

## Specialist Pathway Handbook

Revised November 2011

working  
with the  
community

# Table of Contents

Disclaimer .....	3
Introduction .....	3
Medical Specialist Registration in Australia and New Zealand.....	3
Registration as a Specialist and Fellowship in New Zealand .....	3
The role of the Australian Medical Council (AMC) .....	4
Committee for Specialist IMG Education (CSIMGE) .....	4
Specialist Pathway Application .....	5
Completing your application form .....	5
Paper Based Assessment .....	9
Interview.....	9
Specialist Pathway Flowchart .....	11
How to complete Exemption Candidate Experiences.....	12
Extension, Renewal, Review of Exemption Status.....	13
Break in Exemption Status, Maintenance of Exemption Status.....	14
Substantial Comparability Pathway Applications .....	15
Fellowship Process .....	18
Contacts .....	18
Glossary .....	19

## **DISCLAIMER**

This Handbook is intended as a guide for Specialist International Medical Graduates (IMGs) applying to The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP).

The information in this Handbook is for general guidance only.

The information in this Handbook does not over-ride, effect or limit in any way the provisions of the College Policies and Regulations in respect of IMG training and assessment. The information in this Handbook cannot be used to bind the College, the Committee or the Panels in any process, application or hearing in respect of IMG training or assessment.

The College does not represent that the information in this Handbook is at all times current or determinative, and users should consult the actual College Policies and Regulations which are applicable to IMG training and assessment.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) is the principal organisation representing the medical specialty of psychiatry in Australia and New Zealand. The College is responsible for training, examining and awarding the Fellowship of the College qualification to medical practitioners. The vision of the College is “a fellowship of psychiatrists working with and for the general community to achieve the best attainable quality of psychiatric care and mental health”.

The principal route to Fellowship of the RANZCP (FRANZCP) is via the five year training and assessment process outlined in the Regulations for Basic Training and Advanced Training for Fellowship (available on the College website). However, the College offers some exemptions from this process to those who have psychiatric qualifications from overseas.

The RANZCP body responsible for exemptions is the Committee for Specialist International Medical Graduate Education (CSIMGE). This Committee is responsible for assessing applications from specialist IMGs (SIMGs) seeking exemption from the RANZCP training and assessment requirements for admission to Fellowship of the RANZCP, and for applications from SIMGs who seek registration to work as deemed specialists in Area of Need (AON) positions. The Committee also oversees the delivery to RANZCP Exemption Candidates of a bi-annual workshop which assists them with preparation for the Exemption Candidate Examination (ECE), and develops resources to support Exemption Candidates in their progression towards Fellowship.

This handbook outlines the College processes relating to the assessment of overseas specialist qualifications in psychiatry and the pathway for admission to Fellowship of the RANZCP for SIMGs. Specialist IMGs are alternatively termed overseas trained specialists (OTS). This alternative term applies particularly in Australia and is generally used in this document.

SIMGs wishing to gain Fellowship of the College are expected to familiarize themselves with the College website: [www.ranzcp.org](http://www.ranzcp.org).

## **MEDICAL SPECIALIST REGISTRATION in AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

The process for medical specialist registration differs between New Zealand (regulated by the Medical Council of New Zealand, MCNZ) and Australia (regulated by the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) and its agency the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Authority [AHPRA]).

In New Zealand, FRANZCP is not a requirement for specialist registration as a psychiatrist. In Australia, FRANZCP is a pre-requisite for any doctor to gain specialist medical registration as a psychiatrist.

## **REGISTRATION as a SPECIALIST PSYCHIATRIST and FELLOWSHIP IN NEW ZEALAND**

In New Zealand, the MCNZ seeks the advice of the RANZCP via the New Zealand Branch office regarding an IMG /OTS's training and experience as a specialist. This process of assessment for vocational registration is independent of the RANZCP pathway to Fellowship for OTSs.

IMGs residing in New Zealand who seek to pursue FRANZCP and who are not seeking to practice psychiatry in Australia, may apply for Specialist Assessment directly to the College (CSIMGE), rather than via the Australian Medical Council (AMC).

An IMG who has vocational registration in New Zealand and who is seeking FRANZCP with the intention to work in Australia as a Psychiatrist is required to submit either a Specialist Assessment only application to the AMC or if applying for an Area of Need position an Area of Need/Specialist Assessment application also to the AMC.

Please contact the SIMGE team on [simge@ranzcp.org](mailto:simge@ranzcp.org) for more information on applications in New Zealand.

## **REGISTRATION as SPECIALIST PSYCHIATRIST and FELLOWSHIP in AUSTRALIA**

### **THE ROLE OF THE AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL COUNCIL (AMC)**

The AMC is an independent national standards body for medical education and training. Its purpose is 'to ensure that standards of education, training and assessment of the medical profession promote and protect the health of the Australian community'. One of its roles as the approved external accreditation body for medicine under the provisions of national legislation (AHPRA and MBA) is to assess IMGs who wish to practice medicine in Australia. All IMGs who wish to apply to practice medicine in Australia submit their application to the AMC.

The AMC seeks primary source verification (via EICS) of the medical qualifications of all IMGs who apply to practice medicine in Australia. EICS verification of your Primary and Specialist qualifications is a requirement before admission to Fellowship of the RANZCP.

An overseas trained specialist (OTS) seeking to practice as a specialist in Australia must apply for recognition to practice in their field of specialisation.

With respect to IMGs who are Overseas Trained Specialist's (OTS's), the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) has engaged the individual Specialist Medical Colleges to undertake the assessment of the OTS under the provisions of the national law. The eligibility of applicants to present for assessment by the Specialist College is determined by application to the AMC. The AMC refers each application from an OTS to the relevant Specialist Medical College.

Please refer to the AMC's website ([www.amc.org.au](http://www.amc.org.au)) for information regarding the AMC application process.

