



RACGP

| *Fellowship exams*

Candidate handbook

Changes in this version

The follow updates have been made in new version of the Fellowship Exams Candidate Handbook published on 15 August 2014:

Section	Change
1.4 The exams and applying for RACGP Fellowship	A new section has been included to direct Candidates to a full list of requirements for each pathway to Fellowship.
2.1.1 Current Australian medical registration	Candidates require current Australian medical registration throughout the assessment process. A statement has been included to clarify which registration circumstances fulfill this eligibility requirement.
2.1.3 Cap on exam attempts	A cap on exam attempts was introduced in March 2014. A statement has been added to clarify that the cap on exam attempts applies to all Candidates from 2014.2 onwards and that exam attempts prior to 2014.2 will not contribute towards the cap.
2.2.1 Preferred address	Candidates are now able to select their preferred address on their exam enrolment form. They will then be allocated to the closest available exam centre to this address.
2.5 Withdrawal of enrolment in the Exams	A statement has been added in clause 2.5.3 to advise that Candidates coming to the end of their three year cycle who fail the KFP will be withdrawn from the OSCE and refunded the full enrolment fee.
5. Rules for the conduct of the exams	<p>The following new rules apply:</p> <p>Candidates are not permitted to take a mobile phone into the exam and are required to hand their phone into exam officials for the duration of the exam.</p> <p>A small portion of non-packaged soft lollies will now be made available for Candidates in exam rooms.</p> <p>Candidates are not permitted to bring any paper into the OSCE. The RACGP will supply all Candidates with approved note-taking paper.</p> <p>Candidates are not permitted to take any notes during their allocated rest station time. These stations are designed for Candidates to momentarily rest from the exam and compose themselves in readiness for the remaining exam stations.</p>
6.1 Incident reports and procedural error	The timeline that Candidates have to submit an incident report has been changed from 48 hours to 2 business days.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Assessment in the Fellowship Exams

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' (RACGP) Fellowship Exams (the Exams) consists of three segments:

- Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) – multi-choice test conducted online
- Key Feature Problems (KFP) – multi-choice and short answer test conducted online
- Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) – series of 14 clinical cases conducted with examiners and role players.

Passing the Exams is the primary method by which doctors become eligible to apply for Fellowship of the RACGP. Eligible Candidates can enrol in all three Exams of a cycle, however all Candidates **must** obtain a pass in the AKT as a prerequisite to undertaking the OSCE.

1.2 Exam information

The Exams are currently held twice per year across Australia. Exam enrolment information is available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/Exams/exam-enrolments/ and includes:

- enrolment and exam dates
- exam centres
- enrolment fees
- enrolment form.

Candidates must enrol in the Exams during the nominated enrolment period. Enrolments are not accepted outside the enrolment period.

Candidates who submit a completed enrolment form including payment, will be sent a confirmation email containing further instructions to their preferred email address

1.3 Further information and contact details

For any questions regarding the contents of this handbook, or to make an application, please contact Fellowship Services:

Email: racgpeducation@racgp.org.au (preferred method)

Phone: 1800 626 901

Mail: Attention: Fellowship Services
The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
100 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne
Victoria 3002
Australia

1.4 The exams and applying for RACGP Fellowship

Completion of the RACGP Exams is one of the requirements for Candidates on the Vocational Training Pathway, the General Practice Experience Pathway and in Category 2 and 3 of the Specialist Pathway Program.

Candidates can find a full list of the requirements of each pathway in the following documents:

- the Registrar Handbook (for Vocational Training Pathway Candidates)
- the General Practice Experience handbook
- the Category Two & Three of the Specialist Pathway Program policy.

These documents are available at: www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/

1.5 The Exams: AKT, KFP, and OSCE

The format and the objectives of each exam segment are different and preparation should be geared to each exam.

1.5.1 Applied Knowledge Test (AKT)

Objective

To assess the breadth and application of contextual knowledge required for certification to enter unsupervised general practice.

Exam format

All questions in the AKT are clinically based to reduce the likelihood of testing facts in isolation from the clinical context. The level of applied knowledge to be assessed in this exam is that required for functioning as an unsupervised GP within Australia.

