

Guideline

Subject: **AACB RCPA Chemical Pathology Course**
Approval Date: February 2017, February 2021, April 2021
Review Date: April 2025
Review By: Board of Education and Assessment
Number: 1/2017

The College receives many items of correspondence. The following are generally agreed.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Chemical Pathology Course is provided for those preparing for higher qualifications with The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA), the Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists (AACB) and for Fellows and Members of both groups who wish to participate as part of their continuing education. In addition, it also caters for Scientists working in the field (including diagnostics industry) and Trainees.
- 1.2 The name of the course is the RCPA AACB Chemical Pathology Course. The Course is held annually, generally in February, to coincide with University holidays.
- 1.3 The Course is held under the aegis of the Board of Education and Assessment of the RCPA and the Education Committee of the AACB.
- 1.4 The RCPA and the AACB will both have input into the organisation of the course. The local organising committee should have at least one person participating who is a FRCPA in Chemical Pathology and one member who holds the MAACB or FAACB qualification.
- 1.5 In the event of disagreement between members of the local organising committee, issues will be settled by the Chair of the RCPA Board of Education and Assessment or representative and the AACB Vice President Education.
- 1.6 The Chair and the composition of the local organising committee shall be decided by discussion between members of the local AACB State Branch Committee and local Chemical Pathologists. The composition of the local organising committee will be approved by the RCPA (delegated to the Advisory Committee in Chemical Pathology) and the AACB Executive.
- 1.7 In regard to planning for the Chemical Pathology Course, the RCPA Board of Education and Assessment's Chemical Pathology representative is a full member of the AACB Education Committee.
- 1.8 In regard to all other matters, the AACB might decide to co-opt the RCPA Board of Education and Assessment's Chemical Pathology representative if so wished.

2. Course Planning

- 2.1 The local organising committee must maintain contact with the following groups by face-to-face discussions, phone or email:
 - (a) AACB Office, to arrange details of advertising, venue selection and booking, travel arrangements, advice to speakers, committee meetings at the Course, satchel selection, name badges and preparation of Course Notes.

- (b) RCPA Board of Education and Assessment's representative for planning and content of the course.
- (c) AACB through Vice President of Education for planning and content.
- (d) RCPA Chief Examiner Chemical Pathology for planning and content.
- (e) AACB Chair, Board of Examiners for planning and content.
- (f) RCPA for advertising on the website.

2.2 The local organising committee should attend to the following arrangements:

- (a) Prepare the program.
- (b) Contact suggested and selected speakers.
- (c) Select venue.

2.3 The AACB Office will attend to the following tasks:

- (a) Advertising.
- (b) Booking of venues and catering.
- (c) Travel and accommodation for speakers and committees.
- (d) Receipt of speaker presentations and collation of Course Notes.
- (e) Budget

3. Budget

- 3.1 The general philosophy of the course is that it is primarily for education, not for generating profit.
- 3.2 Registration fee: A low fee is desirable to facilitate attendance by junior laboratory staff. It may be possible to reduce the fee by making meals, conference dinner and similar expenses optional. The registration fee should cover the program, the handbook notes and expenses of invited participants.
- 3.3 Meals: A conference meal might be made optional. The course fee should not cover travel or accommodation of registrants. Organisers may consider holding a course dinner, but the cost of this should not be included in the course registration fee.
- 3.4 Single day registration should be provided at a daily rate higher than the average cost per day for the whole course.
- 3.5 The RCPA Board of Education and Assessment and the AACB Education Committee will financially underwrite the course each year to ensure its financial viability.
- 3.6 A financial surplus after the end of the course will be split equally between the RCPA and the AACB. Similarly, a net loss will be split equally between both organisations.

4. Course Structure

- 4.1 It is not the policy of the RCPA Board of Education and Assessment or the AACB Education Committee to indicate material to be included in these courses, other than to state the main objectives. However, it is recommended that continuity should exist between courses, such that they complement one another and avoid duplication. To assist organisers, the RCPA Board of Education and Assessment or AACB Education Committee should provide details of past courses.
- 4.2 The course should be concerned more with developing cognitive functions such as interpretation and deduction rather than concentrating on didactic exercises oriented towards exchange of information only. If at all possible interactive presentations, including case studies, will be encouraged.