### **COMMITTEE FOR SPECIALIST IMG EDUCATION (CSIMGE)**

The purpose of the RANZCP Specialist Assessment (Exemptions) procedure is to determine the equivalence of training and qualifications of an OTS to the current training and qualifications of psychiatrists in Australian and New Zealand.

The Committee receives applications from Overseas Trained Psychiatrists (OTS's) who:

- hold a Specialist Qualification in psychiatry recognized in their country of training;
- and who are seeking specialist registration to practice psychiatry in Australia or New Zealand.

Applications are made in two ways:

- Applications made via the AMC in the case of an overseas trained psychiatrist whose primary medical qualification is not recognized for unconditional registration in Australia
  - There are two pathways that can be applied for to the AMC
    - Specialist Assessment pathway – for SIMG's applying for specialist assessment only
    - Area of Need pathway – for SIMG's applying for specialist assessment and who have accepted employment in a position deemed as Area of Need
- Applications made directly to the RANZCP by an Overseas Trained Psychiatrists whose Primary Medical Qualification is recognized for unconditional registration in Australia or are seeking to practice in New Zealand only but obtain Fellowship of RANZCP

The Australian Government now requires all SIMG's in Area of Need positions in Australia to also have specialist assessment to obtain, and maintain, medical registration. SIMG's must be also be progressing towards completing the requirements to obtain fellowship of the College in order to receive ongoing medical registration.

## SPECIALIST PATHWAY / SPECIALIST PATHWAY & AON APPLICATION

### Completing your Application Form

- Applicants are advised to have a copy of this handbook readily available when they are completing their application and forms and compiling their documentation. Applications that are not completed correctly will result in delays in processing.
- Please note that it can take some time to complete the application form however all the information is necessary for the assessors and CSIMGE to be able to make an informed decision.
- You can lodge your College application for Exemption Pathway assessment either at the same time as you lodge your application with the AMC or once the AMC notifies you that your application has been forwarded to the College. **IMPORTANT:** The College will not process your application until it has received the AMC documentation.
- The application form (Form A) must be completed to the specifications outlined in this handbook and in full and must be accompanied by **all** required documents as per the “Application Checklist” in section 11 Incomplete applications will not be processed and will result in delays of your application.
- Applications that are bound stapled or have labels or sticky notes will not be accepted and will be returned. Applications, including all documentation, should be submitted and held together securely by bulldog clip or rubber band only.
- Application closing dates and interview dates for each State are published on the College website. Only applications that are completed as per the specifications in this handbook, with the required documentation, by the closing date will advance to assessment. Extensions to these dates will not be granted. Applications that do not meet the requirements as outlined will be delayed until the next round.
- **ALL** sections of the application **MUST** be filled out. This ensures that the assessors are supplied with all of the required information in a standard format so that they can easily review your training, qualifications and experience and come to an informed decision. If you have not completed specific training or other experiences as outlined please indicate this in the space provided. Comments on the application such as “see CV for details” etc will not be accepted.
- A CV completed on the prescribed College template will only be accepted. Please do not submit your own separate CV. Applications with CV’s not completed on the College template will result in delays in processing.

**The below sections correspond directly with the Application form (Form A)**

#### **SECTION 1: PAYMENT DETAILS**

Full payment must be made at the time of submitting the application form. Applications submitted without payment will not be processed.

#### **SECTION 2: PERSONAL DETAILS**

Please ensure your current contact details are supplied. Should your contact details change after your application is submitted, you must advise the College in writing of this. Correspondence in regards to your application will mainly be sent via email. The College asks for your prompt response to any requests or questions to ensure your application is processed without delay.

### SECTION 3: APPLICATION TYPE

- Please indicate whether your application has been submitted via the AMC or directly to the College.
- If you already have an AMC number, please write it in the space provided.
  
- Please indicate whether you are applying for
  - Specialist Assessment only or
- Specialist Assessment and Area of Need (AON) If you are currently working in an AON position and are now applying for the Specialist Pathway, remaining in the same AON position, please tick the box Specialist Assessment & AON Extension.
- If you are currently working in an AON position and are now applying for the Specialist Pathway, changing your AON position at the same time, please tick the box Specialist Assessment & AON.
- Applicants applying for AON (new or extension) must ensure they have submitted all additional AON documentation.
- If you are applying for Category III exemption please consider carefully whether you meet the Seniority and Eminence Guidelines (available on the College website), and provide all supporting documentation as per the guidelines. Applicants must address each of the requirements for Category III in the additional application form available from the website.
- All applicants are interviewed by a regional panel (State Assessment Panel) following the paper based assessment. Face to face interviews are scheduled on a regular basis. For applicants who have not yet arrived in Australia, some States offer interviews via videoconference/Skype, provided the interview panel considers this medium suitable. Please indicate at the time of application if this is your preference. All costs for videoconference on both sides have to be carried by the applicant. Teleconference interviews will not be considered.

### SECTION 4: MEDICAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Basic and Specialist Qualifications: clearly state the qualification, Institution/Medical College, Country and year awarded/start and finish date for each qualification  
e.g. MD (Psych), National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), India, 2003.  
Provide Supporting Documentation - certified copy of MD (Psych) certificate, cross-referenced e.g. attachment No. C4
- Medical Licensure: clearly state the authority, class of registration, any restrictions and the expiry date  
e.g. Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria, specific registration, limited to work at locations as specified on attached Certificate of Registration. Provide supporting documentation - Certificate of Registration, e.g. attachment No. C2.
- Internship: Clearly state the Institution, rotations and dates e.g. Medical College Calicut, Kerala, India. Include supporting documentation  
e.g. BJ Medical College and Civil Hospital, Ahmadabad; rotating internship and terms ; Certificate as outlined on attached certificate of internship; cross reference the attachments e.g. No. C3.
- Other/Additional Post Graduate Qualifications: List in this section any additional post graduate qualifications you believe will support your application. Be sure to include a certified copy of any qualification and appropriately cross-reference it, as done under basic medical and specialist qualifications.

