



ROYAL COLLEGE
OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF CANADA
COLLÈGE ROYAL
DES MÉDECINS ET CHIRURGIENS DU CANADA

Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship

May 2025

These regulations supersede previously published editions.

The Royal College reserves the right to change these regulations at any time, without prior notification.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1	Introduction.....	3
1.2	Contact information	3
1.3	Acronyms	4
1.4	Definitions, terms, and quick reference	4
1.5	Privacy	6

SECTION II – APPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING

	General information	7
2.1	Eligibility criteria.....	7
2.2	Documentation	7
2.3	Confirmation of Completion of training	7
2.4	Assessment fees	7
2.5	Application deadlines.....	8
2.6	Penalty fees	8

SECTION III – EXAMINATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

	General information	9
3.1	Medical qualification acceptable to the Royal College	9
3.2	Satisfactory moral, ethical and professional standing	9
3.3	Appeal of a Decision under Section 3.2	10
3.4	Satisfactory completion of postgraduate medical education.....	10

SECTION IV – POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

PART A – RESIDENCY EDUCATION

4.1	Residency education	11
4.2	Residency training requirements	11

PART B – OTHER POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

4.3	Family medicine training	13
4.4	Clinical or basic research	14
4.5	Eligibility	14
4.6	Electives.....	14
4.7	Other Acceptable Postgraduate clinical training to meet Royal College training requirements	14

SECTION V – ROYAL COLLEGE RULINGS ON EXAMINATION ELIGIBILITY

	General information	16
5.1	Issuing a Royal College ruling letter	16
5.2	Conditions pertaining to rulings	16
5.3	Examination Eligibility rulings.....	16
5.4	Examination Eligibility	17
5.5	Reconsideration of a Ruling on Examination Eligibility.....	17
5.6	Withdrawal of examination eligibility	18
5.7	Deferral of examination eligibility	18

SECTION VI – ROYAL COLLEGE EXAMINATIONS

General information	19
6.1 Surgical foundations examination.....	19
6.2 Examinations in accreditation without certification (AWC) disciplines that convert to subspecialty with examination	19
6.3 Examination registration	19
6.4 Payment of Examination Fees	20
6.5 Withdrawals from Examinations.....	20
6.6 Access to Exams	20
6.7 Rules & Procedures applicable to the delivery of examinations	20
6.8 Deadline for Examination Registration	20
6.9 Examination Dates.....	20
6.10 Examination Sites.....	20
6.11 Examination Format	20
6.12 Candidates requiring an Examination Accommodation.....	21
6.13 Candidate Conduct	21
6.14 Conflicts.....	21
6.15 Language of Examination.....	22
6.16 Frequency of Examinations.....	22
6.17 Decisions of Royal College Examination Boards	22
6.18 Exam Results/ Posting marks	22
6.19 Expiration of Exam Results.....	23
6.20 Formal Reviews of Examinations	23

SECTION VII – INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

General information	24
7.1 Individual in-depth assessment of training for acceptable systems.....	24
7.2 Practice Eligibility Route (PER)	24
7.3 Practice Eligibility Route for Subspecialists (PER-Sub).....	24
7.4 Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP).....	25
7.5 Practice Eligibility Route for the Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (PER-SEAP)	25
7.6 Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) in-training route	25
7.7 Practice Eligibility Route Areas of Focused Competence (PER-AFC).....	25
7.8 Academic Certification	25

SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

The Royal College is the national professional association that oversees the assessment of medical specialists in Canada. In its mandate articulated by a Royal Charter in 1929, the Royal College was given a key role in the oversight of the system of specialty medicine in Canada. The Royal College verifies that a physician has met all the requirements necessary for Royal College certification. To become eligible for examination — physicians must meet an array of credentialing requirements set by Royal College Council and Royal College Committees including a designated specialty committee of the Royal College. With significant assistance from volunteer Fellows, the Royal College produces and administers the national certification exams.

1.1 Introduction

The Royal College *Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship* is a detailed policies and procedures manual that outlines the process leading to certification by the Royal College for time-based training programs. Candidates from Competence By Design (CBD) training programs may refer to the Royal College *Policies for Certification in a Competency By Design Model of Residency Training*. The guide is divided into sections for easy reference and clearly outlines each step in the certification process.

The following represents the basic steps to achieving Royal College certification:

- The applicant has obtained a medical qualification acceptable to the Royal College.
- The applicant has trained in an accredited Royal College/ACGME approved program or for non-Royal College accredited/non-ACGME approved training, the applicant has trained in a postgraduate medical education system deemed acceptable by the Royal College.
- The applicant has satisfactorily completed the specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training requirements (STRs), or required training experiences (RTEs).
- The applicant has successfully completed all examination requirements.

1.2 Contact Information

For further information, to request an application for assessment of training for examination eligibility, or to obtain objectives of training, specialty training requirements and/or required training experiences, please contact the Office of Standards and Assessment at:

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

Office of Standards and Assessment - Credentials Unit

774 Echo Drive

Ottawa, ON

K1S 5N8

Canada

Telephone: (613) 730-8191

Toll Free: 1 (800) 267-2320

Extension: 7750

Fax: (613) 730-3707

E-mail: credentials@royalcollege.ca

Website: www.royalcollege.ca

Please note: Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the Royal College always is provided with any updated contact information each time there is a change.

1.3 Acronyms

Common acronyms include:

ACGME	- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (in the United States)
CACMS	- Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools
CanMEDS	- Canadian Medical Education Directions for Specialists
CBME	- Competency-based medical education
CCT	- Confirmation of completion of training
CBD	- Competence By Design
CFPC	- College of Family Physicians of Canada
FAIMER	- Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research
FRCPC	- Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada
FRCSC	- Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada
IMG	- International Medical Graduate
LCME	- Liaison Committee on Medical Education
MCC	- Medical Council of Canada
MCCEE	- Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination
MD	- Doctor of Medicine
USMLE	- United States Medical Licensing Examinations
WHO	- World Health Organization

1.4 Definitions, Terms and Quick Reference

Postgraduate medical education, training and residency training are used interchangeably throughout this guide.

1.4.1 Assessment of Training for Eligibility to Access the Royal College Certification Examination

All applicants must have their residency training assessed by the Royal College to ensure that the specialty specific training requirements have been met in a program that is recognized and approved by the Royal College. More specific information about “Applications for Assessment of Training” is outlined in Section II of this policy. Applicants seeking credit towards examination eligibility for training in a postgraduate medical education system outside of accredited Royal College/ACGME approved programs should refer to Section VII “International Training” for additional information regarding the application process.

1.4.3 Citizenship

Applicants do not have to live in Canada or hold Canadian citizenship to become eligible for the examinations leading to Royal College certification.

