



RACGP

# Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP

## Applicant Handbook

**Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP Applicant Handbook****Disclaimer**

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The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP Handbook. East Melbourne, Vic: RACGP, 2023.

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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.*

V1.1 October 2023

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## Introduction

In 2017, The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Board endorsed a process to formally recognise the considerable knowledge, skills and experience of Australian General Practitioners using extended skills in their practices.

The process, known as Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP (RES-FRACGP), acknowledges that many general practitioners (GPs) develop specific expertise to meet the needs of their patients and communities; that this expertise is embedded in generalism; and that without such expertise, many patients would have to be referred elsewhere or go without the treatment or care they need.

### Principles

The following principles underpin the approach to Recognition of Extended Skills:

- **Embedded in generalism.** It recognises the development of extended skills founded within the scope of general practice, which go significantly beyond those required at the point of Fellowship.
- **Aligned to RACGP's purpose and values.** For the benefit and in the best interests of RACGP members and aligned to the RACGP strategic plan.
- **Strengthening GP careers.** RACGP acknowledges, supports, and works to strengthen the work GPs are doing to gain expertise and to develop professionally.
- **Robust, evidence-based approach.** A quality assured process based on the principles in the World Federation of Medical Education Standards for Quality Improvement – Postgraduate Medical Education.

## What is Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP?

Recognition of Extended Skills is not a qualification or an award, but a quality-assured and endorsed process of recognising extended knowledge, skills, and experience.

At the point of Fellowship, a GP's core skills and knowledge have been documented in the [2022 RACGP curriculum and syllabus for Australian General Practice](#). Throughout their career, GPs continue to develop their skills in response to patient and community need and their own areas of focus and interest.

GPs applying for Recognition of Extended Skills will provide evidence of their extended skills in an area of subject matter expertise, at the level of the recognition standard.

## Am I eligible to apply for Recognition of Extended Skills?

Applicants must meet the following requirements before they can apply for a Recognition of Extended Skills:

- Be a current financial member in good standing with RACGP
- Have received their RACGP Fellowship at least five years before applying
- Have specialist registration in general practice with Ahpra
- Have no restrictions on their practice
- Have no current or pending investigations by Ahpra
- Practice as a GP in Australia.

## How to apply for Recognition of Extended Skills

Complete an online application through the RACGP Recognition of Extended Skills webpage and pay the application fee. In your application, you'll need to provide your personal details and qualifications.

### Application process

1. Log on to complete the online self-assessment checklist and eligibility criteria to check if you have the necessary skills/experience to apply.
2. Complete the application form.
3. Your application will be reviewed by administrative staff to check all necessary documentation is attached. If not, you'll receive an email to submit missing or correct documents within 14 days.
4. Your application will be sent to an assessment panel.
5. Your application will be assessed by an assessment panel who will review all evidence submitted against the extended skills outcomes, make appropriate commentary and provide any feedback.
6. Approximately six to eight weeks after your submission you will be notified of the outcome.

### Access the online application form

To begin your Recognition of Extended Skills, you'll need to provide your name, RACGP member number and Fellowship date.

Access the online application form on the RACGP Recognition of Extended Skills webpage. Once you begin your application, we recommend you complete it within six months.

### Pay the application fee

The current fee for a Recognition of Extended Skills is AU\$1350. You will need to pay the fee before you submit your application to the RACGP.

## The outcome of your application

We'll email your Recognition of Extended Skills outcome to you within six to eight weeks of you submitting your application.

There are two possible outcomes: you are successful or unsuccessful.

