

# *The Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice*

Guidelines for general practice registrars and practising GPs



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## **The Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice – Guidelines for general practice registrars and practising GPs**

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*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future.*

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# 1. Introduction

The Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) is a qualification awarded by The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) in addition to the vocational Fellowship (FRACGP). The FARGP cannot be undertaken as a stand-alone qualification.

The FARGP aims to develop advanced rural skills and broaden options for safe, accessible and comprehensive care for Australia's rural, remote and very remote communities. The FARGP has pathways designed for both general practice registrars and experienced rural general practitioners (GPs):

- General practice registrars undertake a program where they will gain knowledge, skills and experience. Registrars may be granted exemption from requirements that have been completed prior to their enrolment in the FARGP.
- Practising GPs complete a recognition of prior learning (RPL) process where they provide evidence of their knowledge, skills and experience that match the requirements for the FARGP.

All FARGP candidates have four years from their date of enrolment in which to complete the requirements. The FARGP offers the greatest benefits to registrars when completed over the full registrar training program, well before final FRACGP examination preparation begins.

The FARGP interactive learning program is accessed and delivered via the RACGP's *glearning* website. The FARGP online learning platform gives candidates access to all course materials, learning and assessment tools. Candidates can also upload certificates and other relevant documents, receive ongoing feedback from their medical educator or mentor, and submit work for assessment via the learning platform.

These guidelines provide information on the FARGP to general practice registrars, practising GPs, regional training organisations (RTOs) and the Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS). The system of using medical educators and mentors is designed to support candidates and their supervisors through the process of completing their FARGP.



## 2. Rationale

Rural and remote communities rely on appropriately trained healthcare professionals to meet their varying healthcare needs. In many rural and remote communities across Australia, GPs with advanced rural skills training (ARST) provide the only access that communities have to ongoing specialist medical services such as emergency medicine, mental health services, anaesthesia and obstetrics.

The FRACGP–FARGP pathway program is a recognition of the additional training undertaken to develop advanced general practice skills specific to rural life in Australia. The FARGP program is designed to meet community needs and broaden options for safe, accessible and comprehensive care for Australia's rural, remote and very remote communities.

The FARGP gives general practice registrars and practising GPs the opportunity to acquire new knowledge, skills and experiences, or develop their existing knowledge, skills and experiences.

Rural and remote GPs often face challenges that are quite different to their urban-based colleagues, such as geographical and professional isolation, lack of or outdated resources, harsh environments, and lack of professional support. GPs are required to be creative, flexible, skillful and resourceful given the situations they encounter in rural and remote areas. They need diverse skills to deal with situations where they may be the only person able to provide the level of care needed to a patient.

The FARGP offers general practice registrars and practising GPs the opportunity to develop the advanced skills that will assist them with the challenges of practising in rural and remote Australia. The FARGP provides the flexibility that allows GPs (at any stage in their professional journey) to undertake relevant, engaging and appropriate activities that meet their needs and those of the community in which they practise.

## 3. Scope

The FARGP program acknowledges that general practice registrars are already receiving high-quality general practice education and training within the framework of the RACGP curriculum. Delivered by their general practice training provider, this training enables them to practise unsupervised anywhere in Australia.

Practising GPs have already developed their knowledge and skills related to work in regional, rural and remote Australia. With this in mind, the FARGP offers each candidate the opportunity to focus on community needs-based rural general practice through activities that encourage reflective practice, action research and self-determined learning – three contemporary practices in adult education.

The FARGP fits seamlessly into the training of a general practice registrar and the life of a practising GP. It also provides a rural lens through which the registrar and the GP can view their practice and their community.

All activities and processes have been designed to engage registrars and GPs, and to provide the opportunity to gain relevant knowledge, skills and insights. Regular contact with medical educators, mentors and supervisors is built into the process. Peer contact is also encouraged.



## *4. The Five Domains of General Practice*

The Five Domains of General Practice represent the critical areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for competent unsupervised general practice. They are relevant to every general patient consultation.

