



1. TITLE: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

- 1.1 Policy reference: CO-A-001-03
- 1.2 Category: Academic – Admission
- 1.3 Approval date: July 2020
- 1.4 Approved by: Chief executive
- 1.5 Effective date: September 2020
- 1.6 Review/revision date: July 2021
- 1.7 Unit responsible: Learning team

2. Policy declaration

2.1 Purpose

GP registrars may apply to have some of their previous training, work experience and/or postgraduate qualification/s recognised as credit towards requirements of the General Practice Education Programme (GPEP or the programme) at The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners (the College).

3. Background

3.1 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- › set out the principles that guide recognition of learning gained before enrolment in GPEP
- › prescribe the credit that may be awarded via recognition of prior learning (RPL) against both the academic and experiential learning components of GPEP
- › outline the requirements and limitations of the RPL application and award processes.

3.2 In scope

This policy applies to all doctors seeking to be recognised as a Fellow of the College (FRNZCGP).

3.3 **Out of scope**

Registrars seeking recognition of learning while actively engaged in GPEP.

Registrars enrolled in the Rural Hospital Medicine (RHM) Training Programme.

4. **Definitions**

All definitions are available in the College's Academic Regulatory Framework for Quality Assurance (CO-A-001-00).

5. **General policy**

5.1 RPL is the formal recognition of an individual's learning, work experiences and/or postgraduate qualification/s obtained prior to entry to the programme. The RPL process formally assesses previously completed structured experiential learning and/or qualifications and may result in an award of credit and exemption from one or more clinical experience or education components of the programme. RPL is approved at the absolute discretion of the College.

5.2 RPL may be awarded for:

- a. training completed as part of a previous admission to GPEP that was completed within the five years immediately preceding application for (re)admission to the programme.
- b. training completed and qualification(s) obtained under the supervision of another specialist medical college in Australia or New Zealand.
- c. training completed and qualification(s) obtained under the supervision of an equivalent overseas specialist medical training provider/authority, if deemed comparable to the programme.
- d. training completed and a qualification obtained under a non-general practice medical vocational training programme of sufficient relevance to general practice.
- e. experience undertaken as part of formal specialist general practice training, where:
 - > the qualification is not considered comparable to GPEP; or
 - > the qualification has been deemed not equivalent to GPEP by the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ), after their consideration of an application for provisional vocational registration.

5.3 **Principles**

The College is committed to RPL and recognises that learning may be achieved in a variety of ways.

Recognising prior learning:

- > values the professional knowledge, skills and attributes (competencies) gained in practice;
- > recognises that changes to the practice context impacts on the competencies required;
- > helps to eliminate duplication of learning and assessment for general practice registrars; and
- > ensures that the quality and integrity of FRNZCGP is maintained.

RPL process principles

5.3.1 Reliability

The RPL processes must be academically sound, robust and reliable.
Outcomes of RPL must be of a standard consistent with assessment in GPEP.

5.3.2 Evidence-based

An applicant seeking credit via RPL must provide sufficient and relevant evidence of their learning experiences in order to:

- demonstrate that one or more of the GPEP learning outcomes have been achieved; and
- enable the assessor to judge the validity and equivalence of the experience.

Assessment of RPL principles

5.3.3 Validity

Credit may be awarded for learning experiences assessed as meeting the competencies and/or experiential learning required of GPEP. Credit for valid learning experience will be determined from alignment of the experience with GPEP learning competencies and take into account the content, level and duration of training and clinical/medical experience.

5.3.4 Currency and relevance

Credit may be awarded for learning experiences that are up-to-date and relevant to the competencies of a registered general practitioner current at the time of application and assessment. To be considered current, the experience will normally have been completed within five years of entry to GPEP.

5.3.5 Comparability

Credit may be awarded for learning experiences that are comparable with those of GPEP in terms of content, breadth of experience, level of responsibility, rigour of learning requirements, assessment process, supervision and quality of the situation where the learning took place.

5.3.6 Sustained experience

Credit may be awarded for experience undertaken over a sustained time period of at least one continuous month, unless a minimum approvable training period is otherwise stipulated in the relevant training programme handbook.

5.4 Eligibility criteria

5.4.1 RPL will not be considered for clinical experience undertaken:

- a. during a period of 'on hold' in the programme.
- b. within Australia and New Zealand prior to completion of all requirements for general registration, or registration in a general scope of practice, with the relevant regulators from the respective jurisdictions.

5.4.2 All general practice registrars who receive a reduction in required clinical experience as a result of RPL must still meet the minimum four-tenths clinical time requirement of the programme for all years while enrolled in the programme.

5.5 Outcomes

- 5.5.1 Recognition of prior learning may entitle the applicant to one or more of the following:
- a. reductions or exemptions in GPEP year 1 requirements relating to individual formative components
 - b. reductions or exemptions in GPEP year 2 requirements relating to clinical time requirements
 - c. exemptions in requirements relating to:
 - > clinical and/or written examinations
 - > the academic component.
- 5.5.2 The maximum amount of credit awarded from RPL will not normally exceed 12 months equivalent of full-time training undertaken over a maximum 24-month period.
- 5.5.3 In exceptional cases and on a case-by-case basis, up to 24 months of RPL may be granted for a learning experience undertaken as part of a formal specialty training programme.

5.6 Reconsideration, review and appeals

- 5.6.1 Rights of appeal and procedures on appeal are to be found in the Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06).

6. Related policies, documents and legislation

- > Academic Regulatory Framework for Quality Assurance (CO-A-001-00)
- > Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure (CO-A-001-03A)
- > Appeals Policy (CO-A-002-06)
- > Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form
- > Fellowship Pathway Regulations

7. Administrative procedures

7.1 Promulgation of published policy

This policy will be available via the College intranet and website.