

1. ELIGIBILITY

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

- a) Suitably qualified applicants who have been awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in General Surgery
- b) Applicants who have successfully passed the RACS Fellowship Examination in General Surgery at the time of submitting their application to the BreastSurgANZ Post Fellowship Training Program; and
- c) Applicants who have successfully completed all SET training requirements including all mandatory courses, SEAMS and research at the time of submitting their application to the BreastSurgANZ Post Fellowship Training Program.

BreastSurgANZ will request evidence of obtainment of FRACS, or evidence the applicant has passed the Fellowship Exam in General Surgery and completed all SET training requirements at the time of application.

Applications will not be considered if a trainee has not passed the RACS Fellowship Exam.

Applications will not be considered if a trainee has not completed all SET training requirements including all mandatory courses, SEAMS and research by the time offers are made.

Applications will not be considered if an applicant is unable to travel interstate within Australia and/or to New Zealand for one or both of their training years. The ability to travel interstate within Australia and/or to New Zealand in a trainees' first and/or second year of training is a requirement of acceptance onto the BreastSurgANZ Training Program.

Selection onto the BreastSurgANZ PFT program is highly competitive and typically the number of applications received outnumbers the available number of positions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the BreastSurgANZ PFT Handbook.

2. SELECTION TOOLS

Selection of candidates into the BreastSurgANZ PFT Program is determined through the use of selection tools. These selection tools are weighted differently for first- and second-year trainees.

First year trainees (PFT 1)

- Application Form (30%)
- Referee Reports (30%)
- Interview (40%)

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 varies yearly, and is 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 and your interest in the BreastSurgANZ Post Fellowship Training Program
- 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
- SET Training Transcript: for applicants who have not yet attained their FRACS but who have passed the Fellowship Examination in General Surgery must provide a copy of their SET Training Transcript with their application. A copy of the transcript can be obtained from the Board in General Surgery at E: board@generalsurgeons.com.au. If the transcript is not up to date with respect to completed courses, please submit Certificates of completion with the transcript.

Incomplete applications will not be eligible for assessment. BreastSurgANZ will not contact applicants who submit incomplete applications. Incomplete applications will be immediately withdrawn from selection.

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 Candidates **must submit proof** (in PDF format) of any Higher Degrees, Publications, Presentations, Prizes and Scholarships and/or Leadership, Community and Administration involvement. Where no proof of completion or involvement is provided no score can be allocated.
- 4.3 **First year applicants** are required to submit all required information as detailed in Clause 3 for assessment.
- 4.4 **Second year applicants** will only be required to submit a current CV. A cover letter is not required. Your CV will be forwarded to your allocated training supervisor at the conclusion of the selection process. Second-year candidates must complete the following sections of the BreastSurgANZ Application Form:
 - 1. Personal Information
 - 8. Referees
 - 9. Travel to/within Australia and New Zealand
 - 10. Terms and Conditions

Sections 2 -7 may be completed where a trainee has new information to include which differs from their first-year application.

- 4.5 Each application form will be scored by two (2) individuals 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.
- 4.6 The application form will be scored out of a potential 35 points.
The application components are:
 - a) General and Breast surgical experience (Maximum 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)
- 4.7 The Application Form score out of 40 will be adjusted to an overall percentage score rounded to two decimal places.

4.8 **Surgical Experience**

- a) Unaccredited general and breast surgery fellowship training years will be scored.
- b) Terms must be a minimum of 6 months.
- c) Unaccredited breast fellowship years will be weighted more heavily than unaccredited general surgery fellowship training.
- d) Scoring for post FRACS surgical experience will be capped at a maximum of two years.
- e) General Surgery and breast fellowship years completed overseas will be scored
- f) An unaccredited breast fellowship is defined as:
 - a. term comprising of a breast specific workload of greater than 70% (other interests General, endocrine, melanoma etc accounts for <30% of workload)
 - b. Have sufficient log book numbers and primary operator experience equivalent of a final term General Surgery Education & Training term (GSET)
 - c. Must involve a work level equivalent of a senior registrar / Fellow

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

4.10 **Publications and Presentations**

- a) Scoring will consider presentations and publications undertaken in the past four (4) years.
- b) Presentations and publications must be complete -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.

