1. POLICY TITLE                      Category One (Fellowship Ad Eundem Gradum) of the Specialist Pathway Program
1.1 Policy number:                   ED-E-001.0
1.2 Category:                       Educational
1.3 Approval date:                  June 2014
1.4 Revision due date:              June 2017
1.5 Unit responsible                Education Services

2. POLICY DECLARATION

This policy describes the eligibility criteria and processes for applying for categorisation as a Category One doctor, and admittance into Fellowship Ad Eundem Gradum of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (the RACGP), via the Specialist Pathway Program (SPP).

This policy is authorised by the CEO.

3. BACKGROUND

The SPP is part of a nationally agreed assessment and registration process developed in conjunction with the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (AHPRA), the Australian Medical Council (AMC), the Australian Government Department of Health and the RACGP. The SPP Category One provides a pathway for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to obtain Fellowship of the RACGP based on an assessment of their previous training and qualification(s) in general practice.

i) Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to guide applicants and other stakeholders through the processes of applying for eligibility for FAEG.

3.1 Definitions

“Applicant” is a doctor who has submitted an application for categorisation as part of the RACGP’s Specialist Pathways Program (SPP).

“FAEG” is Fellowship Ad Eundem Gradum.

“Successful Applicant” is an Applicant who has been granted FAEG.

3.2 Related Policies, Documents, Legislation & Strategic Priorities

Academic Misconduct Policy
Appeals Policy
Board of Censors’ Decisions Reviews Policy
Special Consideration Policy
Witnessing and certification of documentation policy

All of the above documents are available at: www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/
3.3. Privacy statement

If you are enrolled in the SPP, we collect personal information about you in order to administer your participation in the program. The RACGP privacy statement can be found at www.racgp.org.au/usage/privacy/.

4. BODY OF POLICY

4.1 Rationale for Category One of the SPP

Category One of the SPP was implemented to assist suitably qualified specialist doctors in general practice or family medicine to benefit from the rights, benefits and obligations associated with Fellowship of the RACGP.

Applicants may be categorised as Category One if they hold qualification(s) considered by the RACGP to be at an equivalent level to an Australian trained general practice specialist.

The categorisation of qualifications is based on the training and assessment completed in order to gain that qualification. It also takes into consideration the context and characteristics of general practice of the country in which the training qualification was completed.

An Applicant needs to have completed a suitable general practice / family medicine training program in the country from which they have that qualification. Any international qualification gained through "grandfathering" or reciprocal arrangements will not be accepted.

The RACGP may request further information or reject any application that does not provide adequate documentation or meet the stated criteria.

4.2 Qualifications considered

The current list of Category One qualifications is available at www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/imgaus/specialist-pathway/.

The RACGP may at any time vary the qualifications considered, or any of the requirements for Category One classification. If new pathways, assessment modalities, or training programs become available in the country in which the training qualification was completed, applications will continue to be assessed against the published RACGP criteria until such time as a full assessment of the merits of the new program has been conducted by the RACGP, and the Category classification of the program has been published on the RACGP website.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1 Stage one: Self categorisation

The Applicant undertakes a self-assessment of their categorisation via the RACGP website at www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/imgaus/specialist-pathway/. Please note any self-assessment is not binding on the RACGP. Furthermore the provision of any information by the Applicant that is not entirely truthful is dealt with under the Academic Misconduct policy - www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/

5.2 Stage two: Application to Australian Medical Council (AMC)

The Applicant applies to the AMC (www.amc.org.au) for Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), International Credentials Services (EICS) verification of their primary medical degree and specialist (secondary) general practice qualification(s). Please see their website for all documentation required as part of that process.

Verification of a primary medical degree can sometimes be a lengthy process, however, the RACGP only requires the verification of the secondary (specialist) qualification to finalise categorisation. If the RACGP receives notification from the AMC that verification of an Applicant’s primary qualification is not able to be established, the RACGP will cease processing an existing application for FAEG, or revoke any FAEG which has been granted.
Applicants are required to provide their AMC and EICS verification number as part of the RACGP application process. Once this is provided they can then proceed to complete the application form while EICS verification is pending.