1.4.4 Elective

An elective is defined as a discretionary, non-mandatory component of training. More specific information on electives is outlined in Section 4.6.

1.4.5 Licensure

The Royal College does not grant licenses to practice medicine. Applicants who intend to obtain a license to practice in one of the provinces or territories of Canada must hold appropriate registration with the provincial/territorial regulatory authority. Applicants should contact the provincial/territorial medical regulatory authority directly for more information. Links to the regulatory authorities can be found on the Royal College website: www.royalcollege.ca.

1.4.6 Objectives of Training, Specialty Training Requirements and/ or Required Training Experiences

Each specialty and subspecialty recognized by the Royal College has specific mandatory Objectives of Training, Specialty Training Requirements and/or Required Training Experiences. Specific information about the training documents developed for each specialty and subspecialty should be read in conjunction with this guide. The objectives of training, specialty training requirements and/or required training experiences for postgraduate medical education for all Royal College recognized specialties and subspecialties are available on the Royal College website at www.royalcollege.ca

1.4.7 Preceptor

A qualified practitioner who supervises practice-based training in which the learner is immersed in the practitioner's clinical practice for a defined period.

1.4.8 Preceptorship

For the purposes of credentialing requirements of the Royal College, the definition of preceptorship is a defined period of clinical education organized around focused immersion in a single supervisor's practice. It is educationally sound, meaning it must have educational objectives, direct supervision, and assessment, and is under the auspices of an accredited RCPSC/ACGME approved program. Focused immersion in a physician's practice includes clinical duties, observation, feedback, and non-patient related experiences.

1.4.9 Royal College Certification Examinations

Applicants are ruled eligible to take the examinations leading to Royal College certification if all the criteria of eligibility and residency training requirements have been met. Candidates for the examinations must register with the Royal College to take the examination.

1.4.10 Reciprocity

The Royal College has no reciprocal arrangements for recognizing examinations or qualifications of any other College or Board in any specialty or subspecialty. Applicants with certification from any other specialty or subspecialty examinations, College, or Board, are not exempt from any of the requirements of the Royal College.

1.4.11 Residency

A residency is a specialty training program that is completed after medical school. These programs offer supervised and specific training for the resident in their chosen specialty/subspecialty. The Royal College has no jurisdiction over appointment to or promotion in residency programs, or residents' salaries.

1.4.12 Ruling

A ruling is a decision on examination eligibility only. Once the applicant's residency training has been assessed, the Royal College will make a "ruling" (decision) on examination eligibility. The Royal College retains the authority to review all applications for assessment of training on a case-by-case basis and to determine the ruling on examination eligibility. The Royal College also retains the authority to withdraw acceptance of an applicant's credentials and/or require that an applicant complete additional training.

1.4.13 Specialist Certification

Certification in a specialty or subspecialty will be granted upon the satisfactory completion of all credentials, training, and examination requirements. The Royal College certification confirms that specialist physicians and surgeons have met Royal College standards and training requirements.

1.4.14 Written-before-Applied

Written-before-Applied is an exam format requiring candidates to complete the written component of the exam with a passing grade before being invited to take the applied (oral, OSCE, practical)

component of the exam. This format will be applied to all candidates in programs that have moved to a Competence-by-Design training model. In years where candidates from both CBD and traditional time-based training programs have their exams at the same time, a Written-before-Applied format will apply to all candidates.

1.4.15 Competence by Design (CBD)

Competence by Design (CBD) is the Royal College competence-based medical education (CBME) approach to residency training and specialty practice in Canada, which focuses on outcomes that are based on a framework of competence.

1.5 Privacy

All documents and information obtained by the Royal College during the certification and fellowship process will be kept confidential, except as required or permitted by law. Candidates are requested to provide copies and NOT original documents. All personal information is managed in accordance with the Royal College Privacy Policy. Please refer to the [Privacy Policy](#) on the Royal College website for an explanation of how personal information is managed.

Under the Royal College Privacy Policy, individuals have the right to view information stored in their personal files. To access your personal information, forward a written request to the Royal College Privacy Officer at privacy@royalcollege.ca. In some instances, information will be redacted from the documents before access is granted.

SECTION II – APPLICATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING

General Information

All applicants for certification, even if residency training is in a postgraduate medical education program accredited by the Royal College, must be assessed by the Royal College. Applicants should carefully study this guide and the specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training requirements and/or required training experiences before applying for assessment of training. The applicant may submit the 'Application for Assessment of Training' using the online credentials registration system, logging in with their Royal College ID. If residents do not have a Royal College ID, they will be required to complete the mandatory [registration form](#) in order to access the [credentials registration system](#). The specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training requirements and/or required training experiences are also available on the Royal College website.

Please note that the submission of a Royal College 'Application for Assessment of Training' does not guarantee that the Royal College will recognize the applicant's postgraduate medical education.

2.1 Eligibility Criteria

A Royal College 'Application for Assessment of Training' should only be submitted by those who can [document](#) that they meet one of the following requirements:

- 2.1.1 a resident currently or previously enrolled in a specialty or subspecialty residency program accredited by the Royal College or approved by the ACGME in the United States.
- 2.1.2 Medical graduates who are seeking recognition of any training in a postgraduate medical education system outside of an accredited Royal College/ACGME approved program should also refer to Section VII for more information about the application process.

2.2 Documentation

- 2.2.1 Applicants are responsible for providing documentation of all credentials by appropriate authorities and for all periods of training. The Royal College retains the right to request additional documentation from an applicant (e.g., letters of reference) to complete an assessment of training.
- 2.2.2 Verification by appropriate authorities of all credentials and all periods of non-Canadian training must be forwarded with the application.
- 2.2.3 Documentation of a medical degree must certify that the degree has been awarded. A certificate showing that the candidate has passed the final examinations of a medical school is not sufficient.
- 2.2.4 All documents and information obtained by the Royal College during an assessment of training will remain confidential and will be retained by the Royal College. Thus, applicants are therefore requested to provide certified copies and NOT original documents, as documents provided for assessment purposes will not be returned.

2.3 Confirmation of Completion of Training

- 2.3.1 Satisfactory completion of postgraduate medical education must be documented and verified by a program director and the postgraduate office on a Royal College 'Confirmation of Completion of Training' (CCT) form. The CCT will be provided by the applicant's PGME program, following request by the Royal College, in the months leading up to the examination.

2.4 Assessment Fees

- 2.4.1 Assessment fees are non-refundable and must accompany an application for assessment of training. To obtain the Credentials Fee Schedule please refer to the [Royal College website](#).
- 2.4.2 The assessment fee for Royal College/ACGME applicants covers the cost of assessment services for as long as the applicant is continuously enrolled as a resident in a specialty or subspecialty residency

program in an accredited Royal College/ACGME approved program, or for four (4) years, whichever is longer. Once this period has lapsed, a request for a new assessment must include another non-refundable assessment fee.

