- should accreditation be amended or withdrawn from the parent site, satellite sites and additional campus’s will be assessed on a case-by-case basis
- Accreditation cycle- the length of accreditation cycle and accreditation dates will be aligned with the parent site
- Dates- due dates for accreditation renewal, and any required in-cycle and out-of-cycle site visits

10.1. Satellite site

Many departments choose to enter into partnership arrangements with larger accredited hospitals (parent site) to meet the [RGA accreditation standards](#). Often this is in a situation where a hospital offers valuable opportunities that enhance RGA vocational training (for example, experience towards exposure of trainees to private hospital settings, experience in paediatric anaesthesia, and obstetric anaesthesia etc), but would not meet all the requirements for a fully accredited hospital on its own.

Examples of satellite arrangements:

- Co-located private and public hospitals – trainees rotate to the private hospital on a list-by-list basis for subspecialty experience. The supervisor of training is located at the parent hospital.
- Public non-teaching hospital and major teaching hospital – trainees rotate to the satellite site for 26 weeks FTE in the first year of training to acquire basic skills in anaesthesia. A supervisor of training is located at the satellite site as well as at the parent hospital.
- Public hospital and major teaching hospital in same metropolitan area – trainees rotate on a day-by-day basis for specific experience. Should a trainee spend under 0.2 FTE per week at a site, the supervisor can be based at the parent site, otherwise a supervisor will be required at the satellite site.

There are many other acceptable arrangements, and these will be considered as part of the accreditation process. ANZCA encourages flexibility, provided all RGA accreditation standards are met.

10.1.1. Satellite site requirements

The following table outlines the RGA accreditation standards for satellite facilities. For further information on the accreditation standards and criteria for duration of accreditation see appendix 1.

| Standard | Provided by the satellite | Notes |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Quality patient care | Must meet this standard. | |
| 2. Clinical experience | Must meet this standard through parent relationship. | Satellite site/s must formally align to an accredited 'parent site'. |
| 3. Supervision | Must meet this standard for supervision of clinical work at all times, by a nominated supervisor. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision Supervision will be provided by an RGA or FANZCA at a level appropriate for the individual trainee. Should a trainee spend under 0.2 FTE per week at a satellite site, the supervisor can be based at the parent site, otherwise a supervisor will be required at the satellite site. The allocated supervisor of training (SOT) may be located at the parent site <p>Allowable time limits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rotation to the satellite is a maximum 26 weeks FTE only. Trainees undertaking extended training may work at a satellite site outside of these time requirements as appropriate. The duration of allowable training time at a satellite site will depend on the depth and breadth of training capacity at the satellite facility. |
| 4. Supervisory roles and assessment | Minimum requirement is that the satellite must contribute towards workplace-based assessment. | A minimum of one FTE (may be split across multiple consultants) who holds FANZCA located at satellite site. |
| 5. Education and teaching | Satellite must meet the criteria for clinical teaching. | Formal teaching programs may be provided at the parent site. |

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| 6. Facilities | Must have a private study space and internet access for access to the training ePortfolio. | Other facilities may be provided by the parent hospital. |
| 7. Clinical governance | Must have Australian Council of Healthcare Standards (or equivalent). | For private hospitals, issues of employment, patient consent and indemnity of trainees should be outlined in the accreditation application (see 38.2). |

10.1.2. Additional campus

We recognise the valuable training experience regional and remote settings are able to provide, but ordinarily would not meet the criteria for a satellite site. For example, RGA accredited sites may wish to rotate their trainees out to a remote site for a small period of time to gain experience in a remote setting. Having this additional campus approved for hosting RGA trainees, enables trainees to continue training as normal under their site umbrella and gain specific further experience/exposure to rural and remote training experience which is not available in the main base hospital is a great benefit to the trainee.

To be granted as an “additional campus”, the already RGA-accredited hospital (parent site) must apply for the additional campus to be approved for training, and the additional campus must provide evidence confirming:

- ACHS (Australia) accreditation for the additional campus is provided.
- RGA trainees may spend 4 weeks FTE or less of their time at the additional campus. Trainees undertaking extended training may work at an additional campus outside of these time requirements as appropriate.
- Supervision will be provided by an RGA or FANZCA at a level appropriate for the individual trainee.
- That appropriate indemnity be provided to trainees if required.

We recognise there are currently existing arrangements in place for many currently accredited training sites, as per regulation 44.7.5. Prior to 2026 hospital employment year (HEY) we endeavour to formalise these arrangements for all current RGA sites, in preparation for the regulation to be amended for 2026 HEY, where it will be mandated for these sites to be formally recognised as additional campuses.

11. Reconsideration, review and appeal

All ANZCA decisions, including those made by the RGA-ASC, the TC-RGA and ANZCA Council, are subject to processes of reconsideration, review and appeal. See regulation 30.

Version control register

| Version | Author | Approved by | Approval Date | Sections Modified |
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| 1.0 | S. Cook | RGA Accreditation Sub-committee | 5/12/2023 | |
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