

CRITICAL APPRAISAL REQUIREMENTS

Trainees must undertake a critical appraisal of a paper published in a peer-reviewed indexed journal within the previous 5 years, or a critical appraisal of a topic. The critical appraisal must be completed during Intermediate training (i.e., before the trainee can progress to Advanced training). Trainees should apply the principles that they learnt during the RACS Critical Literature Evaluations and Research (CLEAR) course.

Trainees must discuss their selected paper or topic with their Training Supervisor and submit a **Critical Appraisal - Proposal for Approval** form, to their respective Regional Training Chairperson (or nominee) prior to commencement.

Trainees must submit an abstract of their critical appraisal to be selected for presentation at a USANZ Section Meeting or the USANZ ASM. A satisfactory signed **Presentation Evaluation Form** must be submitted to progress from Intermediate to Advanced training.

1. Critical Appraisal of a Paper

Trainees should use a relevant critical appraisal tool or checklist to assess the chosen paper. Findings are to be summarised on the **Critical Appraisal of a Paper - Summary of Findings** template. The aspects of the article to be addressed in each section of the summary will vary based on the study type. In addition to submitting a completed tool or checklist, trainees must provide detailed reasoning for their responses to each question in the summary. Merely attaching the checklist or tool is insufficient for completing this task.

For information on different study types refer to:

[Centre for Evidence Based Medicine](#)
[Critical Appraisal Skills Programme](#)

For reporting guidelines on the main study types, refer to:

[Equator Network](#)

For critical appraisal tools/checklists for main study types, refer to:

[Centre for Evidence Based Medicine](#)
[Critical Appraisal Skills Programme](#)
[BMJ Best Practice](#)
[Joanna Briggs Institute](#)
[Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network](#)

Findings should be summarised using the **Critical Appraisal of a Paper - Summary of Findings** template. Trainees may should attach the completed tool or checklist to demonstrate a systematic approach to appraising the evidence included.

Trainees are encouraged to provide their **Critical Appraisal of a Paper - Summary of Findings** for review and feedback from their Training Supervisor, prior to preparing their presentation slides. This should be completed no later than 4 weeks prior to the meeting, to allow time for the Training Supervisor to respond and amendments to be made prior to preparing for the presentation.

At the end of the presentation, trainees will facilitate a discussion about the relevance of findings to clinical practice. A panel of Fellows will evaluate the presentation and one Fellow will complete the **Critical Appraisal of a Paper – Presentation Evaluation Form** to provide feedback to the trainee.

2. Critical Appraisal of a Topic

There are four main steps to complete a critical appraisal of a topic (CAT):

1. Formulation of a PICO question
2. Finding the best available evidence
3. Critical appraisal of the evidence
4. Interpreting and applying the results

For information on developing a focused question refer to:

[Centre for Evidence Based Medicine](#)

[BMJ Best Practice](#)

[University of Queensland – YouTube](#)

These sites also provide more information in relation to searching and grading the quality of evidence ([GRADE](#)). Links to guidelines for appraising evidence are below.

The critical appraisal activity includes using a relevant critical appraisal checklist or tool to appraise the evidence identified. The appraisal of each paper is dependent on the study type. Refer to the links on different study types and critical appraisal tools/checklists for main study types within the information for the Critical Appraisal of a Paper.

Findings should be summarised using the ***Critical Appraisal of a Topic - Summary of Findings*** template. Trainees may wish to attach completed tools or checklists to demonstrate a systematic approach to appraising the evidence included.

Trainees are encouraged to provide their ***Critical Appraisal of a Topic - Summary of Findings*** for review and feedback from their Training Supervisor, prior to preparing their presentation slides. This should be completed no later than 4 weeks prior to the meeting, to allow time for the Training Supervisor to respond and amendments to be made prior to preparing for the presentation.

At the end of the presentation, trainees will facilitate a discussion about the relevance of findings to clinical practice. A panel of Fellows will evaluate the presentation and one Fellow will complete the ***Critical Appraisal of a Topic – Presentation Evaluation Form*** to provide feedback to the trainee.