

Recognition in a subspecialty of Adult Medicine or Paediatrics and Child Health without completion of the relevant Advanced Training program policy

Policy Number:	EDU-Training-2
Policy Area:	Education: Training Programs
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Approval Details:	College Education Committee – 2 November 2009 Amended June 2010
Date Effective:	January 2010
Date of Next Review:	January 2013
Policy Status:	Revised policy
Related Policies:	Post-Fellowship Training Requirements (Divisional Programs) Policy

1. Overview:

- 1.1. This policy defines the requirements for RACP Fellows (Adult Medicine or Paediatrics & Child Health) to be recognised by the College in a subspecialty different to that in which their advanced training program was undertaken, or in a subspecialty undertaken before SACs/JSACs/STCs were established, on the basis of prior certified or experiential learning achieved through a substantial period of professional practice, acquired competence and professional development in that subspecialty.
- 1.2. The policy applies to recognition in subspecialties of Adult Medicine and Paediatrics & Child Health in Australia and New Zealand.
- 1.3. College Divisional Fellows wishing to be recognised in another medical specialty by RACP Faculties or Chapters (i.e. apply for a Faculty or Chapter Fellowship without completion of the training program) or Faculty or Chapter Fellows wishing to be recognised in a subspecialty of Adult Medicine or Paediatrics without completion of the training program should refer to the relevant Division, Faculty or Chapter for further details.

2. Background and Purpose:

- 2.1. College Fellowship (Adult Medicine and Paediatrics & Child Health) is undifferentiated. Regardless of the advanced training program completed all physicians (Adult Medicine and Paediatrics & Child Health) are awarded the qualification FRACP. However, external agencies require documentation from the College detailing the subspecialty in which the physician has completed advanced training and is recognised as competent to practice.
- 2.2. Post-Fellowship training is available to Fellows wishing to train in a second subspecialty. Such training is prospectively approved (with provision for recognition of prior learning), supervised and equivalent to undertaking the core requirements for advanced training in that subspecialty (refer Post-Fellowship Training Requirements (Divisional Programs) Policy).



- 2.3. The College normally requires training to be approved prospectively in order to ensure that it is undertaken within the supportive educational framework provided by College education programs including appropriate curricula, teaching and learning opportunities, planning and recording learning and progress, formative workplace based assessment and opportunities for feedback and support.
- 2.4. The College is committed, however, to providing a pathway for physicians who have:
 - a) completed their physician training in one subspecialty and subsequently wish to be recognised in another subspecialty following learning (either certified or experiential) which has taken place following the gaining of Fellowship through a substantial period of professional practice, acquired competence and professional development in that subspecialty; or b) gained Fellowship of the RACP before SACs/JSACs/STCs were established.
- 2.5. The purpose of this policy is to clarify the framework for dealing with applications for recognition by a Specialist Advisory Committee (SAC), Specialty Training Committee (STC), or Joint Specialist Advisory Committee (JSAC) or equivalent and to ensure transparency and consistency in approach to all such applications assessed by the College.

3. The Policy:

3.1. Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1.1. Fellowship of the RACP (Division of Adult Medicine or Division of Paediatrics & Child Health) for a minimum period of ten years prior to the date of application, and in current good financial standing with the College.
- 3.1.2. Practice at Consultant level in the subspecialty in which the applicant is seeking recognition for a minimum of five years (FTE) immediately prior to the date of application.
- 3.1.3. Ability to demonstrate competence to practice in the subspecialty in which recognition is being sought at or above the level expected of someone who has completed the RACP advanced training program in that subspecialty.
- 3.1.4. Active participation in a CPD program.
- 3.1.5. Current medical registration.

3.2. Application Requirements

- 3.2.1. The application must be made in writing using the appropriate form and accompanied by the scheduled fee.
- 3.2.2. Supporting documentation must include the following:
 - a) The applicant's curriculum vitae
 - b) Details of the curriculum of the advanced training program previously completed and details of any assessments or projects undertaken as part of that training program.

- c) Details of the applicant's professional experience in the subspecialty including evidence of the competencies described in the advanced training program of the subspecialty in which recognition is being sought.
- d) Evidence of completed CPD activities that are directly relevant to the subspecialty (including attendance at subspecialty specific Scientific Meetings).
- e) Two referee reports from senior colleagues supporting that the applicant be recognised as a specialist in that subspecialty. The referees must be recognised by the College in the subspecialty in which recognition is being sought.
- f) Proposed program for 12 months peer reviewed practice unless the applicant gained Fellowship prior to the establishment of the relevant SAC/JSAC/STC (refer item 3.5.2.3 for requirements for period of peer review).