2.4.3 Assessment fees are reviewed annually by the Royal College and are subject to change.

2.4.4 *Additional fees* will be charged for the assessment of training for the examinations in second or subsequent specialties.

2.4.5 *Additional fees* may be charged for the assessment of training taken outside of Canada, including the United States.

2.5 Application Deadlines

2.5.1 Applicants are encouraged to apply well in advance of the application deadlines to avoid late penalty fees. To view the specialty or subspecialty deadline dates by which the completed assessment form must be received in the Royal College Credentials Unit, please refer to the [Royal College website](#) for application deadlines.

2.5.2 Assessment of training normally takes at least six (6) months but may take up to eighteen (18) months, if periods of non-Canadian training, including the United States, must be assessed, or if the application requires supplementary analysis.

2.5.3 All applications for assessment of training or for updated assessment of additional training must be received before 11:59pm EST (Ottawa time) on the date of the relevant deadline. Subsequent requests for updated assessment of additional training must be received before the relevant deadline for the next year's examination session.

2.6 Penalty Fees

2.6.1 Applications received after the deadline date will be accepted on payment of a non-refundable penalty fee (see Royal College website for current fees), with no guarantee that the application can be processed in time for the next examination session.

SECTION III – EXAMINATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

General Information

The Royal College will assess whether an applicant's training and credentials meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the examinations for their specialty or subspecialty area. These eligibility criteria are:

3.1 Medical Qualification Acceptable to the Royal College

Definition

- 3.1.1 The Royal College bylaws define "medical qualification" as a degree granted by a faculty, college, or school of medicine, upon satisfactory completion of a full curriculum of studies in medicine.
- 3.1.2 The Royal College defines the term "medicine" to include surgery and obstetrics, and does not include chiropractic, homeopathy, podiatry, stomatology, or veterinary science.
- 3.1.3 The Royal College defines "practice of medicine" to mean the practice of the medical, surgical, and laboratory disciplines, and the specialties and areas of subspecialties thereof.

Eligibility

- 3.1.4 The Royal College recognizes qualifications from medical schools that grant the degree of Doctor of Medicine (MD) and Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) and:
 - (i) are accredited by the CACMS or the LCME, or
 - (ii) are recognized by the WHO listing of programs through FAIMER at <https://www.wdoms.org/>
 - (iii) **ONLY** DOs recognized by the American Osteopathic Association are acceptable.
- 3.1.5 Applicants with qualifications from medical schools in countries other than Canada and the United States of America may be required to provide the Royal College with information concerning the curriculum of their undergraduate medical experience.

3.2 Demonstration of Satisfactory Moral, Ethical and Professional Standing

- 3.2.1 Candidates must demonstrate satisfactory moral, ethical and professional standing in clinical and/or research activities. This requires that the candidate appropriately relates to patients, students, colleagues, and other health care professionals with respect to gender, ethnicity and cultural, religious, and personal values.
- 3.2.2 If, at any time prior to certification, the Royal College receives information pertaining to a restriction of a medical license, a criminal conviction or charge and/or other relevant information which puts into issue a candidate's satisfactory moral, ethical and/or professional standing, the matter will be investigated and reviewed by the Executive Director, Office of Standards and Assessment, or a delegate.
- 3.2.3 Upon completion of the investigation and review, the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment, or their delegate has the following options for decision:
 - deny eligibility,
 - suspend a candidate's eligibility (with or without conditions for re-instatement of eligibility); or,
 - revoke a candidate's eligibility.Prior to denying, suspending, or revoking a candidate's eligibility, the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment, or their delegate shall disclose to the candidate the nature of the information received and allow the candidate an opportunity to provide relevant information and make submissions as to their satisfactory moral, ethical and/or professional standing.
- 3.2.4 The candidate may appeal against the decision of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment, or their delegate pursuant to the procedure in Section 3.33 of this Policy.

3.3 Appeal of a Decision under Section 3.2

- 3.3.1** An applicant who wishes to appeal a decision made under Sections 3.2 of this Policy must notify the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment of the Royal College within thirty (30) working days of the date of the decision with a written statement of the reasons for the request. The appeal request must be submitted with a non-refundable administrative fee (see Royal College website for current fees).
- 3.3.2** The appeal of the decision will be conducted by a panel of three (3) members of the Royal College Assessment Committee designated by the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate.
- 3.3.3** If a conflict of interest exists or any other impediment such that a panel of three (3) members selected from the Royal College Assessment Committee is unfeasible in the circumstances, the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate shall appoint appeal panel members from outside of the Royal College Assessment Committee.
- 3.3.4** Appeals shall be conducted by way of a written hearing. In extraordinary circumstances, the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate may, in their sole discretion, direct that the appeal be conducted by way of an oral hearing, in whole or in part, instead of a written hearing. The decision of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate in this regard is final and not subject to review or appeal.
- 3.3.5** Prior to the date of the oral hearing or the date for deliberations in the case of a written hearing, the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate shall provide to each member of the appeal panel all materials, documents and evidence submitted by the parties as well as any other relevant information to the matters at issue.
- 3.3.6** Within thirty (30) days of its deliberations, the Chair of the Panel shall issue in writing the panel's decision and any other relevant information or recommendation to the Office of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment.
- 3.3.7** The appeal panel may confirm or amend, in whole or in part, the decision of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate made under Section 3.2 of this Policy.
- 3.3.8** There is no provision for further appeal to the Royal College of the decision of the appeal panel, which is considered final.

3.4 Satisfactory Completion of Postgraduate Medical Education

Eligibility for the examinations leading to Royal College certification requires satisfactory completion of all requirements of postgraduate medical education as defined in the specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training requirements and/or required training experiences, in a program that is recognized and approved by the Royal College.

SECTION IV – POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

PART A – RESIDENCY EDUCATION

4.1 Residency Education

4.1.1 Definition

The Royal College Credentials Unit classifies postgraduate clinical trainees in accredited Royal College/ACGME approved programs as **residents** if they meet **all** the following criteria:

- (i) the applicant is registered with the office of postgraduate medical education of a medical school in the United States or Canada,
- (ii) the applicant is admitted to and enrolled in an accredited Royal College/ACGME approved residency program, the content of which is defined, supervised, and evaluated by the residency program director and the residency program committee, and
- (iii) the applicant's postgraduate clinical training is in a specialty or subspecialty recognized by the Royal College.