### 5.3 Stage three: Assessment by the RACGP

To submit an application, Applicants must:
- Complete the self assessment tool; and
- Pay the categorisation fee.

After payment of the fee, an Applicant will have six months from date of enrolment in the categorisation assessment to complete the assessment. After this time the assessment will be considered abandoned. Once an application is abandoned an Applicant will be required to re-apply to the RACGP.

#### 5.3.1 Documentation requirements

Applicants must submit the following documentation as part of the assessment process:

- Documentary evidence of an offer of a specific position in general practice in Australia, via a letter from the prospective employer or recruitment agency
  - The letter must outline the specific duties that will be undertaken. Generic position statements will not be accepted
  - The position must be in general practice as defined at [www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/what-is-a-gp/what-is-general-practice/](http://www.racgp.org.au/becomingagp/what-is-a-gp/what-is-general-practice/). The RACGP will not categorise an Applicant for the SPP if the intended role is not in general practice
  - The minimum part time requirements for the position are the same as for other assessments of general practice experience. Please see the Assessment of General Practice Experience Policy at [www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/](http://www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/).
- Current (dated and signed) Curriculum Vitae
- Confirmation letter of the award of the qualification from the issuing body of the secondary (specialist) qualification stating:
  - confirmation of the receipt of qualification, and
  - the pathway followed to gained qualification
- Evidence of current medical registration in the Applicant’s current jurisdiction of practice (with an expiry date if applicable). If the information is freely available on the internet a link to the relevant page is also required. If the Applicant’s registration is restricted, or the Applicant does not have current registration, an official copy of the restrictions and a written explanation must accompany the document. If there are any current or unresolved complaints against the Applicant, the Applicant must provide full details of the complaints. In these circumstances further information / explanation may be required, and granting of FAEG may be withheld.
- Certificate of good standing from the body that provides medical registration for general practice / family medicine in the Applicant’s current jurisdiction of practice. This Certificate must be:
  - dated within 6 months of receipt of a completed application by the RACGP, or
  - current (if the Certificate has an expiry date on it) at the time of receipt of the completed application by the RACGP.
• If the country where the secondary qualification was gained is not the current jurisdiction of practice:
  ➢ A certificate of good standing or past good standing from the government body that provides medical registration for general practice / family medicine in the country in which the secondary qualification was obtained
  ➢ Registration history from the country in which the secondary qualification was gained
• Certified copies of any qualifications, and their respective Completion of Training certification (These document are not received from the AMC)
• Evidence of participation in continuing professional development / continuing medical education

Once sufficient documentation and the categorisation fee have been received, categorisation will commence. During the categorisation process further information may be requested.

5.3.2 Categorisation

The RACGP will concurrently categorise the application while waiting for verification of the secondary qualification from the AMC. Confirmation of verification will be required to complete the categorisation process.

Final responsibility for the decision to grant FAEG and ratification of the award is held by the Council of the RACGP and is based on the recommendation of the Board of Censors.

The RACGP will advise the Applicant of their categorisation. If an Applicant is not categorised as a Category One applicant, they will be advised of the next steps they may take in moving forward to Fellowship of the RACGP. If the candidate is categorised as meeting the requirements for of Category One, the Applicant will be asked to pay the fellowship processing fee for FAEG and the RACGP membership fee. Once the fees are received FAEG will be granted.

Upon granting of FAEG, the RACGP will submit a report to the AMC advising of categorisation.

5.4 Stage four: Granting of medical registration

The AMC will advise AHPRA of the Successful Applicant’s eligibility for medical registration with a specialist qualification.

The Successful Applicant will then be responsible for obtaining medical registration.