- 4.3 Several topics should be chosen for detailed coverage. Rather than devoting a whole day to any one topic, it would be better to use half days. Organisers should keep in mind the need to cover major and important areas of Chemical Pathology over a period of three years. It is recommended that local co-ordinators be responsible for such half-day topics and generation of pre-course reading material, program outline for publicity, listing of education objectives and preparation of course notes for each topic.
- 4.4 A program outline should be made available on the RCPA and AACB websites well in advance of the course.
- 4.5 A set of course notes should be provided for use at the course to contain summaries of each presentation which are succinct, pertinent and informative. Summaries should also include a list of education objectives, key references appropriate to the topic and reference for further reading to enable participants to seek out information in greater depth.
- 4.6 Participant activities such as workshops, discussion groups and case presentations with comment should be used as much as possible.
- 4.7 The RCPA Board of Education and Assessment and the AACB Education Committee may suggest certain topics for inclusion in courses when specific education needs have been identified. Such information may arise for the RCPA Board of Education and Assessment, AACB Board of Examiners, RCPA Quality Assurance Program (QAP) organisers and Laboratory Accreditation representatives.

5. Guidelines to Speakers

- 5.1 All speakers are provided with a presentation guide.
- 5.2 If using slides, speakers are encouraged to list these and to use only about 1 slide per minute of allocated speaking time.
- 5.3 Font should be a reasonable size to allow reading.

6. Handbook

- 6.1 A handbook of the Chemical Pathology Course will be collated by the AACB office. This will contain the session notes of the speakers, as well as further contact details of speakers and additional reading material. Copies of any additional reading material will be subject to relevant Copyright approval which may be outside the budget provision of the handbook.

7. Invited Participants

- 7.1 It is expected that the following persons should attend part or all of the course if possible and contribute significantly to the teaching program:
 - (a) RCPA Board of Education and Assessment's Chemical Pathology representative
 - (b) Vice President Education AACB.
Travel, accommodation and registration for both will be paid by the Chemical Pathology Course.
 - (c) Chair, Board of Examiners AACB.
Travel, accommodation and registration expenses will be paid by the AACB.
 - (d) Chief Examiner Chemical Pathology RCPA.
Travel, accommodation and registration will be paid by the RCPA.
 - (e) Board of Examiners of the AACB.

Travel, three nights' accommodation and registration will be paid by the AACB and one to two nights by the Chemical Pathology Course if required to participate over the 4 days of the course.

- (f) Education Committee AACB
Branch Education representative participation is encouraged and they will be expected to contribute at least one lecture. They should be provided with travel, one to two nights' accommodation and free registration for the course. The travel and registration costs would be borne by the AACB and one to two nights' accommodation by the Chemical Pathology Course for those members only who give one or more presentations.
- (g) The Chair of the RCPA AACB Chemical Pathology Course of the following year. This person is expected to give a presentation. The cost of travel, attendance and accommodation is borne by the Chemical Pathology Course.
- (h) A speaker from the RCPA Chemical Pathology Quality Assurance Program (QAP) may be invited to speak on a relevant quality issue. This speaker may be sponsored by agreement with the Chemical Pathology QAP.

8. Reports to the RCPA and AACB

- 8.1 The course organisers must submit a report on the course to the Chemical Pathology representative, RCPA Board of Education and Assessment and the Vice President Education AACB. The report should include an analysis of attendance (separated for attendance seeking the FRCPA in Chemical Pathology or General Pathology, attendance seeking the MAACB or FAACB, attendance seeking continuing education or preparation for other examinations). Details of the financial analysis, including financial gains and losses, expenses incurred, venue costs etc. Further, a complete program and comments on the success of the course should be included. If possible, results of the survey of the course registrants should be analysed in this report as well. Copies of the course notes will be provided to all invited participants as well as to all attendants.

9. Sponsorship

- 9.1 The aim of the course is to be free of commercial sponsorship. However, sponsorship obtained for covering scholarships, production of course notes, provision of satchels, badges, pens, pads and similar things, will be acknowledged by the organising committee at the opening and closing of the course and in the Course Notes.