



## **POLICY ON RE-ENTRY TO PRACTICE FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF ABSENCE**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The objective of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM/the College) is to pursue excellence in the delivery of emergency medicine health care. The College recognises that emergency physicians returning to the workforce after a period of absence may face challenges, such as: identifying changes in literature and practice which have taken place during their absence; updating their knowledge and skills; and adopting new technologies and treatments into their practice.

The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the requirements and recommendations for emergency physicians returning to clinical practice after a period of absence. They are intended to function and align with relevant documents of the Medical Board of Australia (MBA)<sup>1</sup> and the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ)<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

**Authority** means either the Medical Board of Australia or the Medical Council of New Zealand, as appropriate to the jurisdiction in which the Fellow is practising or intends to practice.

<sup>1</sup> Medical Board of Australia, *Registration Standard: Recency of Practice*, 1/10/2016

<sup>2</sup> Medical Council of New Zealand, *Policy on Doctors returning to Medical Practice after an absence from practice for three or more Years*, June 2004.

**Continuing Professional Development** is the means by which Fellows maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence and develop the personal and professional qualities throughout their professional lives (*Medical Board of Australia*).

**Fellow**, in this policy, includes any former Fellow whose membership automatically terminated pursuant to clause 4.2 of the ACEM Constitution or was terminated by the Board pursuant to clause 4.3 of the ACEM Constitution.

**Period of absence** is the period of time during which a Fellow has not undertaken clinical practice in emergency medicine.

**Retired Fellow** has the same meaning as that given in ACEM Regulation A1 (Categories of Membership), subregulation A1.3 (Retired Fellows).

## 2.1 Abbreviations used in these guidelines

ACEM	Australasian College for Emergency Medicine
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
MBA	Medical Board of Australia
MCNZ	Medical Council of New Zealand

## 3. RE-ENTRY TO PRACTICE PROGRAM

In both Australia and New Zealand, the requirements for re-entry to clinical practice are predicated on the amount of clinical experience the Fellow has had prior to returning to practice and the duration of their absence from clinical practice (recency of practice).

### 3.1 Recency of practice

Return to clinical practice requirements in Australia and New Zealand vary according to the duration of the Fellow's absence from clinical practice (as indicated in figure 1 below).

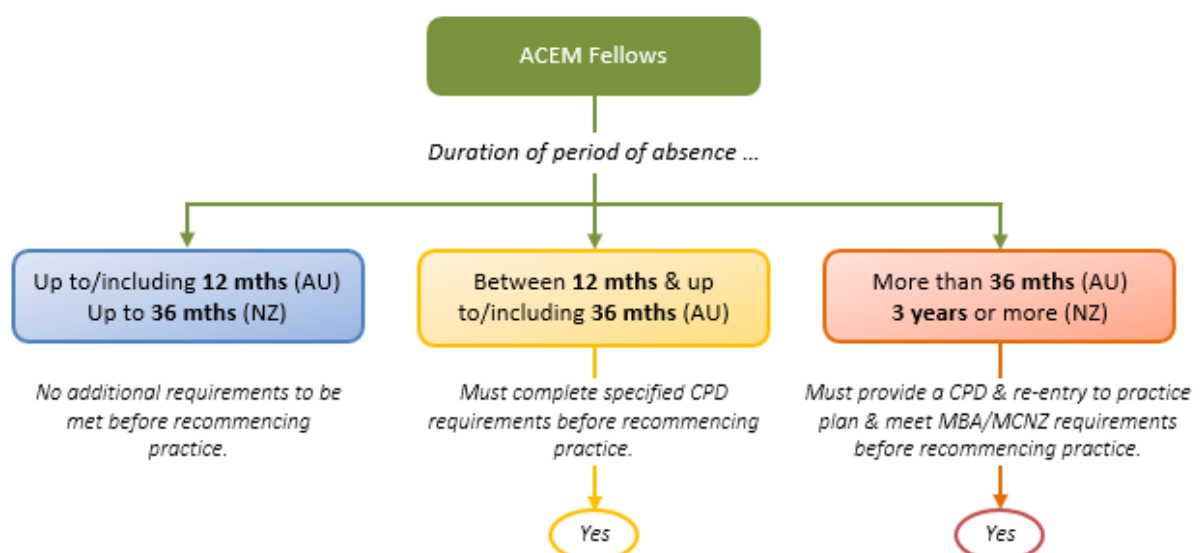


Figure 1 – Recency of practice requirements

### 3.2 ACEM Notification Requirements

Fellows resuming practice following a period of absence are required to notify the College in writing of:

- the period of time they have been absent from practice, and
- the date practice is to be recommenced.

