

Policy on:

The Practice Eligibility Route (PER) for Specialties

1. Objective & Scope

The purpose of the Practice Eligibility Route (PER) is to remove barriers for those specialists practicing in Canada or abroad who are seeking primary specialty certification, with the Royal College but who did not complete their training in a Royal College-accredited residency program or the United States. The PER provides an opportunity for specialists to have their credentials assessed and compared to Royal College residency graduate standards and, subsequently, the ability to challenge the Royal College specialty examination.

Successful application to the PER does not guarantee Royal College certification, rather it provides access to the Royal College examination which must be successfully completed (all components) in addition to meeting the outlined practice requirements before the candidate is eligible for certification.

2. Definitions and Acronyms

CCT	Confirmation of Completion of Training.
International Medical Graduate	A physician who completed post-graduate training in a jurisdiction outside of Canada and the United States.
PER	Practice Eligibility Route: the primary route to certification for International Medical Graduates.
PGME	Post graduate medical education.
Physicians Apply	A service used by the Royal College to verify authenticity of documents.
MRA	Medical regulatory authority: The MRAs are the provincial and territorial bodies responsible for granting physicians a license to practice within their jurisdiction.

MSF	Multisource feedback.
Royal College	Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada is the national professional association that oversees the medical education of specialists in Canada. In its mandate articulated by a Royal Charter in 1929, it is entrusted with a key role in the oversight of the system of specialty medicine in Canada.
Royal College Credentials Unit	The unit of the Royal College responsible for evaluating and processing applications for exam eligibility received from specialists and trainees.
STRs	Specialty training requirements.

3. Policy

Overview of the Procedure for Submission of a PER Application

The Practice Eligibility Route is available to internationally trained applicants, who have training equivalent to Royal College standards. Substantial training equivalence is required to be eligible for the examination, and two (2) years of practice in Canada, with satisfactory assessment of that practice, are required to become certified. A license to practice in Canada is not required to initiate a PER application but will be required to complete the process and receive certification (to meet time in practice in Canada requirements). Applicants currently without a license to practice in Canada may access the exam component(s) of their discipline's examination. Success at the examination may be considered by the MRAs in the licensure application process. The Royal College does not have the authority to issue licenses to practice in Canada and cannot guarantee that success at an exam component will lead to being conferred a license by an MRA.

The applicant must ensure they are able to submit all the documents listed in their application to be evaluated by the Credentials Unit in a timely fashion. An application must be submitted along with the required fee. The review of the applicant's credentials will result in a determination of whether the applicant's training is sufficient to receive Royal College exam eligibility.

Preliminary applications are found on the Royal College online e-booking system.

3.1 Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1.1 Medical specialty training completed outside Canada and the United States.
- 3.1.2 Time in training is substantially equivalent to Royal College training standards.

3.2 Credentials Review

The Credentials Unit requires the following as part of the initial assessment of medical training and practice abroad, as further detailed below:

- Details of the applicant's training (to be compared with Royal College's training standards and/or training experiences)
- Source verification of training documents by Physicians Apply

These documents must be compiled and completed alongside the PER application on the Royal College online e-booking system. The non-refundable application fee must be paid at the time of submission of the application. This application package is reviewed by the Credentials Unit and a ruling letter is issued either confirming or denying exam eligibility.

- 3.2.1 The Royal College requires proof that the applicant has completed training which is substantially equivalent to the specialty training requirements (STRs) and/or training experiences (RTEs) in the respective specialty and is recognized as a specialist in the jurisdiction of training. The applicant must provide satisfactory evidence of completion of all postgraduate medical education (PGME) training requirements of the jurisdiction in which training occurred.

3.3 Royal College Specialty Examinations

- 3.3.1 Following approval by the Credentials Unit of a successful initial credentials review, the Royal College will issue a ruling letter granting eligibility to the specialty examination(s).
- 3.3.2 Eligible candidates may have access to the examination, at any point during the two (2) years in practice, including immediately following completion of training abroad, and up to five years from the date of the ruling letter.
- 3.3.3 Applicants with exam eligibility must register and pay for the examination using the e-booking system. The exams are on fixed dates and take place annually. Registration deadlines can be found on the Royal College site. Applicants must appear at the Royal College examination center in-person to sit the written examination.
- 3.3.4 Royal College examinations typically consist of multiple components. A typical model consists of a written examination component followed by an applied component. Examination formats vary by specialty.
- 3.3.5 Applicants successful at the written component will receive eligibility towards any subsequent exam components (if applicable).
- 3.3.6 Applicants who have met all the PER requirements (including assessment of practice in Canada) outlined in this policy and have successfully completed all the exam components in their discipline, are eligible to become certified by the Royal College. The Credentials Unit will issue this letter when all requirements have been met.

