



Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the difference between the Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) and the Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (FRACGP?)

Answer:

- Fellowship of the RACGP (FRACGP) is the college's vocational qualification. It certifies that the Fellow is competent to deliver general practice services unsupervised in any general practice setting in Australia - urban, regional, rural, remote or very remote;
- The RACGP is accredited by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) as the college responsible for qualifications, assessment, curriculum and standards in general practice;
- FRACGP provides access to the RACGP Fellows list and recognition as a general practitioner on the Commonwealth's Vocational Register;
- The Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) is a qualification awarded by the RACGP *beyond* vocational fellowship.
 - It is awarded only to GPs who have attained Fellowship of the RACGP
 - It recognises advanced rural skills (ARSs), resulting from additional training, undertaken by GPs in preparation for practice in the range of general practice contexts to be found in rural and remote Australia
 - It has its own curriculum based on the FRACGP curriculum but with a rural focus, and a range of curricula in advanced rural skills
 - Advanced rural skills curricula have been developed in consultation with the other medical specialties with which the skills and knowledge involved are shared, such as the RANZCOG (for obstetrics), ANZCA (for anaesthetics), and RACS (for surgery).

2. What are the eligibility requirements for enrolling in the FARGP?

Answer:

- Registrars who are undertaking their RACGP Fellowship training in the Australian General Practice Training program with a regional training provider;
- Practising GPs who have, or are working towards, the FRACGP;

- International Medical Graduates who have full, unrestricted AMC registration and meet program eligibility requirements and have or are working towards the FRACGP;
- A minimum of three sessions in general practice per week.

3. *Do I have to attain my FRACGP before I can enrol in the FARGP?*

Answer:

- No. In fact we encourage candidates to enrol in the FARGP at the same time as they begin working towards their FRACGP. This is because the FARGP is based on the FRACGP curriculum, and many of the FARGP educational activities will assist in preparation for the FRACGP assessment processes;
- Registrars – we encourage registrars to enrol in the FARGP as soon as they enrol in GP training because:
 - the FARGP's core modules, Working in Rural General Practice and Emergency Medicine, are good preparation during hospital terms for general practice terms, and
 - some registrars may wish to undertake Advanced Rural Skills training in conjunction with their hospital terms, so that they can apply these skills in their general practice terms.
- GPs working towards the FRACGP via the Practice Eligible Route or through Practice Based Assessment are encouraged to enrol in the FARGP at least 12 months prior to sitting the FRACGP exam because:
 - the FARGP's core modules can assist in exam preparation study, and
 - FRACGP preparation can be structured to count as study towards the FARGP.

4. *Where does the Graduate Diploma in Rural General Practice fit in now?*

Answer:

- The two qualifications, the FARGP and the Graduate Diploma in Rural General Practice (Grad Dip Rural), have exactly the same educational and assessment requirements, and are co-awarded. This means that all graduates of the FARGP also received the Grad Dip Rural, until February 2010;
- In February 2010, the tertiary accreditation of the Graduate Diploma will cease, and the RACGP will not seek its renewal. From this time onwards, graduates will not receive the Grad Dip Rural;
- The final enrolment date for existing registrars wishing to attain the Grad Dip Rural as well as the FARGP is 30 April 2008. Candidates enrolling after this date may be eligible for the FARGP, but they will not be co-awarded the Graduate Diploma in Rural General Practice;
- The Grad Dip Rural is a formal higher education qualification, accredited in every state and territory with the appropriate higher education authority, and has been so since 1996;
- The FARGP is a fellowship beyond vocational fellowship awarded by the RACGP under the College's royal seal as a medical college in the speciality of general practice;
- The FARGP was introduced in 2006, and signals a commitment by the RACGP to the development of career options for general practitioners beyond vocational fellowship.

5. Can general pathway registrars enrol in the FARGP?

Answer:

- Yes – all registrars may enrol in the FARGP. The registrar will have to negotiate with his/her regional training provider if he/she wishes to make a commitment to rural training and the FARGP;
- The Australian General Practice Training program supports training towards the FARGP as part of vocational training through its Enhanced Rural Training Framework.

