



## Guidelines and interview template for trainee experiencing difficulty

These guidelines are to be used by the supervisor of training (SOT) to document a remedial interview for the trainee experiencing difficulty process (TDP). Before commencing this process, consider whether the trainee is safe to practice. If not, discuss with the head of department (HOD), considering the trainee's rostered duties and the immediate safety of patients and the trainee.

The head of department should be informed that an interview has been scheduled and may be in attendance. The HOD should follow the requirements and processes prescribed by the relevant regulatory board/council. The [Wellbeing SIG](#) resource documents may be a useful adjunct to the process.

The SOT should consider possible solutions and plans of action before the meeting and should be prepared with all relevant documentation to hand. The [early indicator checklists](#) for more information. The most common issues trainees face are:

- Examination failure or failure to present for an examination.
- Clinical performance issues.
- Professionalism and/or insight issues.
- Illness.
- Global assessment concerns

Trainees experiencing difficulty should minimise their involvement with college and other key stakeholder committees and/or working groups in order to prioritise their ANZCA training.

The initial interview with the trainee should be led by the SOT. A formal time should be set aside for the discussion with sufficient advance warning for the trainee. The meeting should occur with adequate time for consideration and in a private place. The trainee is entitled to and should be encouraged to contribute to the discussion. The trainee should be offered the opportunity to bring a support person.

### Documenting discussions with trainees

The SOT and/or the HOD must maintain adequate permanent confidential records of discussions with the trainee. The record should be detailed, factual, and contemporaneous and include matters raised and the views expressed by the trainee.

Any information provided to the trainee indicating that there may be disciplinary action must be clearly stated. Such information must be understood and acknowledged in writing by the trainee. A failure to accept or acknowledge a warning would be grounds for initiating a disciplinary process, according to employer requirements.

It is advisable to seek assistance from the relevant hospital human resources department to ensure compliance with employment legislation.

### Following discussion

- A copy of the record will be provided to the trainee.
- A copy of the record of the discussion and agreed action plan must be forwarded to the education officer (EO) (for the region), and operations manager, Training and Assessments at the commencement of the TDP. Once the process is complete this should be reported to the EO and the operations manager, Training and Assessments. The rotational supervisor should be advised that a TDP is underway.

**Interview details**

College ID 

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Trainee name \_\_\_\_\_

Training site \_\_\_\_\_

Core unit \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor of training \_\_\_\_\_

Head of department \_\_\_\_\_

Education officer \_\_\_\_\_

TDP start date \_\_\_\_\_

Persons present and designation (role or relationship to the trainee)

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Discussion and summary of concerns**

The SOT should use active listening techniques and pay attention to his or her own and the trainee's body language and non-verbal cues. Six principles form the core of active listening:

- 1. Encourage the trainee to express opinions.
- 2. Clarify the trainee's perceptions of what is said.
- 3. Restate essential points and ideas.
- 4. Reflect the trainee's feelings and opinions.
- 5. Summarise the content of the message to check validity.
- 6. Acknowledge the opinion and contribution of the trainee.

Shortcomings in trainee performance and training progress should be clearly identified. (Record discussion on next page. If more space is required, attach additional pages. )

**SOT summary of concerns**

**Trainee summary of concerns**

The trainee should provide a self-assessment, including an explanation about his or her performance and the difficulty (or difficulties) he or she is experiencing.

## Action Plan

Clear expectations about required performance should be outlined. The supervisor of training and trainee will devise and implement a management plan. Agreed, achievable goals should be set, together with practical suggestions for their attainment. Suitable resources to support the trainee's progress should be identified. A time frame for the trainee to access relevant resources should be agreed.

A framework for goal setting is SMART goals:

- a) Specific: What? Why? By whom? By when?
- b) Measurable: How will progress be measured?
- c) Attainable: Goals must be within the trainee's capability
- d) Realistic: The trainee has the support, resources and ability to achieve the goals
- e) Timely: There should be a specific target date for completion (noting there may be a series of dates by which time particular steps may need to be achieved).

Clarify expectations around the role and responsibility of the trainee to implement and deliver on the plan. Include key points/milestones and when these will be achieved.

Agree any actions ANZCA/SOT will take to support the trainee in the implementation of the plan

Before finishing the interview, ask the trainee to commit to at least one action they will complete to initiate the plan. Identify strategies to achieve this

SMART GOALS	Date for completion	Who is responsible?
<i>E.g., I will write a study timetable this week leading up to my next exam attempt</i>	<i>One week from today</i>	<i>Trainee</i>

SMART GOALS	Date for completion	Who is responsible?

Once the action plan is agreed, discuss the consequences of failure to meet agreed targets.

Date and time of discussion \_\_\_\_\_

Duration of discussion \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review \_\_\_\_\_ End date of TDP \_\_\_\_\_

Trainee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SOT Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Following completion of this form, the supervisor of training should provide a copy to the trainee, the education officer, the head of department and notify the rotational supervisor. Please email this document within two weeks of the interview to [tdp@anzca.edu.au](mailto:tdp@anzca.edu.au)