## SECTIONS 5 & 6: TRAINING EXPERIENCES (BASIC AND SPECIALIST)

- Basic Medical Training: Institution demographics, number of beds, sub-specialties represented, level of supervision and responsibilities, procedures undertaken and structured teaching programs must be written here.
- Clinical Experience: Detail your experiences during the specialist training that led to your specialist qualification(s). To make useful comparisons, training times in different general and subspecialty areas must be converted to fulltime equivalence. (FTEs). This conversion is the applicant's responsibility; please refer to the application form for details. Particular care needs to be taken to calculate the duration of time spent in each area.

To assess comparability to RANZCP training, the assessors require details of your experiences set out in the areas of rotations provided to trainees in psychiatry in Australia and New Zealand, which are: General Adult Psychiatry; Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry; Old Age Psychiatry; Addiction Psychiatry

If your training experience was in different areas of practice concurrently, please outline for each area the hours per week spent in that subspecialty and finally the total duration of training in each area (in months FTE). If the experience was rotation based, please state the start and finish dates and months in FTE. For all experiences, the hours of weekly supervision, supervisor name and qualifications must be stated.

Describe the experience in different age groups, settings, treating modalities and types of service delivery. For each of the areas of experience, you need to provide a **brief synopsis** covering:

- the duration of the experience (in months of FTE)
- the approximate caseload (number of patients under care at any one time)
- the types of conditions typically encountered
- the types of treatments typically employed
- the supervision provided

All experiences must be quoted as FTE on the application form to enable the assessors to adequately compare these to the requirements of a RANZCP trainee. If you are having difficulty in determining your FTE please speak with a fellow or trainee for assistance.

Links are provided on the application to the appropriate sections of the RANZCP training regulations so as to provide you with a guideline to experiences that may be considered equivalent.

As well as these clinical experiences, information on a number of other training experiences are required, such as indigenous mental health, experience with carers, experiences with non government organisations (NGOs), ECT experience, rural mental health experience, continuity of care, etc.

Please note:

- Psychotherapy experience refers to your supervised experiences in any of a broad range of psychological therapies (e.g. psychodynamic psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, family therapy). For each area of psychotherapeutic experience, it is helpful to outline the nature of the therapy, the approximate number of patients seen and durations of treatment (total duration and number of sessions) as well as details of the supervision provided. Any information on the way in which this psychotherapy experience was assessed as being satisfactory is also useful
- Indigenous Mental Health refers to your experience with Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island and Maori peoples in Australasia.
- Details of the written and clinical examinations you have passed to gain your specialist qualification and the nature of these examinations are required. Where more than one attempt has been required to pass any component of the examination process, this should be indicated in this section.
- While you are encouraged to familiarise yourself with examples of other applications to help you select the style etc, it is essential that all the information you provide is an accurate and true account of your training and experiences. A generic account of the program or information copied from someone else's template will be deemed unacceptable.

## **SECTION 7: OTHER TRAINING EXPERIENCES (COMPARABLE TO RANZCP ADVANCED TRAINING EXPERIENCES)**

This section refers to additional supervised training after your specialist qualification (comparable to RANZCP Advanced Training). Please refer to the relevant sections of the RANZCP Advanced Training Regulations, which again provide a guideline to experiences which may be considered equivalent. Adequate cross referencing is again required e.g. Supporting Documentation: CV, Attachment no C5, Page No 7.

## **SECTION 8: POST TRAINING EXPERIENCE AS A SPECIALIST**

Indicate the depth and breadth of your experience in psychiatry, including involvement in peer review or supervision after the completion of your specialist qualification. Peer review/supervision refers to ongoing liaison with a peer group and/ or with a senior colleague which provides ongoing learning including feedback on your clinical practice.

Remember to appropriately cross reference to your CV.

## **SECTION 9: OTHER EXPERIENCE AND DOCUMENTATION WHICH MAY SUPPORT YOUR APPLICATION**

Any additional information which may assist you in being granted an exemption status and support for your Area of Need position (if required) should be included in this section.

## **SECTION 10: REFEREES**

The names and contact details of three referees who are able to supply a reference are required. The College may seek from you the names of additional referees if there are issues arising from the assessment which need to be clarified.

At least one referee must be a current clinical supervisor who is a specialist in Psychiatry. Preferably all three referees should be clinical supervisors. If you are already working in Australia your referees must be Fellows of the College (FRANZCP) or Training Supervisors who are approved by the College.

Your application will NOT proceed to assessment if at the closing date for the application, any referee reports have not been received at the College.

Referees will receive one reminder from the College to respond to the request to fill out the required form. You will be notified when referee reports have not been received by the required date. It is your responsibility to follow up any missing referee reports.

The referee report is confidential and any issues arising will be considered by the assessment panels and/or CSIMGE. In addition to the nominated referees, applicants are asked to give permission for the assessment panel to contact the Clinical Directors of units in which they have recently worked (in Section 10 Personal Declaration). Applicants are given the opportunity in the application form to identify any previous director with whom there has been conflict or other reason why that person's comments may not represent a fair and unbiased assessment of their work performance.

## **SECTION 11: PERSONAL DECLARATION**

Carefully read and sign the declaration. Your application cannot be processed if this section is not completed and signed. Answering 'No' to any questions may result in your application being delayed or rejected.

## **SECTION 12: APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

This section must be reviewed and completed as the application cannot be processed until all required documentation is received at the College.

## **PAPER BASED ASSESSMENT**

Once your application with the College is complete, it will be included in the next available round of preliminary assessment (paper based) by the State Assessment Panel. Following the assessment you will receive a Preliminary Outcome Letter which will include your Exemption Category and associated requirements as well as the interview date and time. Please also refer to the Equivalence Guidelines available from the Website for information regarding Exemption Categories.

Should the Assessment Panel require further information to be able to make a preliminary decision on your outcome we will contact you immediately. The information requested will need to be submitted within 7 days. If the provided information is satisfactory you will receive your Preliminary Outcome Letter with your interview details.