**Domain 1 – Communication skills and the patient–doctor relationship** (eg communication skills, patient centeredness, health promotion, whole person care)

**Domain 2 – Applied professional knowledge and skills** (eg physical examination and procedural skills, medical conditions, decision making)

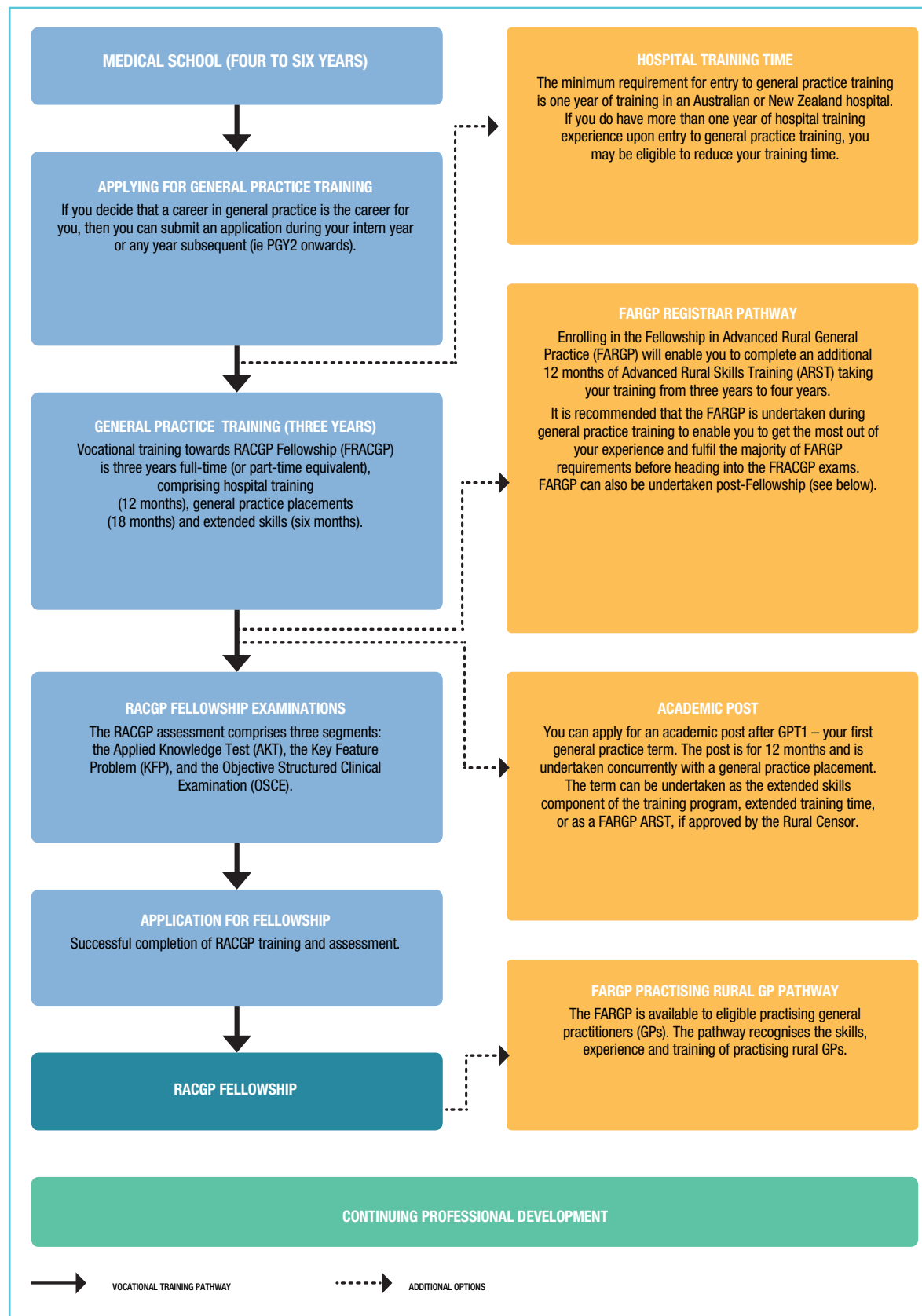
**Domain 3 – Population health and the context of general practice** (eg epidemiology, public health, prevention, family influence on health, resources)

**Domain 4 – Professional and ethical role** (eg duty of care, standards, self-appraisal, teacher role, research, self-care, networks)

**Domain 5 – Organisational and legal dimensions** (eg information technology, records, reporting, confidentiality, practice management)

The Five Domains of General Practice provide a comprehensive, robust framework for ensuring that the key skill areas of general practice are included in education and training. These domains need to be addressed when completing the FARGP learning plan and reflection activities.

## Journey towards general practice





## 5. *FARGP pathway*

### 5.1 General practice registrars

General practice registrars can complete the FARGP requirements at any stage of their general practice training. It is recommended that the FARGP be undertaken during general practice training to gain the greatest benefits. This will enable a general practice registrar to complete the majority of the FARGP requirements well before preparing for the final FRACGP examinations.

