

Post-Fellowship Training (PFT) in Breast Surgery

SELECTION GUIDELINES



1. ELIGIBILITY

The Post Fellowship Training (PFT) program in breast surgery is open to:

- a) to suitably qualified trainees who have been awarded Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in General Surgery
- b) to trainees who have successfully **completed** the RACS Fellowship Examination in General Surgery

Applications will not be considered if a trainee has not sat and passed the RACS Fellowship Exams.

2. SELECTION TOOLS

Selection of candidates into the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program will be determined via the following selection tools. Selection tools for first- and second-year trainees are weighted differently.

First year trainees (PFT 1)

- Application Form (30%)
- Referee Reports (20%)
- Interview (50%)

Second year trainees (PFT 2)

- Application form updates (10%) – refer clause 4.3
- Referee Reports (20%)
- Interview (70%)

The number of offers made for acceptance onto the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program will be dependent on the availability of accredited training positions and the selection assessment of trainees.

3. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

All applications must include the following information:

- Completed [BreastSurgANZ PFT Program Selection Application](#) form
- Cover Letter detailing the reasons for your application
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Proof of a) Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), **or** b) evidence of successful completion of the Fellowship Examination in General Surgery
- Proof of current and valid medical registration from the applicable Medical Board or Council in Australia or New Zealand (e.g. AHPRA). Australian applicants must have general (unconditional) registration. New Zealand applicants must have general scope or restricted general scope registration in the relevant specialty.
- Proof of citizenship or permanent residency status in Australia or New Zealand.
- Proof of Medical Indemnity Insurance

4. APPLICATION FORM

4.1 The structured Application Form ('application form') captures information relevant to the eligibility of the applicant including information on previous experience in general and breast surgery, higher degrees and research, publications, presentations, prizes and scholarships, leadership/teaching/community and administrative involvement.

4.2 ***First year applicants*** will be required to submit a completed application form for assessment.

- 4.3 **Second year applicants** will only be required to provide new and relevant updates which differ from first-year applications. If a second-year candidate has no updates to provide they need to advise BreastSurgANZ that this is the case, when submitting their application letter and list of referees.
- 4.4 Each application form will be scored by two (2) people nominated by the BreastSurgANZ PFT Committee, without reference to the opinions of others, using a structured scoring system. Where any discrepancy occurs in the scores provided by the two (2) scorers, the Committee Chair, or appointed representative, will score the application form to identify the anomaly and correct the score.
- 4.5 The application form will be scored out of a potential 40 points.
The application components are:
- a) General and Breast surgical experience (Maximum 10 points)
 - b) Higher Degree (Maximum 5 points)
 - c) Publications and Presentations (Maximum 10 points)
 - d) Leadership / Community / Administration (Maximum 10 points)
 - e) Prizes and Scholarships (Maximum 5 points)
- 4.6 The Application Form score out of 40 will be adjusted to an overall percentage score rounded to two decimal places.
- 4.7 **Surgical Experience**
- a) Scoring will consider experience in specialities of General Surgery and Breast Surgery.
 - b) Scoring will be considered for Breast Surgery terms or appointments undertaken in the last five (5) clinical years
 - c) Scoring will be considered for non-Breast surgery terms or appointments undertaken in the last two (2) clinical years
 - d) Terms or appointments in surgery of less than six (6) consecutive months will not be scored. Terms or appointments must be a minimum of six (6) months on a single unit (including periods of leave of less than 6 weeks).
 - e) Only terms completed by the closing date of application will be scored.
 - f) Applicants must provide proof of rotations or appointments in the form of training, signed assessment form, RACS trainee surgical logbook or letter of confirmation from the hospital for the most recent two clinical years prior to application. Contracts or rosters will not suffice as documentation. Where adequate documentation is not provided the rotation or appointment will not be scored.
 - g) Documentation must be provided on letterhead or signed will not be accepted and the rotation or appointment will not be scored.
- 4.8 **Higher Degree**
- a) Scoring only includes recognised higher degrees in a surgically/medically related area, and successfully completed at the time of application. Scoring only includes:
 - Masters or coursework or thesis
 - PhD
 - Doctor of Medical Science (MD) by Research (or equivalent)
 - b) Higher degrees must be awarded by the time of application and not awaiting marking.

