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| 1. | POLICY TITLE | ASSESSMENT OF OVERSEAS GENERAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE AND AUSTRALIAN GENERAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE |
| 1.1 | Policy number: | AS-E-022.0 |
| 1.2 | Category: | Organisational |
| 1.3 | Approval date: | |
| 1.4 | Revision due date: | May 2013 |
| 1.5 | Unit responsible | Fellowship Services |

2. POLICY DECLARATION

This policy defines assessment of Overseas General Practice Experience and Australian General Practice Experience to enable the RACGP to determine a prospective Practice Eligible assessment candidate's eligibility to participate in one of the College's pathways to Fellowship. Applications for assessment of general practice experience will be assessed in the context of the definitions of general practice as set out in this policy.

This policy is approved by Council and authorisation by the CEO.

3. BACKGROUND

i) Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Define assessable general practice experience for applicants wanting to attain Fellowship of the College via the Practice Eligible route
- Provide guidelines for applicants preparing an application for the assessment of Overseas General Practice experience and/or Australian General Practice experience
- Recognise the variety of settings in which general practice experience can be gained

The intention of this policy is to set out the rules for assessment of general practice experience to the standard required for eligibility to participate in any of the College's assessments that culminate in the award of Fellowship. This policy ensures that the College maintains appropriate standards for determining eligibility, whilst recognising alternative pathways to Fellowship.

ii) Specific Aims

The specific aims of this policy are to:

- Inform applicants, applying through the practice eligible route, of the requirement for a general practice experience assessment to determine eligibility to participate in any of the College assessments.
- Provide a comparable set of requirements of general practice experiences that meet the standards for eligibility to participate in any of the College assessments.

3.1 Related documents

"Standards for General Practice Education and Training Requirements for Fellowship 2005" available to view at: www.racgp.org.au/fellowship

"Academic Misconduct" available at: www.racgp.org.au/assessment/policy

“*Special Consideration Policy*” available at: www.racgp.org.au/assessment/policy

“*Board of Censors’ Decisions Review Policy*” available at: www.racgp.org.au/assessment/policy

“*Definition of general practice and general practitioner*” available at:
www.racgp.org.au/whatisgeneralpractice

4. BODY OF POLICY

Applicants must submit detailed and complete documentation of their general practice experience to allow for appropriate assessment.

Intending Practice Eligible applicants who have overseas general practice experience must have their general practice experience assessed prior to enrolling in the college assessment segments.

4.1 Assessment of general practice experience

In order to establish eligibility to participate in any of the College assessments applicants following the Practice Eligible route will be required to undergo assessment of their general practice experience in overseas and Australian general practice.

All candidates with overseas general practice experience must provide full details of the nature of their overseas general practice experience and how it is similar to that in Australia, to enable the college censors to assess its equivalence to general practice in Australia. This can be done by applying for the following assessments of time in general practice prior to enrolling in the college assessment segments via the Practice Eligible route.

Only general practice experience within the past 10 years, from the indemnity date shown on the application form, can be assessed by the College Censors.

4.2 General Practice

General practice is the provision of primary continuing comprehensive whole-patient medical care to individuals, families and their communities.

General practice involves the ability to take responsible action on any medical problem the patient presents, whether or not it forms part of an ongoing doctor-patient relationship. In managing the patient, the general practitioner may make appropriate referral to other doctors, health care professionals and community services.

General practice is the first point of contact for the majority of people seeking health care, and often therefore the first point of referral. In the provision of primary care, much undifferentiated illness is seen; the general practitioner often deals with problem complexes rather than with established diseases. The general practitioner must be able to make a total assessment of the person's condition without subjecting a person to unnecessary investigations, procedures and other treatment.

4.2.1 Queensland Medical Superintendents

The experience of medical superintendents of country hospitals in Queensland has been assessed for equivalence to general practice. Details of these assessments may be obtained from the RACGP Queensland Faculty Censor.

4.2.2 Australian Defence Force Experience

The College may accept armed services posts for their equivalence to general practice after consideration of whether the post meets the definition of general practice.