#### 5.1.1 Prerequisites for enrolment

To enrol in the FARGP as a general practice registrar, you must be:

- a member of the RACGP
- working towards FRACGP
- enrolled with an RTO or RVTS.

#### 5.1.2 FARGP requirements

To complete the requirements of the FARGP, you must satisfactorily complete:

- the FARGP learning plan and reflection activity
- 12 months in a rural general practice setting (MMM3–7)
- 12 months of ARST in an accredited procedural or non-procedural training post
- a rural general practice community-focused project
- the FARGP emergency medicine module, which includes a series of case studies, clinical skills audits, and two advanced emergency skills courses.

#### 5.1.3 How to enrol

To enrol in the FARGP, download and complete the [FARGP registrar enrolment form](#) from the FARGP website. Please note that your RTO or RVTS is required to complete certain parts of the form before it can be submitted.

For more information or answers to any specific questions you have related to the FARGP registrar pathway, call the FARGP team on 1800 636 764 or email [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

### 5.2 Practising GPs – RPL

The FARGP Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) pathway enables experienced rural GPs to gain the FARGP qualification via recognition of the relevant experience and skills already acquired.

GPs must have completed at least 12 months full time equivalent (FTE) of rural general practice experience (MMM3–7) as either a general practice registrar or a practising GP in the last four years. The 12 months of rural general practice experience must have been completed while living and working in MMM3–7. Requests for special circumstances will need to be submitted to RACGP Rural (the FARGP team) for consideration.

As of 1 January 2018, all FARGP candidates must complete at least 12 months (FTE) of rural general practice experience in an MMM3–7 setting, as either a general practice registrar or a practising GP, within four years from their FARGP enrolment date.

Candidates who enrolled prior to 1 January 2018 who have completed their rural general practice experience in an MMM2 equivalent setting will be accepted. This is to accommodate the FARGP setting definition change from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard-Remoteness Area (ASGS-RA) to the Modified Monash Model (MMM) on 1 January 2018. Requests for special circumstances will need to be submitted to RACGP Rural for consideration and fees may apply.

The 12 months must be completed either in one continuous block or in two six-month terms. Locums and defense personnel may not be eligible but are encouraged to contact RACGP Rural to discuss their circumstances.

The FARGP RPL pathway respects and recognises the existing knowledge, skills and qualifications of experienced rural GPs by offering the opportunity to submit evidence demonstrating how they meet the specific criteria of the FARGP.

Full or partial RPL is determined following assessment of the GP's level of existing knowledge, skills and experience. The RPL process is a formal, yet straightforward, process that is completed via the FARGP online learning platform. RPL will be granted if the submitted evidence is deemed sufficient for the FARGP requirements. In some cases, GPs may be required to undertake additional activities to meet the full FARGP requirements.

## 5.2.1 Prerequisites of enrolment

To enrol in the FARGP RPL pathway, you must:

- be a member of the RACGP
- hold the FRACGP qualification
- have completed at least 12 months FTE of rural general practice experience (MMM3–7) in the last four years.

## 5.2.2 FARGP requirements

To complete the requirements of the FARGP as a practising GP, you must:

- complete the FARGP learning plan and reflection activity
- provide evidence of 12 months of ARST in an accredited procedural or non-procedural training post, or of sufficient time spent in rural general practice to develop advanced skills as a rural GP
- complete the rural general practice community-focused project or provide sufficient supporting evidence for an exemption
- complete the FARGP emergency medicine module, which includes a series of case studies, clinical skills audits, and two advanced emergency skills courses.

### 5.2.3 How to enrol

To enrol in the FARGP RPL pathway, download and complete the [FARGP practising GP enrolment form](#) from the FARGP website. Once complete, please email your form to [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

For more information or answers to any specific questions you have related to the FARGP RPL pathway, call the FARGP team on 1800 636 764 or email [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

### 5.2.4 The RPL process

Once you have enrolled in the FARGP RPL pathway you will be provided with login details for the FARGP online learning platform and step-by-step instructions.

