

Policy on:

The Practice Eligibility Route (PER) for Specialties

1. Objective & Scope

The purpose of the Practice Eligibility Route (PER) is to facilitate recognition for 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

Continuous practice location	A designated site in Canada where the candidate has been engaged in uninterrupted supervised clinical practice, ensuring ongoing assessment of their practice without disruption.
Fellowship	Unaccredited postgraduate clinical or research based medical training that compliments specialty and subspecialty training, and is usually narrow in scope of practice.
International Medical Graduate	A physician who completed post-graduate training in a jurisdiction outside of Canada and the United States.
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.
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.
Royal College	The 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

3.1. 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. Success at examination and two (2) years of time in 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 time in practice in Canada requirement to confer certification. Applicants currently without a license to practice in Canada may access the exam component(s) of their discipline's examination after being granted eligibility. 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 licensure from an MRA.

The applicant must ensure they are able to submit all the documents listed in the 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.

3.2. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Practice Eligibility Route (PER) to certification, applicants must demonstrate the following:

- 3.2.1.** Medical specialty training that was completed outside Canada and the United States.
- 3.2.2.** Applicant not certified in a Royal College primary specialty.
- 3.2.3.** Training that is substantially equivalent to Royal College training standards.

3.3. Credentials Review

The Royal College requires proof that the applicant has completed training which is substantially equivalent to the specialty specific standards. The applicant must be recognized as a specialist in the jurisdiction of training and must provide satisfactory evidence of completion of all postgraduate medical education (PGME) training in the jurisdiction in which training occurred.

- 3.3.1.** The Credentials Unit requires details of the applicant's training (to be compared with Royal College's specialty specific requirements).
- 3.3.2.** All training documentation must be source verified through Physicians Apply.
- 3.3.3.** Applicants who are assessed by the Credentials Unit and have met the training requirements will be issued a ruling letter granting eligibility to the applicable Royal College specialty examination(s).
- 3.3.4.** Candidates must submit a complete application by the deadline, including all required documents in English or French, and any required source verification. Incomplete applications will be withdrawn, and assessment fees will be refunded.
- 3.3.5.** All PER candidates are subject to the policies and procedures for ruling letters and examination outlined in sections V and VI of the Royal College *Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship*.

3.4. Time in Practice Requirements:

- 3.4.1.** Candidates must complete a minimum of two (2) years of supervised practice in a continuous practice location in Canada. This practice may take place in any Canadian jurisdiction.
- 3.4.2.** Candidates must be actively practicing in a continuous practice location or applicable fellowship (see Section 3.6.1 for criteria) at the time of assessment of practice.
- 3.4.3.** Candidates must dedicate at least 50% of their practice to the primary specialty for the full duration of the two (2) years.
- 3.4.4.** Candidates must hold a license from a Canadian medical regulatory authority (MRA) for the full duration of the two (2) years. It is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain a non-educational license from the appropriate MRA.
- 3.4.5.** Candidates must demonstrate professional competence in the full scope of the primary specialty acting as the most responsible physician on clinical cases.
- 3.4.6.** Time in practice completed prior to receipt of a ruling letter may be assessed only if it was completed within the five (5) years preceding the date on the exam eligibility ruling letter. Any time in practice completed after the receipt of a ruling letter may be assessed.

3.5. Assessment of Time in Practice:

- 3.5.1.** A successful assessment of practice is required for certification.
- 3.5.2.** The assessment of practice is completed through a multisource feedback process consisting of structured attestations of competence completed by individuals who are familiar with the candidate's practice. The MSF process confirms the candidate's practice requirements, including length of practice, dedication to the primary specialty and professional competencies and performance across CanMEDS roles.

- 3.5.2.1.** The candidate's supervisor must attest to the candidate's duration of practice and time dedication to the primary specialty.

3.6. Time in Practice Requirements for Candidates with Fellowship Experiences:

Candidates must undergo an assessment of practice as detailed in Section 3.5. for one (1) year spent in a continuous practice location. In addition, candidates must also undergo an assessment of time in fellowship training as described in this section.

3.6.1. Assessment of Time in Fellowship

One (1) year of fellowship training under the auspices of a Canadian PGME office, may be counted towards the two (2) year time in practice requirement in Canada, provided that the PGME Program Director/Postgraduate Dean provides a letter of attestation that the practice requirements have been met.

3.6.1.1. Candidates must submit a letter of attestation from their PGME Program Director/Postgraduate Dean outlining:

- a description of the fellowship,
- clinical and research responsibilities,
- competence in the primary specialty for which the candidate is seeking certification
- time dedicated to the primary specialty for which the candidate is seeking certification

3.6.1.2. Documentation must demonstrate that the candidate has made a significant dedication of 50% of their fellowship training or greater in the relevant primary specialty for the duration of the one (1) training year being assessed for time in practice.

3.6.2. Fellowship experiences will be counted as an exception to the requirement to practice in a continuous practice location for two (2) years. Candidates with fellowship experiences must provide attestation to one (1) year of fellowship training in Canada, and one (1) year in a continuous practice location in Canada.

3.6.3. Time in fellowship training cannot be counted towards the practice requirement if the same time in fellowship was credited towards training requirements.

3.6.4. Assessment of whether a fellowship meets the criteria above will be at the discretion of the Royal College.

3.7. Royal College Certification

Candidates who have met all the PER requirements will be eligible for certification by the Royal College, including:

3.7.1. A successful credentials review verifying training equivalence to Canadian programs supported by source verification of documents;

3.7.2. Completion of all specialty specific requirements for PER;

3.7.3. Two (2) years of practice in a continuous practice location in Canada supported by a successful assessment of practice;

3.7.4. Success at all required examination component(s).

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Applicant

The applicant is responsible for compiling all necessary documents to submit a complete application and providing the 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.

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

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