

# Stocktake of *Australasian Psychiatry's* training resources

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## Abstract

**Objective:** To identify all past publications from *Australasian Psychiatry* with subject matter particularly relevant for trainees. The results of such a search could then be collated into an easily accessible resource available to trainees and their supervisors.

**Method:** An electronic search of the journal's back catalogue was conducted.

**Results:** Eighty-seven articles published on subjects particularly relevant for trainees were discovered from within *Australasian Psychiatry*. In particular, multiple useful resources were identified on the topics of the scholarly project and formulation skills.

**Conclusions:** *Australasian Psychiatry* has published a wealth of literature that is likely to be of significant benefit for trainees as they work their way through the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists training programme.

**Keywords:** psychiatry, training, medical education

As foreshadowed in our introductory editorial,<sup>1</sup> *Australasian Psychiatry* has an extensive back catalogue of published articles directly relevant for trainees of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP). The pages of this journal have covered topics ranging from beginners' guides to conducting research, how to approach the major assessments within the RANZCP competency-based Fellowship programme and even evaluating trainees' experiences of their own training. However, there is currently no definitive list or resource collecting all such articles for ease of reference. Unfortunately, given the recency bias often prevalent in academic literature, many useful resources may quickly become victim to the passage of time. Moreover, without knowledge of what has already been published regarding trainee psychiatry, as Trainee Editors, we may risk reinventing the wheel during future projects.

The primary aim for this project therefore was to identify all publications from within *Australasian Psychiatry* with subject matter particularly relevant for RANZCP trainees. The secondary aim was to then collate the results into an easily accessible resource available to trainees and their supervisors.

## Methods

An electronic search strategy was developed to identify all relevant published articles from the very first edition of *Australasian Psychiatry* in April 1993 to the present time (April 2021). This was conducted using the search function within the journal's website.<sup>2</sup> The initial search was performed using keywords such as 'trainee', 'registrar', 'scholarly project', 'multiple choice', 'essay', 'objective structured clinical exam', and 'psychotherapy'. These terms were intended to capture as many articles relevant to psychiatry trainees and the College-administered assessment tasks as possible.

The titles of the results generated from this search were inspected for relevance and, if necessary, the abstract and full text were also consulted. Inclusion criteria were broad – any paper that appeared aimed towards trainees was included. However, papers that were targeted at medical students or supervisors were not included.

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**Table 1. Categories of publications in *Australasian Psychiatry* relevant for trainees**

Category	Number of articles
General trainee subjects	11
Scholarly project	23
Psychotherapy written case (and psychotherapy skills)	7
Written examinations	3
Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE)	1
Clinical skills	2
Formulation	18
Supervision	11
Trainee welfare	7
Transition to early career psychiatrist	4

Secondly, articles specifically related to training tasks that no longer remain part of the current 2012 competency-based programme were excluded due to their lack of relevance to contemporary trainees.

## Results

The above literature search yielded 87 distinct articles published from 1994 to the present time. Despite the initial search terms being predominantly focussed on the various College summative assessments, the searches identified multiple articles in themes not initially selected, such as on supervision and trainee welfare. This allowed several important additional thematic domains to be added to the results. Table 1 presents the major categories of papers identified, as well as the number of articles retrieved within each category. The complete list of references yielded from the search is detailed in the Appendix (available in the online version of this article only).

## Discussion

There is a wealth of extant literature in *Australasian Psychiatry* that is likely to be of significant benefit for trainees as they work their way through the RANZCP training programme. This list may also be useful for supervisors, who may seek resources to help guide their trainees during supervision. The full list of articles is available on the journal's website (<https://journals.sagepub.com/page/apy/virtuallspecialcollections>)<sup>3</sup> and will be updated periodically by the Trainee Editors as new material is published.

As seen in Table 1, certain topics have been more comprehensively covered in the journal to date than others.

First, the scholarly project has been written about extensively, including several helpful papers covering the basics of research and academic psychiatry. Given the fundamentals of research are essentially unchanged over time, older works such as David Ben-Tovim's excellent eight-part series from 1994 to 1995 on completing a psychiatric research project remains relevant to trainees today.<sup>4–11</sup> The second most covered topic was the fundamental but challenging skill of formulation. The journal has published instructional papers on several methodologies for case formulation, including beginner's guides<sup>12–15</sup> and novel approaches like pattern-based formulation.<sup>16</sup> That the scholarly project and formulation have been covered more extensively is perhaps unsurprising, as this correlates with anecdotal evidence that trainees often find these tasks to be more daunting or challenging to undertake. It is also why our trainee podcast *The Thought Broadcast* has chosen to focus on the scholarly project initially.

This review also helped identify topic areas that may benefit from increased focus in future years, particularly with regard to the written exams and the OSCE. Much like the Rosetta Stone, our collection thus far is extremely useful as a starting point but also incomplete. This may be an opportunity for examiners and experienced supervisors to submit their ideas to the journal, as well potential future topics for coverage in *The Thought Broadcast*.

## Disclosure

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## Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

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