



TRAINEE RESEARCH REQUIREMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Unless granted credit transfer pursuant to the provisions of the *ACEM Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer*, trainees enrolled in the FACEM Training Program are required to satisfy the research requirement by successfully completing one (1) of the following:

- a research project; or
- approved coursework (Coursework Pathway); or
- a thesis.

The purpose of this policy is to describe matters relating to each of the approved mechanisms by which trainees may meet the research requirement. This policy should be read in conjunction with Regulation B4 or G4 (as applicable) and to the extent that there is any inconsistency, the Regulations shall prevail.

2. DEFINITIONS

major author

refers to an author who has provided at least a 50 per cent contribution in three or more of the following areas:

- study design and planning
- study work (ethics approval, data collection and collation)
- data analysis
- writing of the manuscript

original research

refers to research which is presented and/or published by the people who conducted the research.

trainee

means any trainee enrolled in the FACEM Training Program and includes Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) who are completing requirements of a pathway to qualify for Fellowship of the College

supervisor

means the College-recognised individual(s) responsible for oversight of a trainee's research and refers to Directors of Emergency Medicine Training (DEMTs) or such other suitably qualified individuals who have supervised a trainee during their research project

3. RESEARCH PROJECT

3.1 Completion of a Research Project

Pursuant to Regulation B4.2.1 and B4.2.4 or Regulation G4.2.1 and G4.2.4 (as applicable), the research project may be completed by:

- publishing a paper in a peer-reviewed journal approved by the College for this purpose and referenced in a science citation index; or

- presenting a paper by either oral or poster presentation at either the ACEM Annual Scientific Meeting or the ACEM Winter Symposium.

3.2 Research Project Requirements

Regardless of the method of completion, the research project must:

- (a) be an original contribution in which the trainee can demonstrate that they are a major author;
- (b) satisfy the applicable topics and learning outcomes of the Scholarship domain of the *ACEM Curriculum Framework*; and
- (c) meet all minimum criteria set by the College for the research project as set out in the applicable College regulations, policies and guidelines.

The following do not meet the requirements of the research project and will not be accepted for adjudication:

- (a) case reports
- (b) case series
- (c) study protocols
- (d) book chapters
- (e) literature reviews where two (2) or more trainees rely on a co-authored paper
- (f) literature reviews that comprise a detailed appraisal of fewer than five (5) relevant different trials
- (g) research projects published in the following journal sections (or equivalent thereof):
 - correspondence
 - discussion papers
 - editorials
 - letters to the editor
- (h) research projects that have been previously presented or published by another author(s)
- (i) research projects previously assessed as not meeting the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program that are resubmitted in a different format.

The research project report must follow the relevant [EQUATOR Network](#) reporting guidelines. Each study type has specific guidelines and research projects should be reported in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

3.3 Minimum Criteria

Research projects are adjudicated to ensure they meet the learning outcomes of the Scholarship domain of the *ACEM Curriculum Framework* and the applicable minimum criteria.

The research project must, at a minimum:

- (a) summarise current relevant evidence
- (b) outline the significance of the project
- (c) clearly state the hypothesis
- (d) clearly describe the study design
- (e) describe methods used, including outcome measurements
- (f) ensure the methods are valid for the project type
- (g) ensure appropriate analysis is used
- (h) provide appropriate justification of sample size (where relevant)
- (i) ensure that the results are:

- accurately described, including measures of variance
 - analysed and interpreted correctly
 - presented clearly and unambiguously
- (j) ensure the discussion:
- is a succinct interpretation of the main findings
 - includes the significance of the findings in the context of other works in the field, with appropriate references cited
 - identifies the limitations of the study
 - draws appropriate conclusions

3.4 Authorship

Regardless of whether the research project is published or presented, the trainee must be a major author. Confirmation from the supervisor that the trainee is a major author must be submitted using the applicable College form.

Dual Trainee Authorship

Where two (2) trainees are involved in the authorship of a published research project, both trainees must be major authors and must apply for assessment of the research project at the same time. No more than two (2) dual trainee authors may rely on the same co-authored published research project.

If two (2) trainees have co-authored a research project that is presented, only one (1) trainee may seek adjudication of that project for the purposes of meeting the research requirement.

3.5 Published Research Papers

An application for adjudication of a published research manuscript, together with all required documentation, may be submitted to the College for adjudication at any time.