The AKT contains 150 questions and is a three hour test. A universal allowance of one additional hour has been granted to allow extra time for Candidates who have English as their second language, slow readers, slow typists, or other reasons. Candidates are provided up to four hours to complete this exam.

Candidates are advised to attempt all exam questions. All questions hold equal value and no negative marks are given for incorrect answers. Where there appears to be more than one possible correct answer, Candidates are advised to select the most correct answer.

There are two question types:

1. single best answer
2. extended matching questions.

Questions of each type are grouped together.

The AKT is delivered online at established Exam centres. Individual circumstances at Exam centres may necessitate that the Exam is delivered in a written, paper-based format. If technical difficulties necessitate a paper-based Exam, all Candidates at that centre shall be informed accordingly by the Invigilator/Supervisor.

1.5.2 Key Feature Problems (KFP)

Objective

To assess clinical decision making skills in general practice cases.

Exam format

A 'key feature' is a critical step in the resolution of a clinical problem in the context of everyday general practice. A KFP question consists of a clinical case scenario followed by questions that focus only on those critical steps.

Candidates are required to type short responses or select responses from a list of options provided. The KFP contains 26 cases (of equal value) and is a three hour exam. A universal allowance of an additional 30 minutes has been granted to allow extra time for Candidates who have English as their

second language, slow readers, slow typists, or other reasons. Candidates are provided up to three hours and 30 minutes to complete the KFP.

In general, most cases contain more than one part, following a logical sequence. On each question, Candidates supply or select whatever number of responses is appropriate to the clinical task and which are specified by the question. Depending on the question, Candidates will be penalised for providing additional responses than what is requested by the question.

For most questions, Candidates will receive a weighted reduction in score in the overall exam for all extra responses they provide, however, in “completion” questions, Candidates who provide additional responses will score zero for the entire question.

The KFP is delivered online at established Exam centres. Individual circumstances at Exam centres may necessitate that the Exam is delivered in a written, paper-based format. If technical difficulties necessitate a paper-based Exam, all Candidates at that centre shall be informed accordingly by the Invigilator/Supervisor.

1.5.3 Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE)

Objective

To assess applied knowledge, clinical reasoning, clinical skills, communication skills and professional attitudes in the context of consultations, patient exams and peer discussions. This is a clinical consulting performance assessment.

Exam format

The OSCE reflects aspects of a typical session of general practice in Australia. The gender and age distribution of cases is selected to match Australian epidemiological data.

There is a combination of 14 clinical cases of either 8 minutes or 19 minutes duration, with rest stations interspersed between the clinical stations. It will take Candidates approximately four hours to complete all OSCE stations.

The various 8 minute consultation stations require Candidates to focus on one or two aspects of a consultation; these consultation stations are not intended to represent whole consultations. Other eight minute consultation stations will focus on other areas such as clinical reasoning and/or professional attitudes.

The 19 minute consultation stations resemble standard GP consultations and usually require the Candidate to focus on a number of tasks.

Clear instructions are provided for both the eight minute and 19 minute stations. It is critical that Candidates read and follow the instructions carefully and understand the task(s) required of them.

Although each task will be focussed, Candidates are expected to exhibit a ‘whole patient’ approach by demonstrating the general practice skills of communication, empathy, history taking (relevant and systematic), examination (relevant and systematic), patient education, preventive care, opportunistic medicine and involvement of carers, as appropriate to each simulated case.

Each consultation station will present its own challenges and reflect what is seen in general practice. For example, Candidates might consult with an emotional patient, a confused patient, a patient with multiple medical problems, a new patient, or a patient with diagnostic and management dilemmas.

Each station will also have a different marking schedule. A station that calls for a focus on history taking will have a marking schedule that is weighted towards this aspect, whereas a station where developing a management plan is being examined will have a marking schedule that reflects the importance of this element.

Furthermore, if a station presents a diagnostic problem in which Candidates are required to take a patient history and discuss differential diagnoses with the patient, simply arriving at the ‘correct’

diagnosis may not be enough to pass this station. Elements such as taking a comprehensive medical history and demonstrating communication skills may also contribute to a Candidate's score.