3.3. Assessment of Application

3.3.1. Applications will be reviewed against the following criteria:

- a) Level of seniority of practice in the subspecialty
- b) Length of practice in the subspecialty
- c) Ability to provide evidence of competence in the domains of the curriculum of the advanced training program of the subspecialty
- d) Evidence of appropriate performance in the subspecialty
- e) Content of referee reports
- f) Other significant contributions to the subspecialty including research activities
- g) Evidence of completed CPD activities that are directly relevant to the subspecialty (including attendance at subspecialty specific Scientific Meetings).

3.3.2. Applications will be considered by the relevant SAC/JSAC/STC or delegate(s) thereof.

3.4. Notification of Outcome of Application

3.4.1. A decision regarding recognition will be made wherever possible within 12 weeks of receipt of the application.

3.4.2. All applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application for recognition.

3.5. Outcome of Application

3.5.1. Recognition without a requirement to complete peer reviewed practice.

In cases where the applicant gained Fellowship of the RACP prior to the establishment of the SACs/JSACs/STCs and where the applicant has been practicing in the subspecialty for at least 15 years and is well recognised by peers as an expert in the subspecialty, the College may grant recognition with a reduced or waived requirement for completion of 12 months (FTE) peer reviewed practice. It is expected that this outcome will be the case in a very small number of applications.

3.5.2. Recognition pending completion of 12 months (FTE) peer reviewed practice.

3.5.2.1. In cases where the College is satisfied that the applicant has demonstrated competence in the domains of the relevant advanced training program, recognition will be granted following satisfactory completion of 12 months peer reviewed practice.

3.5.2.2. Only in the exceptional circumstance of applications from individuals detailed under item 3.5.1 will the period of 12 months be reduced or waived.

3.5.2.3. Requirements for period of peer review

- a) The proposed peer review program must include details of the period of practice including planned clinical activities/responsibilities, teaching, research case mix, procedures, educational activities to be undertaken etc.
- b) The proposed peer review program must include details of the applicant's nominated peer reviewer.
- c) The proposed period of peer review must be prospectively approved by the relevant SAC/JSAC/STC.
- d) During the period of peer review the applicant must be practicing at Consultant level in the subspecialty in which recognition is being sought.
- e) The proposed peer review program must include opportunity to demonstrate any competencies that have not been evidenced at the time of application.
- f) During the period of peer review the applicant must participate in CPD activities that are directly relevant to the subspecialty in which recognition is being sought.
- g) Individual SACs/JSACs/STCs may prescribe additional requirements for the period of peer reviewed practice that are specific to the discipline, for example, a minimum number of completed procedures or logged hours undertaking particular tasks that are a core part of the practice of that discipline, or completion of other particular educational activities including modules, workshops or projects.
- h) The peer reviewer must be nominated by the applicant and be approved by the SAC/STC/JSAC in the subspecialty in which the applicant is seeking recognition.
- i) The nominated peer reviewer must not be one of the applicant's referees (unless situational circumstances dictate that there are no other available suitable peer reviewers e.g. in a rural or remote setting).



- j) The nominated peer reviewer must agree to provide a peer review report using the College peer review report form at three, six and twelve months during the review period.
- k) During the period of peer review the applicant must demonstrate performance in the subspecialty at or above the level expected of a trainee completing advanced training in the relevant subspecialty.
- l) Payment of the scheduled fee for the period of peer review.
- m) An additional peer reviewer may be appointed by the relevant SAC/STC/JSAC

3.5.2.4. Satisfactory completion of the period of peer review

- a) Upon completion of 12 months (FTE) peer reviewed practice, receipt of satisfactory peer review reports at three, six and twelve months, and evidence of compliance with all other requirements as prescribed following initial assessment, the relevant SAC/JSAC/STC will provide a letter of recognition to the applicant

3.5.2.5. Failure to complete satisfactorily the period of peer review

- a) If the peer review reports are unsatisfactory and/or if the applicant fails to meet any of the other requirements prescribed following initial assessment, the applicant may be directed to undertake an additional period of peer review, or the application may be declined and the applicant directed to pursue additional supervised training via the post FRACP training pathway (refer Post-Fellowship Training Requirements (Divisional Programs) Policy).

3.5.2.6. Application for recognition declined and applicant directed to apply to join the relevant advanced training program via the post FRACP training pathway.

Refer Post-Fellowship Training Requirements (Divisional Programs) Policy.

3.6 Reconsideration, Review and Appeals

- 3.6.1 The College reconsideration and review process and the appeals process (refer Appeals Policy) will be available to all applicants should an applicant remain dissatisfied with the outcome of an application.

3.7 Evaluation

- 3.7.1 This policy and application outcomes will be monitored and evaluated by the Education Deanery.

4. Procedures, forms and supporting documentation:

- 4.1.** Application Form for Recognition in a Subspecialty of Adult Medicine or Paediatrics and Child Health without completion of the relevant advanced training program.
- 4.2.** Peer Review Documentation.