The advice at this time is only preliminary and can change after the interview.

## **INTERVIEW**

The purpose of the interview is to, clarify the applicant's suitability for the proposed area of need position and determine a category of Exemption (degree of comparability) by confirming details of their training and experience as outlined in their application. The interview is also an opportunity for the applicant to gain an understanding of the standards of competence and safe practice expected of a specialist psychiatrist in Australasia.

The interview is not an examination. The interview must take place within six months of the Preliminary Outcome letter or the assessment will be considered null and void. The applicant would then need to re-apply (and pay the application fee again).

### **Interviewers**

The interview is conducted by the relevant State Assessment Panel, generally consisting of three members. At least two Panel members must be present for an interview to proceed. All Panel members have undergone relevant CSIMGE training and are registered with the College as 'Approved Assessment Panel Members'. The preferred method for interviewing applicants is face to face, however, if the applicant is still overseas, video conferencing may be available for some States providing the technical quality of the videoconferencing arrangement is clearly adequate, and the Panel considers videoconference suitable.

### **Documentation**

It is expected that the applicant will have supplied all relevant documentation to the SIMGE team who will forward it to the Assessment Panel prior to the interview. Applicants may be required to bring additional documentation to the interview should the panel require further information. If this is required applicants will be advised in their preliminary outcome letter.

### **The Interview**

Up to 1½ hours is allocated for conducting the interview. To establish the degree of comparability to Australian and New Zealand training, the applicant will be asked to describe their psychiatry training with reference to their CV and other written material.

For Area of Need applications, the applicant will be asked to describe how their training and experience is relevant to the position for which they are applying. questions will relate directly to the job description and the applicant's demonstrated ability (i.e. relevant training and experience) to perform the expected tasks within this role.

## **Interview Outcome**

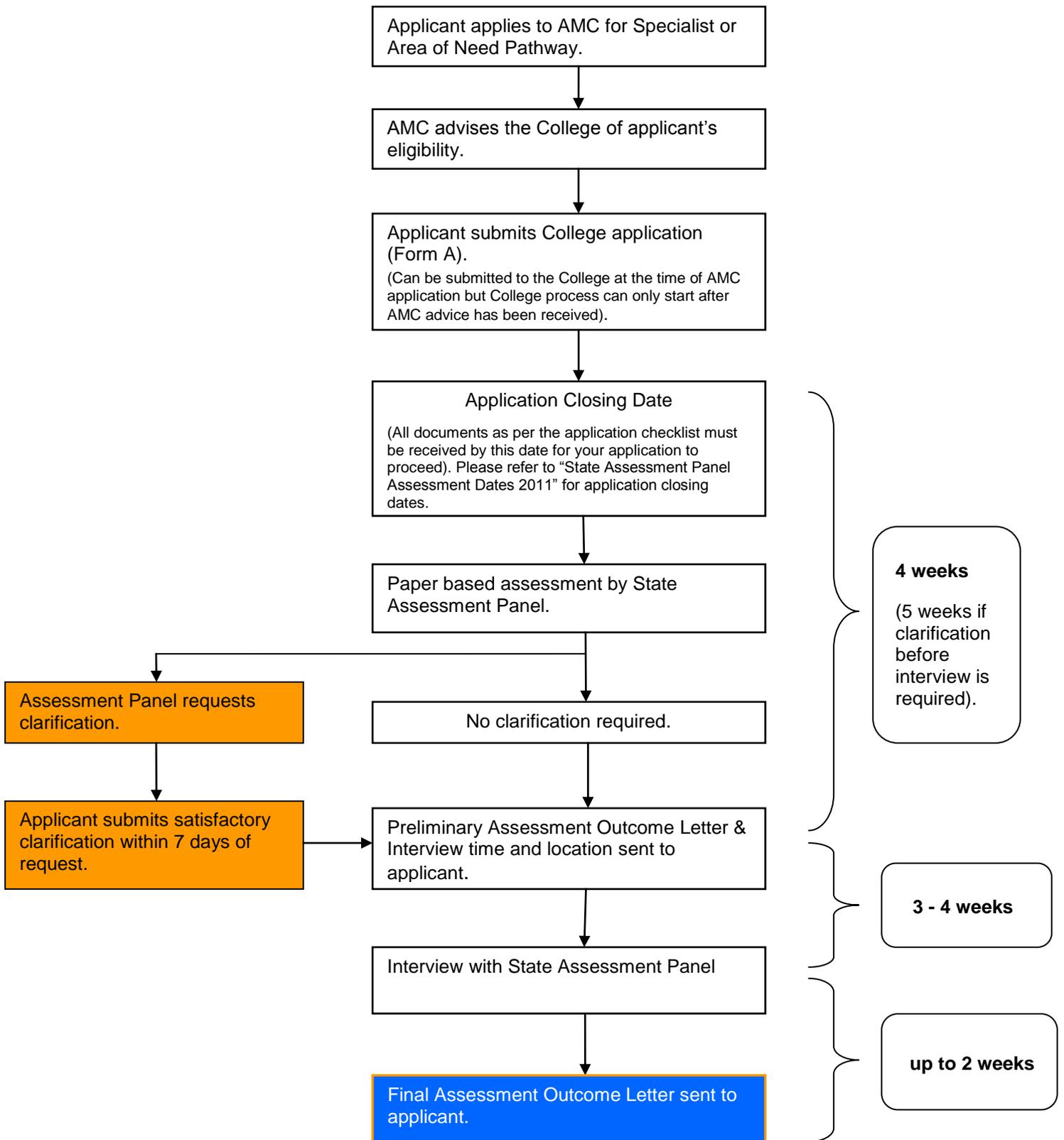
Applicants are advised of the outcome via the College Specialist IMG Education team, not at the interview. Following the interview, the Panel's recommendation is forwarded to the CSIMGE. The final decision stating the exemption category, comparability and area of need support (if applicable) is then released to the applicant, with a copy being provided to the AMC, AHPRA, employing health service and relevant RANZCP Branch.

