



## POLICY ON RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING AND CREDIT TRANSFER

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### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy describes the principles and processes by which evidence of training, experience and credentials possessed by an individual applying for selection for entry into the FACEM Training Program ('a prospective trainee'), or newly enrolled FACEM Training Program trainee, may be assessed for the purpose of obtaining recognition or credit for requirements in the FACEM Training Program.

For the purpose of this policy, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) includes consideration of Credit Transfer (CT) for evidence of formal learning.

The policy does not apply to Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) who apply to ACEM for assessment of their comparability or equivalence to an emergency medicine specialist trained in Australia or New Zealand, unless they have been assessed by the College to be 'neither substantially nor partially comparable, and are accessing this policy as a prospective trainee or newly enrolled trainee in the FACEM Training Program.

## 2. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

### 2.1 Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning refers to the acceptance and assessment of evidence of relevant knowledge, skills and competencies attained through experience or education and training in another medical education program or jurisdiction. (Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges, 2009)

Recognition of Prior Learning may be available in the following situations:

- Trainees wishing to receive recognition of prior learning or credit transfer for evidence of knowledge, skills and competencies obtained from experience or training in a specialist training program in Emergency Medicine.
- Trainees wishing to transfer from one medical specialist training program to another, either part-way through that training or on its completion as an additional qualification.

An RPL assessment process assesses evidence of an individual's equivalent competencies against the learning outcomes of the ACEM Curriculum Framework. This assessment is achieved through a comparison of evidence supplied by the applicant against the descriptions of the eight domains used in the Framework, at the level for which an applicant is seeking recognition, to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning and performance outcomes.

### 2.2 Credit Transfer

Credit transfer is a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for specific components of a qualification based on identified equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications (Australian Qualifications Framework Council, Issued November 2012).

The purpose of an application for Credit Transfer for the FACEM Training Program is to determine a level of credit or formal recognition for applicants who hold a specific learning or training credential relevant to the FACEM Training Program.

Credit granted by another provider is not transferable to ACEM; therefore, a new Credit Transfer application must be submitted.

### 2.3 Date of enrolment

Date a successful prospective trainee is required to advise ACEM of their intention to enrol or defer their enrolment in the FACEM Training Program (refer *Trainee Enrolment Policy*).

## 3. PRINCIPLES FOR ASSESSMENT

### **Validity**

The evidence of knowledge, skills and other competencies should be relevant to the FACEM Training Program. Validity of the knowledge, skills and other competencies is assessed through alignment with the learning outcomes as set out in the *ACEM Curriculum Framework*, and consideration of content, level of training and clinical/medical experience.

**Authenticity**

The evidence of knowledge, skills and other competencies must clearly be those of the applicant and the information supplied in the application must be true and accurate.

**Currency**

The evidence of knowledge, skills and other competencies should be applicable to the current FACEM Training Program. The application must contain evidence obtained not more than five years prior to the date of application when recognition is sought.

**Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency or reproducibility of the competency(ies) in question. The assessment tools used to provide evidence of possession competency(ies) should be reliable and comparable to that used in the FACEM Training Program.

**Equivalence**

Equivalence requires that the evidence of knowledge, skills and other competencies have substantial comparability to that associated with the FACEM Training Program. The evidence of knowledge, skills and other competencies should be such that it demonstrates comparability in terms of content, breadth of experience, level of responsibility, rigour of training requirements, assessment process, supervision and credibility of training setting.

**Timeliness**

Unless otherwise specified in this policy, applications for RPL/CT may be submitted on or after the date of submission of an application for Selection into the FACEM Training Program, and no later than six (6) calendar months of commencement in the FACEM Training Program. Applications received after six (6) months of commencing the FACEM Training Program will not be accepted. Applications may refer only to evidence of demonstrated competencies achieved within the five years prior to the date of the application.