3.6 Research Paper Presentations

An application for adjudication of a research paper presentation, together with all required documentation, must be received by the College not less than six (6) weeks prior to the commencement of the meeting/symposium at which the trainee wishes to present the paper.

Oral Presentations

Where the paper is presented as an oral presentation, the presentation time must be not less than ten (10) minutes, followed by five (5) minutes of questions and answers. Trainees giving an oral presentation are expected to attend the entire session within the Annual Scientific Meeting or Winter Symposium program in which they present their paper.

Poster Presentations

Where the paper is presented as a poster presentation, the information should be of consistent volume and quality with that required for an oral presentation.

Where the paper is presented as a poster presentation, the presentation time must be not less than ten (10) minutes, followed by five (5) minutes of questions and answers. Trainees giving a poster presentation are, ordinarily, required to be present during the entire session within the Annual Scientific Meeting or Winter Symposium program in which they present their poster.

3.7 Adjudication

Research projects are, ordinarily, adjudicated by three (3) FACEMs approved by the College for this purpose, comprising:

- A Principal Adjudicator, who shall be a member of the Trainee Research Panel Executive;

- one (1) member of the Trainee Research Panel; and
- a second member of the Trainee Research Panel or one (1) FACEM.

None of the adjudicators should be from the institution(s) where the trainee is currently working, nor should they be from the institution where the research was conducted.

The adjudicators will make one of the following decisions:

- that the research project satisfies the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program; or
- that the research project does not satisfy the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program and resubmission is required.

For presented projects, the adjudicators will confer at the end of the presentation session to adjudicate all presented trainee projects. The Principal Adjudicator will meet with each trainee immediately after the adjudicators have conferred to advise them of the outcome of the adjudication.

For published papers, the College endeavours to provide trainees with written notification of the outcome of adjudication within six (6) weeks of date on which it was submitted to the College.

A research project assessed by the Principal Adjudicator and one other adjudicator as 'Satisfactory' is deemed to have satisfied the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program.

Where a research project is adjudicated by two or more adjudicators as not satisfying the minimum criteria, trainees will be given one opportunity to submit a revised manuscript addressing the outstanding items. The Trainee Research Panel Executive will provide written feedback to the trainee outlining the minimum criteria that were not met and any other relevant information. This information is provided to the trainee, their DEMT and/or the project supervisor. The College endeavours to provide this information within the one month of adjudication.

The completed adjudication forms are confidential to the College and will not be provided to trainees, their DEMT and/or project supervisor.

3.8 Resubmitted Projects

Where a trainee is advised that their project has not meet the minimum criteria and elects to resubmit their research project, the trainee must ensure that the revised project manuscript addresses all items identified in the written feedback. The revised project manuscript submitted to the Trainee Research Panel Executive for final adjudication must be accompanied by:

- a covering letter describing in detail how each of the points raised in the written feedback have been addressed; and
- a letter from the trainee's project supervisor attesting to the contribution of the trainee to the revision of the manuscript.

Revised project manuscripts submitted for final adjudication must be received by the College within three (3) months of the date of the written feedback provided to the trainee from the Trainee Research Panel Executive. Trainees are encouraged to seek assistance with the revision of the project manuscript from their DEMT / project supervisor, with further assistance from local or interstate mentors if required.

Final Adjudication

Revised project manuscripts, together with all accompanying information provided by the trainee and the original project manuscript will be subject to final adjudication by the Trainee Research Panel Executive.

The Trainee Research Panel Executive will make one of the following decisions:

- that the research project satisfies the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program
- that the research project does not satisfy the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program

Trainees whose research project does not satisfy the research requirement at final adjudication will be advised that they will need to successfully complete a different research project or satisfy the requirement through a different means, such as the Coursework Pathway.

4. COURSEWORK PATHWAY

4.1 Completion of the Coursework Pathway

Pursuant to Regulation B4.3 or G4.3 (as applicable), the research requirement may be satisfied by successfully completing two (2) postgraduate units of study at an Australian or New Zealand University.

At the time of registration as a FACEM Training Program trainee, eligible trainees can apply for recognition of prior learning for successfully completed units of study pursuant to the provisions of the *ACEM Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer*.

