

# Pathways to practising in Australia

for International Medical Graduates



[www.acrrm.org.au](http://www.acrrm.org.au)

Australian College of  
Rural & Remote Medicine

WORLD LEADERS IN RURAL PRACTICE



# Pathways to practising medicine in rural and remote Australia — for International Medical Graduates (IMG)

General practice is the single largest medical specialty in Australia. The Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) is accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) to set and maintain the standards for the specialty of general practice in Australia. As the first College in the world dedicated to rural and remote practice we are world leaders in rural practice.

As a general practitioner, you are often the first contact point for patients requiring treatment for any medical condition. The specialty of general practice provides a unique opportunity for you to develop special relationships with your patients, their family and your community. This assists you to provide lifelong health care that improves patient's health outcomes.

Rural and remote general practitioners need to have a broader set of procedural and other skills, to allow them to work confidently in rural and remote communities. Where an urban general practitioner will readily refer cases to a specialist or tertiary hospital - a general practitioner in rural or remote communities is trained to take direct responsibility for all cases presented to them. This often means extending from primary to secondary and ongoing care.

Research indicates that rural and remote medicine is particularly attractive to doctors who enjoy a challenge and value their independence. What is also evident throughout rural Australia is a spirit of collegiality. Rural doctors readily exchange ideas with colleagues on particular cases and on rural and remote health issues generally. They also develop

strong bonds with their communities. Many emerge in leadership roles, becoming articulate advocates in local, regional, state and national forums.

## Pathways

The College offers the following AMC accredited pathways to registration:

- Specialist Pathway (leads to Fellowship of ACRRM and Specialist Registration)
- Standard Pathway (leads to Limited Registration), and
- ad eundum gradum.



## What does rural and remote mean?

Rural and remote Australia means different things to different people. For some, it's red dirt, dry and cracked riverbeds and the wonders of the outback. For others, it's white sandy beaches, blue waves to surf and incredible reefs to dive. Or perhaps it's lush tropical hinterlands, with the sounds of native fauna and the beauty of bush walks and waterfalls. For others still, it's snow-capped mountains, with trails to ski and crackling log fires. Australia's diversity means you can choose what rural and remote means to you.

## Working in Australia

To be eligible to work as a doctor in Australia you will need to become registered to practice in Australia and fulfil the requirements of one of the registration pathways.

The registration pathways are:

- Specialist Assessment Pathway (Comparability/Area of Need)
- Standard Pathway, and
- Competent Authority Pathway.

## Specialist Pathway

This is an AMC accredited pathway for doctors with recognised overseas qualifications which leads to Fellowship of ACRRM, Specialist Pathway and Vocational Recognition.

### Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for specialist assessment you must have:

- been awarded your specialist medical qualification from a training institution listed in the ACRRM's codified list of recognised qualifications, and
- satisfied all the training and examination requirements to practise in your field of speciality in your country of training.

### Application for specialist assessment

Applicants must apply to the AMC for Primary Source Verification. The forms can be found on the AMC website at [www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms](http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms).

Applicants then apply to the College for assessment under the Specialist Pathway. Application forms are available on our website at [www.acrrm.org.au/specialist-pathway-for-general-practice](http://www.acrrm.org.au/specialist-pathway-for-general-practice).

### ACRRM assessment

The College will assess your training and experience for comparability with the training and experience of an ACRRM Fellow.

Initially the College will conduct a paper based assessment for eligibility. Eligible applicants will proceed to an interview. The outcome of the interview is communicated to the applicant and also advised to the AMC.

Successful applicants will be assessed as "substantially comparable" or "partially comparable".

Successful applicants then join the College and are provided with a learning plan for the period of peer review.

## Ad eundum gradum Fellowship

Ad eundum gradum is a pathway to Fellowship of ACRRM, for holders of the Fellowship of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (FRNZCGP) and for holders of the Certificate in Family Practice from the College of Family Physicians Canada awarded post 1992 (CCFP).

