Education Training Policy and Procedure

Scholarly Project

Authorising Committee/ Department:	Education Committee
Responsible Committee/ Department:	Scholarly Project Subcommittee
Document Code:	**POL PRC EDT-TRN 13.1 Scholarly Project Policy and Procedure**

Scholarly Project Assessment Pathways

The requirements of the Scholarly Project Assessment can be met through either of the following avenues:

- By submission of a Scholarly Project undertaken as part of the RANZCP Fellowship Program.

- By applying for an exemption if trainees can demonstrate that they have achieved the assessment requirements through a different scholarly activity.

- This document on policy and procedures regarding 'Scholarly Project' only relates to the requirements of the Scholarly Project undertaken as part of the RANZCP Fellowship Program.

The 'Scholarly Project Exemption Pathway' that allows trainees to demonstrate the requirements of scholarly activity through an exemption pathway is covered in a separate policy and procedure.

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1. Policy on the Scholarly Project

This policy sets out the requirements of the Scholarly Project, a centrally administered assessment component of the RANZCP Fellowship Program, which trainees must successfully complete in order to be eligible for RANZCP Fellowship.

2. Policy Statement

The Scholarly Project has been designed to help trainees meet the Fellowship Competencies, particularly in the CanMEDS Framework role of Scholar.

The objective of the Scholarly Project assessment task is for trainees to be able to demonstrate their ability to contribute to the development of knowledge in the area of psychiatry or mental health through the submission of a Scholarly Project that has been completed using an appropriate research methodology and investigative approach.

The Scholarly Project will contribute to a trainee's ability to achieve the learning outcomes related to the role of the Scholar. These include, but are not limited to:

- Describe principles of critical appraisal and research methodology and critically evaluate academic material (mapped to Stage 1).

- Demonstrate knowledge of research methodologies and apply principles of critical appraisal and research methodology (mapped to Stage 2).

- Contributes to the development of knowledge in the area of psychiatry or mental health via scholarly activities (mapped to Stage 3).

3. Purpose

The successful completion of a RANZCP approved Scholarly Project assessment is a requirement of the RANZCP Fellowship Program.

This policy sets out the requirements of the Scholarly Project and the expectations for its satisfactory completion. This document also specifies the high-level operational activities underpinning the Scholarly Project assessment. This document ensures transparency in the expectation and assessment of the Scholarly Project.

4. Policy Details

4.1 Requirements of the Scholarly Project

4.1.1 Standard

The Scholarly Project can be submitted for assessment during any Stage of training; however, the Project will be assessed at the standard expected at the end of Stage 3, which will be operationalised as that of a formal scientific report.

Trainees must pass the Scholarly Project assessment to be eligible for Fellowship. See the Progression through Training Policy (6.1) for more information on submission deadlines.

4.1.2 Research and Topic

Trainees are encouraged to select their Scholarly Project topic based on their own interests; it must be in an area relevant to psychiatry or mental health. The work must be based on original work (i.e. defined as work which includes novel aspects not previously reported) and done personally by the trainee.

4.1.3 Learning Outcomes

The Scholarly Project must address the learning outcomes as given in Section 2 above and include conducting a critical appraisal of the literature, formulation of a scholarly question or hypothesis, hypothesis testing, use of appropriate research methodology, presenting and discussing (i.e. interpreting findings and relating them to any previous relevant work in the field) results.

Further information on the assessment of scholarly project is described in Section 16.

4.1.4 Project Options

A Scholarly Project may take the form of:

- original empirical research (qualitative or quantitative)
- a systematic and critical literature review
- a case series
- a quality assurance full-cycle clinical audit

5. Process Details

5.1 Scholarly Project Planning and Topic

5.1.1 Planning

Trainees are advised that completing a successful Scholarly Project requires effective project planning as well as research-related knowledge. Trainees are encouraged to refer to the 'Research in psychiatry' page on the College website.

Trainees should plan ahead as early in training as possible, considering both the time it will take them to complete their Scholarly Project and the availability of their proposed Scholarly Project supervisor, considering the challenges of rotations every six months.

- Trainees should engage their Scholarly Project supervisor at the earliest possible stage of project development.

- As the Scholarly Project must be satisfactorily completed prior to admission to Fellowship, it is the trainee's responsibility to submit their Project with enough time for assessment and any necessary revisions to be undertaken. (See Policy 6.1 – Progression through the Stages of Training for more information on submission deadlines.)

5.1.2 Topic

Trainees are encouraged to select a Scholarly Project topic based on their own interests in an area relevant to psychiatry or mental health.

- There may be research opportunities within particular training rotations.

- Trainees should consider the research requirements of the Certificates of Advanced Training when planning their Scholarly Project, as they may only need to complete one project to satisfy both requirements. The satisfaction of Certificate of Advanced Training research requirements with a successful Scholarly Project, however, is not guaranteed.

The Scholarly Project must contain original work. This could be a:

- new original question, e.g. questions and/or hypotheses not previously addressed

- question that adds depth to current knowledge (e.g. a different view of current knowledge)

- replication study, in which the original element is, for example, in a different setting.

Trainees may align their Scholarly Project with an existing large research project but they must identify an original question and be able to demonstrate their personal contribution to the research work underpinning their Project.

5.2 Supervisors

5.2.1 Selecting a Supervisor and Co-Supervisor

Trainees may have more than one supervisor.

- The principal Scholarly Project supervisor is required to be a RANZCP-accredited supervisor to ensure familiarity with the requirements and deadlines of the Fellowship Program.

- Trainees may seek an additional project co-supervisor (who is not required to be a RANZCP-accredited supervisor) for specific expertise in the area of study.

At least one supervisor should have appropriate expertise in the area of study and have an interest in research.

5.3 Supervision of the Scholarly Project

Supervisors must meet frequently enough with the trainee to provide effective support and supervision. The Scholarly Project supervisor must be involved in considering the most appropriate form of the project.

The supervisor's role may include:

- guiding the trainee to pertinent literature to be reviewed

- helping with the development of a scholarly question(s) or hypothesis(es)

- advising the trainee about the timeframe for completing the project

- providing advice and guidance in the conduct of the research, and analysis and interpretation of the results

- providing guidance in writing the formal report of the research.

The supervisor must not undertake or subsume the project tasks for the trainee.

The Scholarly Project supervisor or co-supervisor should be contactable by the Scholarly Project Subcommittee and the Branch Training Committee (BTC).