Candidates should be aware that in the OSCE they may encounter Examiners that are known to them or whom they have met on previous occasions, such as during their GP training. This does not constitute a "conflict of interest". Conflict of interest will only be considered in circumstances primarily where Examiners/Candidates are family and personal friends, or doctors with whom they have shared a practice or supervised, or have some other exceptional relationship.

All Examiners are provided with a list of Candidates they will be examining and are required to notify the RACGP if there is a perceived or actual conflict of interest.

2. Enrolment in the Exams

2.1 Eligibility for enrolment in the RACGP Exams

To be eligible to sit the Exams, doctors must meet the eligibility requirements of one of the three pathways. Refer to the handbooks and/or policies applicable to each of the pathways via the following links:

- The General Practice Experience (Practice Eligible) Pathway, at www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/imgaus/pep
- The Specialist Pathway Program (SPP) at www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/imgaus/specialist-pathway/
- The Vocational Training Pathway, at www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/students/vocational-training-pathway

2.1.1 Current Australian medical registration

All Candidates require current Australian medical registration throughout the assessment process. The RACGP only considers a doctor to have current medical registration if their name appears on the Registers of Practitioners on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) website www.ahpra.gov.au. This includes doctors whose renewal application is being processed, but not doctors who have a suspension on their registration, have agreed not to practice, or who appear on the list of Cancelled Health Practitioners.

Candidates who have had a change to their registration circumstances or lose their medical registration must inform the RACGP and withdraw from any Exams they are enrolled in. Enrolling or presenting for Exams without medical registration will be considered academic misconduct and will be handled as per the Academic Misconduct Policy, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies

2.1.2 Membership

All Candidates must be financial members of the RACGP when sitting the Exams and for Fellowship. RACGP Membership options are available at www.racgp.org.au/yourracgp/membership/.

2.1.3 Cap on Exam attempts

After three (3) unsuccessful attempts at the same Exam segment, Candidates will be required to show just cause to be able to enrol for a fourth attempt.

At the end of six (6) unsuccessful attempts at the same Exam segment, Candidates are required to have twelve months exclusion from that Exam segment during which time they are required to participate in a remediation program.

This cap on exam attempts applies to all Candidates from 2014.2 onwards. However, exam attempts prior to 2014.2 will not be counted in the cap. The maximum duration of a Candidate's Exam cycle remains at three (3) years as required in clause 6.5 'Completion of the Exam cycle'.

2.2 Venue allocation

2.2.1 Preferred address

It is the responsibility of each Candidate to notify the RACGP of any address changes as soon as they occur. Candidates will be allocated to the closest available Exam centre to their "Preferred Address" as elected on the RACGP Exam enrolment form.

Candidates will be allocated to the available positions at each Exam centre by priority of enrolment date. If the closest Exam centre to a Candidate's preferred address is oversubscribed, Candidates will be allocated to the next closest centre, again by priority of enrolment date.

If a Candidate is allocated to a city in which the Exam is being held in, which is not closest to their preferred address and is unable to accept the allocation, the Candidate may advise the RACGP within 5 working days of receiving notification of their Exam location. Candidates have the option to withdraw from the Exam segment, in which case the Candidate will be refunded the enrolment fee for that Exam segment less an administration fee of \$300. If a Candidate elects to withdraw from an Exam segment the Candidate's three (3) year Exam cycle will **not** be extended.

In circumstances where a Candidate cannot attend an Exam centre for medical reasons or for other exceptional reasons, the Candidate may make a request for special consideration as per the Special Consideration policy, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/ and request to be placed in a specific Exam centre. Such requests must be received no later than the last day of the enrolment period for the relevant Exam, and include sufficient supporting documentation.

The RACGP will attempt to accommodate all Candidates who enrol by the enrolment closing date.

2.2.2 Individual Supervision for the AKT and/or KFP

If a Candidate's usual place of residence is:

- a) Remoteness Area 2 (RA2) and Rural Remote Metropolitan Area 3 (RRMA 3) or greater;
- b) Remoteness Area 3 (RA3) and greater; or
- c) Outside Australia and the Candidate cannot travel to Australia for the Exams,

an individual Candidate may request remote supervision. Candidates are required to make the request at the time of enrolment by emailing racgpeducation@racgp.org.au.