**Maximum RPL**

The maximum Recognition of Prior Learning available for the FACEM Training Program is dependent on the evidence supplied by the applicant, within limits set by ACEM and described within this policy and any other relevant policies and regulations. Any training time granted as part of this process will be deducted from the maximum timeframe(s) permitted under relevant College regulations.

**Trainee**

In the context of this policy may referred to both currently enrolled and prospective trainees in the FACEM Training Program, pursuant to Section 1 of this policy.

**4. APPLICATION FOR RPL/CT**

The application must be made in writing on the appropriate form and be accompanied by all required information and supporting documentation. Applications submitted outside the timeframes specified in this policy will not be considered.

Applicants seeking RPL for core ED training may wish to complete a non-core or discretionary component of the FACEM Training Program until their application for RPL has been assessed.

An application submitted under this policy must address the following:

- (a) Predefined and explicit learning outcomes in the curriculum or component of a training program for which RPL is sought that align with the outcomes of the FACEM Training Program as described in the top-level descriptors for each domain of the ACEM Curriculum Framework.

- (b) A statement of evidence (defined as assessment data) from the trainee providing details of assessment outcomes achieved that shows the equivalence between the training completed for which the RPL/CT is being sought and the FACEM Training Program.
- (c) Evidence of equivalent program/course structure and learning environment (clinical) for teaching and learning contained within the RPL/CT application and with the FACEM Training Program.
- (d) A statement of supervision issued by a specialist doctor at a level equivalent to FACEM that confirms the applicant's ability to perform in the role of trainee at a level consistent with the top-level domain descriptors of the *ACEM Curriculum Framework*.
- (e) Evidence of levels of trainee workplace responsibility consistent with the level of claimed training experience.
- (f) Any additional documentation or information that may be specifically required by the *ACEM Specialist Training and Assessment Committee (STAC)*.

#### 4.1 Eligibility

The following criteria need to be addressed for applications to be considered under this policy:

- (a) Except where specified below, the training that forms the basis of the application must have been completed within the five-year period immediately prior to the date of application for RPL with ACEM.
- (b) The training that forms the basis of the application must have been undertaken in the discipline for which the College in question has responsibility for specialist training. STAC may, at its discretion, accredit other disciplines undertaken as part of another training program if deemed to be completed at the appropriate level with associated learning outcomes. For example, if a former trainee of the College of Intensive Care Medicine (CICM) is applying for credit transfer, the committee will consider their training in the discipline of Intensive Care Medicine and any other non-Emergency Medicine discipline which forms part of the CICM training program

#### 4.2 Documentation Required

An application under this policy must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

- (a) A certified copy of all written in-training assessments relating to the period of training in question.
- (b) The signature and name of the Supervisor of Training should appear on all assessments, which should also clearly show the start and end dates, the site, and the hours per week worked during the term in question. The term should be clearly identified and defined in all respects.
- (c) A statement from the relevant College verifying that at all relevant times the applicant was formally registered as a trainee of the relevant College.
- (d) The training for which RPL is sought was satisfactorily completed and formally accredited towards the requirements to be met by the applicant in the training program.
- (e) Details of the relevant training course/program, including the objectives, content and outcomes of the associated curriculum.
- (f) Where the trainee holds current fellowship with another specialist medical College, a Letter of Good Standing from that College must be provided with the application.

If any of the supporting documentation cannot be provided at the time the application form is submitted or, if further documentation is required by the STAC, then it must be received at the College office within six months of the date of the request by ACEM to the applicant.

### 5. WHEN RPL/CT WILL NOT BE GRANTED

The circumstances in which applications for RPL/CT will not be considered include, but are not limited to the following:

- (a) The application is incomplete (e.g. supporting documentation is not provided).
- (b) The application is not made within the prescribed timeframes (i.e. prior to or within six (6) months of commencement in the FACEM Training Program; refer Section 3) outlined in this policy.
- (c) The RPL/CT being sought does not comply with the necessary currency (i.e. time elapsed since date of training) requirements described in this policy.
- (d) The applicant has fees due for payment to ACEM.
- (e) The RPL/CT being sought is undertaken as part of prevocational training (i.e. did not form part of a specialist training program or qualification; refer section 4.1).

