



P025 - FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy provides a systematic and comprehensive framework to support the process of examination for the award of Fellowship of the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (FACSEP). This policy relates to, and should be read in conjunction with, the current version of the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (ACSEP) Curriculum, the online ACSEP Training Manual, and all relevant College policies and procedures.

BACKGROUND

It is the mission of the ACSEP to provide and promote excellence in the training and continuing professional development of the ACSEP Membership in Australia and New Zealand. Fellowship of the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians is a specialist qualification, acknowledged by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) and the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ). As a specialist medical college, the ACSEP must conduct examinations in accordance with the requirements for accreditation by the AMC, the MCNZ, and fulfil legislative requirements of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Registrars of the ACSEP Training Program sitting the Fellowship Examination.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for this policy:

POLICY STATEMENT

The award of Fellowship of the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (FACSEP) signifies that the individual is a specialist Sport and Exercise Physician practitioner. A Registrar must successfully complete the final examination as part of the requirements for advanced training. The purpose of Fellowship Examination is to determine whether a Registrar can integrate knowledge,



judgement and skills to address realistic Sport and Exercise Medicine scenarios. This policy ensures that the Fellowship Examination is the final test of competence for approved Registrars who have met eligibility requirements.

POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCESS:

1. FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION - STRUCTURE

- 1.1. The Fellowship Examination is structured as two parts: a written examination and a clinical examination.
- 1.2. The written examination consists of two papers: an online multiple-choice question (MCQ) paper and an online short-answer question (SAQ) paper.
- 1.3. The clinical examination consists of one long case presentation, multiple short case presentations (acute and overuse), and a viva voce section.
- 1.4. Fellowship Examinations are conducted annually, with the examination of the written and clinical parts held separately, at different times during the year. Dates for examinations are published online on the ACSEP website.
- 1.5. A satisfactory standard in all parts of the examination, (i.e. written and clinical) is required to pass the Fellowship Examination in its entirety.
- 1.6. Final decisions regarding the conduct of the Fellowship Examination are at the discretion of the Examination and Assessment Committee.

2. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 2.1. Details of application form submission and approval (written and clinical) for Fellowship Examination are available in the online ACSEP Training Manual.
- 2.2. The ACSEP Training Committee will review applications and the progress of each applicant, to confirm or deny eligibility to sit the Examination.
- 2.3. All decisions of the ACSEP Training Committee will be communicated to the applicant.



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- 2.4. The applicant Registrar (herein referred to as the applicant) is required to submit an application for Fellowship Examination (form [Ad2.8: Application for Fellowship Examination – Written](#)) and their learning portfolio to the ACSEP Training Committee by the closing date advertised on the ACSEP website.
- 2.5. If confirmed as eligible, the applicant will be approved to sit the Fellowship Examination - Written, and an invoice for the written exam component sent for payment.
- 2.6. Application for Fellowship Examination – Clinical ([Form Ad2.8A Application for Fellowship Examination – Clinical](#)) can only be submitted after the Fellowship Examination - Written has been successfully completed.
- 2.7. If approved to sit the Fellowship Examination – Clinical, the applicant will be advised, and an invoice for the clinical exam component sent for payment.
- 2.8. All Examination fees (written and clinical), as per the [ACSEP Fee Schedule](#), must be paid by the due date for the applicant to sit the Examination.
- 2.9. All travel and associated costs incurred as part of the Fellowship Examination process are the applicant's responsibility.

3. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to sit the Fellowship Examination

- 3.1. the applicant must have, at the time of applying for the written exam, completed a minimum of 3 accredited full time equivalent (FTE) Training Program years
- 3.2. and must have completed all requirements, including any outstanding research requirements, as required of the ACSEP Training Program, listed within the latest version of the online ACSEP Training Manual.
- 3.3. The applicant must have all prescribed College fees, including membership paid in full.
- 3.4. To be eligible to sit the Fellowship Examination – Clinical, the applicant must have been successful in both papers of the Fellowship Examination - Written.



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3.5. The applicant must advise the College if they have had any adverse findings determined, conditions placed on their practice, or are under any investigation by any medical authority (such as, but not limited to, AHPRA, AMC, MCNZ, Medicare Australia, Accident Compensation Corporation (NZ), or any hospital medical advisory committee).

3.5.1. The relevant ACSEP committee (Training/Research/Examination and Assessment Committee) will determine if such a matter will prevent the applicant sitting their Fellowship Examination (written or clinical), and what, if any, action is required of the applicant before they are deemed eligible to do so.

