



Unsatisfactory Performance by Candidates

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Policy Author:	Academic Standards Committee
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Contact:	Director Education Services

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the course of action to be taken when a candidate displays unsatisfactory behaviour in their educational and/or personal performance and behaviour.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all candidates enrolled in any course run by the ACD who demonstrate an unsatisfactory SITA, unsatisfactory performance, misconduct, failure to comply with or complete required College training and documentation requirements, and the grounds for dismissal.

DEFINITIONS/KEY WORDS/ABBREVIATIONS

- **Trainee** refers to any person who has accepted an offer of a position in the Dermatology Training Program run by the ACD and has paid fees.
- **Training Position** refers to an accredited position for training.
- **Hon Sec** refers to the Honorary Secretary
- **BoD** refers to the Board of Directors
- **ASC** refers to the Academic Standards Committee.
- **NTC** refers to the National Training Committee
- **SITA** refers to a summative-in-training assessment.
- **SSP** refers to a Supplementary Supervision Program.
- **PIF** refers to a Performance Improvement Form
- **PTC** refers to a Post Training Candidate

THE POLICY

It is recognised that the College and the Trainee and/or candidate's employing body (if applicable) share responsibility for managing their performance and that dismissal from education and training may affect a Trainee/candidate's employment and/or training position.

A summary of the process for managing unsatisfactory performance can be seen at the end of this policy.

1 Unsatisfactory SITAS

If a Trainee receives an unsatisfactory SITA (see Training Program handbook) for the first time they will be placed on a **Supplementary Supervision Program (SSP)** which requires a **Performance Improvement Form (PIF)** to be completed.

1.1 What is a Supplementary Supervision Program?

A **Supplementary Supervision Program (SSP)** assists a Trainee who requires additional support and supervision related to knowledge, skills or professional qualities. SSP's can also be implemented at other times if significant concerns are identified outside the SITA and PIF process by the DoT, SOT or other appropriate person, such as:

- Practice which jeopardises patient safety
- Insubordination to ACD teaching staff and/or hospital staff
- Failure to meet obligations of the training program
- Failure to meet obligations to the employer
- Failure to meet the requirements of an accredited training position post Fellowship Examinations, which may include some or all of the above points.

1.2 What is a Performance Improvement Form?

The **Performance Improvement Form (PIF)**, is completed at the beginning of the SSP, and outlines the desired learning outcomes of the SSP. A copy of this form can be found at the end of this policy

1.3 How long are the SSPs?

SSPs vary in length according to the type of candidate and the length of their training program.

- 4 year training program: The SSP is in force for six (6) months
- 24 month IMG Upskilling The SSP is in force for four (4) months
- 12 month IMG Upskilling: The SSP is in force for three (3) months
- 6 Month IMG Upskilling: The SSP is in force for no more than three (3) months (as determined by the DOT).

1.4 Process for second Unsatisfactory SITA

Any trainee who receives a second unsatisfactory SITA at any time during the training program will be deemed as having Unsatisfactory Performance and will be referred to the NTC.

1.5 Process for third Unsatisfactory SITA

Any trainee who receives a third unsatisfactory SITA at any time during the training program will be dismissed from the training program.

