

Credentials Unit – March 2026

Practice Eligibility Route Guidebook

Frequently Asked Questions, Processes & Timelines

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Application for Assessment of Training

Disclaimer: *This guidance document is based on information available and current as of April 10, 2026, and may be revised or updated without notice as requirements, policies, or best practices evolve.*

WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO APPLY THROUGH THE PER?

Those who wish to apply through the PER must have completed their training outside Canada, the United States, and the Royal College approved jurisdictions, in a program that is not accredited by the Royal College. They must also be trained in a [Royal College recognized primary specialty](#) and training should be substantially equivalent to that of the Royal College.

HOW DO I APPLY TO THE PER?

Applications are submitted through the Royal College's [eBooking](#) platform. [Instructions on how to apply](#) can be found on the Royal College website.

WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO SUBMIT WITH MY APPLICATION?

Applications cannot be processed if all listed documents are not submitted. Applicants 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.

Applicants must submit the following documents to the Royal College with their application:

- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Copy of medical degree
- Documentation of completion of internship training, if applicable to the specialty
- Official document signed by your Program Director, Supervisor, or training institution, on letterhead, attesting to your periods of training (including the start and end date of residency — dd/mm/yy) as well as details of training rotations/experiences, specifying the number of months spent in different areas of the specialty.
- Letter of attestation of competence from the applicants Program Director/Supervisor which outlines the applicant's competencies in relation to the [CanMEDS](#) roles.

Applicants must submit the following documents to Physicians Apply for source verification:

- Copy of medical degree

- Internship document, if applicable
- Documentation of postgraduate training (written confirmation from Program Director, Supervisor, or training institution, on letterhead, indicating start and finish dates of training (dd/mm/yy); including certificate confirming completion of specialty training)

HOW IS TRAINING ASSESSED?

Details of the training completed are compared with the Royal College's [training standards and/or training experiences](#) in the primary specialty. If the Specialty Training Requirements for your specialty are not available on the Royal College website, you may obtain this information by contacting per@royalcollege.ca.

HOW LONG DOES AN ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING TAKE?

Assessment of a complete application can take 3-6 months to process. When completed, a ruling letter will be sent via email.

Royal College Examinations

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HOW MANY ATTEMPTS ARE PROVIDED IF I AM DEEMED ELIGIBLE FOR THE EXAM?

Exams typically consist of a written component and/or an applied component. [Examination formats](#) vary by specialty and can be found on the Royal College website. You are allowed a maximum of four (4) attempts on a single exam component within the five (5) year eligibility period. Candidates must complete all required examination components for their specialty within five (5) years of being granted eligibility.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM DEEMED INELIGIBLE FOR THE EXAM?

If your application is unsuccessful, our support team will explain the reason in your ruling letter, indicating the additional residency training required to meet the [Royal College's specialty-specific training requirements/training experiences](#). [Assessment fees](#) submitted with an application are non-refundable.

WHAT IS THE RECONSIDERATION PROCESS IF DEEMED INELIGIBLE FOR THE EXAM?

A reconsideration of a ruling on examination eligibility may be initiated at the request of the 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. An example of substantive new information about an applicant would be that the applicant completed two (2) years in a Canadian accredited program in their specialty under the supervision of a Program Director. Additionally, if an applicant completed two (2) years of residency in their home country, this may also be considered as substantive new information subject to review. The decision of the Executive Director, Standards and Assessment, or their delegate, shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

HOW MANY TIMES PER YEAR DO THE EXAMS TAKE PLACE?

Exams are on fixed [dates](#) and take place annually. For specialties that have more than one examination component, each component will be offered once during an examination

year. For example, if a specialty has a written exam component and an applied exam component, each component will be offered only once during an exam year.

Assessment of Practice

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HOW MUCH TIME IN PRACTICE IS REQUIRED?

No practice time is required to receive exam eligibility through the PER route. For certification, in addition to passing the Royal College specialty exam, a minimum of two (2) years of supervised practice in a continuous practice location in Canada is required within the primary specialty for which you have applied. These two (2) years must be the equivalent of two (2) full-time years in practice. A minimum of 50% of practice must be spent practicing in the primary specialty to fulfil the time in practice requirement.

HOW CAN I COUNT MY TIME IN FELLOWSHIP TOWARDS THE PRACTICE REQUIREMENT?