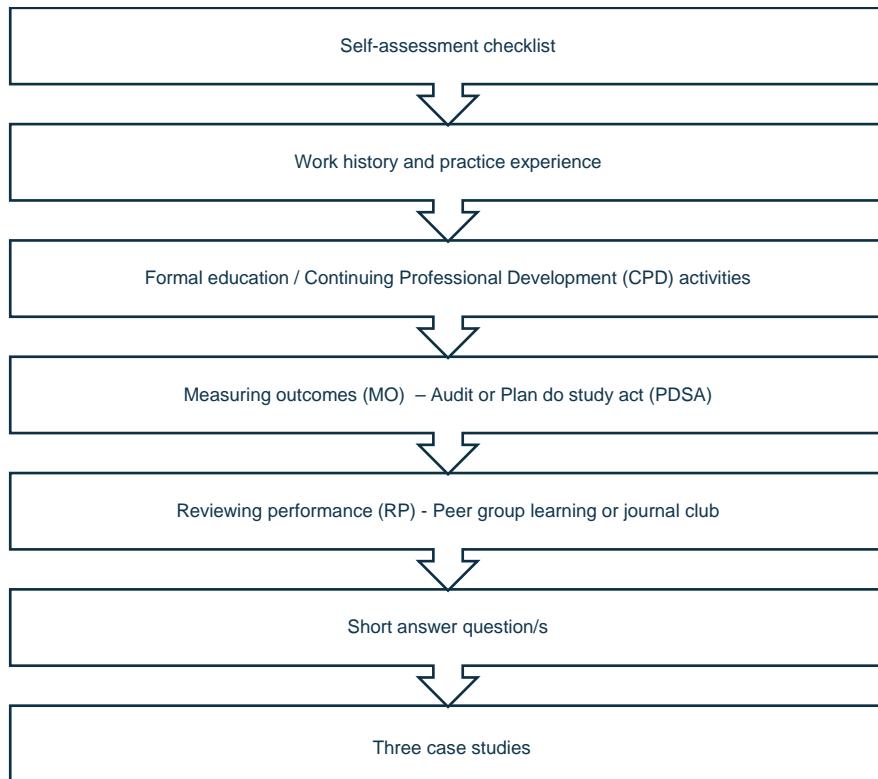
Your application will be assessed in line with the Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP Assessment Guide (add hyperlink).

A statement of RACGP Recognition of Extended Skills will be sent to you as both a physical and electronic copy, as well as a digital pack with logos and materials to use in your email signature and practice website.

If you disagree with the outcome of your Recognition of Extended Skills application, you can apply for reconsideration in accordance with the complaints and appeals policy (see below).

# Application form

The application form is divided into seven areas. The short answer question may not be required for all specific interest areas.



## Self-assessment checklist

You'll be required to complete a self-assessment against the extended skills outcomes for your chosen specific interest area. You'll rate your confidence about your ability to perform as a GP with an extended skill. We recommend you review your responses, identify any gaps and review your evidence to support your achievement of the extended skills in your application.

## Personal details

In this section you'll provide your personal details. We'll use this information to contact you throughout the Recognition of Extended Skills process.

- Provide your full name as printed on your official documents
- Your RACGP number
- Date of Fellowship

All information will be handled in accordance with the RACGP's [Privacy Policy](#).

## Work experience

Provide a summary of your work experience that relates to your areas of specific interest for Recognition of Extended Skills.

## Education activities

List relevant formal education such as qualifications or CPD activities you have undertaken in this area of specific interest.

## CPD activity type measuring outcomes

Demonstrate your participation in activities that use your work data to ensure quality results. Describe your audit or Plan do study act (PDSA) and how it met the extended skills outcomes. Audits should include a minimum of two cycles.

## CPD activity type reviewing performance

Reviewing performance activities require reflection on feedback about your work. They are particularly relevant to your professional and ethical role as a GP.

You will be asked to provide evidence of your participation in any one of the following and how it relates to the achievement of the extended skills outcomes:

- Peer group learning
- Evidence-based medicine journal club
- Random case analysis
- Supervision
- Research
- Other

For further information on CPD activity types please see the [RACGP CPD Home webpage](#).

## Short answer question

Some specific interest areas have included short answer question/s to provide evidence of specific extended skills outcomes. A word limit applies to your answer.

## Case studies

You will be asked to complete three case studies to demonstrate evidence of the extended skills outcomes. Please see Appendix 1 for further information.

## Other evidence

There is a section in the application form where you can choose to provide any additional information that you believe to be relevant to your application. You can also upload any documents that you would like the assessment panel to review.

## Applicant declaration

Complete the declaration form to confirm that the information you've provided in your application is true.

## Documents to upload with your application

Please upload digital copies of your relevant qualifications or education activities (a maximum of 10 documents).

## Evidence rationale

Every GP is unique. The portfolio of evidence that you submit will demonstrate evidence of your achievement of the extended skills outcomes in your specific interest area.

The activities that will be assessed for Recognition of Extended are relevant to your scope of practice and will also help fulfil your CPD requirements. It's likely you can find this information easily in your resumé or curriculum vitae and in your CPD records.