2. Process for Unsatisfactory SITA/Implementation of SSP

- The SoT is to notify the DoT and College within 2 weeks of the unsatisfactory SITA
- The DoT organises an initial meeting with the Trainee and SoT within 2 weeks of the notification to implement a SSP by completing a PIF. The meeting, and PIF, should address:
 - The Trainee's performance and progress for the period of the unsatisfactory SITA
 - The breadth and depth of area/s in which the Trainee's performance must improve
 - The performance standard that must be achieved by completion of the SSP
 - The detailed plan for how this improvement will be achieved and measured.
 - Strategies the Trainee can use to improve their performance
 - Any other assistance which will be offered to the Trainee (e.g. academic and/or personal mentor)
 - The implications for the Trainee if their performance does not improve
 - The date on which the DoT, SoT and Trainee will meet to review the Trainee's progress.
- A College representative will be available to attend the meeting. The trainee may wish to have an approved support person (e.g. friend, family member, counsellor or other support person, but not another trainee or Supervisor) at this meeting.
- The PIF should be completed and signed by the DoT, SoT and Trainee as a record of these meetings.
- If the Trainee refuses to sign the form/s the DoT should note on the form/s that the Trainee has been advised of the issues recorded on the form/s and has refused to sign the form/s. This will be construed as misconduct
- The DoT is to provide a copy of the PIF to the trainee and the Senior Academic Support Officer at the College. College will upload this into the notes section of TOP.
- The DoT informs the NTC when a Trainee is placed on an SSP and this is reported to the ASC as appropriate.
- The DoT, Trainee and SoT meet at regular agreed intervals (at least monthly during the SSP period) within the SSP period to
 - review the Trainee's performance during the period of the PIF.
 - review the trainee's progress regarding the areas of concern documented on the PIF
 - determine if the performance standard is being attained and whether it will be achieved by the next SITA process
 - discuss further strategies the Trainee can use to improve their performance.
 - outline the implications for the Trainee if their performance does not improve as specified.
 - set the date on which the DoT, Trainee and SoT will next meet to review the Trainee's progress towards attaining the agreed performance goals in the PIF.
 - ensure that all possible support/resources are given to the Trainee to address areas of concern.
- If a Trainee refuses to attend any SSP this would be construed as misconduct.

NB: For IMGs where the SSP takes place at the conclusion of their upskilling period, the IMG will be classified as a Post Training Candidate and as such will be unable to fill an accredited training position, unless there is a vacancy in an IMG position.

3. Outcomes of a SSP/PIF

3.1 Satisfactory SSP

If a Trainee has satisfactorily completed the desired learning outcomes as outlined in the PIF within the timeframe, the PIF will be completed and the SSP will cease and their training time during that PIF will be counted as part of their overall training time. The DoT will notify the NTC of the outcome of the SSP and this will be reported to the ASC.

For IMGs where the SSP takes place at the conclusion of their upskilling period, and the IMG meets the necessary requirements, the IMG will be eligible for Fellowship, providing all other requirements have been met.

NB: Granting of FACD will be dependent upon successful completion of PIFs and any other requirements stipulated by the Supervisor and or DoT.

3.2 Unsatisfactory SSP

If a Trainee has not satisfactorily completed the desired learning outcomes as outlined in the PIF within the time frame, this will be deemed unsatisfactory performance (see section 4), and the matter will be referred to the NTC for further determination.

4 Unsatisfactory Performance

A Trainee identified as having unsatisfactory performance, will be referred to the NTC who will place the Trainee on a further three month Supplementary Supervision Program. A Trainee is deemed to have unsatisfactory performance if they have:

- Failed to satisfactorily complete the requirements of a PIF, during their SSP.
- Obtained 2 unsatisfactory SITAS (consecutively or at any stage during the training period)
- Substantially not fulfilled the requirements of the Training Program and/or their employment
- Regular and consistent complaints made by patients and/or peers and/or allied medical staff
- Been deemed unsafe in their practice
- Failed to complete the requirements of the Dermatology Training Program within designated time frames
- Failed to adhere to the Candidate Agreement
- Failed to comply with or complete College training and documentation requirements
- Are deemed to have acted in a manner that constitutes misconduct. (see Academic Misconduct policy)

4.1 Process for Unsatisfactory Performance

- The SoT will notify the DoT and the College within two weeks
- The DoT will organise a meeting with the Trainee and SoT to implement a 3 month SSP by completing a PIF
- The NTC will be notified of the meeting and the conditions of the SSP
- The DoT, Trainee and SoT meet at regular intervals within the three months to review the trainee's progress.
- The DoT reports to the NTC on the Trainee's progress as appropriate

In order to address the issue/s and the status of the Trainee's progress through the Training Program, the following should be considered when developing a SSP plan:

- Similarities/sameness of issues in first and second unsatisfactory SITAs

- Ability of issues to be addressed in the three months
- Trainee willingness to demonstrate insight and a desire to improve
- Additional assistance eg modified training, interrupted training
- Other relevant matters to take into account

It is possible for a Trainee to have a PIF implemented for a failed SITA concurrently with a PIF for Unsatisfactory progress. In such circumstances the Trainee will be placed on probation immediately.