5.3.1 Group Supervision

In some instances, group supervision may be possible and desirable.

5.3.2 Supervision Frequency

Supervision should be regular but may vary in frequency (for example, between weekly and monthly) depending on the stage of project development. It is anticipated that supervision will be most frequent in the initial and final stages of the project.

6. Authorship

The trainee must be the sole author or co-author of the scholarly project submission. Any assistance provided by the supervisor/co-supervisor or any third party must be acknowledged formally by the trainee in a signed statement attached to the submission form.

- Within the project, trainees should acknowledge the 'external assistance' they received, for example 'I received external assistance with the statistical analysis.'

6.1 Co-authorship and Co-research

Two trainees may co-author a shared Scholarly Project; however, the intention to collaborate must be noted in the project proposal.

Trainees can apply to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via assesshelp@ranzcp.org for approval to co-author a shared project of more than two trainees (maximum three trainees). Approval will be granted on a case-by-case basis and must be obtained in advance.

Trainees who co-author a shared Scholarly Project will be awarded the same result.

Trainees may co-research a Scholarly Project with a person from another or the same discipline; however, the trainee must substantially contribute to all areas of the project. Trainees must have made substantial contribution to each of the following areas:

- project design
- data collection
- analysis and interpretation of data
- writing of the manuscript.

Each trainee's role must be clearly articulated and detailed in the project proposal and submission.

- Co-research typically involves major research projects or being part of other large projects.

6.2 Signed Statement as Co-authors

In the case of two or three trainees collaborating as co-authors on a Scholarly Project, the trainees must submit a signed joint statement detailing their respective contributions to the project.

Similarly, if a trainee works with a co-researcher, a signed statement from the principal researcher must be submitted detailing the trainee's contribution to the project.

7.   Scholarly Project Proposal

7.1 Prior to the Proposal

Before submitting a Scholarly Project proposal, a trainee must have:

- decided upon a project topic
- identified and engaged a principal project supervisor (see point 5.2)
- chosen the most appropriate project option (see point 4.1.4)
- identify relevant local ethics committee/s that will be consulted about appropriate approval/s to conduct the project (not required for literature reviews).

7.2 Requirements of the Proposal for the Branch Training Committee (BTC)

The proposal should provide a clear and detailed description of:

- the aim of the project
- the project question and/or hypothesis
- the proposed research methodology and ethics requirements
- names and credentials of the proposed principal and co-supervisor (if applicable).

7.3 Submitting the Proposal

Trainees will submit their Scholarly Project proposal to their BTC for review and approval using the appropriate form for their project format.

Trainees must include evidence of their ethics application with the proposal but it is not necessary to wait for the ethics committee approval in order to submit the proposal.

A completed Scholarly Project Proposal Form must accompany a proposal submission. The BTC or delegated body will review the proposed Scholarly Project to ensure that it adheres to the Scholarly Project Regulation, Policy and Procedure.

- Trainees who plan to co-author a project (see point 6.1) should submit the same Proposal Form (and evidence of local ethics committee consultation/application/approval, if relevant) to their local BTC.

- Trainees are responsible for engaging with their BTC and local ethics committee regarding the Scholarly Project proposal and should consider the time this may require.

- It is the responsibility of the BTC's to ensure that the proposal submitted meets the requirements of scholarly project. BTCs may delegate the responsibility of reviewing and approving proposals at a local level.

- As long as the Scholarly Project submission is consistent with the proposed design and methodology approved by the BTC, the Scholarly Project will not be deemed to be unsuccessful based on this criterion.

- BTCs will notify trainees of the outcome of their proposal submission.

- Should a BTC provide substantial feedback on a Scholarly Project proposal, the trainee must resubmit a revised or new proposal to the BTC.

- Should a trainee change aspects of their project prior to submission, abandon their project and select a new project topic, or decide to change aspects of the proposal in response to feedback from markers who have failed their submitted project, then a revised proposal is to be submitted to the BTC for consideration.

- The BTC may conditionally approve a Scholarly Project proposal pending ethics committee approval. The final approved Scholarly Project Proposal Form (and evidence of local ethics committee approval, if relevant) should only be forwarded to the College after ethics committee approval has been granted.

- BTCs or their delegated reviewers should offer support by ensuring that trainees are aware of the local resources available.

- BTCs or their delegated reviewers should seek advice from local researchers or the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via the Examinations Department if they are unsure about a Scholarly Project proposal.

- BTCs should return the approved proposal showing the box on the final page duly completed by the BTC, to the trainee and RANZCP. Trainees must retain for themselves a copy of the approved proposal.

- The Scholarly Project proposal duly approved by the BTC and evidence of local ethics committee approval, if relevant must be submitted with the Scholarly Project submission.

Trainees must be actively training or on an approved break in training in order to be eligible to submit their Scholarly Project proposal. Trainees who have interrupted their training without approval for a break in training are considered to be not in training as per the Leave and Interruptions to Training Policy (23.1), and are not eligible to complete or submit their Scholarly Project proposal during that time.

If a trainee is a 'no zone' trainee, it is not possible to submit a Scholarly Project proposal as they are not linked to a Training Program and do not have a BTC. Trainees will need to enter a training program before they will be eligible to submit the Scholarly Project proposal for BTC review.

If the trainee decides they need to update or modify their Scholarly Project proposal form for their Scholarly Project while 'no zone' they should organise that with the BTC who supported their Scholarly Project proposal.

8. Scholarly Project Options

All Scholarly Projects will be assessed according to the same assessment criteria (see point 17.1).

8.1 Project Options

Trainees have five different format options for their Scholarly Project:

- original and empirical research (qualitative or quantitative) (see point 9.0)
- a systematic and critical literature review (see point 10.0)
- a case series (see point 11.0)
- a quality assurance full-cycle clinical audit (see point 12.0)
- an equivalent other project (see point 13.0)

8.2 Exemptions from the Scholarly Project

Trainees who have completed a Doctoral thesis, Masters thesis or Honours thesis in a field relevant to psychiatry or mental health, or who have had an article relevant to psychiatry or mental health of which they were a major author (as defined in point 6.0) and which demonstrates the required elements of the Scholarly Project Assessment at required standard, published by a recognised peer-reviewed English-language journal may apply to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee (via the Examinations Department) for exemption from the Scholarly Project.

For details on the Exemption pathway, please refer to the *Scholarly Project Exemption Pathway* Policy and Procedure.

8.3 Selection of Format

Trainees should consider (in consultation with their supervisor) which project option is most appropriate for their proposed research.