- c) Higher degrees must be equivalent to the level expected at an Australian or New Zealand tertiary institution.
- d) Documentary evidence of completion must be provided at the time of application.

4.9 Research and Publications

- a) Scoring will consider presentations and publications undertaken in the past four (4) years.
- b) Presentations and publications must be complete, that is presented, published, or accepted for publication, at the time of application closing date.
- c) Scoring only includes presentations personally given by the applicant.
- d) Scoring only includes presentations at scientific meetings or conferences subject to abstract selection.
- e) Poster presentations will only be scored where the applicant is the first author and named presenter in the meeting program.
- f) Scoring only includes publications in a peer reviewed scientific journal.
- g) Each publication or presentation of the same topic or title can only be scored once.
- h) Documentary evidence of publication and/or proof of presentation must be provided at the time of application. Entries where adequate documentation is not provided will not be scored.
- i) Acceptable documentary evidence of presentations includes official meeting program or letter from convener or conference organiser.
- j) Acceptable documentary evidence of publication includes copy of publication or official letter from the editor clearly stating publication date for acceptance for publication.
- k) Scoring will preference presentations or publications that have a breast focus and where the applicant is a first author.

4.10 Leadership/Community/Administration/Teaching

- a) Applicants may score for involvement in leadership and/or administration, e.g. Committee appointments, Chair positions, volunteer contributions, undertaken in the last four (4) years.
- b) Scoring includes involvement in leadership, community and/or administration in the medical or non-medical field.
- c) Appointments to an academic position in a university (full, adjunct, clinical, or similar will be scored)
- d) Scoring does not include involvement in leadership, community and/or administration undertaken as part of normal medical employment.
- e) Scoring does not include involvement in one-off leadership, community and/or administration activities. Applicants must demonstrate continued contribution.
- f) Evidence of involvement from the relevant institution/organisation must be supplied.
- g) Entries for which documentation cannot verify the activities and time commitment, including dates and hours per week, will not be scored.

4.11 Prizes and Scholarships

- a) Applicants may score for prizes and scholarships awarded during their medical training.
- b) Scores will be awarded prizes or scholarships awarded by any of the following institutions: hospitals, General Surgeons Australia and/or RACS (for prizes or scholarships obtained during or after SET training), University prizes (obtained during MBBS or after).
- c) Points will also be awarded for state or nationally recognised Community based awards/scholarships and/or internationally recognised Community awards/scholarships.

4.12 Application Form Scoring

- a) First year applications will be scored in their entirety as per clauses 4.1 through to clause 4.11 inclusive.
- b) Only updates on second year application forms will be marked. Where no updates are provided, the scores for the applicant's first-year application will be used for assessment purposes for their second-year application.
- c) Research and presentation requirements that form part of the training requirements for the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program will not be marked as part of the selection assessment process.

5. REFEREE REPORTS

5.1 Overview

References are collected to obtain information, in confidence, about the history of the applicant as well as assessments regarding a number of areas in order to assess suitability for the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program.

- 5.2 Applicants will be advised if referees have not returned their reports within the designated time period. Applicants will be provided

5.3 First year applicants

- a) must submit a minimum of four (4) consultant names one of whom must be the applicant's current Supervisor. The other three (3) names must be the names of consultants who have had the greatest period of supervision or contact with the applicant during the any breast surgical rotation or appointment undertaken during the past five (5) clinical years and the last two (2) clinical years for non-breast surgery prior to the closing date for applications.
- b) A minimum of one consultant must be from each rotation or appointment listed on the application form.
- c) Only referees from consultant surgeons will be accepted. Non-surgical referees will not be permitted. A Consultant is defined as one of the following:
 - Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
 - a vocationally trained surgeon employed as a consultant surgeon

5.4 Second year applicants

- a) Must submit four (4) referee names one of whom must be the applicant's current Supervisor. The other three names must include the following individuals from the Unit within which the applicant is currently working:
 - Current Nurse Unit Manager or Theatre Nurse Unit Manager
 - Current Supervisor
 - Two (2) Unit consultants
- b) A Consultant is defined as one of the following:
 - Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
 - a vocationally trained surgeon employed as a consultant surgeon
- c) All four (4) referees will be contacted including the current Supervisor. The applicant will not be advised which other referees will be contacted.
- d) Second year applicants should not submit the same referees they submitted as part of their first-year application unless they're training Supervisor has not changed.