This pathway allows experienced general practitioners from New Zealand and family physicians from Canada to work in Australia as recognised specialists without unnecessary assessment or examination.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for ad eundum gradum with the College you must:

- be in good standing as a certificant Fellow of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners, or a certificant member of the College of Family Physicians Canada
- have documented evidence of experience and or training in the scope of practice for rural medicine

- be seeking to practice in Australia
- be currently compliant with the continuing professional development requirements of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners or the College of Family Physicians Canada, and
- (for Canadians only) have completed two years of post-graduate training in family medicine accredited by the College of Family Physicians Canada.

### Application for ad eundum gradum assessment

Applicants must apply to the AMC for Primary Source Verification. This can be done concurrently with the application to ACRRM for assessment under ad eundum gradum. You will be required to supply ACRRM with the EICS number from your Primary Source Verification. The forms for Primary Source Verification can be found on the AMC website at [www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms](http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms). Application forms for ad eundum gradum are available on our website at [www.acrrm.org.au/ad-eundum-gradum](http://www.acrrm.org.au/ad-eundum-gradum).



## Learning plans and peer review

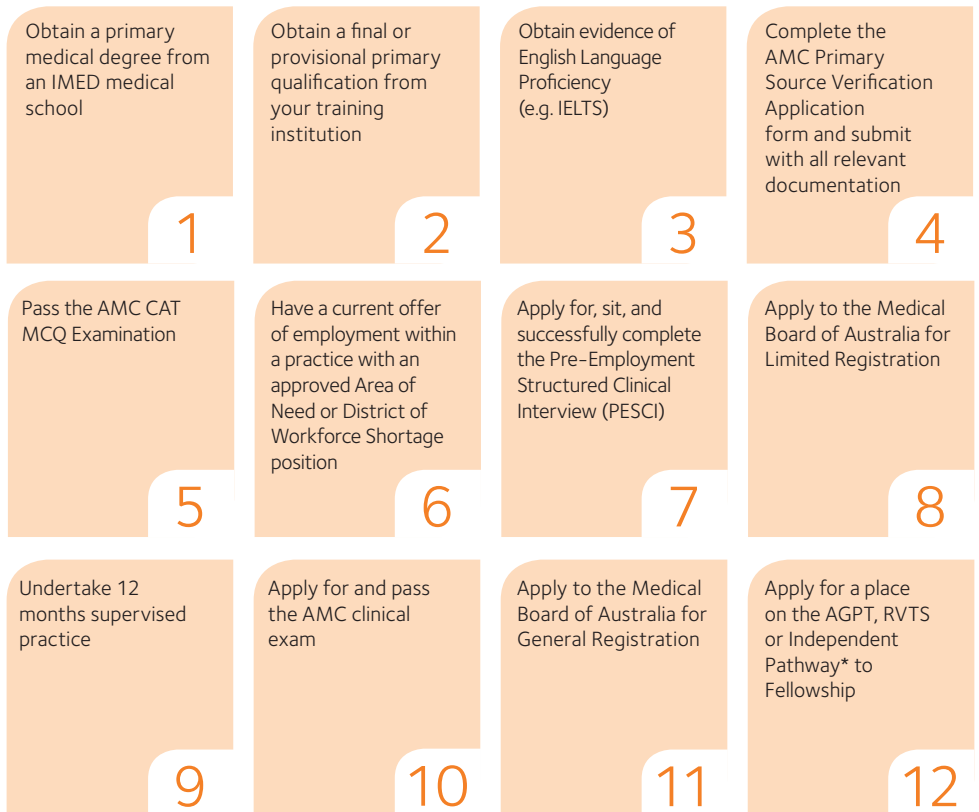
Learning plans are individually tailored for each applicant.

The applicant will be required to work in supervised general practice for 12–24 months and undertake specified training and assessments. Upon successful completion of all components of the learning plan the applicant is recommended for Fellowship of ACRRM (FACRRM).

## Standard Pathway

### Steps to registration and Fellowship

#### Eligibility and application for the Standard Pathway (with Limited Registration)



\*Applicants may apply for a place on the Independent Pathway to Fellowship once they have completed their 12 months of supervised practise. General Registration is a requirement for the AGPT and RVTS pathways to Fellowship.