Under no circumstances will RPL be granted that results in exemption for any component(s) of the Fellowship Examinations (Written and Clinical) and Training Stage Four requirements in the FACEM Training Program.

## **6. RESEARCH**

### **6.1 Theses / Published Papers**

Any applicant wishing to submit a previously undertaken thesis or published paper for consideration for the trainee research requirement will have it assessed by the College in accordance with Regulation B4. A thesis or published paper submitted for consideration for RPL must have been completed within the ten-year period immediately prior to the date of application for RPL with ACEM.

### **6.2 University Subjects**

Recognition of postgraduate university subjects will be assessed in accordance with current trainee research requirements as prescribed by the College.

An applicant who has already completed relevant postgraduate university subjects that meet the requirements of Regulation B4 or Regulation G4 as applicable may apply for retrospective accreditation provided that:

- (1) The application is made within the timeframes specified in this policy.
- (2) The unit(s) were completed within the five-year period immediately preceding the date of receipt of the application.
- (3) The submission includes detailed information on the curriculum and learning objectives of the course.
- (4) The academic record demonstrating successful completion of the units is provided.

### **6.3 Doctor of Philosophy – PhD**

A PhD in biomedical sciences completed through an Australian or New Zealand University will automatically satisfy the research requirement without the need for adjudication. A PhD completed outside of Australia or New Zealand will be assessed for academic equivalence. There is no maximum timeframe within which the PhD must have been completed relative to the date of application for RPL with ACEM.

An application under this policy must be accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

- (1) a certified copy of the academic transcript; and
- (2) a copy of the assessment of academic equivalence.

An application will need to include certified, translated copies if the original documents were in a language other than English.

## 7. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS FOR RPL/CT

### 7.1 Assessment Process

Assessment of RPL applications will be completed by STAC, which may delegate the assessment process to nominees approved by the Chair.

STAC or its delegate will review the structure of specialist programs and, at its sole discretion, will determine if the training in question is substantially comparable to the FACEM Training Program requirement for which RPL is being requested.

### 7.2 Assessment Criteria

Criterion	ACEM requirements	RPL evidence
Predefined and explicit learning outcomes in the curriculum of the program for which RPL is sought that align with learning outcomes of the FACEM Training Program.	Relevant top-level descriptors from the <i>ACEM Curriculum Framework</i> .	Evidence that demonstrates equivalence to ACEM requirements.
A statement of evidence (defined as assessment data) from the applicant providing details of assessment outcomes achieved that shows substantial comparability with those of the FACEM Training Program.	Relevant top-level descriptors from the <i>ACEM Curriculum Framework</i> .	Provision of evidence mapped against ACEM requirements.
Evidence of equivalent program / course structure and learning environment (clinical) for teaching and learning contained within the RPL/CT application and with the FACEM Training Program.	FACEM Training Program requirements.	Description of training program and requirements from verifiable source applicable to recognition sought.
A statement of supervision by a specialist doctor equivalent to FACEM that confirms the applicant's ability to perform in the role of trainee at levels consistent with ACEM's published guidelines and curriculum outcomes.	ACEM ITA, WBAs, SR or similar.	Letter or formal assessment or similar that confirms applicant capabilities in line with ACEM requirements.
Evidence of levels of trainee workplace responsibility consistent with the level of claimed training experience.	ACEM shift reports, ITAs, employment records.	Appropriate RPL evidence, including ITAs or similar, from source training program.

### 7.3 Approved RPL/CT for Prospective Trainees

Where RPL/CT has been granted to a prospective trainee, the RPL/CT outcome(s) will not be applied to their training record until such time as they enrol in the FACEM Training Program in the medical training year for which they were selected for entry into the FACEM Training Program.