4.11 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 past four (4) years.
- b) Scoring includes involvement in leadership, community and/or administration in the medical field only.
- 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.

4.12 Prizes and Scholarships

- a) Applicants may score for prizes and scholarships awarded during their medical training received the past four (4) years.
- b) Scores will be awarded for 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.

4.13 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 total CV 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 with an opportunity to contact their referee in the event a referee has not responded to a request for completion of a referee report.

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
- d) All four referees will be contacted.
- 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.
- d) Second year applicants should not submit the same referees they submitted as part of their first-year application unless the training Supervisor has not changed.
- 5.5 Failure to nominate four (4) referees will deem the application ineligible.
- 5.6 Consultant 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 Nurse referees will be asked to provide a rating in relation to:
- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| - Judgement under pressure | - Team involvement |
| - Decision-making | - Leadership |
| - Communication with colleagues | - Respect for others |
| - Communication with patients | - Time management |
- 5.8 By providing referee names, applicants are confirming that the individual has agreed to act as referee.
- 5.9 BreastSurgANZ may, in their full discretion, contact any nominated referee via email or phone to complete the referee check.
- 5.10 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.

5.11 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.

5.12 **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. Interview panels can be comprised of three (3) BreastSurgANZ members who are PFT Committee members, Hospital Training Supervisors, Councillors or senior BreastSurgANZ members.
- 6.2 Interviews are held in-person or via Zoom videoconference. Candidates will be notified when their interview day and time is confirmed whether their interview will be held in-person or via Zoom.
- 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. First year interviews assess the suitability of the applicant for training whilst second year interviews focus on experience, knowledge and capability.
- 6.6 First year interviews are designed to seek information on a variety of candidate 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

Eligibility to proceed to interview is at the full discretion of BreastSurgANZ and is typically dependent on the number of applications received and the number of available training positions. Where the number of candidates well exceeds the number of available positions, BreastSurgANZ may, in their full discretion, determine that not all candidates are able to proceed to interview.

6.8 Notification of Interview

Applicants will be notified of any 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.

- a) Interview times, dates and format will be confirmed via email.
- b) 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 very good responses covering 4 – 5 of the key points related to the scoring criteria and demonstrated very 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 accredited hospital training positions in Australia or New Zealand irrespective of how the position has been ranked.

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 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 on time. Late applications will not be accepted.
- b) Incomplete applications will not be assessed. No opportunity will be provided to applicants to amend their original application or submit missing required documentation.

14. DOCUMENTATION

- Documents must be submitted via email to education@breastsurganz.org
- Documents must be submitted in PDF format as **separate** documents. Documents not submitted in PDF format will not be included for assessment.
- Only submit the documentation requested above. Any additional documentation will not be assessed.

- If an application is not submitted in its entirety as detailed in this document, BreastSurgANZ will deem the application ineligible for assessment. Where an application is deemed ineligible for assessment, a candidate will be advised that they have been unsuccessful in their application.
- Please ensure documents are clearly labelled as using the following naming convention:

LAST NAME_FIRST NAME_2025_Type of Document (e.g. CV, Application Form, Fellowship Certificate etc.)

PLEASE DO NOT collate your documents

Jpeg, Word or other documents will not be accepted and will not be included as part of your application.

15. ISSUES MANAGEMENT

All issues and/or complaints must be directed in the first instance to training@breastsurganz.org

All emails will be logged and copies provided to the PFT Committee for review, comment, and response. No response will be provided until the issue has been considered and reviewed by the entire PFT Committee.

All correspondence should be addressed to the BreastSurgANZ PFT Committee and should clearly outline the reason for the correspondence.

The PFT Committee will endeavour to provide a response within 10 working days of receipt of an email unless a response can be provided within a shorter timeframe.

It is expected that all correspondence adheres to the principles outlined in the BreastSurgANZ Code of Conduct policy. Behaviour which contravenes this policy, will not be tolerated.

16. GENERAL ENQUIRIES

All other general enquiries pertaining to the program should be directed to training@breastsurganz.org

17. AMMENDMENTS TO THE PFT PROGRAM SELECTION AND APPLICATION OVERVIEW POLICY

BreastSurgANZ, in their full discretion, may amend or change this policy as/when required.