The Standard Pathway is for non-specialist IMGs seeking registration.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for assessment under the Standard Pathway, you must have:

- a primary medical degree from a medical school listed in the International Medical Education Directory (IMED) on the FAIMER website
- been issued with a final or provisional primary qualification by your training institution
- evidence of English Language Proficiency (e.g. IELTS), and
- passed the AMC CAT MCQ Examination.

### Application for assessment

Application for the Standard Pathway is initially made to the AMC by completing the AMC Standard Pathway Application form and submitting all relevant supporting documentation. The form can be found at [www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms](http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms).

## Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interviews (PESCI)

ACRRM is an innovator in the assessment and support of IMGs. The College is the only organisation in Australia accredited to offer PESCI in each state and territory.

Every IMG applying for registration via the Standard Pathway in Australia is required to attend.

The PESCI is a mandatory prerequisite for IMGs seeking registration in Australia to practise in any of the following roles:

- general practice
- all non-specialist positions in private hospital facilities
- senior medical officers
- medical officers (with or without right of private practice), or
- medical superintendents (with or without right of private practice).

Please note: a PESCI is position specific. Therefore, a PESCI is not transferrable to another position.

Currently applicants can have a face-to-face interview in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria or alternatively an interview can be conducted via video conference.

NB: Doctors on the Competent Authority Pathway applying for Provisional Registration to work in general practice and in some hospital positions will be required to undertake a PESCI. Please refer to the AHPRA website for further information regarding PESCI requirements [www.ahpra.gov.au/](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/).

### Eligibility

To be eligible to sit for a PESCI the applicant must be eligible to apply for Limited Registration under the Standard Pathway and have a current offer of employment within a practice with an approved Area of Need or District of Workforce Shortage position.

### Application for assessment

An application form can be downloaded from or completed online on the ACRRM website.

You will also need to:

- provide a comprehensive resumé, a copy of your passport and a signed declaration, and
- complete an ACRRM format position description for which registration is being sought (see the ACRRM website for the forms) [www.acrrm.org.au/pesci](http://www.acrrm.org.au/pesci).





### The interview

The PESCI is a 'fitness for task' interview lasting up to 90 minutes. The interview questions are scenario based, and assess your skills, knowledge and experience for the position for which you are seeking registration.

In preparing for your interview, the panel will review the requirements of the position and select four scenarios relevant to the position which they will use in the assessment.

You should note the main priority of the panel is to ensure your experience, skills and knowledge are appropriate for the position and clinical environment you have applied for including the level of supervision.

### Assessment and outcome

Your performance at the interview is assessed and a full report is compiled by the panel. This report which includes a recommendation in regard to your suitability for the position is forwarded to AHPRA and forms part of the information they consider when deciding your registration. A summary report is provided to the applicant.

The applicant can apply to the Medical Board of Australia for Limited Registration at any stage throughout the process. However it is preferred an application be lodged with AHPRA before the PESCI is undertaken.

### Limited Registration

Limited Registration allows you to work toward achieving General Registration by undertaking the AMC clinical examination or Workplace-based Assessment to obtain your AMC certificate or Specialist Registration in general practice via Fellowship.

With Limited Registration you may be eligible to train for Fellowship of ACRRM through the Independent Pathway (IP).

### General Registration and Fellowship

With General Registration you are eligible to train for Fellowship of ACRRM via the Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) pathway, the Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS) or the Independent Pathway (IP).



## Retaining Limited Registration

AHPRA will consider renewal of Limited Registration for IMGs up to three times. Within this four year period IMGs must progress to either General Registration through successfully completing the AMC clinical examination or Specialist Registration by completing Fellowship such as FACRRM. Details can be found on the AHPRA website [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

## Fellowship of ACRRM

Once you have successfully completed your assessment through the Standard Pathway, have gained Limited Registration and completed 12 months practise in Australia you may be eligible to train for a Fellowship of ACRRM (FACRRM).