The short answer question/s and case studies allow you to write about your most interesting or challenging patient cases and demonstrate how you apply your extended skills in day-to-day practice.

## CPD approved activity

We recognise that the application may take some time, and on completion of your application you will be awarded eight CPD reviewing performance hours.



## Maintenance of skills

The RACGP requires all Fellows with Recognition of Extended Skills to participate in CPD which is relevant to their scope of practice.

GPs with Recognition of Extended Skills are required to complete a minimum of five hours every year of CPD (within the 50 hour Medical Board of Australia requirement) in any category (Educational Activities, Reviewing Performance, Measuring Outcomes) that relates to their area of extended skills. This requirement will begin in the next calendar year after a GP receives Recognition of Extended Skills.

To record this CPD please use the Specific Requirement form available on the MyCPD page of the RACGP website (log on to MyCPD, select Log, then select Specific requirement) to clearly record this CPD.

## Advise us of any changes to your medical registration

After you submit your Recognition of Extended Skills application you must inform the RACGP if there are any changes to your medical registration. This includes any restriction, condition, limitation, reprimand, supervision requirement, tribunal outcome, suspension, undertaking, investigation and/or other remark or regulatory authority activity, whether in Australia or overseas. If you don't inform us, you'll be investigated in line with the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

To advise us of changes to your medical registration, send an email to [education@racgp.org.au](mailto:education@racgp.org.au)

## Membership of RACGP

You must remain a member of the RACGP to retain your Recognition of Extended Skills.

## Become a member of the Recognition of extended skills assessment panel

From time to time, RACGP may seek additional qualified Fellows with Recognition of Extended Skills to become assessors within their specific interest area. If you'd like to express your interest in becoming part of the Recognition of Extended Skills assessment panel, please email [res.fracgp@racgp.org.au](mailto:res.fracgp@racgp.org.au).

## Withdrawal and refunds

### Withdrawing your application

If you wish to withdraw your Recognition of Extended Skills application before it has been sent to the assessment panel:

- Send an email to [res.fracgp@racgp.org.au](mailto:res.fracgp@racgp.org.au)
- An administration fee of \$350 applies and will be deducted from any refund.
- Please refer to the section 'Fees and refunds' for more information about when a refund may be payable if you withdraw your application.

## Fees and refunds

Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP fees apply and will be refunded according to the fee and refund schedule table.

### Fee and refund schedule

	Fee (AUD)	Refund (AUD)
<b>Application phase</b>		
Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP fee	\$1,350	
Change to submitted application ( <i>request must be received within 15 business days of submitting application</i> )	A non-refundable administration fee may apply	
Withdrawal of application ( <i>applicable only before an assessment panel has commenced the assessment process</i> )	\$350 (deducted from Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP fee - non-refundable)	\$1,000
Additional review by assessor/Censor-in-Chief ( <i>in cases involving complaints or appeals</i> )	\$400	

### **Special exemption to refund schedule**

Applications for a refund due to extenuating and/or unforeseen circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis. We take into consideration any costs already incurred by the RACGP when determining the refund amount.

To apply for a special exemption, complete a [special exemption application form](#) and send it to [res.fracgp@racgp.org.au](mailto:res.fracgp@racgp.org.au)

### **Payment of refunds**

The RACGP will pay any approved refund within 30 days of the withdrawal or special exemption request being granted. The RACGP reserves the right to refuse to process a refund if a person fails to provide information necessary to verify or process the refund.

## **Complaints and appeals**

An applicant on receiving notification of an unsuccessful outcome will be provided with feedback on the areas where they did not demonstrate the achievement of Recognition of Extended Skills.

If an applicant believes that the assessment process was not followed, they may submit a complaint in writing to the RACGP Specific Interests – Manager at [gpsi@racgp.org.au](mailto:gpsi@racgp.org.au)

If an applicant would like to appeal a decision made by the assessment panel, they may submit in writing a letter explaining their reasons for appeal to [gpsi@racgp.org.au](mailto:gpsi@racgp.org.au). At the discretion of the RACGP Specific Interests Manager, the application may be reviewed by an additional assessor/Censor-in-chief. There will be a \$400 fee associated with this appeal process to cover assessor time.