The RPL comprises five parts:

1. A self-assessment checklist
2. Learning plan and reflection activity
3. Collection of appropriate supporting evidence
4. Completion of questions relating to your knowledge, skills and experience
5. Submission of all evidence for assessment

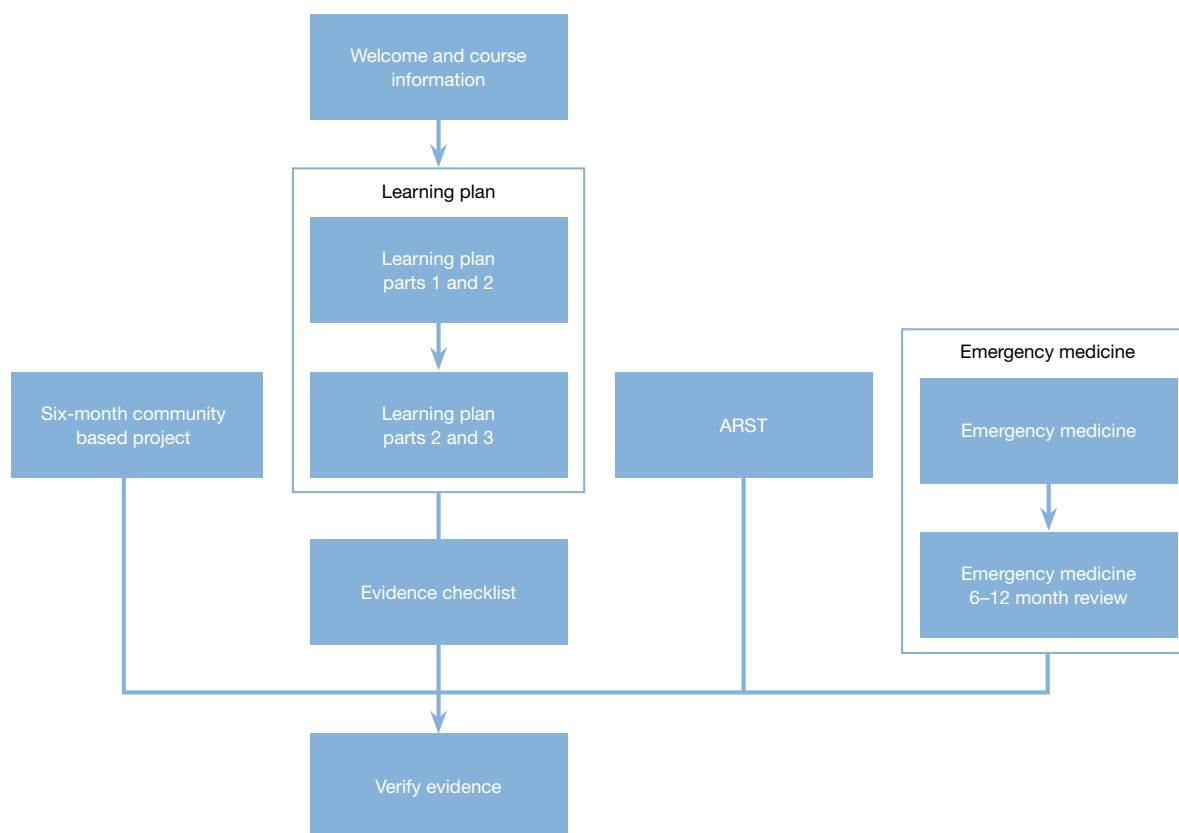
There are three possible outcomes of your FARGP RPL application:

1. You will be granted full RPL and awarded the FARGP.
2. You will be granted partial RPL and advised about the requirements you need to complete to be awarded the FARGP.
3. Your RPL is denied. In the unlikely event that RPL is denied, you will be provided with advice on how best to complete the FARGP requirement.

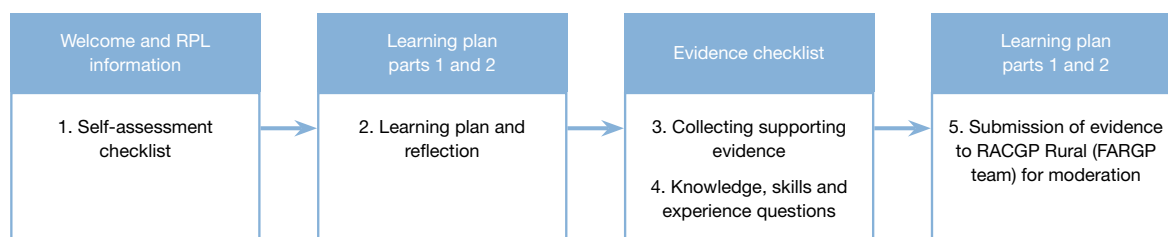
## 6. *FARGP requirements*

The following section explains in detail the individual requirements of the FARGP.