If the Panel cannot reach a final decision based on the application submitted and information gained at the interview, they can seek advice from the CSIMGE. The CSIMGE may seek advice from other Committees or Boards if relevant (e.g. Committee for Training if the applicant has previously been in the Training program). This will likely delay the assessment outcome.

## **Reconsideration of the Final Outcome**

Applicants who are not satisfied with the final outcome of their assessment can request a reconsideration. The process is clearly outlined in the document 'Procedure for Reconsideration of BOE Committee Decisions' (Appendix 2) which is available on the College website.

# SPECIALIST PATHWAY FLOWCHART



## HOW TO COMPLETE EXEMPTION CANDIDATE EXPERIENCES

The final outcome letter details the requirements the State Assessment Panel requires the applicant to complete to gain fellowship to the College.

The below information provides a brief overview of what the usual experiences or assessments an SIMG is required to complete. More detail can be found in the links as outlined below which are available on the College website under the Pre-Fellowship menu.

### Written Examinations (Link 46)

The Written Examination is scheduled twice a year and may be attempted whenever held, provided currency of Exemption Status. The Written Examination must be successfully completed before applying for the Exemption Candidate Examination (ECE). For more information on the Written Examination please log in to the College website and go to Pre-Fellowship – Examinations – Written Exam.

There are a number of pre-requisites for all OTSs who have passed or been exempted the written examinations and who hold current Exemption Status, prior to gaining entry to any particular Clinical Examination. These are:

### Experience with NGO and other Community Organisations (Link 28a)

Exemption Candidates are required to participate in one approved activity that assists you to demonstrate an understanding of the role of non-government sector and other community organisations in mental health service provision. An activity should involve at least 4 hours work (including preparation). Demonstration that you have reflected on your experience might include preparation of a 1-2 page report about what you have learnt, or a half hour discussion with appropriate personnel from the organisation. A Certificate of Completion needs to be completed by yourself and your supervisor (College Fellow) and sent to the College [Link to Policy and Certificate of Completion](#).

### Indigenous Experience (Link 29a)

The College recognises the particular mental health issues facing the indigenous people of Australia and New Zealand. This training requirement is intended to increase awareness of these issues and to facilitate more effective partnerships with these communities to provide effective mental health services. It is recommended that you also liaise with your Mentor/Supervisor to determine what would constitute a suitable training experience. A Certificate of Completion needs to be completed by yourself and your supervisor (College Fellow) and sent to the College [Link to Policy and Certificate of Completion](#).

### Observed Interviews (Link 33a)

To assist exemption candidates with their preparation for the ECE, candidates are required to complete five observed patient interviews with one patient type from five different categories. Each interview must be observed by an experienced College Fellow (that is, a Fellow who has held Fellowship for 3 years or more). The interviews should be observed by at least two different College Fellows. It is desirable that the Fellows are College accredited supervisors. A Certificate of Completion needs to be completed by yourself and your supervisor (College Fellow) and sent to the College. [Link to Policy and Certificate of Completion](#).

### Consultative Exercises (Link 66a)

To assist exemption candidates with their preparation for the ECE, candidates are required to complete two consultancy exercises. Each consultancy exercise is to be conducted by a College Fellow. It is desirable that the Fellow is a College accredited supervisor. A Certificate of Completion needs to be completed by yourself and your supervisor (College Fellow) and sent to the College. [Link to Policy and Certificate of Completion](#).

### Exemption Candidate Examination Preparation Workshop

To assist exemption candidates with their preparation for the ECE, candidates are required to satisfactorily complete an Exemption Candidate Examination Preparation Workshop. The College conducts two such Workshops each year which are held in a capital city and run over two consecutive days. CSIMGE also mandates other workshops which have acquired accreditation from CSIMGE, and which are an acceptable alternative to the RANZCP Workshop. There are other Workshops available which have not applied for, or have not obtained, accreditation and which are not acceptable alternatives for an ECE place. It is important for an OTS to verify with the Workshop organiser that the Workshop is accredited if they wish to rely upon any particular Workshop for entry to the ECE.

## **Exemption Candidate Examination (Link 47/48a & Link 49a)**

There are two ECEs conducted each year. For the various training and assessment requirements which need to be successfully completed to be eligible to apply for the Exemption Candidate Examination please [click here](#) and log in to the College Website.

## **Additional Training Requirements**

The State Assessment Panel may require some SIMG's to undertake additional training for a period of time to ensure they have completed the equivalent training to that of a trainee undertaking the RANZCP training program. For example an applicant may have only 3 months FTE experience in Child and Adolescent Training and may be required to complete a further 3 months of training to obtain 6 months which is required of an RANZCP trainees to obtain Fellowship.

## **Other Requirements**

The CSIMGE or State Assessment Panel may require a SIMG to complete additional requirements such as the submission of 12 monthly referee reports or a Case History Submission. These additional requirements will be outlined in the final outcome letter.

## **Remediation (Link 83a)**

Remediation is required following two consecutive failures in any Examination (Written and Clinical). Please refer to the [Remediation Policy](#) and support documentation regarding timeframes and layout of remediation plans.

## **EXTENSION, RENEWAL, REVIEW OF EXEMPTION STATUS**

### **Extension of Exemption Status**

Exemption status is generally initially granted for three years, during which time the candidate is expected to progress through any additional training, pre-examination experiences and examinations as stipulated by the CSIMGE for eligibility for Fellowship. Should the candidate be unable to complete all requirements within three years, they may apply for an Extension of Exemption Status.

Applications for extension of exemption status should be submitted directly to the RANZCP. The application form is available on the College website.

The Committee may request an additional interview prior to the granting of an extension of exemption status.

### **Renewal of Exemption Status**

An OTS who has previously held exemption status but whose status is no longer current may apply for a Renewal of Exemption Status.

Applications for renewals of exemption status should be submitted directly to the RANZCP. The application form is available on the College website.

