



# **Australian Dental Council report of an evaluation of Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia Fellowship of the Faculty of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology**

September 2021

*Updated August 2022*

## 1. Executive summary

<b>Program provider</b>	Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia
<b>Program/qualification name</b>	Fellowship of the Faculty of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology (Forensic Odontology)
<b>Program/qualification abbreviation</b>	FFOMP(FO)
<b>Program/qualification code</b>	N/A
<b>Head office address, including State</b>	207 Albion Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010
<b>Campus</b>	N/A
<b>Program length</b>	5 Years
<b>Registration division</b>	Specialist Dentist
<b>Registration specialty</b>	Forensic Odontology
<b>Qualification type</b>	Specialist Practitioner Training
<b>Australian Qualifications Framework level</b>	N/A
<b>Accreditation standards version</b>	Accreditation standards for dental practitioner programs (Approved August 2020)
<b>Date of virtual site evaluation</b>	15 September 2021
<b>Date of ADC decision</b>	12 August 2021
<b>Type of accreditation</b>	Re-Accreditation
<b>Accreditation start date</b>	1 January 2022
<b>Accreditation end date</b>	31 December 2026

## Background

The Fellowship of the Faculty of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology – Forensic Odontology (FFOMP(FO)) is offered by the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA). The program was first accredited by the Australian Dental Council (ADC) in 2016 subject to one condition and a monitoring requirement. The condition was subsequently met, and no further conditions have been imposed on the program. The monitoring requirement for a further visit to be undertaken when the first trainee is in the second year of the program has not to date been applicable, since the first candidate withdrew from the program before progressing to second year. A second candidate enrolled in the program in July 2020 and was granted advanced standing to commence in Year 4 of the program.

The FFOMP(FO) program is not required to comply with Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency's (TEQSA's) Higher Education Standards as the program does not lead to an award within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The FFOMP(FO) is a five-year program based on a situated learning model of course delivery. Trainees in the program are required to be located at training sites accredited by the RCPA and supervised by Fellows of the College. The program enables graduates to apply for registration with the Dental Board of Australia (DBA) as specialists in forensic odontology.

## Overview of evaluation

The Accreditation Team (AT) undertook a virtual-site visit to the College on 15 September 2021. Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions the visit had to proceed via virtual means. The AT reviewed the RCPA's submission against the Accreditation Standards, associated appendices, and additional information. The review was undertaken against the revised Accreditation Standards that came into effect on 1 January 2021.

During the visit the AT interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- CEO
- Deputy CEO
- Chief Pathologist and Director of Medical Services, NSW Health Pathology
- RCPA President
- Chair, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology Faculty
- Chief Examiner, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Principal Examiner, Forensic Odontology
- Head of Education and Training
- Educational Quality and Accreditation Coordinator
- Curriculum and Assessment Development Officer
- Educational Advisor
- Director, NSW Forensic Dental Unit
- Staff specialist and supervisor of trainee
- RCPA trainee

## Key findings

Evaluation of the RCPA's FFOMP(FO) program was aided by the comprehensive program submission.

The facilities accredited by the RCPA as training sites are appropriate for the training of Forensic Odontologists and the proposed supervisors are well qualified to support trainees in the development of the required specialist competencies. The College also provides a high level of support to trainees.

Interviews conducted with the College and work-placement supervisors indicate that the existing model places a high level of responsibility on supervisors. Supervisors currently have significant responsibility for the delivery of the educational components in the workplace as well as formative assessment of the trainee. Supervisors also provide progress reports, which are assessed by the Registrar and Principal Examiner. However, the exposure to learning content remains under the direction of the Supervisor(s) and although the College does provide supervisors with a framework, there is still a potential risk of variance in learning outcomes by trainees across different sites. Further, the AT is not clear about the mechanisms for endorsing the proposed program between the student and supervisor and how any potential issues are addressed. Additional information around this is requested.,

The AT is unclear on the rubrics used to evaluate the program learnings and whether these are provided to supervisors, examiners, and students.

The AT is unclear about how much support is provided to trainees in relation to the following:

- Research methodology
- Structured research
- Assessment of the research project
- Ethics protocols and processes
- Formalised structured approach and delivery of research literacy at the appropriate level

Whilst there is evidence supporting the RCPA's commitment to cultural safety and cultural diversity, the AT is uncertain if completion of the cultural safety module is compulsory for trainees or whether there is any monitoring to ensure compliance.

Whilst formative assessment is in place and is well balanced, there is a lack of evidence around the existence of rubrics and how this is communicated to both staff and trainees alike.

The AT acknowledges that a challenge for the program is the few placement positions available, and that trainees require employment/placement prior to admission to the program.

## ADC accreditation decision

The ADC has determined that the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia's Fellowship of the Faculty of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology (Forensic Odontology) program is reaccredited for a period of five (5) years from **1 January 2022** until **31 December 2026**, subject to the following conditions:

1. To meet Standard 3 – Program of study, the College is requested to provide evidence by **8 April 2022** that demonstrates how the provider ensures consistent delivery of the program and achievement of the learning outcomes across different sites.

***The ADC has determined that this condition has been met.***

2. To meet Standard 3 – Program of study, evidence is to be provided by **30 June 2022** of a formalised and systematic approach to the development of research literacy in the RCPA program.

***The ADC has determined that this condition has been met.***

3. To fully meet Standard 5 – Assessment, the provider is required to submit a report to the ADC by **16 July 2022** detailing:
  - examples of marking guides/rubrics used in the program, including for the research project; and
  - details of how the provider communicates to supervisors the marking guides/rubrics and moderation mechanisms to ensure that there is consistency in assessment and marking between different supervisors and training sites.

***The ADC has determined that this condition has been met.***