4.1.2 Principles

- (i) Residency is characterized by increasing levels of independent decision-making on the part of the resident within the context of the supervision and counsel of the teaching staff who maintain ultimate responsibility for the professional services provided.
- (ii) The senior resident must report to and have direct access to the supervising staff physician to achieve senior responsibility.
- (iii) The residency program must develop and refine the resident's decision-making skills so that at completion of training the resident can function as an independent consultant in their chosen specialty/subspecialty.
- (iv) The residency requirements must be fulfilled in a progressive fashion to include senior responsibility.
- (v) In general, the Royal College relies on the program to determine if a resident has completed the requirements of residency and apply the policies set out in section 4.2. For residents from training programs that are not Royal College accredited the Royal College must apply the policies set out in section 4.1.

4.2 Residency Training Requirements

4.2.1 Residency training requirements are subject to change. Normally, when amendments are made, an appropriate period is allowed to protect the interest of the resident who has already embarked on a program recognized by the Royal College. However, should a resident interrupt training, no assurance can be given that all training taken prior to the interruption will still be acceptable, even though previously recognized by the Royal College.

4.2.2 By the end of training, the resident must have achieved the objectives of the specialty/subspecialty and must successfully meet the requirements of the CanMEDS competencies as they relate to their specialty/subspecialty. At any point during a resident's training, the Program Director with the approval of the Post Graduate Dean, has the authority to lengthen or change a resident's program if evaluations reveal that the resident is not meeting the specialty training requirements. For more information about CanMEDS and the specialty/subspecialty objectives of training and/or required training experiences, please refer to the [Royal College website](#).

4.2.3 Applicants for Royal College certification in some specialties who do not graduate from Royal College accredited residencies may be required to provide evidence that they have completed at least one (1) year of approved postgraduate basic clinical training. For basic clinical training, the Royal College Credentials Unit will normally accept rotating, transitional, mixed, or straight internships; residency training in family medicine; and/or basic clinical training that is integrated into specialty residency

programs. The basic clinical training year is a mixed clinical educational experience incorporating rotations on a variety of settings, such as surgical, medical, pediatrics and ambulatory. For more information, please refer to the specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training documents and/or required training experiences on the [Royal College website](#).

4.2.4 Overlap of Training Between Specialties

- (i) The Royal College will accept overlapped training between specialties if the specialty training requirements and/or required training experiences of the disciplines allow it and the credit is recommended by the program directors. For example, in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics the fourth year of specialty training is often the first year of subspecialty training. This kind of overlapped training is allowed by the Credentials Unit if the residency training programs are taken consecutively.
- (ii) In the case where an applicant applies for a double-counting of credit when there has been a gap in training between two specialties, the Royal College reserves the right to withhold an application of credit for an overlapping year unless recommendations of credit from the program directors and post graduate deans of both specialties accompany the application and the corresponding Specialty Committees of the Royal College agree that the overlap of training can be granted.

4.2.5 Modifications to Residency Training

The Royal College understands that it may be necessary for some residents to modify their training due to personal circumstances described under applicable human rights legislation. The Royal College will support modifications that are necessary to prevent discrimination, except where such accommodation would impose undue hardship on the Royal College. Undue hardship includes, among other things, any compromise to the validity, reliability and/or integrity of the Royal College certification and examination process and outcome.

4.2.5.1 Fractional (part-time) residency training

- (i) The program director and postgraduate dean must approve the resident's fractional training syllabus.
- (ii) The program director and postgraduate dean must certify that the supervision and assessment of the part-time resident is at least equivalent to that of other residents in the residency program and that the total educational experience is fully equivalent to normal full-time residency.

4.2.5.2 Waiver of training after a leave of absence from residency

Guidelines on granting a leave of absence:

The Royal College expects that all residents must have achieved the goals and objectives of the training program and be competent to commence independent practice by the completion of their training program. It is understood by the Royal College that residents may require leaves of absence from training. The circumstances that would qualify residents for leaves of absence are determined by the university. It is expected that any time lost during a leave will be made up upon the resident's return.

Guidelines on granting a waiver of training:

The postgraduate office may allow a waiver of training following a leave of absence, in accordance with university policy. Similarly, the end-of-training date for a resident cannot be changed to an earlier date after the resident has taken the certification examinations.

Each university will develop its own policy on whether it is willing to grant a waiver of training for time taken as a leave of absence. However, in the case where waivers of

training are acceptable to the university, they should be within the acceptable times listed below. In addition, regardless of any waived blocks of training, the decision to grant a waiver of training must assure that the resident will have achieved the required level of competence by the end of the final year of training.

A waiver of training can only be granted by the postgraduate dean on the recommendation of the resident's program director.

The following are the maximum allowable times for waivers:

1. One (1) year program – no waiver allowed
2. Less than one (1) year for remediation or enhanced skills – no waiver allowed
3. Two (2)-year program – six (6) weeks
4. Three (3)-year program – six (6) weeks
5. Four (4)-year program – three (3) months
6. Five (5)-year program – three (3) months
7. Six (6)-year program – three (3) months
8. In Internal Medicine, where residents are undertaking three (3) years of training with an Internal Medicine Program Director, a maximum of six (6) weeks may be waived for these three (3) years of training. Subsequently, a maximum of six (6) weeks of training may be waived in the following two (2) years of training under the subspecialty Program Director. The process for this program is as follows:
 - i. Three (3) years of training completed with an Internal Medicine Program Director followed by two (2) or three (3) years of subspecialty training with a different program director are treated separately for the purpose of the waiver of training.
 - ii. A waiver must be recommended by the Internal Medicine Program Director and approved by the Postgraduate Dean on the Core in-Training Evaluation Report (CITER). A decision to grant a waiver is made in the PGY3 for a maximum duration of six (6) weeks.
 - iii. In the subspecialty years, a decision to grant a waiver is recommended in the final year by the Subspecialty Program Director and approved by the Postgraduate Dean. A maximum of six (6) week waiver of training can only be taken in the final year of training.
 - iv. If the resident undertakes three (3) years of Internal Medicine training with an Internal Medicine Program Director at one (1) university and switches to another university for subspecialty training, it is the responsibility of the Postgraduate Dean at the corresponding institution to approve the waiver of training.

PART B – OTHER POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

Where the Royal College is responsible for assessing the training of applicants, at the discretion of the Royal College Credentials Unit, some credit may also be given for postgraduate medical education other than residency training.

4.3 Family Medicine Training

Training taken in Canadian programs accredited by the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) may be accepted for partial credit in some specialties.

4.4 Clinical or Basic Research

The guidelines for credit given for meeting specialty training requirements for a research experience are available from the Royal College Office of Standards and Assessment, Credentials Unit. The advice and support of the residency program director must be sought **before** commencing the research experience.