5.5 Failure to nominate four (4) referees will deem the application ineligible.

5.6 Referees will be asked to provide a rating and make comment about the applicant in relation to the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Clinical expertise | - Technical ability |
| - Judgement under pressure | - Decision-making |
| - Communication | - Team involvement |
| - Respect | - Teaching |
| - Leadership | - Learning |
| - Professional integrity | - Personal attributes |

5.7 By providing referee names applicants are confirming that the individual has agreed to act as referee.

5.8 The BreastSurgANZ administrative team are responsible for the collection of the reports. All referees contacted as part of the selection process will be advised of the confidential nature of the reports. Harassment of any kind of any individual involved in the completion of collection of the reports is a serious matter and may result in the applicant being deemed **unsuitable** for selection and removed from the selection process. Harassment includes repeated requests by the applicant to any consultant for any report submitted.

5.9 If an applicant elects not to provide the details for consultants as stipulated by these regulations, or it is subsequently discovered that the applicant has provided incorrect or misleading information either intentionally or unintentionally, including listing consultants who do not strictly comply with these Regulations, or omitting consultants in preference for other who have had a lesser supervisory role, the applicant may be automatically withdrawn from the selection process and their application withdrawn from the selection process and their application will not be considered further.

5.10 **Scoring**

- a) The options chosen by the referee will be converted to the associated numeric score by the BreastSurgANZ administration team using a predetermined scoring system from 1 to 4 as follows:
 - The first option is categorised as “unsatisfactory” and scores 1 points
 - The second option is categorised as “basic” and scores 2 point
 - The third option is categorised as “intermediate” and scores 3 points
 - The fourth option is categorised as “advanced” and scores 4 points
- b) Where a referee is unable to rate a candidate on a particular assessment it will be scored a zero (0).
- c) Individual report scores will be converted to a percentage score rounded to two decimal places, calculated by dividing the total score for the report by the total number of questions for which the referee has provided a response.
- d) If the referee has provided responses for less than 75% of the report (3 questions or more unanswered), the report will be deemed invalid and will not be used as part of the selection process. In these circumstances an alternate report will be sought.
- e) The percentage scores for the four (4) individual reports will be averaged to provide an overall percentage score, rounded to two decimal places, for the Structured Referee Report selection tool.

6. **STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

- 6.1 Applicants will be notified if they are required for a panel interview. Panel interviews are conducted by three (3) PFT Committee members, Hospital Training Supervisors, Councillors or senior BreastSurgANZ members.
- 6.2 Interviews will be held in person or via Zoom videoconference.
- 6.3 Interviews will be between 20 and 25 minutes in duration.
- 6.4 Applicants will be asked structured questions and will include both clinical and non-clinical questions.
 - .. Interviews are designed to identify factors deemed important to the practice of breast surgery and to assess the suitability of the applicant for training.
- 6.6 The interview seeks information on a variety of attributes including:
 - a) The ability to interact effectively and cordially with peers, mentors, registrars, hospital administrators, patients and their families.
 - b) The ability to act ethically, responsibly and with honesty.
 - c) The capacity to care, demonstrate concern and sensitivity to the needs of others.
 - d) The ability to assimilate and organise information and to adapt accordingly.
 - e) The ability to present concisely within a timeframe.
 - f) The ability to recognise and respond appropriately to ethical issues.
 - g) The ability to promote health maintenance and respond to the health needs of the community, patients, colleagues and self.
 - h) Clinical acumen and capability.
 - i) The candidate’s commitment to a career in Breast Surgery.

6.7 Eligibility to Proceed to Interview

Applicants must score a combined total score from the Application Form and Referee reports of 70% or above to be eligible to proceed to the interview stage. Applicants who do not meet this criteria will be deemed unsuitable and not eligible for an interview. Applicants will be notified accordingly.