The Committee may request an additional interview prior to the granting of a renewal of exemption status.

### **Review of Exemption Status**

If an OTS can confirm they have obtained a new qualification and/or experience and believes it may affect the exemption status they were initially granted, an application for a Review of Exemption Status may be submitted. The Committee assesses applications for review to determine if additional exemptions are warranted.

Applications for review of exemption status should be submitted directly to the RANZCP. The application form is available on the College website.

The Committee may request an additional interview as part of its review.

## **MAINTENANCE OF EXEMPTION STATUS, BREAK IN EXEMPTION STATUS**

### **Maintenance of Exemption Status**

In November 2007, General Council approved the implementation of a policy for the maintenance of exemption status from January 2008. The policy is located under Link 83 Maintenance of Exemption Status on the College website. Exemption candidates are advised to familiarize themselves with this policy.

It is generally expected that candidates will be able to successfully complete the mandated training and assessment requirements to proceed to admission to Fellowship within three years of gaining exemption status. The College acknowledges that circumstances may arise which prolong a candidates progression and therefore provides for extensions upon application.

Candidates are required to apply to the Committee for Specialist IMG Education for extension of their exemption status every three years (to a maximum of 9 years from the issue of the first exemption) if they wish to maintain their exemption status.

A formal review of an exemption candidate's progress towards Fellowship will be conducted upon receipt of an application for extension of exemption status for the third time; that is, the candidate has held exemption status with the College for nine years.

The policy aims to ensure the maintenance of high standards of clinical competence and professional development in Australia and New Zealand. However, there may be circumstances in which the College is required to withdraw exemption status from a candidate for a number of reasons, including:

- Serious breach in ethics or conduct;
- Medical Board deregistration;
- Termination of employment; and,
- Failure to progress towards Fellowship.

The Policy outlines the procedures for reviewing the exemption status of individuals when a situation as above occurs. It is the responsibility of the exemption candidate, employing service and/or supervisor to inform the Committee of any serious breach in ethics or conduct, medical board deregistration or termination of employment.

### **Break in Exemption Status**

Candidates may apply to the CSIMGE for a Break in Exemption Status. To support the temporary suspension of their exemption status, candidates must be able to provide to CSIMGE evidence of exceptional circumstances.

Note that it is important for candidates who have encountered circumstances such as personal or family illnesses which suspend their abilities to progress towards Fellowship, that they apply for a Break in Exemption status at the time at which that circumstance becomes evident to the candidate. An early application is likely to be more favourably considered than retrospective claims. An application for a Break in Exemption Status which is made when a candidate is returning to employment/ examination preparation, or when a candidate has reached the maximum number of exemptions (after 9 years from the initial exemption), is less likely or unlikely to be considered favourably by CSIMGE.

## SUBSTANTIAL COMPARABILITY PATHWAY APPLICATIONS

The Substantial Comparability Pathway is an additional pathway to Fellowship. It operates as a component of the Specialist/Dual Pathway. It commenced on 1 July 2011 (Phase 1). This pathway is open to those applicants whose specialist training experiences and qualifications in an overseas service and health system have been deemed equivalent to an Australasian trained and qualified psychiatrist. It comprises a (usual) 12 month workplace based assessment (WBA) program. Employment in Australasia as a specialist psychiatrist within a health service is a mandatory requirement for WBA and this pathway.

Application is through the Specialist/Dual Pathway and via the relevant State Assessment Panel.

New applicants to the Substantial Comparability Pathway are still required to undergo the paper-based and interview assessments by the relevant State Assessment Panel, and to submit all the relevant information for those assessments. The State Assessment Panel shall make a recommendation to CSIMGE on the applicant's eligibility to be assessed as Substantially Comparable.

SIMGs whose application for the Specialist/Dual Pathway was on or after 1 June 2008 and whose Exemptions Category has already been determined by the relevant State Assessment Panel, and who hold the relevant qualifications for eligibility for Phase I, shall be assessed by CSIMGE for admission to Phase I of the Substantial Comparability Pathway. They are not required to re-submit a detailed application, curriculum vitae etc, but will be required to submit additional information pertinent to the Substantial Comparability Pathway and the mandatory requirements as set out below.

### Eligibility for the Substantial Comparability Pathway, Phase I

For those applicants whose initial application to RANZCP for exemptions was received on or after 1 June 2008 and for new applicants, the qualifications which are deemed admissible for Phase I are:

- **MRCPsych** with Certificate of Completion of Training (**CCT**)/Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (**CCST**) - *training must have been completed in the UK or Ireland.*
- Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists UK (**MRCPsych**) **prior to 01/01/1997** – *training must have been completed in the UK or Ireland.*
- Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Canada (**FRCPC**) *Certification in Psychiatry.*
- United States Board Certification in Psychiatry (**ABPN**).

### Eligibility for the Substantial Comparability Pathway, Phase II

Phase II will be implemented after the evaluation of Phase I and the refinement of the pathway as indicated by that evaluation. Currently, this is envisioned for early 2013. In Phase II, additional qualifications /training programs will be assessed for comparability. This may include SIMGs who hold qualifications listed in Phase I and who's application on the Specialist Assessments /Dual Pathway was prior to 1 June 2008.

### Additional Mandatory Requirements for Entry to the Substantial Comparability Pathway

In addition to the recommendation made by the relevant State Assessment Panel of the applicant's eligibility to be assessed as Substantially Comparable, the candidate in applying to the CSIMGE for the Substantially Comparable Pathway must:

- Be eligible for registration in Australia or New Zealand as a recognised specialist psychiatrists;
- Have established primary source verification;
- Meet the requirements of AMC, MCNZ and APHRA with respect to English language proficiency and any other requirements;
- Be employed in a position as a specialist psychiatrist;
- The employment must be at least for the duration of the WBA program ;
- Obtain employer support for participation in the pathway and WBAs;
- Arrange a suitable supervisor who has completed the Substantial Comparability Pathway Supervisor training;
- Submit an application to RANZCP and pay the relevant fee (existing exemptions candidates are only required to pay the Placement fee if accepted onto the Substantial Comparability Pathway. New applicants are required to pay both the Application fee and the Placement fee);
- Provide evidence of good standing and satisfactory current references.