4.5 Eligibility

4.5.1 Credit is only given at the discretion of the Royal College Assessment Committee:

- (i) where the specialty training requirements permit,
- (ii) where the specialty residency program director can provide assurance that the postgraduate clinical residency requirements can be reduced appropriately, and
- (iii) if the research experience, in the judgment of the Royal College Credentials Unit, is of outstanding quality.

4.5.2 Credit will be considered if the research has been done in an academic centre:

- (i) as part of a program in which research methodology is taught,
- (ii) where the research supervisor or mentor has an established research record,
- (iii) when it is documented that the applicant had a significant role in the research project,
- (iv) when it is documented that the research is relevant to the specialty in which the applicant seeks certification, and
- (v) where there are defined objectives for the research experience and a formal evaluation process for the resident.

Conditions

4.5.3 Research conducted outside of a recognized residency or higher degree program in an approved university **may** be considered for a maximum of one (1) year of credit, in some specialties.

4.5.4 An advanced degree or full-time training in a relevant discipline taken before or after graduation in medicine can be considered for a maximum of one (1) year of credit in some specialties. Documentation of the advanced degree or full-time training must be provided, together with evidence that the study or research was relevant to the objectives of the specialty in which the candidate is seeking certification.

4.6 Electives Eligibility

4.6.1 Electives taken in an unaccredited setting may be accepted towards specialty or subspecialty training requirements if **all** the following conditions are met:

- (i) the resident must be enrolled in a recognized program at the time the elective is taken,
- (ii) the total duration of rotations taken at unaccredited sites must not exceed six (6) months of the total training for the specialty or subspecialty,
- (iii) the elective period is planned by the program director and the resident, which is then accepted by the program director as meeting the specialty training requirements,
- (iv) there is a clearly defined elective supervisor,
- (v) there are clearly defined and understood educational objectives, and
- (vi) there is a well-defined in-training evaluation system to include evaluation of the resident during the elective period that is based on the educational objectives of the elective and that is clearly understood beforehand by the resident, the elective supervisor, and the program director.

4.7 Other Acceptable Postgraduate Clinical Training to meet Royal College Training Requirements

4.7.1 The Royal College Credentials Unit **may** recognize other postgraduate clinical training only if the trainee requires a single additional year of training to meet Royal College requirements. This training

must take place at the site of an accredited Royal College/ACGME approved program and meet **all** the following criteria:

- (i) the content of the postgraduate clinical training is the same as that of a Royal College accredited/ACGME approved residency program,
- (ii) the training is directed, evaluated, and supervised in the same manner as a resident's training,
- (iii) the applicant is registered with the office of postgraduate medical education of a medical school in Canada or with the office of graduate medical education of a medical school in the United States.

4.7.2 Credit will not be given for postgraduate clinical training time spent in preceptorship practice except where defined in the specialty training requirements and within the definition as outlined in section 1.4.8.

4.7.3 Credit will not be given for postgraduate clinical training time spent in teaching positions.

4.7.4 Credit will not be given for training taken in disconnected periods in blocks of less than six (6) months.

SECTION V – ROYAL COLLEGE RULINGS ON EXAMINATION ELIGIBILITY

General Information

The attestation to the satisfactory completion of specialty or subspecialty residency training (e.g., CCT) does not alone ensure admission to the examinations leading to Royal College certification.

Important Note: As training programs in Canada transition to a Competence-by-Design (CBD) model, exam components will be de-coupled (the written and applied components will become independent components) and success at the written will be a requirement to continue to the subsequent component. All disciplines will use this format in CBD, but certain disciplines have opted to move to this model before they shift to CBD. In those disciplines, the *below policy does not apply*. Rather, the applicable policy can be found in the [Policies for Certification in a Competence by Design Model of Residency Training](#) on the Royal College website.

The specialties that have a written-before-applied exam format can be identified in the exam format documents on the [Royal College website](#). This includes any CBD cohort presenting for the examination.

5.1 Issuing a Royal College Ruling Letter

5.1.1 The Royal College Credentials Unit will issue a “ruling letter” on examination eligibility and/or conditions to be **met** to attain eligibility, under the following conditions:

5.1.1.1 For applicants from a Royal College accredited residency, the “ruling letter” will be issued upon receipt of a “Notification of Exam Eligibility” document from the resident’s program.

5.1.1.2 For other applicants, the “ruling letter” will be issued when the assessment of training for eligibility to access the Royal College certification examination has been completed.

5.1.1.3 For applicants, in a subspecialty, a “provisional ruling letter” may be issued. Receiving eligibility for a subspecialty examination is dependent on satisfactory completion of training, credentialing, and examinations of the primary discipline. In circumstances where the timing of the subspecialty examination takes place before the results of the primary examination are available, then candidates will not be able to provisionally register for the examination.

5.1.1.4 Receiving a Royal College “ruling letter” does not mean certification has been granted; rather, it is a step in the process of becoming certified.

5.1.2 Applicants who have **not met** the residency training requirements of the Royal College will be issued a “dictate ruling”. Applicants will be required to take further residency training in a program that is recognized and approved by the Royal College if they wish to be eligible for the examinations leading to Royal College certification. A requirement for further residency training imposes no obligation on any residency program to provide such training.

5.2 Conditions Pertaining to Rulings

5.2.1 A ruling on training credit or eligibility for the examinations is only valid when it is signed by an executive officer of the Royal College.

5.2.2 A ruling is valid for:

- Five (5) consecutive years for certification examinations administered yearly (this includes the Surgical Foundations examination).

5.3 Examination Eligibility Rulings

5.3.1 In order to be ruled eligible for the examinations leading to Royal College certification, an applicant must demonstrate that:

- (i) there is documentary evidence that skills essential to the practice of the specialty or subspecialty have been evaluated as satisfactory.
- (ii) the requirements for full specialty or subspecialty residency training including senior responsibility have been achieved.

- (iii) the professional and ethical standing of the applicant has been assessed as satisfactory,
- (iv) the specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training requirements, and/or required training experiences have been completed satisfactorily, and
- (v) the *Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship* have been followed.