4.2 Outcomes of SSP for Unsatisfactory Performance

Satisfactory SSP

- If the trainee is making satisfactory progress at three months a further meeting will take place at six months from the initial SSP date. If satisfactory progress is maintained, the trainee will be deemed to have completed the SSP.

Unsatisfactory SSP

- If at three months the trainee has made unsatisfactory progress they may be placed on probation (see section 6) or may be dismissed from the Training Program (if the SSP for unsatisfactory performance was due to a failed SITA).
- Training time that resulted in the second unsatisfactory SITA will not be accredited
- Subsequent training time will not be accredited until the Trainee has achieved the learning outcomes required for their level of training including successful completion of WbAs and examinations, and any other conditions as laid down by the ASC.
- Should dismissal from the training course be recommended the ASC will be notified, consider all relevant documentation, and make a recommendation to the BoD. The BoD will follow the same process before making a decision on the ASC recommendation. The Hon Sec will notify the Trainee in writing of the BoD decision

5. Unsatisfactory Performance - Mohs Training Program

A Mohs Candidate is deemed to have unsatisfactory performance if they have:

- Failed to complete satisfactorily within the first six months of their studies, the DermCEX, one CbD, two ProDAs and 30% of the required number of surgical procedures
- Failed to complete satisfactorily within the succeeding three months an additional one CbD, one ProDA and another 20% of the required surgical procedures

The Mohs SoT will notify the Mohs Chair.

In order to address the issue/s and the status of the Candidate's progress through the Mohs Training Program, the following will be implemented:

- A SSP which requires a PIF to be completed. A SSP assists a candidate who requires additional support and supervision related to knowledge, skills or professional qualities. It is implemented by the Supervisor in consultation with the Chair of the Mohs Committee.
- The ASC is advised when a candidate has been placed on a SSP.
- The PIF is in place for three months
- Regular contact is required between the candidate, mentor and their SOT to ensure that all possible support/resources are implemented to address areas of concern.
- Candidates will receive written notification that any further unsatisfactory performance may result in dismissal from the Training Program.

Continuing unsatisfactory performance will result in candidates receiving written notification that any further unsatisfactory performance may result in dismissal from the Training Program. The NTC will be notified and they will place the candidate on probation.

6 Probation

A trainee/candidate may be placed on probation by the relevant committee for:

- Repeated unsatisfactory Performance following unsatisfactory SITAs, and/or consistently poor day-to-day practice as observed by supervisors and facility employees
- Performance where they have a PIF implemented for a failed SITA concurrently with a PIF for Unsatisfactory progress
- Failure to complete the training/Course requirements within prescribed timeframes
- Failure to comply with or complete College Training and Documentation requirements
- Failure to adhere to the Candidate Agreement
- Misconduct as defined in the Academic Misconduct Policy
- On-going unsafe practice

6.1 Process for Probation

The NTC will refer the Trainee to the ASC which will assess the issues, determine sanctions and implement a Probation Management Plan (PMP) by completing a PIF. The trainee will be closely monitored and will be given an academic and/or personal mentor. The duration of probation is 3 months for all trainees.

While on probation, time in the training scheme will not be accredited.