Selection of the appropriate option will require the trainee to clarify:

- the question being posed
- the resources available to them (most importantly time, access to their proposed supervisor and any resources required for the research)
- the particular research skills they would like to develop
- their understanding of the relevant literature.

9. Original and Empirical Research

An original and empirical Scholarly Project is a more formal research option and could involve undertaking either quantitative or qualitative research, or a combination (mixed methods).

In both quantitative and qualitative projects, it is essential for the discussion to include a thorough examination of the strengths and limitations of the research.

The project must meet the required standards for the Scholarly Project Assessment, one of which is that of a formal scientific report that meets the criteria specified under section 4.1.3.

9.1 Quantitative Research

A quantitative Scholarly Project should typically involve a series of steps as follows:

a) Review of relevant literature leading to development of one or more hypotheses.

b) Development of an appropriate research strategy.

c) Data collection for either a pilot or more definitive project.

d) Data analysis yielding a set of results.

e) Discussion of the results, including an interpretation of the findings, their application to practice, how they relate to existing information in the field, strengths and limitations of the project.

f) Conclusion/s.

9.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative methodologies are most suitable for exploring areas or constructs to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations. Qualitative research can provide insights into a problem or help to develop ideas or hypotheses. Typically, 'in-depth' data are collected from a small number of subjects often using recorded interviews. Data analysis usually involves the generation and elucidation of recurring themes. More sophisticated studies may use software to assist with analysing and reporting data once themes have been identified. Results and discussion focus on how these recurring themes (which may include emotions, cognitions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) further our understanding of the topic under study.

Trainees should be mindful that supervisors may have a more limited knowledge of qualitative methodologies and seeking co-supervision may warrant consideration.

9.2.1 Characteristics of Qualitative Research

It is acknowledged that qualitative research may differ from quantitative investigations in terms of the following characteristics:

- Problem statements rather than *a priori* hypotheses are utilised.

- Questions may be refined and reformulated as the project progresses and, on occasion, the research may be redirected as new understandings emerge.

- Sample sizes will be considerably smaller. Non-probability sampling is usual and sample size may not always be defined *a priori* although an approximate estimate can usually be made.

- A wide range of methodologies can be utilised depending on the objectives of the research. These include phenomenological, hermeneutic, grounded theory, ethnographic/participant observation and others.

- Concepts such as objectivity, reliability and validity are much less clear-cut than in quantitative research. However, the methodology needs to be clearly described so that the study could be replicated by other researchers, and potential biases in sampling, missing data and other limitations are clearly described and acknowledged.

- Findings may not be generalisable from the sample to a larger population; however, they should be transferable to similar groups in similar situations and may inform future quantitative research approaches.

- Results may be presented in narrative rather than numerical form.

9.2.2 Issues to be Addressed

In preparing a proposal for a qualitative Scholarly Project, trainees should endeavour to address the following issues:

- Reasons for adopting a qualitative approach.

- What is the significance of the research and to whom is it significant? An argument must be presented to support the utility of the project.

- What methodology is proposed and what is the rationale for this choice?

- The rationale underlying the sampling strategies should be clearly stated and appropriate for the project's objectives. Recruitment should be explained as well as approximate sample size.

- The means of data generation must be specified. Data may derive from interview, participant observation, examination of documents, etc.

- Ethical dilemmas which may arise in the course of the project should be addressed.

- The feasibility of the project must be addressed in terms of time constraints and available resources.

9.2.3 Requirements

Trainees preparing a qualitative Scholarly Project should consider the following:

- An understanding of the relevant methodology.

- The literature relevant to both the specific subject area and the methodological framework must be reviewed in some depth.

- The context in which the research takes place should be described and taken into account.

  The strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the research must be discussed in depth.

10. Systematic and Critical Literature Review

A literature review may be an organised narrative review or a formal, systematic review with or without meta-analysis. The topic area will be introduced and the context of the question presented. This will usually include summary statements (supported by references).

- *For example, if the topic is treatment of panic disorder, the current epidemiology, burden and outcome of panic disorder will be summarised.*

Systematic reviews are more than just a search for and summary of relevant studies. They require the trainee to synthesise the information and comment critically on findings, considering strengths and limitations of individual studies and the literature as whole.

Reporting should follow PRISMA guidelines.

10.1 Appropriateness of systematic review as research methodology

Trainees should carefully consider and justify whether a systematic review is the most appropriate research strategy for answering a research question. It is likely that there may be very little available published research on some topics, such as:

- Newly described syndromes

- Rare conditions
- Highly specialised topics

In these instances the trainee should consider whether a different type of review (e.g. a narrative critical review) or project may be more appropriate.

10.2 Background

The background will refer to current and relevant literature and reflect critical appraisal of this literature, such that deficiencies in the present state of knowledge leading to the objectives and specific aims of the review are clear to the reader. These deficiencies may include gaps in knowledge, or problems with the reliability, generalisability or relevance of the research reports.

- *For example, 'It is evident that while there are several published meta-analyses of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) antidepressant treatment for panic disorder, these are now dated (in the most recent the search date was to 2004) and none has included studies of more recently introduced antidepressants. The objective of this present review is to evaluate the efficacy of more recently developed antidepressants in the treatment of panic disorder. The specific aims are to evaluate the efficacy of antidepressant Y compared to placebo pharmacotherapy and when compared to SSRIs, in the treatment of adults with panic disorder.'*

10.3 Questions

Questions asked commonly are of treatment efficacy, but there are many other areas of inquiry.

- *For example, 'What are predictors of long-term outcome of disorder Z?'*

Questions may also refer to broader areas of psychiatry beyond clinical practice. However, trainees should ensure their questions are focused, concise and specific.

- *For example, with regard to the psychological health of adolescents following parental separation as a broad area of psychiatry, reading might give rise to the question: 'What is the evidence for increased rates of school drop-out in Australasian adolescents following parental separation?'*

10.4 Requirements

A simple summary of the current literature is insufficient to meet the requirements of the Scholarly Project. There must be critical appraisal of the literature. The trainee must demonstrate an ability to formulate a research question and synthesise knowledge in the chosen area.

10.5 Literature Review Linked to a Higher Degree

Trainees proceeding to a higher degree (PhD or Masters thesis) may submit their literature review leading to a description of testable hypotheses and the methodology intended to test these. (These usually comprise the first two or three chapters of a thesis). Such trainees should provide clear evidence of their intention to proceed to the higher degree. Pilot data should be included where possible.