## **Selection of Pathway to Fellowship**

The applicant to the Specialist Pathway has a choice of going down the Substantial Comparability Pathway or the standard Specialist Pathway. A candidate on the Substantial Comparability Pathway may at any time on application to CSIMGE opt to move to the Specialist Pathway, **but cannot be enrolled simultaneously on both pathways.**

A candidate who has failed to make satisfactory progress on the Substantial Comparability Pathway may be determined after assessment by the Substantial Comparability Assessment Review Panel (SCARP) to exit the Substantial Comparability Pathway and join the Specialist Pathway.

In those cases, the Exemptions Category as initially determined by the relevant State Assessment Panel will apply.

## **Deficits in Training and/or Qualification**

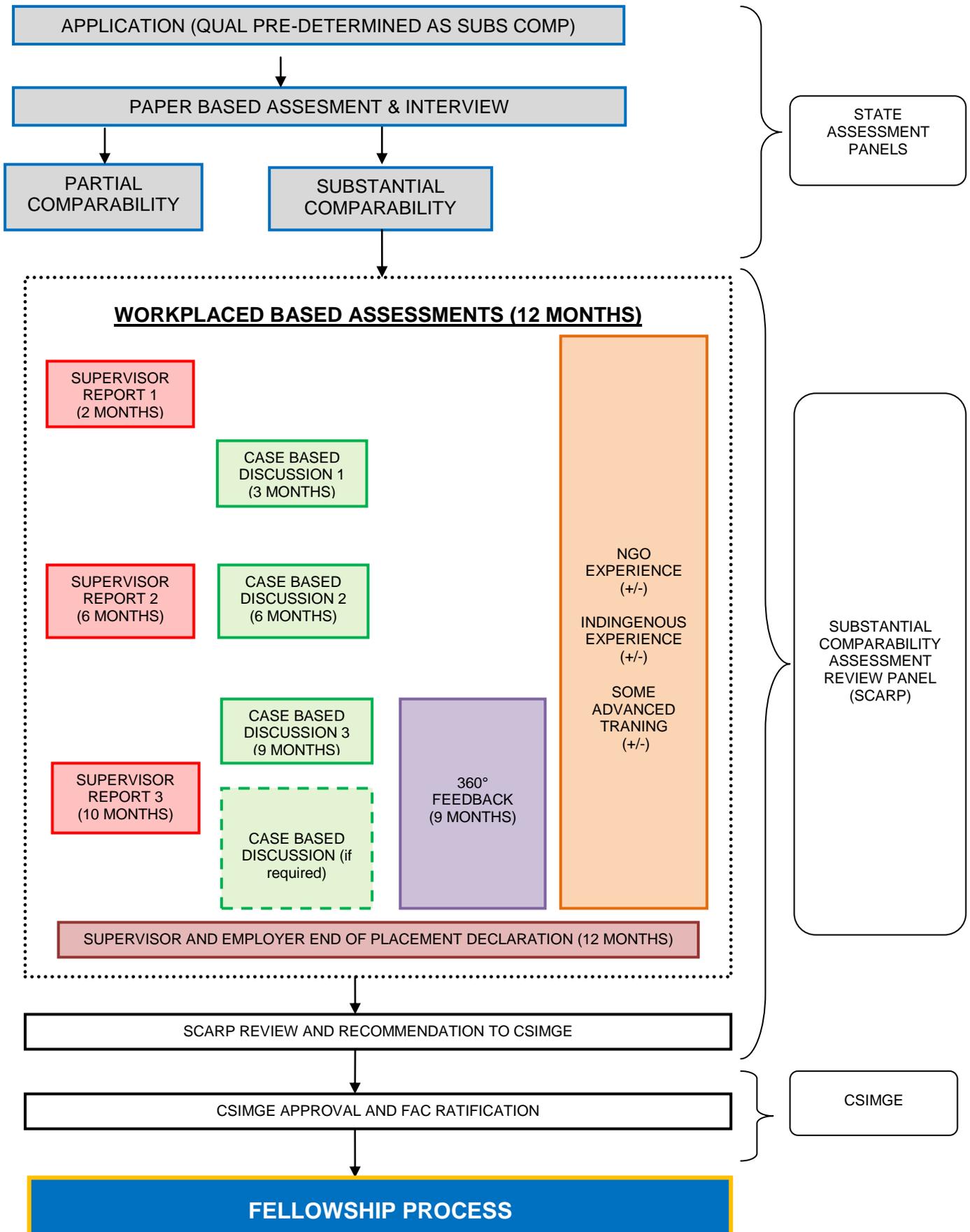
The applicant who holds a Phase I eligible qualification but who has deficits in training and/or experience as assessed by the relevant State Assessment Panel shall still be required to complete those experiences or training. For example, candidates on the Substantial Comparability Pathway are still required to complete the indigenous experience. For the purposes of Phase I, additional training requirements e.g. child and family psychiatry, will where possible be accommodated within the 12 month workplace based assessment period. However, an extension of the workplace based assessment period may be required and shall be determined by the CSIMGE, based on the State Assessment Panel assessment.

## **Referral back to State Assessment Panel**

In the case of a candidate electing to depart the Substantial Comparability Pathway for the Specialist/Dual Pathway, or failing to make satisfactory progress on the Substantial Comparability Pathway, and being directed by SCARP to the Specialist/Dual Pathway, the candidate will be referred back to the relevant State Assessment Panel to oversight the candidate's progress on the Specialist/Dual Pathway, including applications for extension and interruption.

For further information about the Substantial Comparability Pathway, please refer to:  
<http://www.ranzcp.org/prefellowship/substantial-comparability-pathway.html>.