In order to address the issue/s and the status of the Trainee's progress through the Training Program, the following should be considered when developing a Probation Management Plan:

- If the issues documented in the second unsatisfactory SITA Summary are the same as those identified in the previous SITA process/es
- The issues identified raise concerns for patient safety
- It is reasonable to anticipate that the Trainee's/candidate's performance can improve over the next six months (for standard 4 year Dermatology training) or three months (for other programs including IMG upskilling of two years or less duration)
- The Trainee/candidate shows insight and willingness to improve
- Further assistance can be provided
- The issue could be improved with authorised temporary leave (interruption) from the training program
- Other relevant matters that may need to be taken into account

The ASC can make the following additional concurrent sanctions:

- The Trainee/candidate completes specific work-based assessment tasks to demonstrate that a satisfactory level of training has been reached.
- The Trainee/candidate successfully completes additional training time.
- Loss of accredited training time.
- A leave of absence until the issue is resolved.

6.2 Outcomes for Probation

The Trainee must attend mandatory meetings with the DoT and SoT to monitor remediation and/or progress on their management plan:

- If at three months the trainee has made unsatisfactory progress she/he may be dismissed from the Training Program.
- If at three months the trainee is making satisfactory progress a further meeting will take place at six months. If satisfactory progress continues the trainee will be taken off probation and will return to the training program.
- When a Trainee satisfactorily finishes their probationary period an SSP will be instituted for six, four or two months depending on the duration of the training program, to further assist and support the Trainee's return to the Training Program. The ASC may re-instate accreditation of training time retrospectively.

The DoT reports to the NTC on the Trainee's progress during probation.

7 Consistent Unsatisfactory Performance (All programs)

The Hon Sec will write to the candidate following notification by the DoT to the ASC in the following circumstances:

- A third unsatisfactory SITA (consecutively or at any stage during the training period)
- Appropriate counselling and remedial measures have been unsuccessful
- The candidate failed to comply with or complete remedial action
- Continued unsatisfactory performance while on Probation or at any other stage

The ASC will recommend to the BoD that:

- The candidate be dismissed from the relevant Training Program; or
- Probationary periods and/or modified training conditions are applied, if dismissal is not recommended. If conditions are imposed, dismissal may result either under those conditions or by reason of a further review under this policy.