If a Candidate does not meet the criteria as listed above, but believes they have valid reasons for remote supervision, they should contact the RACGP directly to discuss their options.

Candidates who elect to sit under remote supervision will be required to pay fees to cover the costs associated with delivering the Exam, such as Invigilator fees and catering. Due to the resources and costs involved with conducting an OSCE, requests for the establishment of a remote supervision or a remote centre for the OSCE are not applicable.

2.2.3 Sitting the AKT and/or KFP on an alternative day for religious or exceptional circumstances

Candidates who are precluded from presenting for the AKT and/or KFP on the designated Exam date are eligible to apply to sit the segment(s) on an alternative date. These Candidates are required to contact the RACGP at the time of enrolment to make this request.

All Candidates who request to sit an Exam on an alternative day are required to submit the appropriate documentation as per the requirements outlined within the *Special Consideration Policy*, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/. Candidates who are unable to sit the Exam on a Saturday due to religious beliefs, must provide a letter from the leader of the congregation, signed and dated on the letterhead of that organisation.

All Candidates are required to complete a Statutory Declaration stating they will "not divulge or discuss the content of the Exam with any other party before all other Candidates have completed the Exam". This declaration must be signed and witnessed as per the *Witnessing and Certification of Documentation Policy*, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/ prior to commencing the Exam. Any breach of this declaration will constitute an incident that will be dealt with under the *Academic Misconduct policy*, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/.

Candidates who elect to sit on an alternative day will be required to pay a fee to cover the costs associated with delivering the Exam, (e.g. Invigilator fees, catering). The OSCE cannot be held on alternative dates and the scheduling of the OSCE alternates between Saturday (May) and Sunday (October) to accommodate those Candidates who may not be able to sit on either day.

2.3 Verification of applications

Candidates are not required to submit any documentation supporting their application for enrolment; however, verification of eligibility will take place during each enrolment period. The RACGP will undertake audits of applications and Candidates may be requested to provide evidence at any time between the date of enrolment and the Exam date.

Any questions falsely answered in the online enrolment application may be considered academic misconduct as per the *Academic Misconduct Policy*, available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies .

2.4 Personal Information

The RACGP will collect and may distribute your personal information in accordance with the National Privacy Principles for the purposes of:

- a) determining eligibility to enrol;
- b) assessing performance; and
- c) exchanging relevant information with appropriate third parties for the purpose of achieving items a) and b) as listed above.

Further information concerning the collection or distribution of personal information is available within the RACGP Privacy Statement at www.racgp.org.au/usage/privacy/ .

2.5 Withdrawal of enrolment in the Exams

If a Candidate needs to withdraw from an Exam, they may do so in writing to racgpeducation@racgp.org.au. Withdrawal fees will apply (refer to Clause 2.5.1).

Once withdrawn, Candidates must submit a **new** application to enrol in any subsequent enrolment cycle and cannot transfer their enrolment either between different segments or different cycles of the Fellowship Exam.

2.5.1 Withdrawal fees and refunds

All withdrawals from the Exams will incur a \$300 withdrawal fee per segment, regardless of when they are received.

- Candidates who withdraw up to and including 30 days before the Exam will be refunded the Exam fee less a \$300 withdrawal fee
- Candidates who withdraw 29 days or less before the Exam will forfeit the entire Exam fee.

In exceptional circumstances, Candidates may apply for Special Consideration detailing the reasons why they cannot present for the Exam. Requests for Special Consideration must be accompanied by the appropriate supporting documentation. Where Special Consideration is approved, the enrolment fee will be refunded less a \$300 withdrawal fee.

2.5.2 Candidates who have paid for an OSCE but were unsuccessful with the AKT

Candidates who enrol in the AKT and OSCE for the same cycle but fail the AKT will be withdrawn from the OSCE and refunded the full enrolment fee following the release of the AKT results.

2.5.3 Candidates who have paid for an OSCE but have failed the KFP at the end of their three (3) year cycle.

Candidates coming to the end of their three (3) year cycle but who fail the KFP will be withdrawn from the OSCE and refunded the full enrolment fee following the release of the KFP results.