A literature review linked to a higher degree as described above is considered an exception to the requirement for Scholarly Projects to be 3000–5000 words in length.

11.   Case Series

Trainees may submit a Scholarly Project based on case histories or clinical vignettes, provided it has a unifying theme, identifies and attempts to answer a suitable research question or hypothesis, and is presented in the context of current knowledge in the relevant field.

Ethics approval or endorsement from the institution responsible for the clinical cases must be sought by the trainee.

11.1   Requirements

The case series must contain the following:

- an introduction that identifies the unifying theme of the cases, summarises current relevant literature, and describes the reason why the cases are being presented, e.g. a hypothesis or research question

- a description of at least three cases
    - While the minimum requirement is to describe three cases, it is expected that more cases would be described if they were less complex.
    - All cases described must reflect patients treated by the trainee.

- a discussion that reflects on the theme, including consideration of current relevant literature and any clinical (or other) implications.

Trainees must obtain valid consent from all patients for use of patient information as per the relevant institutional ethics processes.

11.2 De-identification and Confidentiality

All information which could potentially identify a patient or an interviewee where relevant, must be removed with a statement concerning de-identification included in the report.

The first time a pseudonym is used, it must have an asterisk (*) after it, indicating that it is a pseudonym. Each case series must contain a de-identification disclaimer (and statement concerning the use of asterisks) stating that all data identifying the patients has been removed. It is not sufficient to simply use a pseudonym for the patients and trainee. Location, names of hospitals, hospital units, supervisors and dates of admission must also be modified.

Refer to the section 15.2 --- for details on de-identification and examples of de-identification disclaimers.

12.   Quality Assurance Full-Cycle Clinical Audit

A clinical audit is used to measure the true quality of an aspect of a clinical service. It is dependent on setting explicit, realistic standards for the care given. In addition to measuring quality, there must be a commitment to change practice where the results of the audit show that improvements should be made. The audit cycle involves:

- a cycle of assessment
- the implementation of a change
- a review of the impact of the change.

Please note that the RANZCP will only accept clinical audits that complete a full-cycle.
If the audit does not complete the full cycle, it should not be categorised as a quality assurance

full-cycle clinical audit. In reviewing any proposal under this category, if the BTC considers it will be difficult to complete a full-cycle quality assurance clinical audit in the available time, they should consider advising the trainee to re-classify the proposal as an observational 'original and empirical research' project. Original and empirical research of this type may help to define the area that needs to be subjected to quality assurance once practice guidelines are developed or identify and describe issues for further investigation.

12.1   Requirements of the Audit

To meet the requirements of this option, the expected standard would be a project that encompasses the whole of the clinical audit cycle. The decision to conduct a quality assurance full-cycle clinical audit project relies on a documented expectation of the relevant area of clinical practice which may be defined in a clinical practice guideline, recommended practice or legislation. The audit can then investigate how closely the audited practice adheres to the defined expectation, identify shortfalls, devise an intervention to improve adherence and then audit again to assess whether the practice is nearer to adhering to the defined expectation. Esposito and Del Canton (2014): "Clinical audit is a part of the continuous quality improvement process. It consists in measuring a clinical outcome or a process against well-defined standards, established using the principles of evidence-based medicine."

12.2   Subject of the Audit

The trainee may define a practice that they believe is worthy of auditing. There may or may not be an existing policy or guideline against which the audit is made. If there is no such standard, the trainee might look at national practice standards or options from comparable services. Alternatively, the trainee may develop a set of standards as a result of the audit conducted and compare and contrast these with the literature.

Topics for audit may include the following:

- *access to service, for example appointments, premises, telephone, out of hours*

- *communication with patients, carers, team members outside the service*

- *interface, for example discharge planning, letters, records*

- *professional values, for example education, workload.*

13.   Other Research Options

Trainees who wish to complete an alternative equivalent project that does not match the above categories must be approved by the BTC after submitting a Proposal Application form. The BTC can approve such a project in consultation with the Scholarly Project Subcommittee (if required).

The Scholarly Project Subcommittee will review proposals and provide advice as required.

For example, an analysis of the psychodynamics of relationships evidenced in a movie and the utility for assessing pathology or an analysis of the impact of the mental health of a choral composer on their work.

14.   Projects Focussed on Indigenous Participants

Any Scholarly Project that has a focus on Indigenous participants should follow the relevant principles of research with Indigenous people, such as Kaupapa Māori research methods when working with Māori. The National Health and Medical Research Council publish guidelines for research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

14.1 Helpful resources

Trainees should note the following relevant resources.

- 'Ethical guidelines for research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' published by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Refer to https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/research-policy/ethics/ethical-guidelines-research-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples for details.

- 'Guidelines for Māori research ethics: A framework for researchers and ethics committee members' published by the Health Research Council of New Zealand. Refer to https://www.hrc.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2019-06/Resource%20Library%20PDF%20-%20Te%20Ara%20Tika%20Guidelines%20for%20Maori%20Research%20Ethics_0.pdf

15.   Writing the Scholarly Project

15.1 Length

The Scholarly Project must be 3000–5000 words in length (with the exception of a literature review linked to a Higher Degree as outlined in point 10.4).

Scholarly Projects found to be outside the prescribed range will be returned by the College unmarked.

Cover Page and table of contents are compulsory.

The total word count must appear on the cover page.

The word count will exclude cover sheet, abstract, footnotes, appendices, any de-identification disclaimer, index/table of contents and references/bibliography. Figures and diagrams are also excluded from the word count.

Where tables may be used extensively such as in Systematic reviews, the word count for all Tables should not exceed 1000 words. This will be counted separate to the overall words of the Scholarly Project submission.

- Trainees must format their references in a separate reference list/bibliography at the end of the Scholarly Project and to use superscript numbers in the body of the Scholarly Project, as these can be excluded from the word count.

- Trainees must include a 'ScreenTip' when they superscript the reference number in the Scholarly Project body which links to the full reference. This can be done via the hyperlink function (see Appendix I for instructions).

15.2 Project de-identification

Where it is relevant to a Scholarly Project, all information which could potentially identify locality of services, including names of hospitals, hospital units must be removed from the Scholarly Project, including from all appendices and acknowledgements.

If the Scholarly Project makes any references to patients, all information which could potentially identify a patient must be removed with a statement concerning de-identification included in the report.

