



# Assessment of International Medical Graduates

Guideline Domain:	Education
Guideline Area:	IMG Assessment
Policy Author:	IMG Committee
Contact:	Education Manager
Version:	3.00
Approval Details:	Board of Directors
Effective Date:	May 2013
Review Date:	August 2013
Related Policies/Regulations	Post Training Candidate Policy

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide international medical graduates (IMGs) an opportunity for the assessment of their qualifications and experience, where their dermatology training was undertaken in a country other than Australia, for the purpose of practicing dermatology in Australia.

## SCOPE

This policy defines the process for assessing the ability of international medical graduates to practice independently as specialist dermatologists in Australia by comparing against the expected standards of Fellows of the Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD).

This policy applies to any international medical graduate who has gained their specialist dermatological qualification in a country other than Australia. Any international medical graduate seeking Fellowship of the Australasian College of Dermatologists will be assessed in accordance with this policy.

## DEFINITIONS/KEY WORDS/ABBREVIATIONS

**International medical graduate (IMG)** means specialists who have gained their dermatological qualification from any country other than Australia.

**Specialist Recognition** means full specialist registration in Australia.

**Area of Need** refers to a specific employment opportunity for an IMG, which is generally located in a rural/regional area in Australia.

**The Applicant** is an IMG undertaking assessment under the specialist recognition and/or Area of Need assessment pathways.

**IMG Upskilling Position** is a dedicated specialist training position for IMGs assessed by The College IMG Assessment Committee as partially comparable to an Australian-trained dermatologist.

**The College** means the Australasian College of Dermatologists

**BoD** refers to the Board of Directors of the Australasian College of Dermatologists

**AMC** refers to the Australian Medical Council

## **POLICY**

### **1. Eligibility to Apply**

- 1.1 IMGs with formal postgraduate specialist qualifications may apply through the Australian Medical Council (AMC) for assessment of their qualifications. The AMC will verify the applicant's qualifications. If verified the applicant will then be referred to The College for specialist dermatology assessment subject to the provisions of this policy.

### **2. Assessment Process**

- 2.1 The IMG assessment process examines the candidates quality of training, duration of training, scope of clinical experience, type of formal assessment including specialist examinations in dermatology, recency of practice as well as relevant professional skills and attributes in order to determine comparability with the expected standards of Fellows of the Australasian College of Dermatologists.
- 2.2 The College considers applications received under the following categories:
  - a. Specialist Recognition assessment pathway: IMGs who wish to practice as an independent specialist
  - b. Area of Need assessment pathway: IMGs who wish to work in a position designated as an Area of Need (AoN).
- 2.3 The documentation required to commence a specialist assessment is obtained from the AMC (except those with FRACP – See 1.2). Applications for assessment will be activated from the date all requested documentation and payment of the assessment fee is received by the College.
- 2.4 Applicants must complete The College online application form, which will be considered by the IMG Assessment Committee as part of the initial assessment process. Applicants must also complete The College Privacy and the Assessment Process form, which follows The College's Privacy Policy.
- 2.5 The specialist recognition assessment process consists of a document-based assessment and may include a structured interview, which is conducted face-to-face or via videoconference. The interview is only available to IMGs who are deemed either partially comparable or substantially comparable from the document based assessment, or for whom more information is required to complete the assessment of comparability.

The interview is conducted by the IMG Assessment Committee. The composition of the IMG Assessment Committee is as follows:

  - Chair (who is also a member of the BoD)
  - The Chief Examiner or a member of the National Examinations Committee as nominated by the Chief Examiner
  - A member of the College's educational staff

- A College Fellow with a minimum of ten years standing
- A College Fellow with five or fewer years standing
- An overseas trained Fellow who has undergone the College's assessment process
- A representative of the health jurisdictions
- A representative of the public interest

2.6 The Area of Need assessment should normally be completed within eight weeks from the activation date and specialist recognition assessment within 12 weeks of the activation date.

### 3. Assessment Standards

- 3.1 Assessment under the specialist recognition assessment pathway focuses on qualifications and clinical experience in order to determine comparability with a dermatologist who has trained in Australia. The College's IMG Assessment Committee will compare the applicant's training and experience to that of an Australian-trained dermatologist using The College Training Program Curriculum.
- 3.2 An Area of Need assessment focuses on the applicant's qualifications and clinical experience in dermatology in order to determine comparability with a dermatologist who has trained in Australia with regard to the defined scope of practice. The level of experience of the IMG is assessed against a specified set of criteria derived from the requirements stated in the position description for the AoN position.
- 3.3 The College undertakes concurrent assessment for Specialist Recognition for AoN applicants (Dual Assessment Pathway), i.e. applicants for an AoN position are assessed simultaneously for their suitability to fill a specific AoN position and also to practice as a specialist outside the requirements of the AoN position.

### 4. Assessment Outcomes: Specialist Recognition Assessment Pathway

- 4.1 **Not comparable:** Applicant is assessed as being unable to achieve substantial comparability within a maximum period of two years full-time training. Assessment process complete.
- 4.2 **Partially comparable:** Applicant is assessed as requiring a maximum of two years further training and/or assessment in order to be eligible for specialist recognition as a dermatologist in Australia. An IMG assessed as partially comparable will be required to undertake a specified period of additional training and/or assessments. The period of additional training and nature of the assessments will be determined by the IMG Assessment Committee on a case-by-case basis.