3.6. Regardless of training situation (i.e., full-time, part-time, deferral taken), from the time of commencement of the Training Program, the applicant must have satisfactorily completed the whole Training Program, including the Fellowship Examination and Application for Fellowship within 10 consecutive years. After 10 years, Registrars will be removed from the Training Program and will not be able to sit examinations or obtain College Fellowship.

3.7. Dispensation for research requirements

3.7.1. If at the time of application, the applicant has outstanding research requirements, dispensation to sit the Fellowship Examination may be given to the applicant. Dispensation is dependent on the progress made towards completing the research requirement and assessed on a case-by-case basis by the ACSEP Research Committee.

3.8. Special Consideration for training time.

3.8.1. Extensions beyond the 10-year training period may be granted under exceptional circumstances, as conditioned and approved by the relevant ACSEP committee (Training/Research/Examination and Assessment Committee, and/or the CEO). Guidelines for special consideration - Training Program extension, are available in P023 Special Consideration Policy.

4. FORMAT OF THE FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION – Written

4.1. The Fellowship Examination – Written, consists of a MCQ paper and a SAQ paper, each of three hours duration.



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Fellowship Exam – Written	6 hours total
MCQ	3 hours, 120 multiple choice questions (electronic format)
SAQ	3 hours, 10 Short Answer Questions (electronic format)

- 4.2. The Fellowship Examination – Written is usually held annually on a Saturday in June.
- 4.3. The assessed learning outcomes of the Fellowship Examination – Written are published in the ACSEP Curriculum.
- 4.4. The MCQ and SAQ papers are to be attempted on the same day.
- 4.5. The Fellowship Examination – Written will be conducted throughout the capital cities of Australia and major cities in New Zealand.
- 4.6. Overseas candidates will be required to attend a venue in Australia or New Zealand.
- 4.7. At least three months' prior notice will be given as to the date and venue of the Fellowship Examination – Written.
- 4.8. A sample SAQ, from a previous exam will be available to Registrars for use in exam preparation.

5. FORMAT OF THE FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION - Clinical:

- 5.1. The Fellowship Examination – Clinical consists of a long case presentation, multiple short case presentations and a viva voce section.



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Fellowship Examination – Clinical	Approximate 4 hours total
1 x Long Case	30 minutes interview and examination time with patient 10 minutes to prepare presentation (patient in the room) 20 minutes with examiners (patient not in the room)
2 x Short Cases	45 minutes
Viva voce	30 minutes

- 5.2. The Fellowship Examination – Clinical is usually held annually on a Saturday in September.
- 5.3. The Fellowship Examination – Clinical examines competence in sport and exercise medicine and internal medicine as relevant to the exercising person, including knowledge and skills in clinical diagnosis and examination, investigations, interventions and rehabilitation, and care of athletes and teams.
- 5.4. All parts of the Fellowship Examination – Clinical are to be attempted on the same day.
- 5.5. The Fellowship Examination – Clinical will be conducted at a single nominated venue.
- 5.6. Overseas candidates will be required to attend the nominated venue in Australia or New Zealand.
- 5.7. At least three months' prior notice will be given as to the date and venue of the Fellowship Examination – Clinical.
- 5.8. Applicants must pass all Assessment Stations of the Fellowship Examination – Clinical to be eligible to receive College Fellowship.
- 5.9. Clinical examiners work in pairs or trios, depending on the number of candidates. Each pair/trio is allocated to one of the three sections of the clinical examination where they work exclusively throughout the examination period.
- 5.10. All candidates are examined by a minimum of six examiners and all clinical examiners are Fellows of the ACSEP.



6. RESULTS – Written examination

- 6.1. Written notification advising the candidate of a pass or fail in the MCQ and/or SAQ parts of the examination will be sent to candidates as soon as practicable after examination (typically within fourteen days). Notification will advise of eligibility or otherwise to present for clinical examination.
- 6.2. Failure of one or both parts of the written examination.
- 6.2.1. Where a Registrar only passes one paper of the written examination, that pass may be carried forward to their next eligible sitting (1 year) of the examination, and that Registrar would only need to re-sit the failed paper.
- 6.2.2. If after a second attempt the Registrar applicant fails again to pass one of the papers, a remediation Action Plan will be provided by the Training Committee.
- 6.2.3. If after remediation and a third and final attempt the Registrar fails again to pass one or both written papers, Registrars now forfeit their opportunity for ACSEP Fellowship and they are considered off the ACSEP Training Program from this point.
- 6.3. Registrars can request a review, reconsideration and/or appeal of the outcome/results of an examination.