The trainee's name is not to appear anywhere on the Scholarly Project. The trainee's name must only be recorded on the Submission Form and naming of the files. This includes removing all hidden data of personal information saved in the document. Examples of personal information are author, last modified by, comments from reviewers. These details may be removed permanently via the Inspect Document function in Microsoft Word (see Appendix II for

instructions). Scholarly Projects found to have the trainee's name on them will be returned unmarked by the College.

As part of de-identification, the name of the trainee's supervisor/co-supervisor or any third party who provided assistance must not appear in the project.

Examples of De-identification Disclaimers

I. "All data which could potentially identify the patients, their families and other individuals has been removed from this Scholarly Project. The locations, names of hospitals, supervisors and dates of assessment have been modified and replaced with a pseudonym* (e.g. Jane*) the first time they appear in the text."

II. "Pseudonyms are used for all names in this Scholarly Project and are marked with an asterisk (e.g. Jane*). All data that could potentially identify the patients has been removed from this Scholarly Project to ensure confidentiality."

• The de-identification disclaimer is not included in the word count.

• Trainees are advised to seek their supervisor's input regarding de-identification to avoid potential breaches of patient confidentiality and to refer to principle four of the RANZCP Code of Ethics.

Proofreading Following De-identification

Trainees are reminded to carefully proofread their Scholarly Project following de-identification. Inconsistencies will lead to a grading that is unsatisfactory as it will be below the standard required for a formal report.

15.3 Presentation

Trainees should present their Scholarly Project according to the following requirements:

a) The Scholarly Project is well presented with a clear layout.

• Professional English is used with appropriate spelling and grammar.

• The font must be 12 point in size.

• The font used is to be consistent throughout the report, for example Arial or Times New Roman.

• The report must be double-spaced.

• Pages must be numbered.

• The report must have a table of contents.

• 'ScreenTip' must be used for all reference numbers throughout the report (see Appendix I for instructions).

• The title of the project, submission date, de-identification disclaimer (if applicable) and total word count must be present on the cover page.

Projects will be returned unmarked by the College if all the above requirements are not met.

b) The Scholarly Project should be carefully proofread (by supervisor and/or third party, as well as by the trainee).

• It is recommended that trainees seek advice in relation to the style of expression, use of language, structure and organisation of content, which could be provided by a colleague or a professional editor.

- Trainees are reminded that they are required to submit work that is their own independent undertaking. The Scholarly Project Subcommittee encourages and supports the formative process that occurs when trainees and supervisors/Directors of Training review draft submissions. Careful proofreading by a third party is recommended; however, for a professional editor or supervisor/Director of Training to substantially modify the content of the report would be considered unauthorised collaboration.

- Trainees are reminded to adhere to de-identification and confidentiality requirements before seeking advice from a third party non-clinician.

16.   Submitting the Scholarly Project

Trainees must submit their Project for assessment to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via Scholarly@ranzcp.org.

Scholarly Projects may be submitted for assessment at any time; however, the Scholarly Project Subcommittee will mark projects and release results in designated time periods as specified on the RANZCP website. In order for trainees to have their projects assessed in a designated marking period, projects must be received by the Examinations Department by 5.00 pm (Melbourne time) of the relevant submission cut-off date.

16.1 Scholarly Project Submission Procedure

When submitting a Scholarly Project, trainees must complete the Submission Form together with a BTC approved proposal showing the box on the final page of the proposal form duly completed by the BTC, evidence of ethics requirements being met, an electronic copy of the project, a copy of their current medical registration and the prescribed fee. If the relevant ethics committee advised that its approval is not required, a letter from the Ethics Secretariat/Ethics Committee Chair explaining why it is not required duly signed by the supervisor should be included. Ethics approval is not required for literature reviews.

- Submissions received after the relevant cut-off date will be held over until the next submission date.

- Scholarly Projects will not be processed without the electronic copy, payment or signed Submission Form. In these instances, the Scholarly Project will be returned by the College unmarked.

- The trainee's name is not to appear anywhere on the Scholarly Project. The trainee's name must only be recorded on the Submission Form, accompanying acknowledgement statement and naming of the files. Scholarly Projects found to have the trainee's name on them will be returned unmarked by the College.

- Projects will be returned unmarked if there is no BTC-approved proposal at time of submission (see point 7.3).

- Trainees who have co-authored a Scholarly Project must submit only one copy of the project with one submission form listing the details of each co-author. Each trainee must pay the Scholarly Project fee in full; therefore, each co-author must include their own payment details as well as a copy of their current medical registration with the submission.

16.2 Electronic Copy

A Microsoft Word version (not PDF) of the Scholarly Project must be forwarded to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee via Scholarly@ranzcp.org.

- The word count stated by the trainee on the Submission Form (and cover page) will be verified.

- The project should be saved as one file, not as separate files (cover page, table of contents, project, and references). Applications without correctly saved files will be considered incomplete and will not be accepted.

- The file must be labelled with the trainee's RANZCP ID. Please refer to the instructions on Scholarly Project Submission Form.

16.3 Trainee submissions related to targeted learning

Trainees who are undertaking or have undertaken targeted learning relevant to the Scholarly Project must comply with the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure (6.2). A brief reference to the requirements follows; however, applicants are responsible for being aware of all requirements of the Targeted Learning Policy and Procedure.

A targeted learning plan must be reviewed by the trainee, DOT and supervisor (where relevant) prior to the trainee submitting or re-submitting a Scholarly Project.

A trainee who is required to undertake progression-based targeted learning (for not passing the Scholarly Project by the targeted learning deadline on the Trainee Progress Trajectory) remains eligible to submit their project.

A trainee who is required to undertake assessment-based targeted learning (for two failures of the Scholarly Project) will be eligible to re-attempt once they submit the Commencement of Targeted Learning Form to the College Training Department. A trainee's re-submission will not be accepted if the College does not have notification that the trainee has commenced targeted learning by the final submission date.

17. Assessment of the Scholarly Project

The Scholarly Project Subcommittee will delegate the marking of individual projects to suitably experienced Fellows who have completed training and calibration.

Fellows cannot adjudicate a project where they have a conflict of interest.

The Scholarly Project will be assessed to the standard described earlier in section 4.1.1 --- (regardless of what stage in training the trainee has reached when submitting).