### 6.1 General practice registrars



### 6.2 Practising GPs



## 6.3 Rural general practice experience

### 6.3.1 General practice registrars

All general practice registrars must spend 12 months in a rural general practice setting. When considering options for suitable training posts, the 'Guiding principles for suitable rural general practice training posts for the FARGP' (section 9 of these guidelines) should be followed.

### 6.3.2 Practising GPs

All practising GPs must have completed at least 12 months FTE of rural general practice experience (MMM3–7) as either a general practice registrar or a practising GP in the last four years before they can enrol in the FARGP.

## 6.4 FARGP learning plan and reflection activity

All FARGP candidates, whether they are general practice registrars or practising GPs, must complete the learning plan and reflection activity. This stage is a series of online multiple choice questions designed to assess areas of strength, including areas in which you require further knowledge, skills and experience.

Following completion of this activity, you may be required to undertake a series of further activities (depending on your answers) in order to fill the gaps in your training. You will then be required to upload evidence of having acquired these new skills to the FARGP online learning platform.

## 6.5 Meeting with medical educators/mentors

### 6.5.1 General practice registrars

General practice registrars are required to meet with their medical educators four times during the course of undertaking the FARGP. The purpose of these meetings is for registrars to reflect on their progress and review this with their medical educator.

It is recommended that the review dates should be set after the learning plan is completed, as this provides a time frame for completing the various requirements.

The four meetings need to be at least six weeks apart and can be conducted either face to face or through other means, such as phone or videoconferencing.

### 6.5.2 Practising GPs

Practising GPs are required to nominate a mentor when they enrol in the FARGP. A mentor for the FARGP can be any Fellow of the RACGP. A mentor is required to review the learning plan once it is completed. Mentors do not need to have the FARGP nor live or work nearby, as the process is completed online.

RACGP Rural requires only the mentor's name and RACGP member number, which are submitted via the relevant FARGP enrolment form. The time commitment for mentors will be approximately two to three hours in total.

## 6.6 ARST

A core requirement of the FARGP is completion of at least 12 months of Advanced Rural Skills Training (ARST), which can be undertaken in a broad range of disciplines that address the needs of rural and remote communities.

ARST can be completed as part of the registrar training program or, alternatively, evidence can be submitted for suitable programs previously completed.

### 6.6.1 General practice registrars

General practice registrars are required to complete an ARST in an accredited training post. Registrars are free to choose which advanced skill(s) they wish. It is recommended that the needs of the community also be taken into account when making this choice.

FARGP ARST curricula currently exist for the following disciplines:

- anaesthetics
- obstetrics
- surgery
- emergency medicine
- adult internal medicine
- child health
- mental health
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- small town rural general practice (STRGP)
- palliative care.

The FARGP ARST curricula and logbook (where required) can be viewed and downloaded from the [Essential FARGP and ARST curriculum](#) information webpage. Several ARSTs are completed via approved third-party arrangements (approved by the RACGP Rural Education Committee and RACGP Rural Censor).

Examples include:

- Joint Consultative Committee on Anaesthesia (JCCA) Anaesthesia Curriculum
- Conjoint Committee for the Diploma of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (CCDOG), Diploma of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists (DRANZCOG) and DRANZCOG Advanced
- Australian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) Emergency Medicine Certificate (EMC).

The table below lists a summary of the duration and optional qualifications possible for the various ARSTs.

FARGP ARST curriculum statements	Duration	Optional qualification obtained on completing the ARST (additional enrolment required)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health	12 months	N/A
Adult internal medicine	12 months	N/A
Anaesthesia	12 months	No qualification – letter of satisfactory completion of training issued
Child health	Six months or 12 months	Sydney Child Health Program (SCHP) Sydney Children's Hospital Network (SCHN) University of Sydney
Obstetrics	Six months	Diploma of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists (DRANZCOG)
Obstetrics	12 months	Advanced Diploma of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists (DRANZCOG Advanced)
Emergency medicine	Six months or 12 months	Emergency Medicine Certificate (EMC), Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM)
Mental health	12 months	N/A
Palliative care	12 months	N/A
Small town rural general practice (STRGP)	12 months	N/A
Surgery	12 months	N/A

Please note, while you are free to choose your desired advanced skill(s), it is a core requirement of the FARGP to undertake 12 months total advanced skills training in an accredited training post.

