Specialty Standards Review Committee

Role

The Specialty Standards Review Committee (SSRC) has been delegated authority by the Committee on Specialty Education to review and approve all Royal College discipline-specific standards documents in order to maintain the highest standards of postgraduate medical education.

Responsibility and Authority

The SSRC conducts comprehensive peer reviews of discipline-specific standards documents with the goal of:

- assuring timely and coordinated review of the discipline-specific standards documents that underpin the core activities of the Royal College;
- ensuring consistency by reviewing suites of documents with attention to all facets of the Office of Specialty Education (OSE): accreditation, credentialing, training, and assessment;
- providing recommendations on the approval status of discipline-specific standards documents, namely *approval*, *approval in principle*, or *approval deferred (pending further clarification/significant revision)*;
- augmenting support for the specialty committees, advisory committees, working groups, and Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) committees/ subcommittees by providing feedback and suggested revisions; and
- advising the OSE standing committees on broader policy implications that arise during document reviews.

The SSRC is responsible for reviewing the following discipline-specific documents:

Specialty/subspecialty/special program documents
- Specific Standards of Accreditation (SSA)
- Objectives of Training (OTR)
- Specialty Training Requirements (STR)

Area of Focused Competence (AFC-diploma) documents
- Competency Training Requirements (CTR)
- AFC-Standards of Accreditation (AFC-SA)
- Competency Portfolio

Competence by Design (CBD) documents
- *[Discipline]* Competencies
- Training Experiences
- Standards of Accreditation

In addition to reporting to the Committee on Specialty Education (CSE), the Specialty Standards Review Committee (SSRC) has a reporting relationship with the COS.

Composition

The SSRC is comprised of current or former member(s) of specialty committees, AFC committees, AFC subcommittees, or the OSE standing committees (i.e., Accreditation Committee, Assessment Committee, Committee on Specialties, or Professional Learning and Development Committee) or their subcommittees who have been recommended to the role.

The SSRC will be chaired by the Director, Specialty Education, Strategy, and Standards, OSE or the Associate Director of the Specialties Unit. In the event that neither the director nor the associate director is available, an experienced SSRC member may be requested to chair a meeting on their behalf.

Representatives from all facets of OSE may participate in SSRC conference calls on an ad hoc basis.

Key Competencies and Characteristics

Generally, committee members should meet the following criteria and possess the following key competencies:

Royal College Fellow
Experience in the development of discipline-specific documents
Detailed knowledge of the policies of the Royal College specifically related to accreditation, credentialing and/or assessment
Love of and feel for language
Clarity of thought
Attention to detail, thematic organization of text and consistency within and between documents

Committee members should possess the ability and willingness to meet the strategic directions of the Royal College and the willingness to participate effectively in committee meetings.

Term of Office

The usual term of office is a single two-year term, which is renewable for as long as the committee member is actively contributing to the SSRC's mandate and is committed to the role.

Voting Guidelines

Four committee members, including the chair, shall constitute a quorum.

Meetings

The SSRC typically meets via web conference to carry out its mandate. However, the committee may hold face-to-face meetings periodically, approximately once every 2 years, as a means of providing orientation for new members and facilitating learning and relationship building for all.

The SSRC meets via web conference as required as discipline-specific documents are finalized for review.

Documents will be sent to SSRC members at least one week prior to the scheduled SSRC conference call. In order to achieve quorum, members are asked to make themselves available for a minimum of seven meetings each year. Web conferences are two hours in length and are generally scheduled between 10:00 and 16:00 hours Eastern Time.

In conducting the document review, one SSRC member will be asked (one to two weeks prior to the SSRC meeting) to undertake the role of lead reviewer, performing a detailed review of one document or suite of documents on the agenda. That reviewer will lead the discussion of that document or suite of documents during the SSRC call, summarizing the comments and recommending changes. All SSRC members attending the call are asked to provide input and respond to the lead reviewer's comments. OSE will assign the role of lead reviewer to an SSRC member, while monitoring to ensure equal distribution of responsibility over the course of the year.

After reviewing and discussing a document (or suite of documents), SSRC members attending the call will make a decision on the approval status of the document(s) by means of a majority vote. The decision may be *approval*, *approval in principle,* or *approval deferred*. Document(s) that are approved or approved in principle will be revised per the SSRC discussion and will undergo OSE verification en route to becoming official standards documents. Documents with approval deferred will return to the specialty committee with the SSRC feedback/suggestions and, upon revision, will be reassessed by SSRC.

Committee work product

In the course of performing their committee duties, committee members may produce or contribute to materials, content or other work products. These work products and the related intellectual property will be owned by the Royal College. The Royal College is open to discussing other ownership arrangements for specific projects. Alternative arrangements must be confirmed in writing by the project contributors and the Royal College.

TOR record

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