3. Assessment preparation

The Exams aim to facilitate learning so that practitioners will be actively involved in continuing their professional development beyond the Exam.

The first question a Candidate should ask is: "What is Australian general practice?". The answer to this question will provide insight into the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are relevant to everyday practice, and therefore the Exams. The curriculum was written to act as a guide to the knowledge, skills and learning experiences that are necessary for competent, unsupervised general practice. For this reason, many Candidates find it useful to refer to the curriculum to guide their preparation for the Exams at <http://curriculum.racgp.org.au/>.

The domains of general practice that form the basis of the Exam Matrix are the same as those used in selecting questions and cases for the Exams.

The frequency and patterns of problems as they present to general practice should also be considered during Exam preparation. This is information gathered from studies such as the Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health (BEACH) study used to design the Exam Matrix. The questions used in the Exams aim to reflect the frequency of problems as they occur in Australian general practice. Candidates may find it useful to compare their practice profile with that of other practitioners by reviewing their practice using a log diary of, for example, 100 consecutive patients. Comparing a practice profile with the BEACH data may assist in identifying learning needs. For example, if you see very few paediatric cases, you may wish to undertake further study in paediatrics in order to better prepare for the Exams, this study may include organising some sessions in a facility with a paediatric population, reading journals, attending lectures, and workshops. A more formal method to review a practice profile is to participate in BEACH. The University of Sydney <http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/fmrc/beach/> provides additional information and up to date BEACH data.

Training for general practice occurs in the work setting; similarly, preparation for an Exam of general practice should occur in the practice setting. The Exams do not solely assess book knowledge, but aim to assess how this knowledge is applied to everyday situations that occur in General Practice. The actual processes of patient care and doctors' attitudes are also important aspects of this Exam. The Exams assess the competencies that Candidates would use in actual General practice.

Candidates can become more aware of their own performance in general practice and change any aspects they consider appropriate. By performing well in actual practice it becomes easier to translate these behaviours into the Exam situations. It may be helpful to invite a trusted colleague to provide constructive feedback on your consultations and ask them to spend time watching you consult, either in the practice or by videotape (such methods would of course require informed patient consent).

3.1 Pre-exam courses

Each RACGP state faculty and sub-faculty provides information and practice opportunities for Candidates through a pre-exam course. Dates and venues are advertised in faculty newsletters and via the RACGP weekly update to members Fridayfacts, available at www.racgp.org.au/yourracgp/news/fridayfacts/. Please contact your state faculty for further information at www.racgp.org.au/yourracgp/faculties/.

3.2 Study groups

Although the practice setting provides the best preparation, Candidates may find it useful to form study groups. Such groups typically comprise between three to six candidates living/working in close proximity to each other. Registrars interested in forming study groups should contact their Regional Training Provider (RTP). Other Candidates should contact their state faculty office.

3.3 QI&CPD program

Many activities that are promoted through the RACGP Quality Improvement and Continuing Professional Development (QI&CPD) program may also be useful to candidates as they prepare for

the Exam. These include clinical audits, supervised clinical attachments, lectures, workshops, small group learning and online learning programs. While this is not a comprehensive list, it indicates the breadth of educational material available to Candidates. Candidates interested in accessing further QI&CPD activities can contact the QI&CPD Department within their state faculty or search for activities at www.racgp.org.au/education/courses/activitylist/.

3.3.1 Check

The RACGP [check program](http://www.racgp.org.au/education/courses/check/) is a versatile self-education program and QI&CPD activity that provides a range of cases written by expert clinicians. Each case includes a brief clinical scenario followed by a series of questions designed to bring out the important issues for practitioners to consider in the clinical history, examination, investigation and/or management of a problem. More information is available at www.racgp.org.au/education/courses/check/.

3.3.2 gplearning

[gplearning](http://www.gplearning.com.au) is the RACGP's interactive online QI&CPD service containing over 200 activities on a wide range of subject areas and include Category 1 and Category 2 activities. Dedicated gplearning modules are set up to better support Candidates in studying for the Exams, details for which are sent to Candidates leading up to an Exam. More information is available at www.gplearning.com.au.