Other ARST disciplines, such as population health and sexual health, need to be prospectively approved by the RACGP Rural Censor. Applications to the RACGP Rural Censor should be made prior to commencing the training post. Complete applications will be reviewed and a response provided within six weeks of receipt. Applications will be assessed on a broad range of conditions, including but not limited to:

- sufficient clinical placement time to provide the appropriate volume of patients
- supervision by an appropriate specialist in the discipline area
- completion of a recognised curriculum (such as an Australian Qualification Framework [AQF], approved university postgraduate certificate or diploma program)
- details of the assessment criteria and assessment process
- a learning plan that provides details of how the learning objectives will be met and assessed
- an explanation of the rural general practice context of the program
- a training post supported by the registrar's RTO.

Applications should be discussed with your RTO medical educator and submissions emailed to the RACGP Rural Censor at [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)



General practice registrars who have completed a relevant training program before enrolling in the FARGP and believe it covers one of the FARGP ARST areas, can have their training assessed to see whether it meets the FARGP requirements.

## 6.6.2 Practising GPs

Practising GPs are required to provide evidence of having completed at least 12 months of ARST or, alternatively, having spent sufficient time in Australian rural general practice to develop advanced skills as a rural GP.

In the event that you do not have an advanced skill or have had your RPL for the advanced skill denied, you have the following two options for completing this requirement:

### Option 1

Select an advanced skill discipline that interests you, find an appropriate training post and complete the training. You will be liable for any costs if the training post is not funded.

Currently, RACGP Rural does not have the resources to support GPs who undertake this option.

### Option 2

Apply for an exemption from the advanced skills post via the STRGP curriculum as your ARST. View the [STRGP ARST curriculum](#) on the RACGP website to ensure that you meet all of the curriculum's learning objectives.

To apply for an exemption, you will need to complete the '[Application for exemption form](#)' and submit it with supporting evidence (eg course parchments and academic transcripts or published article details) to the RACGP Rural Censor via email at [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

## 6.7 Rural general practice community-focused project

The FARGP rural general practice community-focused project is based on the foundations of public/population health. The World Health Organization (WHO) explains public health as referring to organised measures (whether public or private) that prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life.

The FARGP curriculum for general practice registrars and practising GPs includes a requirement to complete a community-focused project run over a minimum of six months. This requirement is likely to be the most difficult part of the FARGP, but is often the most rewarding. This is a unique opportunity to get to know your local community and to engage with it in an effort to improve health.

It is recommended that general practice registrars complete this requirement during one or more of their rural GP placement terms, as the project needs to relate to a rural general practice setting. Practising GPs can complete this activity in their own community.

The project is not a full-time commitment, but it must be conducted over a minimum of six months. The project report will need to demonstrate the ability to complete a community needs assessment; identify needs or gaps in the community; and demonstrate skills in planning, carrying out, evaluating and presenting a 'project report-style concept'. The project can be on any topic you choose related to a needs assessment of your community.

You may be eligible for an exemption from this FARGP requirement if you have previously been involved in a similar style project or if you have completed a university postgraduate qualification that included a project of this type.

You can apply for an exemption if you have completed one of the following:

- university postgraduate studies in public health, such as a Master of Public Health
- university postgraduate studies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, health promotion or a similar public/population health course that included a community-focused needs assessment project

- authored a research-based journal article or conference paper that has been peer-reviewed and published
- completed the FARGP ARST curriculum in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (2014).

To apply for an exemption, you will need to complete the 'Application for exemption form' and submit it with supporting evidence (eg course parchments and academic transcripts, or published article details) to the RACGP Rural Censor via email at [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

### Further information

For more information, refer to the [Guidelines for rural general practice community-focused project](#) on the RACGP Rural [website](#).

For more information or answers to any specific questions you have related to the rural general practice community-focused project, call the FARGP team on 1800 636 764 or email [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

## 6.8 Emergency medicine module

All FARGP candidates, whether they are a general practice registrar or practising GP, must complete the FARGP emergency medicine module. This includes a series of case studies, a clinical skills audit and the satisfactory completion of two advanced emergency skills courses; one within three years and one within five years of FARGP portfolio submission.

Both of the advanced emergency medicine courses must:

- be at least two days each in duration
- be relevant to rural general practice
- have an assessed component.

Appropriate courses include:

- RACGP Clinical Emergency Management Program (CEMP) Advanced
- Advanced Paediatric Life Support (APLS)
- Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO)
- Early Management of Severe Trauma (EMST)
- Advanced Life Support (ALS)
- Emergency Management of Anaesthetics Crises Course (EMAC)
- Rural Emergency Skills Training (REST). E

Others courses can be approved by the RACGP Rural Censor upon application.