17.1 Assessment Criteria

Adjudicating Fellows will consider each project according to the criteria below which are relevant to the project submitted.

a) The project is pertinent to the theory or practice of psychiatry or mental health.

b) The trainee was a major author or co-author of the project (particularly relevant for group projects or projects conducted in collaboration with larger projects). A major author or co-author implies that they had a major role in project planning and designing, data collection and interpretation, analysis and/or reporting of the project.

c) Follows the deidentification and presentation requirements given in Section 15.2 and Section 15.3 respectively. Evidence of Ethics Committee approval or letter from Ethics Secretariat/Ethics Committee Chair advising approval not required is provided (not required for literature reviews).

d) The content conforms to the requirements for the type of project submitted.

e) There is a clear statement of the objectives of the project.

- Hypotheses are well formulated and appropriate to the methodology.

f) The literature review is comprehensive, contemporary and critical.

g) All references cited in the text are listed at the end of the report in Vancouver referencing style only (This is to ensure the word count can be verified).

'ScreenTip' must be used for all reference numbers throughout the report (see Appendix I for instructions).

h) The project uses methodology (and analysis) suitable to its format and research question.

i) Relevant results are presented appropriately.

- Where applicable, all tables/graphs (including legends) are presented and labelled correctly, and cited clearly in the text.

- All results that will be discussed in the "Discussion" section are presented

j) The discussion provides a concise summary and critical consideration of the main findings including:

- a critical review of the methodology, reporting style and analysis used

- consideration of whether the null hypothesis/es should be rejected, or otherwise considers the relevance of the findings to the stated aims of the project

- a statement about how the project contributes to the field e.g. compares/contrasts with previous literature as cited in the literature review/background

- no new findings are introduced in the discussion

- strengths and limitations of the project

- The Conclusion section is concise. Conclusions relate to the research question/s and are supported by the project results.

17.2 Assessment Marking

Projects will be passed outright, passed subject to revisions (conditional pass) or failed.

17.2.1 Conditional pass

A conditional pass may be awarded where there are problems, errors or deficiencies in the submission which are minor and not numerous. In the event that a project is awarded a conditional pass (i.e. passed subject to revisions), the trainee will receive written feedback indicating what matters need to be addressed. Trainees must revise their manuscript and submit it to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee within the timeframe specified. The resubmission is to have a covering letter outlining how the matters have been addressed and noting the page numbers in the manuscript where the changes have occurred. Trainees must highlight the revised text/sections of their manuscript (do not use Track Changes). The accompanying Submission Form does not need to be signed by the trainee's Scholarly Project supervisor and trainees are not required to pay the Scholarly Project fee when they submit their revised manuscript for consideration.

If the Subcommittee does not believe that the revisions adequately address the feedback provided, the outcome will be a "Fail" grade.

Only the first submission of a Scholarly Project can be awarded a conditional pass. Please note that a submission with an outcome of conditional pass is not counted as an attempt for the purpose of considering Targeted Learning.

17.2.2 Determination of a Failed Scholarly Project

In the event that a project is failed by an examiner, a second independent examiner will review the project. If the second examiner also fails the project then the final outcome of the project is a 'Fail'. Should there not be a consensus; the Scholarly Project is referred to the Chair, Scholarly Project Subcommittee for a final determination.

17.2.3 Failed Scholarly Project Feedback

Trainees will receive written feedback indicating which domains were not met and why. Failed Scholarly Projects are retained on file with a copy of the feedback provided to the trainee.

Written feedback will indicate areas requiring revision that in the opinion of the markers will assist in achieving a pass when resubmitted if adequately addressed. Marking occurs in reference to the proposal form which markers are provided with along with the Scholarly Project report. Scholarly Project reports are expected to have adhered to the proposed methodology and analysis.

While written feedback is provided to trainees to highlight the domains that need to be revised, there may be other aspects of the project that may need further review from trainees. On resubmission, the projects are reviewed and marked as a whole. Trainees should ensure that in revising and resubmitting the project, other errors have not crept in that may impact the outcome of the project.

The following disclaimer will appear on the bottom of each page of feedback:

> *This feedback is provided for educational purposes only and is not a basis for appeal. All submitted Scholarly Projects have been marked according to the domains detailed in the Assessment Framework. The marker has provided feedback to highlight areas of the project requiring revision; however, this is not intended to be a step-by-step guide to rectify the project and other areas may need your consideration. You may amend the project in light of these comments or submit a completely new project. On resubmission, a project will be marked as a whole. In some instances, markers may advise trainees that the failed project is unsuitable for resubmission.*

17.2.4 Submission following a Failed Scholarly Project

Trainees may revise their project to address the feedback provided and resubmit to the Scholarly Project Subcommittee or submit an entirely new Scholarly Project (a new project proposal will be required, see point 7.3). In some instances, markers may advise trainees that the failed project is unsuitable for resubmission.

- The accompanying Submission Form does not need to be signed by the trainee's Scholarly Project supervisor for a resubmission of the project.

- Trainees are reminded that feedback is a guide to the deficiencies of the project or its reporting. Removing or rectifying those deficiencies will assist in achieving a successful outcome when resubmitted if adequately addressed. On resubmission, a Scholarly Project will be marked as a whole, not specifically focusing on failed domains only.

- The projects are identified by the College as 'First submission', 'Second submission' or 'Third submission' and all previous feedback is made available to the marker.

- Second submissions (i.e. first resubmission) are marked by the original marker.

- Third submissions are marked by the Chair of the Scholarly Project Subcommittee.

- A trainee is not permitted to resubmit a Scholarly Project for a third time (i.e. a fourth submission) without approval from the CFT, in consultation with the Scholarly Project Subcommittee that it is acceptable for them to do so. Trainees must also have adhered to the overarching requirements of the Failure to Progress Policy (19.1).

If a trainee elects to submit a new project, the marker will not refer to earlier submissions.

- A new Submission Form (complete with Scholarly Project supervisor's signature) is required.

17.2.5 Multiple failures of the Scholarly Project

Trainees who fail the Scholarly Project twice must complete a targeted learning plan as per the Policies and Procedures on Targeted Learning Plans (6.2) and Progression through Training (6.1).

Trainees must adhere to the overarching requirements of the Policy on Progression through Training (6.1) and the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1).

Trainees required to submit a Training Review application for the Scholarly Project are not eligible to apply for further attempts at the Scholarly Project unless a Training Review outcome is received and provides the trainee with further attempts or time to complete the Scholarly Project.