Where RPL/CT has been granted to a prospective trainee who is selected for entry to the FACEM Training Program and they choose not to enrol or defer their enrolment, the RPL/CT granted will be rescinded and, where applicable and eligible to do so, a new application submitted within the timeframes specified in this policy, at the time of enrolling in the FACEM Training Program.

Where RPL/CT has been granted to a prospective trainee who is not selected for entry into the FACEM Training Program and they apply for selection to enter the FACEM Training Program in a subsequent year(s), a new application for RPL/CT must be made and such application(s) will be assessed afresh under this policy as from time to time updated.

## **8. ACEM DIPLOMA OF PRE-HOSPITAL AND RETRIEVAL MEDICINE CREDIT TRANSFER ARRANGEMENT**

### **8.1 Eligibility**

Training time undertaken in the Diploma of Pre-Hospital and Retrieval Medicine (DipPHRM) Training Program may be credited towards the FACEM Training Program, provided that:

- (1) There is a minimum of six (6) months FTE available to be certified in the FACEM Training Program to either the Non-ED requirement, the Discretionary requirement (where applicable), or Maintenance pathway;
- (2) The available time in the FACEM Training Program is not a period of Additional Training Time; and
- (3) The applicant has completed the following training requirements in the DipPHRM Training Program:
  - A minimum six-month FTE placement at a CCPHRM-accredited DipPHRM training site;
  - A minimum of two (2) Training Supervisor Reports (TSRs), with the final TSR reflecting an 'at standard' outcome; and
  - A minimum of 50 cases logged in the applicant's DipPHRM Portal.

If the above conditions have been met, the credit can be applied without review.

If the trainee does not meet the TSR or logbook requirements within two (2) weeks of completion of their six-month FTE placement, the period of training will not be credited towards the trainee's FACEM training.

### **8.2 Timeframes**

A FACEM trainee that enrolls in the DipPHRM Training Program will be advised of what FACEM training requirement, if any, the training can be applied to. This credit transfer can occur at any point during the trainee's FACEM training as long as they meet the above eligibility requirements.

If the conditions outlined in section 8.1 have been met, the credit will be automatically applied without STAC or TPR panel review.

If the trainee does not meet the TSR or logbook requirements within two (2) weeks of completion of their six-month FTE placement, the period of training will not be credited towards the trainee's FACEM training.

## **9. PAYMENT OF FEES**

The application fee(s) associated with the process to which this policy applies may be found on the ACEM website and need to be submitted at the time of application. Applications will not be progressed in any way until such time as any applicable fee(s) are paid.

The fee is non-refundable should a prospective trainee elect not to enrol or the RPL application is unsuccessful, and is in addition to any other costs associated with entry to the FACEM Training Program.

## **10. GRANTING OF RPL**

Where STAC or its delegate grants RPL for a specified number of FTE months of training, regardless of the type(s) of training, the maximum duration permitted under College regulations for completion of all requirements of the FACEM Training Program, shall be reduced by the corresponding number of FTE months for which RPL is granted.

## 11. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Regulation B - FACEM Training Program
- Regulation G – FACEM Training Program
- ACEM Curriculum Framework
- *Trainee Research Requirement Policy*

## 12. DOCUMENT REVIEW

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

### 12.1 Responsibilities

Document authorisation: Council of Education  
 Document implementation: General Manager Training and Accreditation  
 Document maintenance: General Manager, Governance and Standards

### 12.2 Revision History

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	Jan-2012	Approved by Council
v2	Jan-2013	Approved by Board of Education
v2-1	Mar-2014	Changes as per governance review – ‘Board of Education’ to ‘Council of Education’
v3	Dec-2016	Approved by COE
v4	Jan-2018	Revisions to sections 3 and 5 approved by COE
v5	Aug-2018	Section 9 approved by COE
v6	May-2021	Revisions to section 4.2, section 5, section 6.1 and addition of 6.3
v7	Jun-2021	Addition of DipPHRM credit transfer process
v8	Apr-2022	Addition of pre-application for RPL
v9	Jan-2023	Revisions to sections 5, 10 and 11