Exemption from the FARGP emergency medicine module may be granted if you have:

- completed the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) – Emergency Medicine Certificate (EMC)
- completed the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) – Emergency Medicine Diploma (EMD).

Exemption from the case studies component of the FARGP emergency medicine module may be granted if you have attended the RACGP Rural simulation workshop at the annual RACGP conference for general practice, in the last three years (subject to evidence of attendance).

To apply for an exemption, you will need to complete the 'Application for exemption form' and submit it with supporting evidence.

## *7. Training obligations – Roles and responsibilities*

Registrar candidates are responsible for:

- completing the FARGP requirements prior to RACGP FRACGP or within 12 months of their RACGP Fellowship date
- starting their community-focused project as soon as possible and ensuring that it is relevant to rural general practice setting (this relates to the Five Domains of General Practice)
- booking their emergency medicine courses
- arranging their ARST
- ensuring they are enrolled in the FARGP to undertake ARST (section 5.1.3 of the [AGPT Training Obligations Policy 2017](#))
- applying for RPL as per the requirements, time frames and process specified by RACGP Rural
- answering all written exercises with as much detail as possible pertaining to the community they are in, rather than providing generic answers
- providing as much documentary evidence as possible, including a curriculum vitae for the assessment on the FARGP portfolio
- notifying their RTO and RACGP Rural of any issues or extenuating and unforeseen changes in personal circumstances that may affect their FARGP journey
- actively managing their wellbeing and any fatigue (section 11.1.1 of the [AGPT Training Obligations Policy 2017](#))
- requesting withdrawal (if applicable) in writing to: Manager, RACGP Rural via [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

Medical educators are responsible for:

- encouraging registrars to consider being a rural GP as a career of choice
- maintaining regular contact with their assigned candidates
- assessing all activities and stages in the FARGP online learning platform upon email notification relating to their assigned candidates as promptly as is reasonably possible (two weeks maximum)
- arranging and attending four meetings, at least six weeks apart, conducted face to face, by phone or by videoconferencing
- notifying RACGP Rural of any issues or special circumstances relating to their assigned candidates.

The RTOs are responsible for:

- assisting registrars in completing enrolment and exemption forms
- assisting registrars in applying for RPL as per the requirements, time frames and processes specified by RACGP Rural
- accreditation of all ARST posts prior to the registrar's placement – in cases where this is not possible and retrospective accreditation may be required, approval must be requested from the RACGP Rural Censor prior to the registrar's placement
- ensuring processes are in place to manage registrar fatigue and assessing registrar workloads (section 11.2.7 of the [AGPT Training Obligations Policy 2017](#))

- managing registrar training time to ensure that training is completed within the training time cap specified in Clause 5.14 (section 11.2.6 of the [AGPT Training Obligations Policy 2017](#))
- ensuring that registrars understand the benefits of FRACGP and FARGP accreditation
- assisting registrars in all aspects of the FARGP where required, until FARGP completion
- notifying RACGP Rural of any issues or special circumstances relating to their assigned candidates.

Practising GP candidates are responsible for:

- completing the FARGP requirements within four years FTE of their enrolment date
- nominating a mentor who is prepared to review their learning plan once completed
- applying for RPL as per the requirements, time frames and processes specified by RACGP Rural
- starting their community-focused project as soon as possible and ensuring that it is relevant to rural general practice setting (this relates to the Five Domains of General Practice)
- booking their emergency medicine courses
- arranging their ARST
- notifying RACGP Rural of any issues or extenuating and unforeseen changes in personal circumstances that may affect their FARGP journey.

Mentors are responsible for:

- reviewing their assigned candidates' learning plan, including the 'initial reflection' and 'write your plan' exercises (this exercise involves no more than a two-hour commitment).

RACGP Rural is responsible for:

- responding promptly and efficiently to enquiries, requests and feedback from candidates, mentors, medical educators and RTOs
- supporting candidates, mentors, medical educators and RTOs with all aspects of the FARGP
- developing curricula for the ARST.

## *8. The FARGP assessment process*

The FARGP assessment process is formative. Candidates complete the FARGP requirements through the online learning platform, and then submit them for assessment to their medical educator or mentor.

Once a candidate completes an activity, an email will be sent to their medical educator or mentor notifying them of the completion. Candidates will receive a return email to indicate whether the activity is approved or if additional information is required. Once the medical educator or mentor has marked an activity or stage within the FARGP assessment process as satisfactory, the candidate will no longer be able to edit their work.