18. Recognition of Prior Learning

Trainees who have completed a project that they believe to be equivalent, in addition to the completion of the other prior training, may apply for recognition of prior learning (RPL) in relation to the Scholarly Project no more than 6 months after the date on which they commence training in the RANZCP Fellowship Program (i.e. the day they start accruing accredited training time or start a break in training), in accordance with the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (14.1). As stated in that policy, RPL may be granted where it is confirmed that there is equivalency.

The scholarly project component of RPL applications submitted to the Committee for Training (CFT) will be reviewed by the Committee for Examinations (CFE) to assess and advice whether the scholarly project component meets the exemption criteria and standard in accordance with the policy on *Scholarly Project Exemption Pathway* before a final decision is reached on the RPL application.

19. Deadline

The deadline for successfully completing the Scholarly Project is detailed in the Policy on Progression through Training (6.1). A brief reference to the requirements of the Policy on Progression through Training (6.1) and the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1) follow; however, trainees are responsible for knowing the requirements of these and other policies in full.

The Scholarly Project is expected to be attempted and passed by the time the trainee has completed 60 months' full-time equivalent (FTE) accredited training.

- Failure to do so will result in a requirement for the trainee to complete a targeted learning plan. Failure to complete the Scholarly Project by 72 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) months will result in the requirement for the trainee to submit an application to the Committee for Training (CFT) for a training review as to why they should be able to continue towards Fellowship. Further detail, including information on exceptional cases, can be found in the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1).

Should a trainee fail the Scholarly Project assessment twice, the trainee must complete a targeted learning plan as per the Policies and Procedures on Targeted Learning Plans (6.2) and Progression through Training (6.1).

Should a trainee fail the Scholarly Project assessment three times, the trainee must submit a training review application to the CFT as to why they should be able to continue towards Fellowship as per the Policy and Procedure on Failure to Progress (19.1).

20. Copyright

The RANZCP recognises that the copyright of the Scholarly Project resides with the trainee as the author. Scholarly Projects that are submitted for publication should contain a copyright notice as follows:

Copyright © [**insert year of creation]** [insert name of trainee/author].
This project was carried out as part of the RANZCP Fellowship requirements.

It is noted that publications such as journals may have their own policies in relation to the assignment of copyright in any work published, and it is the responsibility of trainees to familiarize themselves with these policies as appropriate.

21. Review of Decisions

Any request by trainees for review of a decision in relation to the Scholarly Project should follow the formal education review process.

22. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Education Committee (EC) shall implement, monitor and review this policy and report on anomalies and issues as these arise.

This policy will be reviewed biennially and updated as required.

Targeted learning and training review deadlines effective 1 January 2017

This policy has been updated to include the revised targeted learning and training review deadlines as detailed in the Progression through Training Policy (6.1) and the Trainee Progress Trajectory.

As a result of concerns from trainees, supervisors and Directors of Training, the Board has approved a more accommodating Trainee Progress Trajectory by adjusting the specified targeted learning and training review deadlines associated with each of the five centrally administered assessments.

The previous targeted learning and training review deadlines have been removed from this document. These changes are effective from 1 January 2017.

Further assistance available
Contact the Training team at intrainhelp@ranzcp.org.

Associated Documents

1. Regulation: 13.1 Scholarly Project Education Training Regulation

2. Policy: 6.1 Progression through Training Education Training Policy

    19.1 Failure to Progress Education Training Policy and Procedure

    6.2 Targeted Learning Plans Education Training Policy and Procedure

    14.1 Recognition of Prior Learning Education Training Policy

    18.2 Special Consideration Education Training Policy

    2.1 Reviews and Appeals Education Training Policy

3. Policy and Procedure:Scholarly Project Exemption Pathway Policy and Procedure

4. Forms: Scholarly Project Proposal Forms

    Scholarly Project Submission Form

    Scholarly Project Assessment Framework

5. Other: 'Research in psychiatry' page of the College website

    Examination timetable

REVISION RECORD

| Contact:	Senior Manager, Training & Development			
Document Code:	POL PRC EDT-TRN 13.1 Scholarly Project Policy and Procedure			
Date	**Version**	**Approver**	**Description**	
27/3/2024	1.0	B2024/3 R19	New document Note this new document was developed from combining 13.1 Scholarly Project Policy V3.6 (approved 11/3/2020) and 13.1 Scholarly Project Procedure V4.4 (approved 29/11/2022). Both documents rescinded as of 27/3/2024.	
NEXT REVIEW: 2026				

APPENDIX I: ScreenTip Instructions

You can add a ScreenTip as you add a hyperlink by following these steps:

1. Highlight the superscript number, insert link and following window appears.
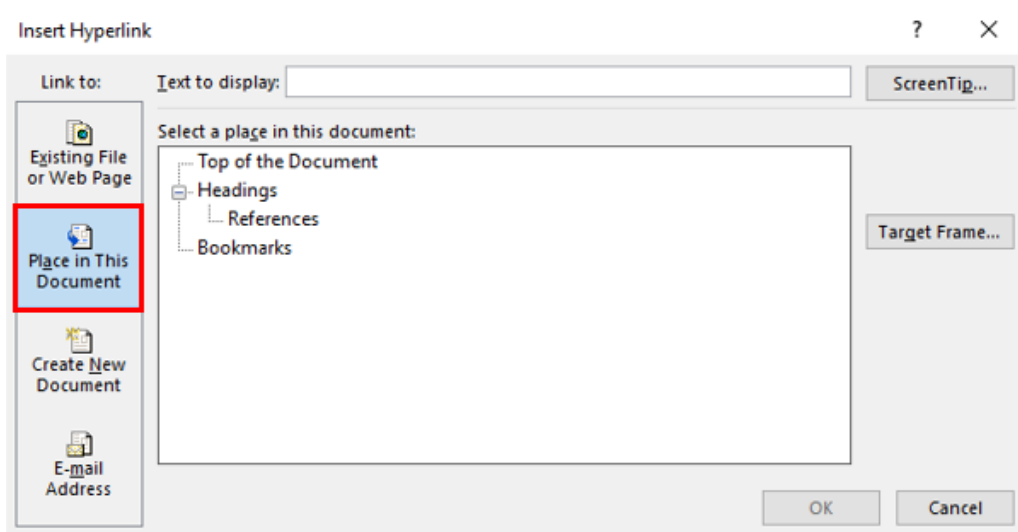
2. Click on the ScreenTip button. The Set Hyperlink ScreenTip dialog box appears.
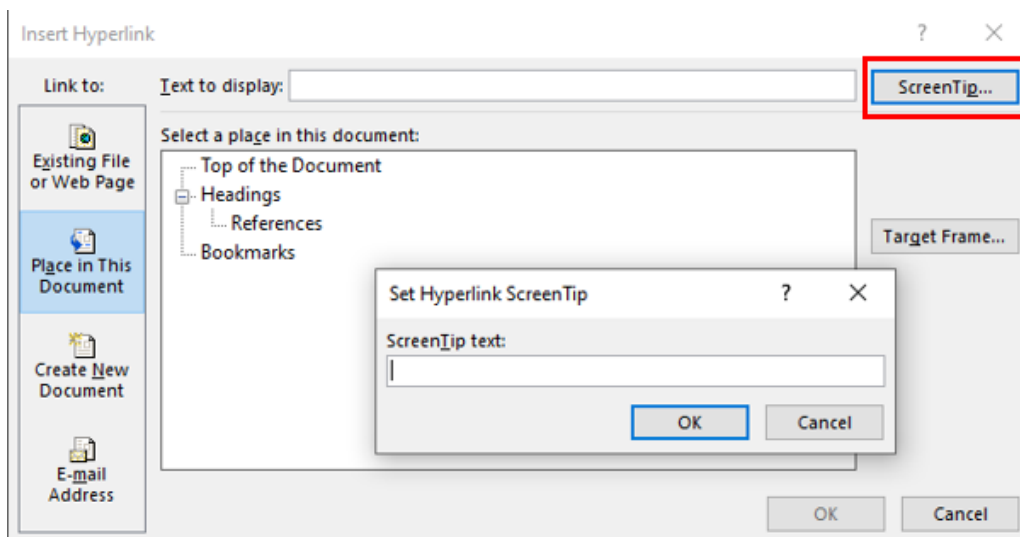
3. In the ScreenTip Text box, enter the reference which you have cited in the reference list.