6.8 Notification of Interview

- a) Applicants will be notified the interview details at least 10 business days prior to the interview taking place. Interview dates will be included on the Selection Timeline detailed on the BreastSurgANZ website.
- b) When interviews are to be held in person, it is the applicant's responsibility to make the appropriate travel arrangements and to meet any costs incurred in attending the interview.
- c) Interview times, dates and format will be confirmed via email.
- d) If an applicant is unable to attend an in-person interview due to extenuating circumstances alternative arrangements can be made for that person to attend via videoconference.
- e) If an applicant does not make themselves available at the scheduled time without prior arrangement/notification to the BreastSurgANZ administration team the applicant will not be considered further in the selection process and their application will be withdrawn from selection.

6.9 Interview Scoring

- a) Applicants will be scored using a structured scoring system and criterion statements relating to topics outlined in clause 6.6.
- b) Each question will be accompanied by a criterion answer.
- c) The score for each question will be out of five (5).
- d) Each panel member will also score the applicant and applicant answers will be scored using the following structured scoring system and criteria:
 - Unsatisfactory (1 point): The applicant failed to articulate appropriate responses and did not cover any of the key points related to the scoring criteria and did not demonstrate the potential for appropriate knowledge, skills or abilities and/or did not demonstrate some of the personal qualities and behaviours sought.
 - Basic (2 points): The applicant articulated appropriate responses covering 1 – 2 of the key points related to the scoring criteria and demonstrated the potential for suitable knowledge, skills and abilities with further experience and demonstrated the personal qualities and behaviours sought.
 - Intermediate (3 points): The applicant articulated appropriate responses covering 3 points related to the scoring criteria and demonstrated appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities and the personal qualities and behaviours sought.
 - Advanced (4 points): The applicant articulated good responses covering 4 – 5 of the key points related to the scoring criteria and demonstrated good knowledge, skills and abilities and the personal qualities and behaviours sought.
 - Expert (5 points): The applicant articulated excellent responses covering 6 or more of the key points related to the scoring criteria and demonstrated good knowledge, skills and abilities and the personal qualities and behaviours sought.
- e) The total interview scores out of 30 will be adjusted to an overall percentage score rounded to two decimal places for the interview selection tool

7. HOSPITAL PREFERENCES

Candidates will be required to rank all available hospital positions for the year (first or second) for which they are applying. **All** positions must be ranked from first to last preference. Candidates must be prepared to accept any of the available accredited hospital training positions in either Australia or New Zealand.

8. RANKING

At the completion of the assessment process candidates will be ranked according to their final collated assessment score. Hospital positions will be allocated beginning with the highest ranked candidate through to the lowest ranked candidate.

Rankings are determined following weighting to the percentage adjusted score out of 100 obtained from each of the three (3) selection tools, to obtain an overall percentage score.

9. NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOME

a) Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing that they have not been successful in their application however no information will be provided in relation to overall rankings.

b) Successful Applicants

- Successful applicants will be notified in writing via email that they have been successful in their application via an offer of training which will include the applicant's allocated hospital.
- Applicants will have 24 hours to accept their allocated position.
- Applicants **will not** be notified of their overall score and/or their ranking.

10. TRAINING FEE

The BreastSurgANZ Council has approved an annual Training Fee of **\$2,750 (inc. GST)** for the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program.

The Training Fee is payable upon successful admission to the PFT Program and at the commencement of training.

11. APPLICATION FEE

A non-refundable application fee of **\$550 (inc. GST)** is payable upon application for the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program.

Following submission of an application you will receive an invoice for immediate payment. No application will be processed prior to receipt of payment of the application fee.

12. SPECIALIST TRAINEE MEMBERSHIP

Trainees accepted onto the BreastSurgANZ Post Fellowship Training Program will be required to become a Specialist Trainee Member of the Society for the duration of their training. Specialist Trainee Membership costs **\$275 (inc. GST)** per training year and will be invoiced for each year of training in February/March.

13. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

- a) Completed applications and all supporting documentation must be submitted. Late applications will not be accepted.

14. DOCUMENTATION

- Documents must be submitted via email to education@breastsurganz.org
- Please, wherever possible, submit your documents in PDF format.
- Only submit the documentation requested above. Any additional documentation will not be assessed.
- Please ensure documents are clearly labelled e.g., JOHN SMITH_CV; JOHN SMITH_Application Form

15. CONTACT

Please direct all queries to: E: education@breastsurganz.org