7. RESULTS – Clinical Examination

- 7.1. Written notification will be sent to candidates by the ACSEP National Training Coordinator as soon as practicable after the Examination and Assessment Committee meeting, advising of an overall pass or fail of each element of the Fellowship Examination (written and clinical).
- 7.2. Failure of the Clinical Examination.
- 7.2.1. Where the candidate has failed the Clinical Examination, the requirement to sit the written examination the following year may be waived by the Examination and Assessment Committee. The Registrar would then be required to re-sit the Clinical examination only.



7.2.2. Before any second attempt of the Clinical Examination, candidates can apply to the Training Committee or Examination and Assessment Committee for a Remediation Action Plan.

7.2.3. If a candidate passes the Written exam at the first attempt but was unsuccessful in two attempts at the Clinical Examination, then candidate would be required to sit the whole Fellowship Examination (Written and Clinical) in a third and final attempt. Failure in any component of the Fellowship Examination in this third attempt will result in forfeiture of the opportunity for ACSEP Fellowship and they will be removed from the ACSEP Training Program from this point.

7.3. Remediation plan/program may be offered at any point where the candidate has been identified or identifies as in difficulty with the Clinical Examination process.

8. EXAMINATION FEEDBACK

8.1. Individual written feedback is provided to unsuccessful candidates by the Examination and Assessment Committee in an appropriate time frame.

8.2. If after feedback is provided, the candidate disagrees with the outcome of the written and/or clinical examination and consider that there are sufficient grounds, they may, within 3 months of receipt of the feedback apply to the Chief Executive Officer of the College to have the decision reviewed and reconsidered.

8.3. For full guidelines of the appeals procedure please refer to the P019 Appeals, Review and Reconsideration Policy

9. FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION COMPLETION

9.1. After successful completion of the Fellowship Examination and all outstanding requirements of the training program, National Office will adjust College records to show that this Registrar has now become an ACSEP Fellow. They will be formally presented with their Fellowship certificate at the ACSEP Conference.



- 9.2. A College Medal may be awarded for the most outstanding performance in the Fellowship Examination. To be eligible for the medal, a candidate must have sat the examination for the first time and have achieved a pass in every section of the examination.

10. FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION WITHDRAWAL FEES

- 10.1. Registrar applicants who withdraw their application from either Written or Clinical Fellowship Examinations will be charged a non-refundable Withdrawal from Fellowship Examination Administrative Fee as per the [ACSEP Examination Fee Schedule](#)
- 10.2. The following refunds will apply and are calculated from the date the Refund Request is received by the Registrar & Training Coordinator.
- 10.2.1. Withdrawal within 6 weeks of the Exam date - 50% of Exam Fee
 - 10.2.2. Withdrawal within 4 weeks of the Exam date - no refund is given
- 10.3. Candidates who fail to appear at scheduled examination will forfeit the examination fee unless the Examination and Assessment Committee directs otherwise (due to exceptional circumstances or special consideration).

11. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- 11.1. Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in a recognised ACSEP record keeping system as per P012 Records Management Policy and associated procedures. The ACSEP complies to the principles of protecting the privacy of data and documents as set out in P004 Privacy Policy and associated procedures. Any third-party providers are required to comply with the Australian Privacy Principles outlined in the Privacy Act 1988.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

The CEO, COO, Registrar & Training Coordinator and relevant ACSEP committees are responsible for ensuring that these procedures are followed.



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Complaints Process

It is the ACSEP policy that any adverse feedback (written or verbal) from membership or external personnel about College policy or procedures will be investigated thoroughly as per the most current version of the P002 ACSEP Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Reporting

Any additional reporting outside of this policy is outlined in the most recent version of the online ACSEP Training Manual <https://www.acsep.org.au/page/resources/trainingprogramdocs>

RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

ACSEP Training Manual (most recent online version)

The ACSEP website resources pages <https://www.acsep.org.au/page/resources/trainingprogramdocs>

P002 Grievance Policy and Procedure

P004 Privacy Policy

P012 Records Management Policy

P019 ACSEP Appeals, Review and Reconsideration Policy

P023 Special Consideration Policy

FEEDBACK

ACSEP staff and membership may provide feedback about this document by emailing ACSEP Programs, Policies and Systems Administrator at nationaloffice@acsep.org.au

APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	ACSEP Board of Directors
Advisor or Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	Applicable ACSEP Committees including but not limited to the Examination and Assessment Committee, Research Committee and Training Committee
Administrator	ACSEP Programs, Policies and Systems Administrator
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