5.4 Examination Eligibility

- 5.4.1 Candidates must complete all required examination components for their specialty within five (5) years of being granted eligibility.
- 5.4.2 Candidates taking 'written before applied' exams will be required to successfully complete one exam component before being invited to a subsequent exam component (e.g., written, or applied). If a candidate is successful on the written component of the examination, but unsuccessful on the applied component, they will not be required to repeat the written component in subsequent years. A maximum of four (4) attempts are permitted on a single exam component. If a candidate should use all four (4) years of eligibility to pass their written examination component, their maximum eligibility for the applied component will be limited to the remainder of the five years of examination eligibility period set out in section 5.4.1.
- 5.4.3 Candidates taking comprehensive exams will be required to successfully complete both exam components in one (1) year. Those that are unsuccessful will be required to re-take both components at the subsequent attempt.
- 5.4.4 A candidate will be granted no further eligibility on the occurrence of either of the following:
 - the candidate has exhausted four (4) years of eligibility on a single exam component (written or applied) without successful completion.
 - the candidate has not completed all examination components within five (5) years of their initial grant of eligibility.
- 5.4.5 Candidates who have exhausted their eligibility under section 5.4.2 may only re-apply for examination eligibility upon completion of additional accredited residency training and submitting a request for a reconsideration of a ruling on exam eligibility pursuant to the reconsideration of a ruling process set out in section 5.5.
- 5.4.6 Exam eligibility is granted notwithstanding the route to certification. Exam eligibility is not renewed upon submission of an application through another route to certification.
- 5.4.7 Candidates lose one examination attempt for each exam failure or failure to attend either of the exam components.
- 5.4.8 Certification in an applicable primary specialty is required before exam eligibility will be granted towards a sub-specialty examination.
- 5.4.9 A Royal College accredited residency program has the authority to withdraw a trainee's exam eligibility at any point prior to the examination by notifying the Credentials Unit at the Royal College.

5.5 Reconsideration of a Ruling on Examination Eligibility

- 5.5.1 A reconsideration of a ruling on examination may be initiated at the request of an applicant or by the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment of the Royal College, or a delegate, if substantive new information about an applicant's credentials or training is received or if there was an error in the administration of policy in an applicant's assessment of training. New information may be received from the applicant or any other knowledgeable source and should be sent to the attention of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment.
 - 5.5.1.1 Candidates who complete an additional two (2) years of accredited residency training under the supervision of a Program Director **may** be granted **only** one (1) additional attempt at the examination. Such determination will be at the discretion of the Royal College.
- 5.5.2 Requests for reconsideration of a ruling will be considered by the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate.

- 5.5.3** If a reconsideration of a ruling is initiated by the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate, the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate shall disclose to the applicant the nature of the information received and allow the applicant an opportunity to provide relevant information and make submissions.
- 5.5.4** The Executive Director, Standards and Assessment or a delegate shall issue a written decision either confirming or amending the original ruling with respect to examination eligibility and provide a copy of the decision to the applicant.
- 5.5.5** The decision of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment, or their delegate, shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

5.6 Withdrawal of Examination Eligibility

- 5.6.1** The Royal College retains the authority to withdraw acceptance of an applicant's credentials or withdraw permission to access the examinations leading to Royal College certification in the event of an error in the Royal College's assessment of an applicant's credentials or on the recommendation of an Examination Board, the Royal College Credentials Unit, or the applicant's program director.
- 5.6.2** The Royal College may require that the applicant satisfy specific requirements as a condition of accessing the examination leading to Royal College certification.
- 5.6.3** Withdrawal of a satisfactory CCT form, or questionnaire attestation will result in withdrawal of examination eligibility.
- 5.6.4** Candidates who have had their examination eligibility withdrawn under section 5.7.1 may only re-apply for examination eligibility upon substantive changes in their application pursuant to the reconsideration of a ruling process set out in section 5.5 of this Policy.

5.7 Deferral of examination eligibility

- 5.7.1** In the event that the candidate cannot attend or unexpectedly misses an examination due to a serious accident, illness or other impediment, the Royal College will consider deferral of examination eligibility for one (1) additional year of eligibility. Note: Deferrals will only be granted in exceptional situations. Deferrals will generally not be granted for missed flights and other travel delays, minor illness, lack of preparedness, scheduling conflicts or delays in obtaining citizenship or visas.
- 5.7.2** Candidates who know in advance of the examination that it will be missed should contact the Royal College to request a deferral as early as possible.
- 5.7.3** Candidates who miss an examination unexpectedly must submit a request for deferral within five (5) business days of the missed examination date.
- 5.7.4** All requests for deferral must include the following documentation:
 - (i) A written request for deferral and a detailed description of the circumstances leading to the request, signed by the candidate.
 - (ii) In the case of serious accident or illness, an original letter, on office letterhead, from the candidate's qualified treating professional identifying and confirming the accident or illness, together with verification that the accident or illness was serious enough to warrant missing the examination; and,
 - (iii) In the case of any other impediment, appropriate documentation, from a source with direct involvement or knowledge of the circumstances in question.Note: The Royal College may request additional information and/or confirmation, as it considers necessary on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.7.5** The final decision regarding a request for deferral lies with the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment, or a delegate, and is not subject to reconsideration or appeal.

SECTION VI – ROYAL COLLEGE EXAMINATIONS

General Information

In the context of a candidate preparing for the Royal College examination, the Royal College does not provide or endorse any preparatory courses, syllabi, reading lists, or ghost banks. The candidate should seek the advice of the program director for examination preparation.

6.1 Surgical Foundations Examination

6.1.1 In the surgical specialties of Cardiac Surgery, General Surgery, Neurosurgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Orthopedic Surgery, Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, Plastic Surgery, Urology and Vascular Surgery, candidates must successfully complete the Surgical Foundations examination to attain eligibility for any examination in the relevant surgical specialty.

6.1.1.1 Effective February 2019, internationally trained applicants no longer require the Surgical Foundations examination to attain eligibility for any examination in the relevant surgical specialty.

6.1.2 The Surgical Foundations examination is held annually in the fall and examination dates are set on a yearly basis. A ruling for the Surgical Foundations examination is valid for five (5) years as noted under section 5.2.2. For more information about the registration deadline, examination dates, sites, and format for the Surgical Foundations examination, please refer to the Royal College website: www.royalcollege.ca.

6.2 Examinations in Accreditation without Certification (AWC) disciplines that convert to subspecialty with examination

6.2.1 All graduates of Royal College accredited AWC programs that convert to subspecialty with examination are eligible to take the certification examinations starting with the first set of examinations offered. Eligibility to the certification examinations is contingent upon the applicant's successful completion of an approved primary entry specialty residency for the discipline (e.g., Maternal Fetal Medicine applicants must have completed an accredited or approved Royal College residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology).

6.2.2 All graduates of ACGME or other approved programs in disciplines that convert from an AWC to a subspecialty with examination are eligible to take the certification examinations if the program was approved after the recognition of the subspecialty as an Accreditation Without Certification program by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

6.2.3 Eligibility for all these applicants is contingent upon fulfilling all the requirements outlined in the *Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship* and the Specialty Training Requirements and/or required training experiences of the subspecialty, as with all other disciplines.