#### *Undertaking Additional Training*

There are two options available to IMGs who are assessed as requiring additional training:

4.2.1. The applicant may apply for a College-advertised IMG upskilling position. Applicants should note that these positions are limited and an assessment outcome of partially comparable does not guarantee placement into an IMG upskilling position.

4.2.2 The applicant may apply for selection into an accredited training position in The College's training program. More information can be found on The College website..

- 4.3 **Substantially comparable:** Applicant is eligible for specialist recognition as a dermatologist in Australia. An IMG assessed as substantially comparable will be recommended to undertake twelve months participation in The College's Continuing Professional Development Program as well as mentoring by a College Fellow, at the end of which time the mentor will submit a report to The College Board of Directors as to the suitability of the individual for election to College Fellowship.

## 5. **Assessment Outcomes: Area of Need Assessment Pathway**

- 5.1 **Not Fit for Task:** Applicant is assessed as being not suitable to practise in the Area of Need position applied for. Assessment process complete. Applicants under this category are deemed Not Comparable under the specialist recognition assessment pathway (See 3.3 Dual Assessment Pathway).
- 5.2 **Fit for Task and Partially Comparable:** Applicant is assessed as suitable to practise in the Area of Need position applied for, within the confines of the position description. However, the applicant requires a period of further training (either 3 or 6 months) and/or assessment in order to be eligible for specialist recognition as a dermatologist in Australia (i.e. eligible to practise independently as a dermatologist after satisfying the contract of the AoN position). An IMG assessed as partially comparable will be required to undertake a specified period of additional training and/or assessments. The period of additional training and nature of the assessments will be determined by the IMG Assessment Committee on a case-by-case basis.
- Undertaking Additional Training*
- The employer works with the College and local ACD Fellows to create an accredited IMG upskilling position suitable for the applicant's training and/or assessment requirements.
- 5.3 **Fit for Task and Substantially Comparable:** Applicant is assessed as suitable to practise in the Area of Need position applied for, within the confines of the position description. In addition, the applicant is eligible for specialist recognition as a dermatologist in Australia (i.e. eligible to practise independently as a dermatologist after satisfying the contract of the AoN position).

## 6. **Notification of the Assessment Outcome**

- 6.1 Notification of the assessment outcome will be sent to the AMC, who will in turn notify the applicant. The recommendation will include specific training and/or assessment requirements for those applicants who have been assessed as partially comparable.
- 6.2 The AMC request that the IMG notify in writing whether they intend to complete the College's requirements for specialist recognition (where the IMG is not found to be substantially comparable).

## 7. **Validity of Assessment/Validity Period**

- 7.1 The assessment by The College of an IMG is valid for a period of five years from the date of completion of assessment (applicants should refer to AMC

Report 1 or Combined Area of Need/Specialist Assessment Report). If an IMG has not commenced the prescribed period of upskilling by this date, re-assessment will be required.

- 7.2 IMGs who have been assessed as partially comparable and who occupy accredited training positions are not entitled to more than 24 months of supervised clinical training. IMGs who do not satisfy all prescribed training and/or assessment requirements within 24 months are no longer eligible to remain in an accredited training position and are not entitled to any further accredited training.
- 7.3 IMGs who are assessed as having to satisfy the requirements of The College Fellowship examination are entitled to sit the Fellowship examination in their second year of training. If the IMG fails the Fellowship examination in the second year of training, they are entitled to a further three attempts, but must have passed the Fellowship examination within five years of commencement of training. If the IMG is unable to satisfy the requirements of the Fellowship examination after the final valid attempt, they must retrain (start training again) and would be required to compete with other IMGs assessed as partially comparable for a training position.

## **8. Subsequent Assessments**

- 8.1 An IMG who has previously been assessed by The College as partially comparable may apply for a subsequent assessment (re-assessment) if the period of validity of the original assessment has expired.

## **9. Fees**

- 9.1 An assessment fee is payable prior to the commencement of initial assessment and prior to interview assessment (where interview is required) for specialist assessment, for both applicants who apply under the specialist recognition and Area of Need pathways.
- 9.2 An assessment fee is payable where onsite visits and assessments are required as part of the Area of Need assessment pathway.
- 9.3 A fee is payable for participation in The College's Continuing Professional Development Program for IMGs who are assessed as substantially comparable and apply for Fellowship of the Australasian College of Dermatologists.
- 9.4 A fee is payable for applications for assessment of Specified Training Positions (see [www.dermcoll.asn.au](http://www.dermcoll.asn.au)).

*Note: Fees are determined annually in May by The College Board of Directors. Fee information is published on The College website: [www.dermcoll.asn.au](http://www.dermcoll.asn.au).*

## **10. Educational Support**

- 10.1 An IMG who has undergone an assessment for specialist recognition and who is found to be partially comparable will have equal access to all educational opportunities that are currently offered to Australian trainees, including preparing for the Fellowship Examination.
- 10.2 Additional training and support is offered to the supervisors of IMGs undertaking training.

## **11. Appeals**

- 11.1 Decisions relating to the assessment of IMGs by The College may be reviewed or appealed in accordance with The College's Appeals Policy, which can be viewed on the College website:

<http://www.dermcoll.asn.au/public/publications.asp#ACDA>