3.4 Exam Support Online

The RACGP has developed Practice Exams for the online AKT and KFP Exams which display similar style questions in the same format as the Exam. These practice Exams are made available to enrolled Candidates prior to each Exam, and scores and feedback are provided. Further details of how to access this resource are provided to Candidates in the lead up to the AKT and KFP Exams. More information is available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/exams/exam-support-online/.

4. Assistance sitting the Exam – special consideration

This section only covers Special Consideration in the form of special arrangements in the Exams. Please refer to the *Special Consideration Policy*, at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/ for further information.

4.1 Presumption of fitness to sit

Candidates should ensure that they are sufficiently fit and healthy to present for the Exams. Marks in the Exams are based solely on the performance of the Candidate in the assessment, and can never be changed on the basis of personal circumstances (be they illness, or other misadventure) surrounding the Exam.

4.2 Special arrangements – medical condition

A Candidate who has a medical problem that is likely to impair his or her assessment performance may lodge a request for special arrangements. These requests for special arrangements must describe the medical problem in detail and specify the nature and level of support sought. The Candidate must make the request in writing, preferably at the time of enrolment, but no later than the commencement of any Exam segment. The request must also be accompanied by a detailed medical certificate outlining:

- a) The date(s) on which the Candidate sought medical treatment or advice
- b) A description of the medical problem or disability
- c) The period of the medical problem or disability, and
- d) The medical practitioner's professional opinion about the effect of the medical problem or disability on the Candidate's assessment performance, and where appropriate specify the assistance required.

In making such an application, Candidates agree that they are waiving to the RACGP their rights to privacy in relation to the medical condition that may affect their assessment performance. The waiver of privacy is solely for the purpose of the RACGP considering the application and reaching a determination as to whether it is an appropriate case for Special Consideration, and the form which such Special Consideration may take. The medical practitioner supplying the evidence should not be a relative and should have a proper and professional doctor-patient relationship with the applicant.

4.3 Applications for Special Consideration

Candidates who wish to apply for Special Consideration must contact RACGP Fellowship Services, by email at racgpeducation@racgp.org.au. Further information regarding the Special Consideration Policy is available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/

5. Rules for the conduct of the Exams

- Candidates must read the Education Policies, available at www.racgp.org.au/assessment/policy prior to each Exam.
- Candidates must be in the waiting area for the online Exams at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled Exam commencement time.
- Candidates must present primary current proof of identity to the administrator/supervisor at the commencement of the Exam. A primary proof of identity should be an original document and include a photograph. Accepted forms of proof of identity include:
 - a) Australian passport, not expired more than two years
 - b) current overseas passport
 - c) current Australian photo driver's license
 - d) proof of age or identity card issued by an Australian State or Territory Police
 - e) current Australian student identity card
 - f) any other Australian entitlement or identity card, issued by the Commonwealth or a State or Territory Government, that includes a photograph of the Candidate.
- Candidates must present any mobile phone at the point of registration, demonstrate to staff that it is completely turned off, and store it in a clear plastic bag provided by staff for the duration of the exam. Mobile phones and other belongings will be securely stored until the exam ends and Candidates are released from quarantined areas.
- Candidates may bring a pen, wallet and/or a small handbag into the Exam room. Exam supervisors may inspect anything that you bring into the Exam room. Except for these admissible items, Exam supervisors may prohibit the admission of any materials that are deemed unsuitable.
- Candidates must not bring into the Exam room any writing paper, notes, books, computers, calculators or any recording or electronic devices, bags or other personal belongings the Invigilator may nominate.
- The RACGP accepts no responsibility for the loss of any Candidate personal property in or around the Exam rooms.
- Candidates must obey any instructions on exam materials or given by an Exam Supervisor.
- Exams will be conducted in English and Candidates must answer all questions in English.
- Candidates will not be re-admitted into the Exam room, unless an Invigilator supervises the Candidate during the period of the absence from the Exam room.
- Candidates must not smoke in any Exam room or otherwise disrupt the conduct of the Exam.
- Candidates must not bring any food into any Exam room, without prior approval. A small portion of non-packaged soft lollies will be made available for Candidates in Exam rooms.
- Candidates may drink only water from a clear, colourless plastic bottle.
- Candidates must leave all paper in the Exam room after completing the Exam.
- Candidates must not disturb any other Candidate during the Exam at any time.
- Candidates must not communicate with or provide assistance to any other Candidate during the Exam.
- Candidates must not accept assistance from any other Candidate during the Exam.
- Candidates must not look at another Candidate's computer screen (at online Exam/s) for any purpose.
- Candidates must not leave the Exam room during the first 30 minutes or the last 15 minutes of the online Exam/s.
- Candidates must not permit any other Candidate to read or copy from their computer screen during the online Exam/s.