## Useful contacts

**Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency**

T: 1300 419 495 (in Australia); +61 3 9285 3010 (outside Australia)

W: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-Ahpra/Contact-Us.aspx>

**Australian Medical Council**

W: [www.amc.org.au/assessment/pathways/overview](http://www.amc.org.au/assessment/pathways/overview)

**Medical Board of Australia**

T: 1300 419 495 (in Australia); +61 3 9285 3010 (outside Australia)

W: [www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates.aspx](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates.aspx)

**RACGP Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP team**

E: [pfr@racgp.org.au](mailto:pfr@racgp.org.au)

## Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Applicant</b>	The medical practitioner applying for Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP.
<b>Business day</b>	A day when the RACGP national office is operating.
<b>Conflict of interest</b>	<p>A situation in which it is reasonable to conclude that an individual's or group of individuals' personal interests directly conflict with the best interests of the applicant or where individuals' actions may be influenced by their personal interests rather than education and training outcomes. A conflict of interest includes, but is not limited to, when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close personal friends or family members are involved,</li> <li>• an individual or their close friends or family members may make financial gain or gain some other form of advantage, and,</li> <li>• an individual is bound by prior agreements or allegiances to other individuals or agencies that require them to act in the interests of that person or agency or to take a particular position on an issue.</li> </ul>
<b>Extenuating and unforeseen circumstances</b>	Circumstances that are outside the applicant's control and can reasonably be considered to have been unforeseen and can be shown to have a direct and significant impact on the applicant. The RACGP considers extenuating and unforeseen circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
<b>Extenuating circumstances</b>	Circumstances the RACGP considers on a case-by-case basis, that are outside the applicant's control and that can be shown to have a direct and significant impact on the applicant's ability to sit an assessment and/or their performance in an assessment.
<b>Assessment panel</b>	Suitably qualified general practitioners, with the required training and skills with Recognition of Extended Skills for Fellows of the RACGP.

## Appendix 1: Case study guidance

The key headings in this template are provided to guide you in writing a case study. Extensive answers are not needed for every point – simple dot points of relevant information are adequate. Please note the focus is on your reflection of the case. The background history examination etc is used to support these reflections.

Ensure that the case is de-identified, this may include any information in the case that might make it possible to identify the patient.

### History

- What was the patient's presenting complaint?
- What were the key features of the history?
- Were there any risk factors to consider in this case?
- What was the patient's family, social and cultural background?
- What was the patient's and/or parent's or carer's agenda? (ie what do you think were their main concerns and wants?)
- What were your initial hypotheses and why?
- What were your differential diagnoses? What features support or do not support each diagnosis?
- Of these, what was the most likely diagnosis? Why?
- What were the important diagnoses (ie. conditions not to be missed)? Why?

### Examination

- What were the key features you looked for on examination and why? Include relevant positives and negatives.
- As a result of history and examination, what was your resultant principal diagnosis?
- What red flags were important in this consultation?
- What is the impact of this diagnosis on the patient?

Develop a problem list for this patient. Include the presenting complaint and any other issues that were important to consider for this patient (for example, there may be issues related to medication, social issues or preventative activities to consider).

### Management

- What investigations did you organise and why?
- What was the management plan? Include details about counselling and education provided, safety netting, follow-up and referral (if applicable).

Describe the basis for the management decisions:

- How did the patient's social and cultural background influence your management plan?

- Did you use any clinical guidelines? Or any other sources of assistance/ guidance?
- How does your management compare with the best practice guidelines for management of these symptoms and condition?
- Is the patient and/or parent or carer likely to comply with the management plan? If not, why not and what could you do to improve?
- Are there any preventative activities to consider for this patient?

**Reviews**

- Have you reviewed the patient since the initial consultation?
- If yes, what were the outcomes?
- If no, what was the reason?

**Final reflection**

- Were there any challenges you experienced in provision of care to this patient?

Include a consideration (where relevant) of:

- Ethical issues
- Communication issues - How did you ensure you communicated effectively with the patient and how did you know if communication was effective?
- Ensuring that shared decision making occurred
- Any medico-legal issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, mandatory reporting etc
- If you work in a rural or isolated area: How did working in a rural or isolated area impact this case and your management?
- If you do not work in a rural or isolated area: How would working in a rural or isolated area impact this case and the management?
- How might this case influence your practice in the future?

Reference the guidelines or other evidence used to support your decision making.