4.2.3 Academic General Practice

Part time work in academic general practice, combined with working a minimum of three sessions per week in general practice, will be counted as equivalent to one third of the time in Australian general practice experience.

4.3 Overseas General Practice experience

There are various categories of overseas general practice experience, training and assessment that may lead to eligibility to participate in any of the College assessments:

- accepted postgraduate qualifications in general practice for RACGP membership (see Specialist Pathway web pages – www.racgp.org.au/assessment/pathways)
- conjoint examination with the RACGP (Malaysia and Hong Kong).

Any other overseas clinical experience claimed as equivalent to Australian general practice is assessed by the Board of Censors upon presentation of a detailed submission by the applicant.

4.4 Full Time General Practice

Full time general practice is 37 hours worked per week in typical general practice activities. Full time general practice must include work spread over at least five working days per week and must include a minimum of nine sessions per week, none of which may be less than 3.5 hours. Working longer hours in a week will not be calculated to accrue the doctor more than a week's working time if the doctor is seeking an assessment of general practice experience.

Working full time with the Australian Royal Flying Doctor Service is regarded as equivalent to full time general practice.

4.5 Part Time General Practice

Part time experience in general practice must be for a minimum of three sessions (equivalent to a minimum of 10.5 hours) per week in the one practice for a minimum of one month. Three sessions per week is considered to be equivalent to 30% of full time general practice.

Experience greater than three sessions per week but less than full time will be calculated on a pro-rata basis as determined by the number of sessions and hours worked.

The time requirement for eligibility for admission to Fellowship for doctors working part time in general practice is limited to a maximum of 10 years in part time general practice, provided that they:

- demonstrate continuity of care
- work no less than 30% equivalent of full time general practice
- submit to the College (if requested) a log diary of 100 consecutive patient consultations to demonstrate the depth and nature of their general practice experience, and also a curriculum vitae containing in particular detail regarding the number of sessions worked in general practice.

4.6 Locum Work

Full time locums in general practice are regarded as equivalent to full time general practice provided the locum period is greater than one week duration in any one practice.

4.7 Accredited Medical Deputising Service

Work in an accredited medical deputising service for a minimum of three sessions per week may count as general practice experience to a maximum of 2.5 years (full time equivalent). If evidence of continuity of care can be provided, a further six months of this time may count as general practice experience.

Employment in non-accredited after hours deputising services is not considered equivalent to general practice.

4.8 Eligibility for the Practice Eligible Route

Applicants wishing to participate in any of the College assessments via the Practice Eligible route must have:

- (i) four years full time approved Australian equivalent general practice experience (or part time equivalent) and;
- (ii) at least one year full time general practice experience (of the required four years full time) to have been gained in Australian general practice.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 Overseas and/or Australian general practice experience assessment

Applications for assessment of overseas general practice experience or a combination of overseas general practice experience in conjunction with Australian general practice experience are to be submitted on the [Assessment of Overseas and Australian General Practice Experience form](#). Applications for assessment of Australian only general practice experience are to be submitted on the [Assessment of Australian General Practice Experience form](#)

Applicants are required to submit a complete application. Requests from the College for clarification and/or additional information for an application will delay the progress of the application.

Once the complete application form is sent to the College Censors for assessment, assessment may take up to three weeks depending on circumstances and the number of applications received.

Applicants intending to enrol in the College examinations must submit their application for assessment of overseas and/or Australian general practice experience no later than eight weeks before the close of enrolments.

Applicants must forward the complete application form with the relevant application fee, visit www.racgp.org.au/assessment/pathways/practiceeligible for the current fees

Word versions of the application forms for assessment of Overseas and/or Australian General Practice Experience can be obtained at www.racgp.org.au/assessment/pathways/practiceeligible

5.2 Right of appeal

There is an appeal process that an applicant can pursue, see:

“Board of Censors’ Decisions Reviews” policy at www.racgp.org.au/assessment/policy

5.3 Review of this policy

The review cycle for this policy is three years.