6.2.4 If a graduate of an AWC program that has converted to certification with examination chooses to challenge the certifying examinations and fails, the physician maintains their AWC status with the Royal College.

6.3 Examination Registration

6.3.1 Residents who intend to register for the examination leading to Royal College certification **must** have received from the Royal College an official ruling letter confirming their eligibility for the examination.

6.3.2 Candidates must register for the examinations by the deadlines published on the [Royal College website](http://www.royalcollege.ca). Candidates must obtain confirmation of receipt of their registration from the Royal College to ensure that the Royal College has received their registration.

6.3.3 Residents who are ruled eligible for the next examination session will receive information about the examination with their official ruling letter. More specific information on rulings is outlined in Section V "Royal College Rulings on Examination Eligibility" of this Policy.

6.4 Payment of Examination fees

Examination fees must be paid in full and are due by the posted deadline.

6.4.1 Examination fees will be published on the [Royal College website](#) prior to the examination registration deadline. Candidates need to refer to the published fees prior to submitting their registration to the exams.

6.4.2 Non-payment of fees by the deadline may result in the candidate's registration to the examination to be declined.

6.4.3 Examination fees are reviewed annually by the Royal College and are subject to change. To obtain an Examination Fee Schedule please refer to the [Royal College website](#).

6.5 Withdrawals from Examinations

6.5.1 Notification of withdrawal **must** be received by the Royal College at candidates@royalcollege.ca at least twenty (20) business days before the first component of the examination. Upon receipt, 50% of the examination fees will be refunded. Notification of withdrawal less than twenty (20) days before the examination will result in no refund of the fees.

6.5.2 All candidates who fail one of the examination components, withdraw from an examination component, or do not appear at the examination component, will have been considered to have used one year of eligibility for the applicable exam component, unless granted a deferral pursuant to section 5.8.

6.6 Access to Exams

Access to the examinations will be granted to candidates that have registered and have received confirmation of their examination registration. Candidates are also required to show a government issued photo identification at the time of the examination.

6.7 All Royal College examinations are conducted in accordance with the *Rules & Procedures applicable to the Delivery of Royal College Examinations*. Please refer to the policy on the Royal College website.

6.8 Deadline for Examination Registration

All applications must be received before 11:59pm EST (Ottawa time) on the date of the relevant deadline. Please refer to the [Royal College website](#) to see the current deadlines for the spring and fall examinations.

6.9 Examination Dates

Examination dates are subject to change without notice. Please refer to the [Royal College website](#) to obtain the official examination dates.

6.10 Examination Sites

Examinations, including the Surgical Foundations examination, **may** be held in various centres across Canada. Information on the location of the exam venues is available on the [Royal College website](#).

6.11 Examination Format

6.11.1 The Royal College examination incorporates combined written and applied components that may include one or more short answer questions (SAQ) and/or multiple-choice questions (MCQ), oral, OSCE, clinical, practical, or other examination components.

6.11.2 As disciplines transition to a Competence-by-Design (CBD) training model, there may be an occurrence of candidates from both the traditional and CBD programs writing exams in the same exam season. In this case, the written-before-applied format that applies to CBD candidates will also be applied to traditional candidates. Note: A written-before-applied format requires candidates to

pass the written component of the exam before they are invited to take the applied (oral, OSCE, practical) exam.

6.11.3 Information about the examination format of each specialty and subspecialty is available on the [Royal College website](#).

6.11.4 Candidates are notified as soon as possible of changes in the examination format or timing approved by the Royal College Examination Committee.

6.12 Candidates requiring an Examination Accommodation

6.12.1 The Royal College will attempt to accommodate candidates with specific requirements for the examination provided that the validity of the examination is maintained, and the accommodation does not cause undue hardship or unreasonable expense for the Royal College.

6.12.2 Requests for examination accommodation must be submitted to the Royal College at the time of [registering](#) for the examination through the online e-booking system. Requests must include the following documentation:

- A signed letter from the candidate with a description of the need for accommodation and its severity, along with a description of the required accommodation.
- If the candidate has previously been provided accommodations by their university or other medical education programs, the candidate should provide documentation of the accommodations provided.
- Supporting documentation from a qualified treating professional confirming the need for accommodation, its severity, the candidates' functional limitations, and specific recommendations for the accommodation. All supporting documentation must be provided on office letterhead, from the candidate's fully licensed practicing physician, clinical psychologist, or other appropriate licensed healthcare provider (the practitioner cannot be a relative or spouse of the candidate).
- If the supporting documentation specified above is more than two (2) years old, the candidate must provide up-dated documentation from a qualified treating professional confirming that the original documentation and functional limitations outlined therein are still valid.

Note: The Royal College may request additional information, as it considers necessary, on a case-by-case basis.

6.12.3 In the event that the need for an examination accommodation arises after the registration for examination is submitted, the candidate must inform the Program Manager, Assessment at examaccommodation@royalcollege.ca and submit the documentation described in section 6.12.2 as soon as possible. It may not be possible to arrange the examination accommodation requested too close to the examination date.

6.12.4 The final decision regarding an accommodation request lies with the Director, Assessment and Certification, or a delegate.

6.12.5 Prior to taking the Royal College examination, the candidate and the Royal College must agree upon special arrangements in writing.

6.12.6 Candidates requesting exam scheduling accommodations in relation to religious observances may do so using the exam accommodations process.

6.13 Examination Rules and Procedures

All examination candidates are required to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner and in compliance with the *Rules & Procedures applicable to the Delivery of Royal College Examinations*.

6.14 Conflicts

The Royal College tries to ensure that potential examiner and examinee conflicts are minimized. A conflict that could exist may include:

- a past candidate/faculty teaching relationship.
- a past work-based candidate/examiner relationship.
- past candidate/ examiner encounters in other exams; and

- all other relationship encounters that could present a bias at an examination.

6.14.1 If a candidate identifies a conflict, they are obligated to bring the conflict to the attention of the examination invigilator who will bring it to the attention of the Chair of the Discipline-Specific Examination Board who will identify a substitute member of the same Discipline-Specific Examination Board to take over the examiner duties.

6.14.2 The Royal College cannot guarantee that a candidate will have new examiners when re-writing or taking multiple examinations. Candidates may not request substitute examiners unless there is a legitimate conflict.

6.14.3 If you perceive a conflict of interest with an examiner, please report it to the Royal College at candidates@royalcollege.ca before the exam.

6.15 Language of Examinations

6.15.1 The Royal College examinations are offered in both English and French.

6.15.2 Standard medical terminology is used in both English and French examinations. All candidates must anticipate that the examination text will be presented in Standard Medical Terminology. "Standard Medical Terminology" means language used to describe medical components, processes, conditions, and procedures. Its source may include medical textbooks, lexicons, dictionaries, and journals; it may be specific to a medical specialty.