3.4 Time in Practice in Canada Requirement

It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain a license to practice and to complete a minimum two (2) years of practice in a continuous practice location in Canada. The Royal College does not issue licenses. It is at the discretion of the Medical Regulatory Authorities (MRA) to grant licenses to practice in Canada. Typically, the applicant will use the letter confirming success at the examination to apply for a license with an MRA.

- 3.4.1 The two (2) years in practice in a continuous location may be completed in any jurisdiction in Canada. Each province and territory have a local medical regulatory authority responsible for issuing licenses to practice medicine in their jurisdiction. The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada does not grant licenses to

practice. These two (2) years must be the equivalent of two (2) full-time years in practice.

3.4.1.1 One (1) year of time in practice during other postgraduate clinical training, i.e., fellowship training, can be counted towards the total of two (2) years of practice in Canada¹, provided that the practice was assessed and a PGME Office presents evidence of sufficient breadth of discipline and competency assessment during that period. Such determination will be at the discretion of the RC.

3.4.2 It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain a license to practice and to meet the time in practice requirement. During this period of two (2) years, the Royal College keeps the application on file and, pending the completion of two (2) years, the applicant may submit documents to complete the subsequent stage of the PER process, the assessment of practice in Canada.

3.4.3 Applicants already in Canada and in practice at the time of PER application may have already met the minimum time in practice requirement. If the applicant already has a total of two (2) years of practice in Canada, they may immediately apply for an assessment of practice.

3.5 Assessment of Practice

Following demonstration of completion of the required time in practice requirements (completion of two (2) years of practice in a continuous practice location in Canada), the applicant is required to submit the following documents to have this time in practice assessed¹. Approval of an assessment of practice is necessary for certification.

3.5.1 Multisource feedback (MSF) survey: Feedback on the professional competencies relating to the CanMEDS roles is gathered and then benchmarked against scores from similar practices. This process allows the applicant to reflect on their performance across the range of CanMEDS roles and to identify their areas of strength and areas for growth.

3.6 Royal College Certification

Applicants who have met all the PER requirements will be eligible to become certified by the Royal College:

- a successful credentials review verifying training equivalence to Canadian programs;
- two (2) years of practice in a continuous practice location in Canada;
- success at the examination component(s)

The Credentials Unit will issue a letter of certification when all requirements have been met.

¹ Time in fellowship must only be counted towards either the candidate's training requirement or time in practice requirement.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Applicant

The applicant is responsible for compiling all necessary documents required for a complete application and providing required information to the Royal College at all stages of the process. Following a successful credentials review, the applicant will receive eligibility to the Royal College examination and will be responsible for registering and completing the examination.

All PER applicants will remain subject to the policies and procedures of the Royal College, as applicable, including those listed in section 5 of this policy. This includes examination eligibility and renewal policies.

4.2 Royal College Credentials Unit

The Credentials Unit receives applications and renders decisions on behalf of the Royal College. The Credentials Unit is responsible for reviewing credentialing documents and determining equivalency to Canadian training programs. The Credentials Unit issues ruling letters regarding exam eligibility.

4.3 Medical Regulatory Authority (a Canadian licensing body)

For an applicant to meet the entirety of the PER requirements, the physician will need to complete a minimum of two (2) years of practice in a continuous practice location in Canada. The applicant will have to apply to a MRA to receive licensure and the ability to practice in Canada. A list of MRAs can be found on the [Royal College website](#).

4.4 Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee makes decisions regarding the PER policy. Panels made up of members of the Assessment Committee also hear appeals for reconsiderations of eligibility rulings.

5. References

[*Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship*](#)

[*Policy on Formal Review of Examinations*](#)

6. Contact(s)

For information or clarification, please contact:

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
Office of Standards and Assessment, Credentials unit
774 Echo Drive
Ottawa ON K1S 5N8
Telephone (toll-free): 1-800-668-3740
Credentials@royalcollege.ca

7. Appendices

This policy has no appendices.

8. Policy record

Most recent resolution:	Resolution No. 2024-7-15; C: 2022-2023-12 (revision)
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