4.2 Coursework Pathway Requirements

The units of study must be undertaken within the same course at the same Australian or New Zealand University. These units must incorporate two (2) different subjects from the following core subjects:

- biostatistics
- clinical epidemiology
- evidence-based medicine
- research methods

Two different units in the same subject will not satisfy the research requirement.

4.3 Minimum Criteria

Units must be taken from the list of Approved Coursework Pathway Units available on the College website at: [https://acem.org.au/Education-Training/Specialist-Training-Assessment-and-Exams/Trainee-Research-Requirement-\(1\)/I-have-completed-or-planning-University-subjects.aspx](https://acem.org.au/Education-Training/Specialist-Training-Assessment-and-Exams/Trainee-Research-Requirement-(1)/I-have-completed-or-planning-University-subjects.aspx)

Trainees wishing to take a unit of study not already approved by the College must submit an application for prospective approval of that unit of study for the purposes of the Coursework Pathway. Coursework Pathway units of study are reviewed by the Trainee Research Panel Executive to determine whether they meet the learning outcomes of the Scholarship domain of the *ACEM Curriculum Framework*. Approval or otherwise of a unit is at the discretion of the Trainee Research Panel Executive.

5. THESIS

5.1 Completion of a Thesis

Pursuant to Regulation B4.1.1 and B4.4.1 or Regulation G4.1.1 and G4.4.1 (as applicable), the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program project may be met by a thesis completed as part of a university qualification by research.

5.2 Thesis Requirements

A thesis completed as part of a university qualification by research will be considered on its merits, including consideration of the discipline in which the thesis was conducted.

The following do not meet the learning outcomes of the Scholarship domain of the *ACEM Curriculum Framework*; and will not be accepted for adjudication:

- a thesis that formed part of a university qualification where more than 50 per cent of the assessment is by coursework, or
- a thesis that formed part of the trainee's basic medical degree.

A PhD in biomedical sciences completed through an Australian or New Zealand University will automatically satisfy the research requirement without the need for adjudication. A PhD completed outside of Australia or New Zealand will be assessed for academic equivalence.

5.3 Minimum Criteria

Where applicable, a non-PhD thesis is adjudicated to ensure it meets the learning outcomes of the Scholarship domain of the *ACEM Curriculum Framework* and the applicable minimum criteria. These minimum criteria are the same as those for the research project (refer Section 3.3. above).

5.4 Adjudication

A non-PhD research thesis will be adjudicated to determine whether it meets the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program. To be eligible for adjudication, the research thesis must have comprised at least 50 per cent of the assessment component of the relevant degree.

A thesis is adjudicated in the same manner as a research project (refer Section 3.6 above).

The adjudicators will make one of the following recommendations to the ACEM Trainee Research Panel Executive:

- that the thesis satisfies the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program
- that the thesis does not satisfy the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program and is to be referred to the Trainee Research Panel Executive for review

5.5 Assessment Decision

The Trainee Research Panel Executive will make one of the following decisions:

- that the thesis satisfies the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program
- that the thesis does not satisfy the research requirement of the FACEM Training Program

Trainees whose thesis does not satisfy the research requirement will be advised that they will need to satisfy the research requirement through a different means.

6. PLAGIARISM

The College regards plagiarism as a serious act of academic misconduct. Plagiarism of another's work is considered unacceptable, as is the making available of one's own work to another trainee for the purposes of plagiarism.

In cases where collaboration is permitted (i.e. dual authorship), the work submitted for assessment must be the collaborative work of the trainees who are submitting the work, and must be clearly acknowledged as such.

Any allegation of plagiarism will be investigated in accordance with the College's *Plagiarism Policy*.

7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Regulation B4 - Research Requirement
- Regulation G4 – Research Requirement (Trainees Commencing from 2022 Training Year)
- *ACEM Curriculum Framework*

- ACEM Plagiarism Policy (under development)
- *Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer (TA113)*

8. DOCUMENT REVIEW

Timeframe for review: every two (2) years, or earlier if required.

8.1 Responsibilities

Document authorisation: Council of Education
Document implementation: Executive Director, Training
Document maintenance: General Manager, Governance and Standards

8.2 Revision History

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	Feb-2017	Approved by Council of Education
v2	Feb-2022	Revisions to reflect introduction of revised FACEM Training Program from 2022 Training Year (Regulation G)