4. Click on OK to close the dialog box.

5. When completed, click OK to close the Insert Hyperlink box.

APPENDIX II: De-Identifying Word Document

File Properties – Check for Issues – Inspect Document – Inspect – Remove All (refer to pictures below)
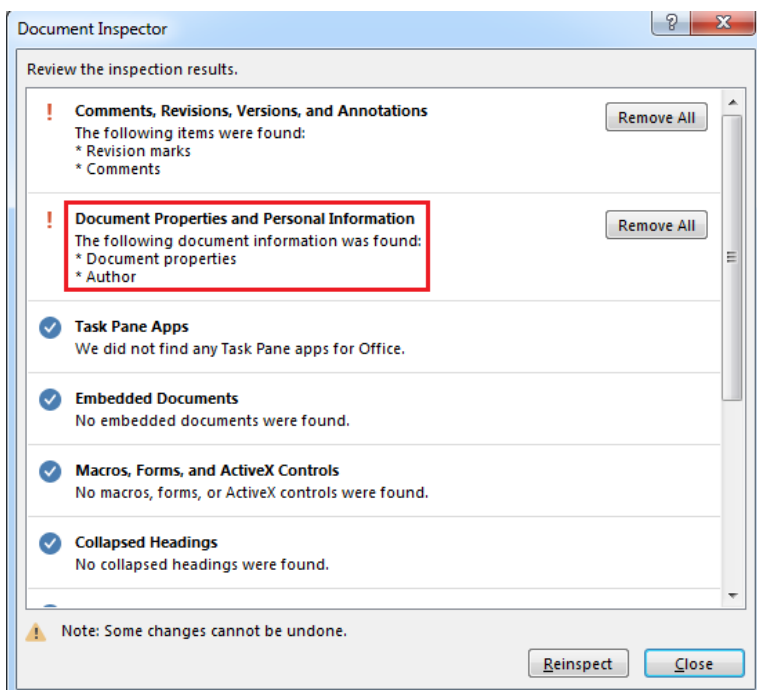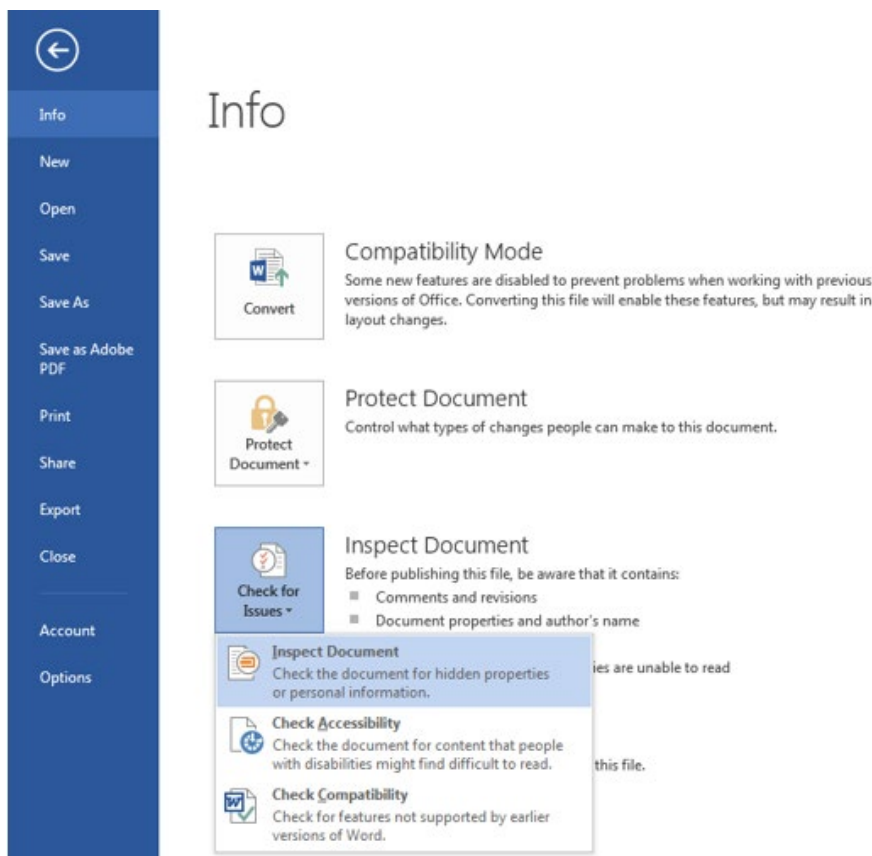
Screenshots taken from Microsoft Word 2013 application; used with permission from Microsoft. For more information on Microsoft office products please visit https://products.office.com/en-au/home.