6.15.3 Candidates must declare at the time of examination registration whether they wish to be examined in English or French for each component of the exam. The candidate must consistently respond to answers on the respective exam components using the declared language.

6.15.4 Candidates whose first language is not English, or French should ensure that they have reasonable fluency, written and oral, in either English or French.

6.16 Frequency of Examinations

6.16.1 The Royal College will offer discipline specific examinations on a yearly basis as directed by the Assessment Committee.

6.16.2 Where specialties have more than one examination component, each component will be offered once during an examination year. For example, if a discipline has a written exam component and an applied exam component, each component will be offered only once during an exam year.

6.17 Decisions of Royal College Examination Boards

6.17.1 The Royal College Examination Boards are empowered by the Royal College Examination Committee and by the Council of the Royal College to make final decisions on the examinations of all candidates, following procedures approved by the Royal College Examination Committee and Council of the Royal College.

6.17.2 Unsuccessful candidates will receive a summary of their performance from the Exam Board Chair. The intent of this report is to indicate where the performance did not meet the standards set by the examination board. The report will provide very general comments and will not include details on specific questions. Candidates are not permitted access to their exam content, and they are not allowed to review their exams.

6.18 Exam Results/posting of marks

Candidate results are posted on a secure, confidential server and can only be accessed through the Royal College website using a unique identifier. If a candidate does not want their results posted on the website, they must inform the Credentials Unit as soon as possible, including up to the day before their examination by email at candidates@royalcollege.ca. Examination results go through a rigorous data verification process to ensure that posted results have been audited and verified as complete and accurate.

6.19 Expiration of Exam Results

Candidates who successfully complete all exam components in their specialty will receive a letter from the Credentials Unit acknowledging the candidate's successful result. Additionally, this letter will contain an invitation to become certified by the Royal College pending any further requirements (e.g., completing training). This results letter will be valid for five (5) years. If the outstanding requirements outlined in the letter have not been met and certification has not been achieved within five (5) years, the candidate will be required to re-take all examination components in their specialty and complete all outstanding requirements to re-qualify for certification.

6.20 Formal Review of Examinations

Formal reviews of exams are conducted based on alleged significant procedural irregularities in the assessment process, not because of alleged errors in content. Please refer to the [Policy on Formal Review of Examinations](#) on the Royal College website for detailed information about the policy and process.

SECTION VII – INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

General Information

The requirements stated below are in addition to all other policies and procedures outlined in this guide. Non-Royal College accredited/non-ACGME approved trained applicants must fulfil all other requirements as stated in Sections II, III, IV, V, and VI, in addition to meeting the prerequisites stated in this section or the referenced policies.

7.1 Individual Assessment of Training for approved jurisdictions

Residency training from non-Royal College accredited/non-ACGME approved systems listed on the [website](#) does not confer eligibility to the Royal College examinations. The Royal College must conduct an evaluation of training to determine an applicant's eligibility to the Royal College examinations.

7.1.1 Criteria for Individual Assessment of Training

- (i) The applicant's training must satisfy all the Royal College postgraduate medical education requirements in the specialty as detailed in the specialty specific objectives of training, specialty training requirements, and/or required training experiences available on the [Royal College website](#).
- (ii) The applicant must meet **all** other requirements for examination eligibility as outlined in Sections II, III, IV, V and VI of this guide.

7.1.2 Procedures for Assessment

- (i) Applicants will be required to pay a non-refundable assessment fee. For assessment fees please consult the [website](#).
- (ii) Once the assessment of training has been completed, applicants will receive a ruling letter on examination eligibility and/or conditions to be met to attain eligibility. More specific information on rulings is outlined in Section V of this guide.

Applicants that are international medical graduates (IMGs) that completed specialty training outside Canada or the United States in an approved jurisdiction, please refer to the application process outlined on the [Royal College website](#).

Note: By resolution of Council, in 2005 the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (Royal College) discontinued the process of assessing other jurisdictions' Postgraduate Medical Education systems (PGME) for International Medical Graduate (IMG) applicants seeking Royal College Certification. This discontinuation also applies to specialties or subspecialties that were not assessed within approved jurisdictions.

Applicants with training from International PGME Systems not listed on the [Royal College website](#) may be able to apply through other routes to certification.

7.2 Practice Eligibility Route (PER)

Applicants that are international medical graduates that are already licensed and practicing as a specialist in Canada or ready to begin practicing in Canada may be eligible to apply for examination eligibility pursuant the *Policy on Practice Eligibility Route*.

7.3 Practice Eligibility Route for Subspecialists (PER-Sub)

Applicants that are practicing in a subspecialty in Canada that are not eligible for the traditional credentials review because of completing unaccredited training or no training in the subspecialty may be eligible to apply for examination eligibility pursuant the *Policy on Practice Eligibility Route for Subspecialists*.

7.4 **Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP)**

The Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP) provides an approved mechanism for non-Royal College, internationally training subspecialists practicing in Canada to take a Royal College subspecialty examination and join the Royal College as a Subspecialist Affiliate. Applicants may be eligible to apply for examination eligibility pursuant to the *Policy on Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program*.

7.5 **Practice Eligibility Route for the Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (PER-SEAP)**

Applicants can apply for an assessment through PER-SEAP if they are an internationally trained subspecialist that is already licensed and practicing as a subspecialist in Canada, and they are not Royal College certified in a primary specialty. Applicants may be eligible to apply for examination eligibility pursuant to the *Policy on Practice Eligibility Route for Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program*.

7.6 **Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) in-training route**

The in-training route for Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) is designed for specialists who acquire the competencies of a Royal College AFC discipline through training in an accredited program, and who wish to have their competencies recognized with the AFC credential. Please refer to the application process outlined on the [Royal College website](#).

7.7 **Practice Eligibility Route – Areas of Focused Competence (PER-AFC)**

The Practice Eligibility Route for Areas of Focused Competence (PER-AFC) is designed for specialists who have acquired the competencies of a Royal College AFC discipline through professional practice and who wish to have their competencies recognized with the Royal College credential. The practice route is intended for specialists in practice who have not completed training in a Royal College accredited AFC program. Please refer to the application process outlined on the [Royal College website](#).

7.8 **Academic Certification**

Academic Certification assists Canadian university faculties of medicine in the recruitment of international specialists as full-time clinical faculty at the rank of associate or full professor when recruitment of qualified Royal College certificants has been unsuccessful. This route to Royal College certification is not intended for those who have a reasonable alternate route to certification. Please refer to the nomination process outlined on the [Royal College website](#).

8. **Policy record**

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