- Candidate Ear plugs are permitted during the online Exam/s, however, Candidates must ensure they can hear announcements made by the Invigilator and/or Supervisor or Administrator during the Exam.
- No Candidate is permitted to bring any paper into the OSCE. Suitable paper will be provided for all Candidates to take notes during the allocated reading time prior to each case. At the conclusion of each case, all notes must be submitted to the examiners and cannot be removed from the exam room. Candidates are not permitted to take any notes during rest stations.

6. After the Exam

6.1 Incident reports and procedural error

Candidates are provided the opportunity to note down any incidents or possible procedural errors during the course of the Exam. If it not possible for a Candidate to complete an incident report during the Exam, they must complete and return it to the RACGP as soon as possible after the Exam. Incident reports received more than 2 business days after the Exam will not be considered. All Candidates who submit an incident report will receive an acknowledgment of receipt by the RACGP via email.

All incident reports are considered by the Board of Censors or its delegated committee prior to the release of results. Incidents are initially investigated for their materiality as an incident. Although it is accepted that while any disruption may be unsettling, it is understood that disruptions occur daily in general practice and must be dealt with in that context. If an incident is considered material, it will be reviewed for its impact on the Candidate's performance. If it is found that the incident impacted on the Candidate's performance, then it may be determined to be a Procedural Error.

6.1.1 Notification of Procedural error outcomes

In the case where a Procedural error has been found and compensation has been determined by the Board of Censors or their delegated committee, the affected Candidate will be notified in writing immediately following the release of results. The notification will include the following:

- outcome of incident
- compensation awarded
- next steps

For all other incident reports that do not fall into the above category, no specific notification will be provided.

6.2 Possible procedural error outcomes

6.2.1 Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) and Key Feature Problems (KFP)

The Candidate may be granted a free resit, a reduced fee or full fee waiver. The determination of a Procedural error in the AKT or KFP will never result in a change of mark for that Exam.

6.2.2 Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

Where the Procedural Error has been proven to have occurred, the Candidate will be granted the higher mark out of:

- a) the mark they received; or
- b) the average mark obtained for the particular case in question by the entire cohort that completed the Exam across Australia.

Any amendment to an assigned mark will only apply to the particular case during which the error occurred; no consequential effect on following cases will be considered.

6.3 Results

A summary of Exam results will be emailed to Candidates (unless they have specifically elected not receive exam results notification via Email), and will also be made available via the RACGP website at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/exams/exam-results/. Candidates are required to log into the RACGP website with their personal username and password to access their individual results. On the day results are published, Candidates who successfully complete an Exam segment are also identified and listed by their RACGP membership number on the RACGP website. Exam results will not be provided by telephone or fax.

6.4 Censor feedback to Candidates

An important element of any educational process such as the Exams is feedback. Candidates who have failed any segment of the Exams may request feedback from the Censor in their State. Censors provide feedback on areas in which Candidates performed well, as well as any areas of concern. Feedback may be delivered as a group activity with other unsuccessful Candidates.

Candidates are advised to avail themselves of this service, as it encourages them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement in practice and to obtain further training in those areas, thus the exam has an educational value over and above its value as an assessment process. Candidates who request reconsideration under the RACGP's *Board of Censors' Decisions Reviews policy* or *Appeals policy* available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies will not be eligible for feedback until these processes are complete.