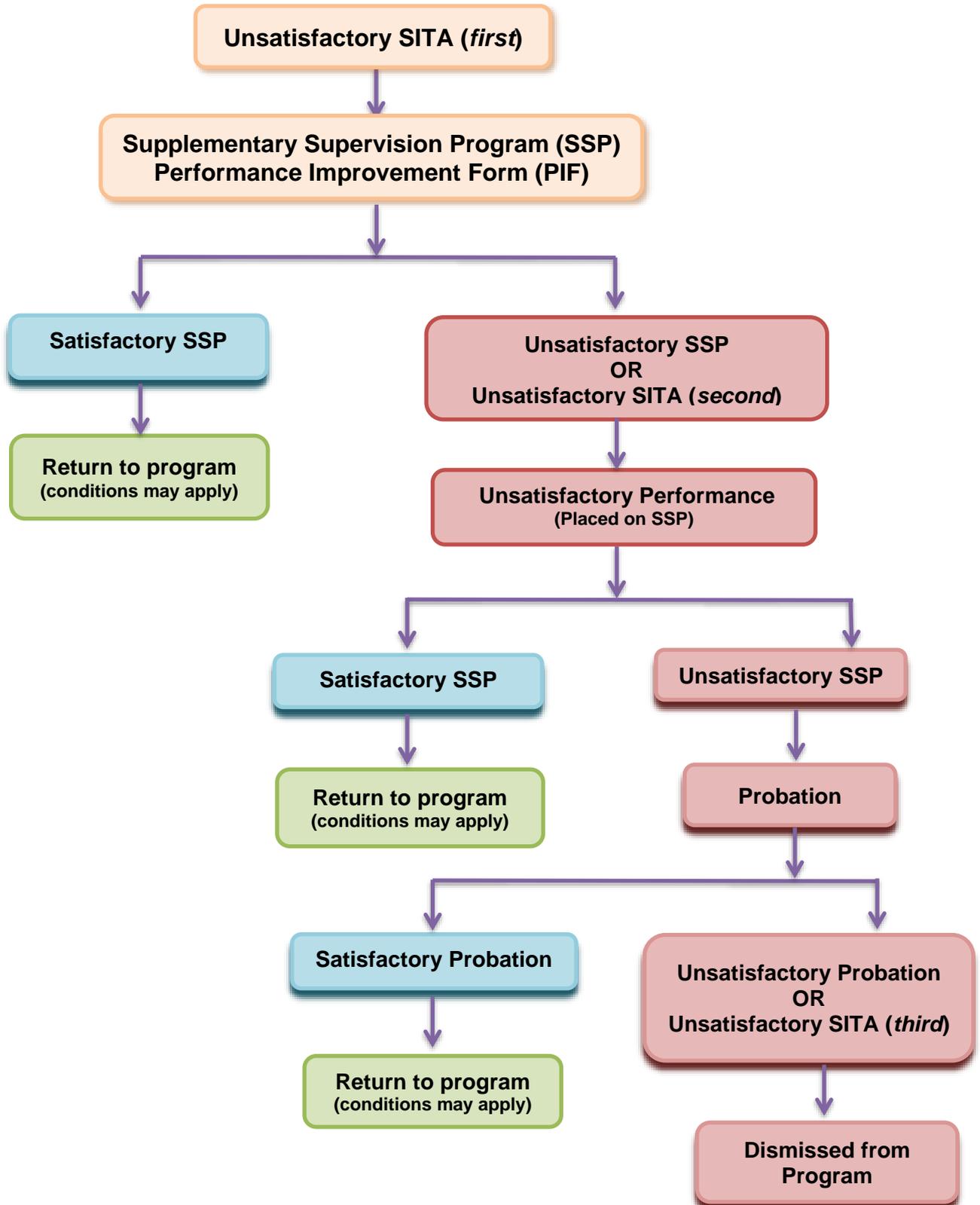
An interruption from training may be recommended pending investigation of reasons for unsatisfactory performance.

The Board will review the reports, all relevant documentation and the ASC recommendations in light of all relevant College policies and procedures. The decision to dismiss a Trainee from the training program will be made by the BoD. A letter outlining the outcomes of the BoD deliberations will be issued to the candidate under the signature of the Hon Sec. This will outline summary of the process and the decision reached. The Trainee will be advised that they have the right to appeal, as noted toward the end of this policy.

8. Appeals

Decisions relating to dismissal from training or other action may be appealed in accordance with the College Appeals Process.

Unsatisfactory Performance Process





THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE
OF DERMATOLOGISTS

Performance Improvement Form (PIF)

Trainee Name			
Training Position		Report Period	
Supervisor of Training (please print)		Year of Training	FT/PT

AREAS OF PERFORMANCE REQUIRING IMPROVEMENT *(include relevant sections of the curriculum, including Fundamentals of Clinical Practice, Procedural Dermatology and Professional Qualities)*

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EXPECTED STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE:

For the areas listed above, specify the standard of performance that the Trainee will be expected to have reached by the next SITA process.

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Outline steps that will be taken to improve performance (e.g. specific clinics, observations, external courses, regular meetings ProDAs, Derm-CEXs etc):

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Date agreed upon to meet for Performance Improvement Follow Up: _____

All parties sign to acknowledge that this form is an accurate record of details discussed during this meeting (attach additional notes as required).

Supervisor's Signature		Date	
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Director's Name			
Director's Signature		Date	

I understand the areas in which my performance needs to improve. I understand that continuing unsatisfactory performance may result in a period of training not being accredited or in dismissal from the training program.

Trainee's Signature		Date	
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If an observer attended the meeting, please print name and sign to acknowledge above.

Name:			
Signature		Date	