Recognition of Prior Learning

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<th>Education</th>
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<td>all candidates</td>
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<td>Policy Author:</td>
<td>National Education Committee</td>
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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide candidates in any program run by the Australasian College of Dermatologists with the opportunity to have prior learning considered for recognition towards the requirements of the program in which they are enrolled, whilst ensuring that academic rigour is appropriately maintained.

**SCOPE**

This policy covers all candidates in all courses run by the ACD. If the applicant demonstrates that they have achieved the learning outcomes/performance competencies they will be granted recognition for the components of the relevant training program that provide education, training and/or assessment in those learning outcomes/performance competencies.

**DEFINITIONS/KEY WORDS/ABBREVIATIONS**

Candidate refers to anyone who is enrolled in a program or course run by the Australasian College of Dermatologists and has paid fees where applicable.

A trainee is a person who has been selected to the ACD Training Program, who is occupying one of the ACD’s accredited training positions, who has signed the ACD Trainee Agreement and made all required payments.

*International Medical Graduate* refers to a doctor who is registered as a specialist dermatologist in a country other than Australia, and who has been assessed for specialist recognition by the ACD IMG Assessment Committee on behalf of the Australian Medical Council.
Mohs refers to the Mohs program and/or anyone undertaking that sub-specialty
FACD/PhD refers to anyone who is enrolled in a joint FACD/PhD program
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an assessment process undertaken to determine whether an individual doctor’s performance meets the learning outcomes of a training program offered by the College.
RPL Assessment is the process of collecting evidence and making judgments on the nature and extent of progress towards the performance requirements set out in the relevant training program for the course in which the candidate is enrolled and making the judgment as to whether competency or equivalency has been achieved.
The ACD curriculum refers to the curriculum which underpins the ACD Training Program.

**POLICY**

1. **Eligibility**
   
   1.1 Applicants must be candidates enrolled in a program or course run by the Australasian College of Dermatologists and have paid fees where applicable.
   
   1.2 The policy applies to candidates with Australian qualifications.
   
   1.3 Applications for RPL must be received within six months of entry into a program of two to four years duration, and within three months of entry into a program of less than two years duration.
   
   1.4 Prior education and training for which recognition is sought must have been completed not more than five years prior to the commencement of training. This requirement may be waived if the applicant has recent clinical experience practicing as a specialist dermatologist.
   
   1.5 Prior research must have been completed not more than three years prior to the commencement of training.
   
   1.6 International Medical Graduates are not eligible for further RPL as they have already been assessed via the IMG Assessment Committee.

2. **Applying for RPL Assessment**

   2.1 Applications should be made in writing to the Hon Sec by 1 July of the year of commencement in the Dermatology Training Program, and within one month of commencement in any other program, on the prescribed form and must be accompanied by a detailed curriculum vitae, and a certified copy of primary medical degree and other relevant certificates/diplomas as well as other supporting documentary evidence. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all relevant documentation. Refer to sections 3, 4 & 5 for the specific documentation required to support applications for RPL. It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate the comparability of the prior experience to the College training or requirement from which they are seeking exemption. Applications on incorrect forms or not supported by documentary evidence will be returned to the applicants for re-submission.

   2.2 To be processed, the prescribed fee, as determined by the Board of Directors, must accompany applications.
2.3 The National Training Committee, the National Examinations Committee, the Mohs Committee, and the RTO as appropriate, will consider applications. All applications will be referred on to the National Education Committee.

2.4 In assessing applications, the relevant Committee will assess the comparability of the prior experience to the nominated components of the relevant College curriculum in terms of learning outcomes and performance criteria, and assessment.

2.5 Each application is considered on a case-by-case basis, and the outcome will depend on a number of variables including the scope of the application and the nature and amount of evidence provided by the applicant.

3. **RPL for Clinical Training and Education**

3.1 Only clinical training and education in dermatology which was completed after two years of general medical and/or surgical training will be considered for RPL. Experience acquired during an applicant’s intern period will not be considered.

3.2 Previous clinical training and education may be considered for RPL, provided the experience was:

- Undertaken as part of a structured specialist dermatology training program, accredited by a recognised specialist medical college or similar body which is based on a detailed curriculum, and involved competitive entry.
- The curriculum of clinical training undertaken must have been comparable to the ACD curriculum in terms of the fundamentals of clinical practice, procedural dermatology and professional qualities, as well as specialised content modules.
- Undertaken for a continuous period of three months or more and supervised by an appropriately qualified consultant.
- Supported by a detailed, verified logbook of clinical experiences maintained by the applicant.
- Supported by a log of educational experiences undertaken by the applicant.
- Assessed by regular formative and summative assessments of performance, conducted by suitably qualified supervisors or assessors.