The College is the first in the world dedicated to rural and remote practise, which requires an extended range of specialist skills. Training for FACRRM takes four years and includes at least one advanced specialised discipline, such as Anaesthetics, Obstetrics, Emergency Medicine, Surgery, or Population Health.

The four-year training program would typically include:

- Core Clinical Training (one year)
- Primary Rural and Remote Training (two years), and
- Advanced Specialised Training (one year).

There are three training pathways to Fellowship of ACRRM. Places in two are funded by the Commonwealth Government (AGPT and RVTS) and requires General Registration. The third, the College's Independent Pathway may be undertaken with Limited Registration. It is a full-fee pathway suited to experienced doctors.

Training time for experienced doctors can be reduced through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where previous experience is assessed and deemed comparable to FACRRM training requirements.

For more information on training toward Fellowship of ACRRM, visit our website at [www.acrrm.org.au/training-towards-fellowship](http://www.acrrm.org.au/training-towards-fellowship) or talk to a member of our Vocational Training team.



## Competent Authority Pathway

The Competent Authority Pathway is administered by AHPRA and is open to IMGs from the UK, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand and the USA. Once you have had your Primary Source Verification approved, you can apply to the Medical Board of Australia for Provisional Registration.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for assessment under the Competent Authority Pathway, you must have:

- a primary medical degree from a medical school listed in the International Medical Education Directory (IMED) on the FAIMER website
- completed training or assessment with a Medical Board of Australia approved competent authority, and
- secured an offer of employment.

### Application for assessment

Application for the Competent Authority Pathway is made to AHPRA by completing the Competent Authority Pathway application form and submitting all relevant supporting documentation. The form can be found at [www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms](http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/ass/forms).

### Provisional Registration

With Provisional Registration you are eligible to apply to the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine for a place on the Independent Pathway to Fellowship. You may apply to the College once you have completed 12 months supervised practise.

Provisional Registration is valid for 12 months.

Visit the Medical Board of Australia website for further information: [www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates/Competent-Authority-Pathway.aspx](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates/Competent-Authority-Pathway.aspx).



## Eligibility and application for the Competent Authority Pathway (with Provisional Registration)

Suitable for graduates from the UK, Ireland, NZ, Canada and USA

Obtain a primary medical degree from an IMED medical school

1

Obtain a final or provisional primary qualification from your training institution

2

Complete the AMC Primary Source Verification Application form and submit with all relevant documentation

3

Have a current offer of employment within a practice

4

Apply to the Medical Board of Australia for Provisional Registration documentation

5

Apply for, sit, and successfully complete the Pre-Employment Structured Clinical Interview>(\*if applicable)

6

Undertake 12 months supervised practice

7

Apply to the Medical Board of Australia for General Registration

8

Apply for a place on the AGPT, RVTS or Independent Pathway\* to Fellowship

9

\*Applicants may concurrently apply for General Registration and a place on the Independent Pathway to Fellowship. General Registration is a requirement to apply for the AGPT and RVTS pathways to Fellowship



## IMG associate membership

Are you currently an International Medical Graduate (IMG) seeking to work in Australia?  
Would you like to learn more about practising medicine in rural and remote Australia?  
Do you want access to learning tools and educational resources where you live?

Then join the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine as an IMG associate member. As an associate member, you will become part of a collaborative network of practitioners who share your dedication to quality medical care.

No matter where you are in the world, by joining the College you will gain access to multiple training tools and resources that will contribute towards expanding your knowledge and confidence to practising medicine in rural and remote Australia.

### Complete the online membership form. It's simple!

The College focuses on engaging with members, we will strive to provide quality support and education to assist you in the continued development of your professional career.

#### Membership benefits include

- Educational events, courses and conferences, at discounted member rates
- Access to the College's online learning platform RRME0
- Education modules and case studies
- Discussion boards
- Clinical Guidelines a unique mobile-enabled support tool
- Access to virtual study groups and workshops
- Professional Development Program where you can record all your educational activities

To become an associate member of the College, contact us today.

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