6.5 Completion of the Exam cycle

The maximum duration of a Candidate's Exam cycle is three (3) years, during which time all segments of the Exams must be completed successfully. A pass mark in any one segment of the Exam may be carried over for a period of three (3) years. A failed segment may be repeated until a pass mark is achieved in that segment. If a Candidate is unable to successfully complete each of the segments within this three (3) year period, the initial pass can no longer be carried over and a new exam cycle is required to be commenced. Each of the three (3) segments will need to be repeated and successfully completed, regardless of the result achieved in a previous exam cycle.

The commencement of the three (3) year cycle is defined as the cycle date of the first pass of either the AKT or KFP

The Board of Censors has the right to request remediation of a Candidate and evidence of completion of remediation if a Candidate fails an Exam segment.

6.6 Request for reconsideration

Candidates may request a reconsideration of their result if they believe that:

- a) the RACGP made an incorrect decision in relation to the Exam process, or
- b) a Procedural Error occurred in the conduct of the Exam and the Candidate's performance was directly and significantly impaired.

In the reconsideration process:

- the candidate's Exam cannot be re-marked
- the clinical content of any Exam cannot be questioned
- claims of Procedural Error will be investigated and determined as per Clause 6.2. It is more difficult to investigate or substantiate any claim of Procedural Error at the date of the release of results.

To request reconsideration of results, a Candidate should read the *Board of Censors' Decisions Reviews policy* at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/, complete the appropriate form contained within the policy and return the request with payment to the RACGP within 10 working days (National Office) of the date of release of results.

6.7 Reconsideration outcomes

6.7.1 Incorrect assessment result

If there is found to be an error with the overall result in any of the Exam, the mark will be amended to reflect the correct result.

6.7.2 Procedural Error

If there is found to be a Procedural Error the possible outcomes are listed in Clause 6.2.

7. Marking and scoring of the Exams

7.1 Standard setting

A Standard is a conceptual boundary between acceptable and unacceptable performance. For the RACGP Exam, the Standard of performance required of candidates is demonstration of competence for unsupervised general practice in Australia.

Standard Setting is the process by which a Standard is translated into a passing score, intended to divide a group of Candidates into those who are at or above the Standard, and those whose performance is below the Standard.

The procedures used to set the 'cutting scores' for the AKT and KFP involve a group of expert Examiners making judgments about hypothetical borderline Candidates' performance in each question. The actual performance of Candidates in the same questions can then be considered before determining final scores.

This Standard Setting process has an additional benefit to Candidates. The quality of every question used in the Exam is scrutinised by the group of expert Examiners for face validity and statistical reliability and quality. Any questions considered to be of less than excellent quality are debated at length and often omitted as necessary.

The 'borderline group method' is used to set the cutting score for the OSCE. This method uses each examiner at each clinical station throughout Australia. At each of the 14 clinical stations, each Candidate is judged on a number of different performance domains, as well as on their overall performance. Standard Setting is achieved through statistical analysis of the performance domain scores against the overall performance scores.

Although the overall pass mark varies from exam to exam, the Standards used in determining those pass marks remain constant. The processes employed by the RACGP in determining cutting scores are less arbitrary than simply choosing a pass mark. They involve both judgments by Examiners and analysis of actual Candidate performance in the assessment tasks. The result is a process that is both fair and accurate.

7.2 Candidate performance reporting

The Board of Censors will review the scores achieved by all Candidates at the conclusion of the administration of each segment of the Exams. This information is de-identified so that the Censors are unaware of a Candidate's identity. The administration of the assessment segments, the Candidates' scores and the cutting score for each segment are reviewed by the Board of Censors who ratify and approve the segment cutting scores, and the overall result for each Candidate.

The exam results, as ratified by the Board of Censors on behalf of RACGP Council, shall be final and will not be subject to review except in the following circumstances:

- at the instigation of the Candidate in conformity with the *Board of Censors' Decisions Reviews policy* at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/
- pursuant to a resolution of the RACGP Council, duly passed, directing the Censor in Chief to review Exam results for any purpose the Council deems fit in its sole unfettered discretion
- the Censor in Chief, having conducted a review of Exam results as ratified, may make recommendations to the RACGP Council and any resolution of Council as to such recommendation shall be final.