3.3 The verified logbook of clinical experiences, the log of educational experiences and copies of formative and summative assessments must accompany the application form.

3.4 The applicant must demonstrate the comparability of their prior experience to the nominated components of the relevant College curriculum in terms of learning outcomes and performance criteria, and assessment.

3.5 The names, positions and contact details of two referees who have worked with the applicant and can confirm and discuss the applicant’s claims must be provided.

3.6 A maximum of 6 months of training time will be granted to an applicant applying for RPL for clinical training and education experience within the Dermatology Training Program.
3.7 A decision on an application for RPL of clinical training and education experience may be deferred until the end of the first year of training to enable adequate formative assessments to confirm the claimed level of competency of the applicant.

3.8 RPL granted for clinical training and education experience may lead to an overall reduction in the duration of the training program for the applicant. However, the applicant must complete all other requirements of the training program (unless an application is made and granted for other specific requirements).

4. **RPL for Research Requirements**

4.1 RPL for research publication requirements of the Dermatology Training Program may be considered provided that:
   - The applicant is the principal author of a quality/major publication, and the first author for any other papers.
   - The paper represents either original research or is a review article of a major topic in dermatology; a case series with a full literature review or equivalent.
   - The research is of a dermatological nature
     - The publication of the research paper is in an acceptable journal, as defined by College

4.2 The application must be accompanied by a copy of the letter of acceptance from the journal in which the paper will be published, or a copy of the published paper.

4.3 The Trainee must indicate if the paper is to be assessed as a quality/major paper or a minor paper.

4.4 If it is assessed as a quality/major paper and found lacking it may be considered for RPL of a minor paper.

4.5 Providing all other rules are met, the Trainee may submit three previous papers for consideration as fulfilling the requirements of minor papers.

4.6 The Trainee may only make one submission for a quality/major paper, and one group of three papers for minor publications.

4.7 All papers, whether for quality/major publication or minor publication must have been commenced no longer than three years before the date of application for RPL.

4.8 All applications must be received by the College by 1 July of the first year of training (full-time or part-time).

5. **RPL for Assessments in the Dermatology Training Program**

5.1 RPL will not be granted for the Fellowship Examination.

5.2 RPL for the Clinical Sciences Examination and/or Pharmacology Examination may be considered provided that the application is accompanied by:
   - A copy of completion certificate or official transcript, certified by the examining body and displaying the applicant’s name and completion date.
• Documentation detailing the format and structure of the examination, i.e. type and number of questions etc. and how it correlates to the format and structure of the Clinical Sciences or Pharmacology Examination.

• Details of the specific knowledge and competencies of the examining body’s curriculum that the examination assessed at the time the examination was undertaken, and how they correlate to the knowledge and competencies assessed by the Clinical Sciences or Pharmacology Examination link to this information.

6. RPL for Mohs

6.1 RPL up to a maximum of six months may be granted if the candidate presents:

• Verification of membership of the American College of Mohs Micrographic Surgery

• A logbook of surgical experience

7. RPL for FACD/PhD

7.1 RPL may be granted if the candidate presents:

• A verified logbook of clinical activities

• Evidence of two publications in a peer reviewed journal

• Evidence of two presentations to recognised conferences

7.2 RPL for Clinical Training and Education – conditions for RPL in this area are the same as for FACD candidates – see item 3 above.

7.3 RPL for Research Requirements – conditions for RPL in this area are the same as for FACD candidates – see item 4 above.

8. Decisions

8.1 Applicants will be notified of the decision, in writing, within 60 days of the application. Possible decisions include that the application is approved, unsuccessful or that the decision is pending further information provided by formative assessments completed during the first year of training.

8.2 Where the relevant Committee decides that the applicant’s prior experience is not comparable to the relevant component of the ACD training program, the reasons the application was unsuccessful will be detailed in a letter to the applicant.

8.3 Where the relevant Committee approves the application for RPL, the applicant will be notified in writing. ‘Recognition of Prior Learning’ and the notification letter date should be recorded in the relevant section of the Trainee’s portfolio.

9. Using the time granted under RPL

9.1 Candidates who are credited with time (e.g. 3 or 6 months) must consult with their SoT and DoT regarding the best time to take it. Candidates should not assume that they can use this time when they wish to do so.
9.2 No candidate is permitted to take any time in their final year of training.
9.3 Candidates in training programs other than the Dermatology Training Program must consult with their SoT and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

10. Appeals
10.1 An applicant may appeal the decision through the ACD appeals process, available on the College ePortal.