# SUSTANTIAL COMPARABILITY PATHWAY FLOWCHART



## FELLOWSHIP PROCESS

Once an OTS has completed or is close to completing all required assessments as determined by CSIMGE, they become eligible to apply for Fellowship of the College. Fellowship can be awarded once all requirements for Fellowship have been completed and upon application from the OTS to the College, and pending payment of membership fees.

The OTS is required to complete a Notice of Intention to Apply for Admission to Fellowship form which is located under Link 81 on the College website.

A Notice of Intention to Apply for Admission to Fellowship is valid for 6 months. If an OTS has not been admitted to Fellowship within the 6 month time frame from receipt of the Notice to Apply for Admission to Fellowship form, a new application form is required to be submitted and the approval process starts again.

This submission to the SIMGE team must be accompanied by a copy of the OTSs current Certificate of Registration from Medical Board of Australia (AHPRA) or Medical Council of New Zealand.

Once this form is received by the College, the application will be put forward to General Council followed by the Fellowship Attainment Committee (FAC).

A pre-requisite of a Notice of Intention to Apply for Fellowship is receipt by the College of EICS verification (via the AMC) of your Primary & Specialist Medical Qualifications. Fellowship cannot be obtained without EICS verification. Provision of EICS verification is the responsibility of the OTS via the AMC. Please contact the AMC directly for information regarding the verification process.

## CONTACTS

RANZCP

[www.ranzcp.org](http://www.ranzcp.org)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship:

[www.immi.gov.au/](http://www.immi.gov.au/)

Australian Medical Council:

[www.amc.org.au](http://www.amc.org.au)

Australian Government Doctor Connect Site:

[www.doctorconnect.gov.au](http://www.doctorconnect.gov.au)

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

[www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)

Medical Council of New Zealand:

[www.mcnz.org.nz](http://www.mcnz.org.nz)

## GLOSSARY

<p>Australian Medical Council</p>	<p>The AMC is a national standards and examinations body in Australia. One of its roles is to assess international medical graduates who wish to practice medicine in Australia. The AMC determines the eligibility of applicants to present for specialist assessment; however the assessment itself is conducted by the relevant Specialist Medical College (following referral by the AMC).</p> <p>Information regarding the AMC processes can be obtained from the AMC website <a href="http://www.amc.org.au">www.amc.org.au</a></p>
<p>Certified Copies</p>	<p>To have a document certified, you should make a photocopy of the original document and take the original and the copy to an authorised person. The person must then write on every page of the document, 'I have sighted the original document and certify this to be a true copy of the original.' The person should then sign each statement and provide their designation, for example, 'FRANZCP'. Note: The RANZCP will neither return the certified copies of documents submitted with your application nor provide copies of these documents to you in the future.</p>
<p>Conditional Registration</p>	<p>Registration With Conditions (portability subject to approval of the Medical Board), refers to registration where practice is limited to a particular setting; to practice in postgraduate training, supervised training, teaching, research, public interest/area of need, conditional (disciplinary or health conditions) or as an overseas trained specialist.</p>
<p>Continuing Professional Development / Continuing Medical Education (CPD/CME)</p>	<p>The College program for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provides a pathway for psychiatrists to review and further develop professional practice to ensure the continued high standard of psychiatric practice. Fellows are automatically enrolled in the CPD program when they gain Fellowship. Psychiatrists and doctors working in the role of a psychiatrist, who are not Fellows or Affiliates of the College, can also enrol in the CPD Program.</p>
<p>Full Time Equivalent (FTE)</p>	<p>Full-time equivalence (FTE) is a measure of the amount of time an individual works per week. An individual working 40 hours per week has an FTE of 1.0. An individual working 20 hours a week has an FTE of 0.5. A FTE greater than 1.0 per week cannot be claimed as part of any Specialist Assessment.</p>
<p>Medical Registration</p>	<p>Medical registration is a legal requirement for a doctor to be entitled to treat a patient as a "medical practitioner" and to be issued with a practising certificate entitling remuneration as per the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Registration may be either to practice as a medical practitioner, or to practice as a specialist practitioner.</p> <p>Medical registration is the responsibility of the State/Territory Medical Boards or Medical Council of New Zealand.</p> <p>Further detail on categories of registration can be obtained from <a href="http://www.amc.org.au/register.asp">http://www.amc.org.au/register.asp</a>, and the relevant Medical Board.</p>
<p>Medical Council of New Zealand</p>	<p>The MCNZ registers doctors to practice medicine in New Zealand. It carries responsibilities in the areas of medical standards and doctors' conduct and competence. It guides doctors on medical practice issues and promotes education and training of doctors. It is responsible for ensuring that doctors maintain high standards of practice.</p>
<p>Peer Review</p>	<p>Peer review is a collegial, mutually beneficial process in which information about teaching and learning is formulated, exchanged, challenged, tested and re-formulated by both (or all) parties, as a standard part of professional practice.</p>
<p>Specialist Assessment</p>	<p>The process by which SIMGEs apply for exemptions from the RANZCP training and assessment requirements based on their qualifications and experience.</p>
<p>Overseas Trained Specialists (OTSs)</p>	<p>Doctors who have obtained their specialist qualification in psychiatry, overseas, and are registered to practice as a psychiatrist in that country.</p>
<p>Good Standing</p>	<p>As a means to determine that an applicant is competent and of good character, registering authorities throughout the world require verification of the practitioner's current standing in their previous jurisdiction(s) of registration. A valid "Certificate of Registration Status" or 'Certificate of Good Standing' is a document used by many registering authorities to satisfy this requirement.</p>
<p>Unconditional Registration</p>	<p>Registration Without Conditions (fully portable) refers to graduates of AMC-accredited Australian/New Zealand Medical Schools who have completed an approved period of intern training, and doctors whose primary medical qualifications were obtained overseas, who have passed the AMC examination and who have completed a period of supervised training, as determined by the relevant Medical Board.</p>