5.5 Stage five: Commencement of work

The Successful Applicant should commence work in general practice in Australia within 6 months of being awarded the FAEG. The Practice Principal or Manager must email the RACGP advising the date the Successful Applicant commenced work.

5.5.1 Extensions

If a Successful Applicant cannot commence work within six months, they may apply to the Specialist Pathway Officer for a three month extension.

If a longer extension is required requests may be made to the Censor in Chief. All requests must:
• outline the reasons for the extension, which must be of a sufficiently unpredictable and unavoidable nature
• be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation
• detail when work will be commencing
• confirm that the job offer presented as part of categorisation still stands (if not details of the new job offer will be required).

The Censor in Chief, in his / her discretion, may grant up to two separate extensions each of up to six months duration.
5.5.2 Work requirements

Successful Applicants are required to work for four months full time equivalent in Australian general practice within the first twelve months of commencing work. The minimum requirement for part time work is 10.5 hours over two days per week. As long as minimum time is worked, this would be considered one third of full time equivalent for the purposes of meeting the time requirements of this policy.

If Successful Applicants believe they will be unable to meet this requirement due to maternity leave or illness they should apply for a variation under the Special Consideration Policy available at www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/fellowship-of-the-racgp/policies/.

5.5.3 Non-compliance with work requirements

If the Successful Applicant does not commence approved general practice work within 6 months of being notified of FAEG status or does not ask for an extension of time before commencing work, or does not complete the requirements listed in 5.5.4 below, then the application will lapse and the applicant may be required to reapply to the RACGP for Fellowship Ad Eundem Gradum. The RACGP may also advise the Medical Board of Australia that the Successful Applicant has not met the requirements of the SPP.

5.5.4 Post-commencement requirements

1. Mentoring

The Successful Applicant is required to enter into a mentoring relationship when they commence work for the first 12 months of Australian practice. The mentor must be a Fellow of the RACGP.

The role of the mentor is to assist the Successful Applicant to integrate into general practice in Australia. The mentor does not need to work in the same practice as the Successful Applicant, however, they need to be available for guidance and support. The proposed mentor must contact the RACGP directly agreeing to be the mentor for the Successful Applicant.

As part of the mentoring relationship both parties should communicate at least once a month. Phone calls, letters, visits and emails would be acceptable means of communication provided both parties are happy with the quality of support provided.

2. Modules 1 and 2

The Successful Applicant must complete gplearning online Modules 1 and 2 ‘GP pathways’ within 6 months of commencing practice.

3. Contextual Skills Module 3

The Successful Applicant must complete Contextual Skills Training in:

a. Communication skills
b. Patient Safety
c. Introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness
d. Emergency management workshop which fulfils the criteria (i) to (v) below. Candidates are required to submit guidelines for the course completed.

i. recognise and manage medical emergencies in general practice, including acute coronary syndrome, acute asthma and anaphylaxis
ii. demonstrate skills in organisational leadership, including effective communication and team management
iii. demonstrate effective skills in management of scene safety
iv. demonstrate competence in airway management and effective ventilation technique
v. demonstrate skills in effective cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

4. The Successful Applicant must register for, participate in and meet the requirements of the RACGP’s Quality Improvement and Continuing Professional Development program.
5. The Successful Applicant must apply for recognition as a General Practitioner with Medicare.

6. The Successful Applicant must submit evidence of completion of 4 months full time equivalent general practice experience in the twelve month period following the date the Successful Applicant commences work in Australia.

5.6 Stage six: Completion of requirements, certificate ordering and graduation

The Successful Applicant is required to complete all requirements set out in paragraph 5.5 above before they are eligible to attend a graduation ceremony or receive their Fellowship Certificate.

Once the Successful Applicant has completed Stage 5, they must fill out a request for graduation form and send it to the Specialist Pathway Officer who will sign off on the completion of the requirements listed above.

The RACGP will then order the Successful Applicant their Fellowship certificate and notify the relevant state faculty that the Successful Applicant is eligible to graduate at the next State faculty ceremony.