6. What do I have to do to receive the FARGP?

Answer:

- Registrars:
 - Complete Advanced Rural Skills (ARS) training in accredited posts
 - Meet the ARS curriculum requirements
 - Meet the FARGP curriculum requirements:
 - Core modules – Working in Rural General Practice and Emergency Medicine
 - Complete 160 hours of self-identified educational activities. These activities may be undertaken in a wide variety of ways e.g. online *gplearning*, other online education activities, QA&CPD activities, workshops' etc.
 - Submit a portfolio of learning and assessment for final assessment by the RACGP Rural Censor.
- Practising GPs/IMGs:
 - May be eligible for Recognition of Prior Learning for previous experience (to a maximum, of 50% of total curriculum requirements)
 - Complete core modules
 - Complete 160 hours of self-identified educational activities. These activities may be undertaken in a wide variety of ways e.g. online *gplearning*, other online education activities, QA&CPD activities, workshops, conferences, etc.
 - Submit a portfolio of learning and assessment for final assessment by the RACGP Rural Censor.

7. Does FARGP lead to vocational recognition?

Answer:

- All graduates of the FARGP must first attain the FRACGP, the College's vocational fellowship award
- FRACGP provides access to the RACGP Fellows list and recognition as a general practitioner on the Commonwealth's Vocational Register.

8. When do I sit my exam for the FARGP?

Answer:

- Candidates do not have to sit for an exam for the FARGP;
- Assessment for the FARGP is based on a continuous assessment framework:

- You are required to develop and maintain a portfolio of all relevant education activities undertaken during your enrolment period in the FARGP
- The portfolio includes:
 - learning plan
 - provision for review of your learning plan with your mentor
 - assessment record – based on your learning plan
- Assessment in the FARGP is progressive, and assessments are designed by the candidate and their medical educator/mentor to demonstrate the outcomes of learning objectives
- Curricula for Advanced Rural Skills agreed to by the relevant medical colleges through Joint Consultative Committees stipulate required assessment measures.

9. What is the difference between the FARGP and the FACRRM?

Answer:

- The Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice (FARGP) is a qualification awarded by the RACGP *beyond* vocational fellowship:
 - The FARGP is awarded only to GPs who have attained Fellowship of the RACGP
 - It recognises advanced rural skills (ARSs) resulting from additional training undertaken by GPs in preparation for practice in the range of general practice contexts to be found in rural and remote Australia
 - It has its own curriculum based on the FRACGP curriculum but with a rural focus, and a range of curricula in advanced rural skills
 - It can be pursued as an integrated component of vocational training with the AGPT program with the assistance of the Enhanced Rural Training Framework
- The FACRRM is awarded by the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM):
 - FACRRM is the qualification ACRRM will confer as the end point of vocational training with the AGPT program. It is thus a vocational fellowship, rather than a qualification *beyond* vocational fellowship.
 - Medical graduates and undergraduates interested in the FACRRM are advised to contact ACRRM directly, or refer to the [FACRRM FAQs](#) on the AGPT web link.

10. Can I do the FACRRM as well as the FARGP?

Answer:

- Yes - all three fellowships FRACGP, FARGP and FACRRM can be, and already are, undertaken concurrently through the Australian General Practice Training program if registrars wish;
- Because requirements for placement, duration of training and completion of training may differ between these awards, candidates will need to refer to each award's completion of training requirements.

11. Does the RACGP recognise the FACRRM?

Answer:

- The RACGP is unable to automatically recognise the FACRRM as being equivalent to the FRACGP/FARGP because the FACRRM's assessment, training standards and curriculum are currently under review as part of its AMC accreditation process. In the meantime:
 - The RACGP will negotiate recognition of prior learning arrangements with candidates upon request
 - The RACGP does not guarantee full recognition of training time spent in posts which are not accredited by the RACGP
 - Candidates should discuss their plans with their regional training provider (RTP) medical educator as soon as possible
 - After review of training plans by the medical educator, the educator may require further advice from the RACGP State Censor or the RACGP Rural Censor.

The aim of the RACGP is to make the attainment of the Fellowship in Advanced Rural General Practice simple and easy and to blend seamlessly with ongoing QA&CPD requirements.

If you require more information, please contact Di Schaefer – National Rural Senior Education Officer – Ph: 1800 636 764 or email: di.schaefer@racgp.org.au .