In addition, they are required to meet the applicable re-entry requirements and to provide to the College such documentation as may be required by ACEM in association with those [requirements](#).

**Note:** The above notification requirements do not apply to:

- Retired Fellows and suspended Fellows seeking reinstatement to active Fellowship, and
- Former Fellows seeking readmission to College membership as a FACEM.

Applications from such persons are made directly to the Board in accordance with ACEM Regulation A3 – Reinstatement to Membership/Active Fellowship. Pursuant to this regulation, such applicants may be referred by the Board to the CPD Committee for review.

### 3.3 Re-Entry Requirements

ACEM considers that all Fellows returning to clinical practice in emergency medicine after a period of absence should ensure that their knowledge, clinical skills and professional qualities are consistent with contemporary standards. The aim of the re-entry program is to enable the Fellow who has been absent from clinical practice to demonstrate the same standard of safe clinical practice as his or her peers.

ACEM believes that, in such circumstances, the Fellow should be advised and encouraged to develop an agreed 'practice re-entry' or 'refreshment of knowledge and skills' program before re-entering specialist clinical practice. It is the responsibility of the Fellow to reflect on their knowledge and skills (and the deficiencies), perhaps with the assistance of a FACEM mentor or the CPD Committee. This reflection should consider the competencies defined for Advanced Training Stage 3 in the ACEM Curriculum Framework.

#### Absence of 12 months or less

The MBA and the MCNZ have no specific requirements that must be met before recommencing practice.

#### Absence of 12 to 36 months

The MBA requires, at a minimum, completion of one (1) year's CPD activities relevant to intended scope of practice prior to recommencement of practice in Australia. The MCNZ does not have any such re-entry requirements.

#### Absence of 36 months or more

Fellows absent from practice for 36 months or more must follow a formal re-entry program which meets the practice re-entry requirements of the MBA or the MCNZ, as appropriate to the jurisdiction in which they intend to work. See clause 3.4 of this policy.

### 3.4 Formal Plan for CPD and Re-entry to Practice

The formal re-entry plan must be completed using the prescribed form, all parts of which must be completed in full. The completed form, together with all the specified documentation, must be submitted to the must be attached CPD Committee for review.

Where necessary, the Chair of the CPD Committee may require submission of additional documentation on an individual basis.

## Supervision requirements

All nominated supervisor/s must be a FACEM, and will be responsible for:

- collaborating with the Fellow in the development of the plan for return to practice and resuming CPD
- providing supervision comparable to that of an ACEM advanced trainee
- undertaking formal assessment of the Fellow in accordance with the agreed requirements of the plan, and
- providing feedback to the Fellow on progress at agreed intervals.

## Review Process

### Initial Review

(a) The CPD Committee shall review the plan and indicate whether the plan is:

- approved without modification
- approved with modification (as noted)
- not approved.

The Fellow shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the review, and shall be giving reasons for any modifications or non-approval.

### Supervisor's Report/s

- (b) The appointed supervisor/s shall submit to the CPD Committee a written report if, at any stage during supervision, he or she has any concerns about the about the standard of practice or knowledge of the Fellow being supervised.
- (c) The appointed supervisor/s shall submit a final report within 28 days of completion of the program. Such report shall include:
- whether or not the goals of the program have been achieved
  - details of any deficiencies identified in the knowledge and practice of the Fellow
  - whether or not these deficiencies have been addressed.

### Outcome of Program

- (d) The CPD Committee shall review the supervisor's report and make a recommendation to the Council of Education for decision.

## 4. DOCUMENT REVIEW

Timeframe for review: every two (2) years, or earlier if required.

### 4.1 Responsibilities

Document authorisation: Council of Education  
Document implementation: CPD Committee  
Document maintenance: Manager Standards

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## 4.2 Revision History

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	Aug-2016	Approved by Council of Education

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