Once a candidate's FARGP portfolio has been approved by their medical educator or mentor, all FARGP portfolios are escalated to the FARGP assessment team for review. Following successful assessment, all portfolios are required to be reviewed by the RACGP Rural Censor, RACGP Censor-in-Chief and RACGP Rural Board before ratification of the award by the RACGP Council.

Note: the FARGP is only awarded when the FRACGP requirements are met.

## *9. Guiding principles for suitable rural general practice training posts for the FARGP*

The information in this section was developed by the RACGP Rural Education Committee and released in 2014. It was developed to help general practice registrars and RTOs determine which rural general practice placements are suitable to meet the requirements of the FARGP.

The healthcare needs of rural communities shift frequently in accordance with changes in policy, infrastructure availability, disease burden and population profile. Rural and remote GPs must be able to respond and upskill in order to meet the patient driven health needs of their community.

As of 1 January 2018, all FARGP candidates must complete at least 12 months (FTE) of rural general practice experience in an MMM3–7 setting, as either a general practice registrar or a practising GP, within four years from their FARGP enrolment date.

Candidates who enrolled prior to 1 January 2018 who have completed their rural general practice experience in an MMM2 equivalent setting will be accepted. This is to accommodate the FARGP setting definition change from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard-Remoteness Area (ASGS-RA) to the Modified Monash Model (MMM) on 1 January 2018. Requests for special circumstances will need to be submitted to RACGP Rural for consideration and fees may apply.

The 12 months must be completed either in one continuous block or in two six-month terms. Locums and defense personnel may not be eligible but are encouraged to contact RACGP Rural to discuss their circumstances.

A general practice registrar and/or RTO should be able to demonstrate that each of the following principles have been met with regard to the FARGP requirement of 12 months in a rural general practice setting:

1. The practice is accredited for the vocational training of general practice registrars.
2. GPs from the practice provide emergency/trauma services at the local hospital or similar healthcare facility.
3. GPs from the practice provide other procedural and/or non-procedural services at the local hospital or similar healthcare facility.
4. The practice has no or limited access to local specialists, including hospitals with salaried medical specialists and inpatient–outpatient allied health services.
5. GPs at the practice provide after-hours services based on community needs.

If you have any questions or require assistance in relation to these guiding principles, please contact RACGP Rural on 1800 636 764 or email [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au)

## *10. FARGP withdrawal policy*

The FARGP withdrawal policy relates to any activities undertaken as part of the FARGP.

If the request to withdraw is received within seven days of the confirmation of enrolment and prior to the first login to the FARGP online learning platform, the candidate will be eligible to apply for a refund of the program fee less a \$300 withdrawal administration fee.

If the request to withdraw is received more than seven days following confirmation of enrolment or after the first login to the FARGP online learning platform, the withdrawal fee will be the entire program fee.

Requests for withdrawal should be submitted in writing via email to [fargp@racgp.org.au](mailto:fargp@racgp.org.au) addressed to the Manager, RACGP Rural.

## *11. FARGP time frame policy*

In most cases, FARGP candidates are given a maximum of four years to complete the FARGP requirements.

To assist registrars in completing the FARGP requirements during their general practice training, they are permitted a further 12 months from the date they achieved FRACGP to complete the non-clinical requirements as a registrar. After this time, candidates will be withdrawn from the FARGP and will need to re-enrol in the FARGP practising GP pathway.

A FARGP candidate will be withdrawn from the FARGP program by the RACGP Rural should they:

- fail to complete the FARGP requirements within 12 months of their FRACGP Fellow date (registrars only), or
- fail to complete the FARGP requirements within four years of their enrolment date without requesting a special circumstances extension from RACGP Rural.

## *12. FARGP and QI&CPD Program requirements*

Attaining the FARGP qualifies the GP for 150 Category 1 Quality Improvement and Continuing Professional Development (QI&CPD) points.

GPs who successfully complete the FARGP assessment process will satisfy their QI&CPD Program requirements for that triennium.

Points are allocated at the time the RACGP ratifies the FARGP, as this is considered to be the completion of the assessment process.

## 13. Support and information

The RACGP Rural team is available to answer questions about the FARGP. Please contact the team via the details below. Alternatively, visit the website to download forms and other resources at [www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/ruraladvantage/essential-fargp-information](http://www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/ruraladvantage/essential-fargp-information)

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