In some specific cases, one (1) year spent in clinical fellowship training in Canada may be counted toward the two (2) year practice requirement if the fellowship had significant overlap with the primary specialty. Candidates must provide a letter from their fellowship director attesting to their clinical competencies in the primary specialty and to their time dedication – which must be equal to or greater than 50% of their year in fellowship. Time in fellowship training that has been counted towards the training requirements cannot be counted towards the practice time requirements.

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY COMPLETED TIME IN PRACTICE IN CANADA BEFORE APPLYING?

Applicants already practicing in Canada at the time of their 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.

HOW IS AN ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICE COMPLETED?

Candidates will be asked to inform the Royal College when they begin their time in practice in Canada, so that the Credentials Unit may begin the assessment of time in practice. Nearing the end of their time in practice, the Royal College will send candidates a *Respondent Information Form*, to collect references and initiate the multisource feedback (MSF) process.

Feedback on the candidates professional competencies relating to the [CanMEDS](#) roles is gathered through a MSF process, consisting of a standardized attestation of competence completed by candidate references, specifically from:

- A supervisor,
- a Royal College Fellow in the same specialty as the candidate,
- a person of the candidate's choice.

Candidates are also required to submit a letter of employment that includes the practice start date, a copy of their license, and a letter from their supervisor attesting to their clinical competence and time dedication in the specialty.

Fulfilling Training Requirements

***Disclaimer:** This guidance document is based on information available and current as of April 10, 2026, and may be revised or updated without notice as requirements, policies, or best practices evolve.*

Training that appears similar to the Royal College training standards does not automatically make an applicant eligible to sit the Royal College examination. All training must first be reviewed and approved by the Credentials Unit. Eligibility to sit the examination is confirmed only after this review. Applicants must also have completed the required duration and type of specialty training. If the training assessed is insufficient or not comparable to Royal College training standards, eligibility to sit the examination will not be granted.

All training is assessed against the Royal College’s specialty training requirements/required training experiences. Please refer to the specialty-specific information on the [Information by Discipline](#) page. If you have difficulty locating this information on our website, contact per@royalcollege.ca for assistance.

I COMPLETED FELLOWSHIP/SUBSPECIALTY TRAINING, CAN IT BE COUNTED TOWARDS THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS?

Where the specialty training requirements permit, up to 12 months of additional postgraduate medical education such as fellowships or subspecialty training may be considered to fulfill the training requirements. Please note that terminology varies and the STR may refer to fellowships and subspecialty training as “academic enrichment activities”, “selectives”, “electives” or “advanced residency training”. Details on what may be considered can be found in the Specialty Training Requirements document on the [Information by Discipline](#) page by selecting your specialty from the menu.

I COMPLETED RESEARCH IN THE SPECIALTY; CAN IT BE COUNTED TOWARDS THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS?

Research completed within a fellowship, internship or during residency training may be considered to fulfill the training requirements provided it is within the scope of the specialty, and the specialty training requirements allow for it. Specific criteria for acceptable

research activities can be found in the Specialty Training Requirements document on the [Information by Discipline](#) page by selecting your specialty from the menu.

I COMPLETED AN INTERNSHIP; CAN IT BE COUNTED TOWARDS THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS?

Time spent in internship training may be considered to fulfill the training requirements. Please note that terminology varies and the STR may refer to internships as “basic clinical training”, “basic clinical residency”, “foundational clinical training”, “broad-based clinical training”. Specific criteria for acceptable internships can be found in the Specialty Training Requirements document on the [Information by Discipline](#) page by selecting your specialty from the menu.

WHAT IS “FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING IN SURGERY”?

Foundational training in surgery, also known as Surgical Foundations training, is a requirement for all surgical specialties. It is typically two (2) years of clinical training in the fundamental knowledge and skills of surgery. Specific criteria for Surgical Foundations training can be found in the Specialty Training Requirements document on the [Information by Discipline](#) page by selecting your surgical specialty from the menu.

Application and Exam Timelines and General Requirements/Information by Specialty

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WHEN SHOULD I APPLY FOR ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING?

Applications are accepted year-round; however, each exam session has a specific deadline as indicated in the table below.

Applications received after the deadline will be subject to late fees. If applications received after the deadline for the upcoming exam are not processed in time to register for the exam, they may be pushed to the following exam year. Applicants should review the exam schedule found on the Royal College website to determine the season of their written exam (Spring/Fall).

Applications are processed according to the following priority levels:

- Priority Level 1: applies to in-season applications submitted within the primary intake period (e.g., fall or spring). For example, a spring 2026 application submitted before the April 30th, 2025, deadline would receive Priority Level 1 processing, as the Credentials Unit focuses on evaluating applications for the upcoming term.
- Priority Level 2: applies to off-season applications submitted outside peak intake periods (e.g., fall or spring). For example, a fall 2026 application submitted in March 2025 would be processed at Priority Level 2, as the Credentials team prioritizes spring 2026 applications until the April 30, 2025, deadline.

WHEN SHOULD I REGISTER FOR THE EXAM?

Candidates who receive a ruling letter indicating they are eligible for an exam can register within the registration window outlined in the table below. Candidates can register for Royal College examinations using the instructions and link provided in their ruling letter. Late registration forms are not accepted.

APPLICATION AND EXAMINATION REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Application for Assessment of Training	
Spring Exams	April 30th of the <u>year before the exam</u>
Fall Exams	August 31st of the <u>year before the exam</u>
Examination Registration	
Spring Exams	September 1st to November 4th of the <u>year before the exam</u>
Fall Exams	February 1st to April 15th of the <u>year of the exam</u>

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS/INFORMATION BY SPECIALTY

Disclaimers:

- *The table below provides general guidance for comparing international medical training with Royal College primary specialty requirements. Actual training standards may change, and all applications for assessment are reviewed individually. Final decisions regarding training credit and examination eligibility rest solely with the Royal College and may differ from this guidance. Exam eligibility decisions cannot be appealed based on information in this document.*
- **Exam timing in the table below is applicable to the 2026 exams.** Exam timing for future years is subject to change.

Specialty	Required time in training	Additional training which may be considered	Exam component timing (2026 exams)
Anesthesiology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship or research. • One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Cardiac Surgery	6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of academic/clinical enrichment. 	Written – Spring Applied – Fall (same year)
Dermatology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of foundational clinical training in Internal Medicine or Pediatrics and up to twelve (12) months of full-time clinical or basic science research. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One (1) year of internship. 	
Diagnostic and Clinical Pathology (General Pathology)	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to six (6) months of electives (e.g., additional training or research). • One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Fall (same year)
Diagnostic and Molecular Pathology (Anatomical Pathology)	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship or research. • One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Fall (same year)
Diagnostic Radiology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship • Up to three (3) months of quality improvement or research. • One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Emergency Medicine	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (same year)
General Surgery	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship or research. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Hematological Pathology	4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Fall (same year)
Internal Medicine	4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (same year)
Medical Genetics and Genomics	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship or Research. • Two (2) years of internship. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Medical Microbiology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship or Research. • One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (same year)
Neurology (adult and pediatric)	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship or Research. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (following year)
Neuropathology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship. • One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Neurosurgery	6 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship, research, or other scholarly activities. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)

Nuclear Medicine	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to six (6) months of scholarly activity (including research or quality assurance) or other clinical training. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (same year)
Obstetrics and Gynecology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship. One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Ophthalmology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship or a minimum of three (3) months or equivalent longitudinal experience in research. One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (same year)
Orthopedic Surgery	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to six (6) months of Fellowship. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to six (6) months in clinical or basic research. 	Written – Fall Applied – Fall (same year)
Pediatrics	4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note section 2.2 on the Pediatrics STR. It is now a requirement for applicants to complete four (4) years of core Pediatrics training before transitioning to a subspecialty. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship or research. One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Fall (same year)
Plastic Surgery	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to three (3) months of scholarly activity Up to twelve (12) months of research or fellowship may be considered. 	Written – Fall Applied – Spring (following year)
Psychiatry	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to six (6) months of selectives Up to six (6) months of electives. One (1) year of internship. 	Written – Spring Applied – Spring (same year)
Public Health and Preventive Medicine	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to eighteen (18) months of research 	Written – Fall Applied – Fall (same year)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship. • One (1) year of internship. 	
Radiation Oncology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to six (6) months of additional clinical training, research, or a scholarly project. • Up to twelve (12) months of fellowship. • One (1) year of internship. 	<p>Written – Spring Applied – Fall (same year)</p>
Urology	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to three (3) months of research or elective time. 	<p>Written – Fall Applied – Fall (same year)</p>
Vascular Surgery	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to ten (10) months of research • Up to twelve (12) months of Fellowship. 	<p>Written – Fall Applied – Fall (same year)</p>