



Medical Board  
Ahpra

# **Evidence guide:** Eligibility for specialist registration

Effective date: 21 October 2024

## Introduction

This guidance has been developed to support individual doctors applying for specialist registration. It outlines what evidence you need to provide to support your application and provides more information about the requirements for supervised practice, orientation to the Australian healthcare setting and cultural safety education.

The Medical Board of Australia (the Board) will grant specialist registration if you have met the qualification and eligibility requirements detailed in the *Registration standard: Specialist registration*, published on the Board's website at [www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx).

## Eligibility for specialist registration

The eligibility requirements for specialist registration are outlined in section 57 of the National Law:

An individual is eligible for specialist registration in a recognised specialty in a health profession if they:

- a. are qualified for registration in the specialty; and
- b. have successfully completed –
  - i. any period of supervised practice in the specialty required by an approved registration standard for the health profession; or
  - ii. any examination or assessment required by an approved registration standard for the health profession to assess the individual's ability to competently and safely practise the specialty;
- and
- c. are a suitable person to hold registration in the health profession; and
- d. are not disqualified under this Law or a law of a co-regulatory jurisdiction from applying for registration, or being registered, in the specialty; and
- e. meet any other requirements for registration stated in an approved registration standard for the specialty.

The Board may decide you are eligible for registration in the recognised specialty by imposing conditions on your registration under section 83 of the National Law. If conditions are imposed on your registration, they will be published on the public register of medical practitioners.

## Requirements for specialist registration

If you are applying for specialist registration, you must meet the requirements of the following approved registration standards:

- English language skills
- recency of practice
- professional indemnity insurance
- criminal history, and
- continuing professional development.

As well as meeting these standards, the *Registration standard: specialist registration* requires you to demonstrate that you are competent to practise the specialty in Australia by completing:

- a minimum of six months of full-time equivalent supervised practice approved by the Board, within your specialty in Australia
- a Board-approved orientation to the Australian healthcare system, and
- cultural safety education.

The Board may waive these requirements if you have met them previously.

The information below details how you can provide evidence of satisfactory completion of the supervised practice, orientation and cultural safety education requirements. It also explains other circumstances in which these requirements may be waived.

Appendix A summarises the evidence required. This includes requirements for individuals who are currently, or have previously been, registered in Australia, and for individuals applying for registration in Australia for the first time.

## Exemptions

There are exemptions to some requirements outlined in the *Registration standard: specialist registration*.

You will be exempt from the requirement to complete six months of full-time equivalent supervised practice within your specialty if you have been awarded an approved qualification for the specialty which was completed in Australia or internationally.<sup>1</sup>

If you are qualified for specialist registration through the Expedited Specialist pathway but have not completed the required period of supervised practice, orientation and/or cultural safety education, the Board may impose conditions on your registration under section 83 of the National Law to enable you to meet these requirements. The evidence requirements detailed in this document outline how you will then be able to satisfy the requirements of these conditions.

## Supervised practice

Supervised practice assures the Board that an individual can practise the specialty safely and competently at the level expected of a specialist.

If you have not previously completed supervised practice in Australia, you will need to submit a *Supervised practice plan* (SPPA-00) for the Board to consider.<sup>2</sup> You need to set out your proposed supervised practice arrangements and address the requirements of any conditions on your registration.

You will have satisfactorily completed your supervised practice when you have:

- shown competence against the relevant standards, as assessed by your Board-approved supervisor, and/or
- successfully completed the required training, assessment and/or examination approved by the Board.

The documentary evidence must meet the minimum requirements outlined in the Board's *Policy: Supervised practice requirements for specialist registration*.

## Approved program of study

If you have completed an approved program of study and have been awarded fellowship of an Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited specialist medical college, you will be exempt from the requirement to complete six months of full-time equivalent supervised practice.

Completing an approved program of study and being awarded fellowship assures the Board that you have demonstrated the expected standard of practice and can practise the specialty competently and safely.

## Expedited Specialist pathway

If you qualify for the Expedited Specialist pathway and hold specialist registration, you will be required to provide evidence that shows you have satisfied the conditions on your registration. This will include a minimum of two *Supervised practice reports* (TSPR-00) completed during your period of supervised practice; one after three months of supervised practice and one at the completion of six months of supervised practice.

You will need to complete at least two other assessments to demonstrate that you are competent and safe to practise as a specialist. This includes:

- a multisource feedback assessment, and
- a minimum of one other assessment type (mini-clinical evaluation exercise (Mini-CEX), direct observation of procedural skills (DOPS) or case-based discussion (CBD).

The outcomes of these assessments will be considered with your supervision reports.

Note: The Board may not require you to complete supervised practice and the assessments if you have previously satisfactorily completed a period of supervised practice in Australia in a specialist position and/or have met the relevant specialist medical college's requirements for fellowship.

For further information on the additional assessment requirements for this pathway, please refer to the Board's website at [www.medicalboard.gov.au](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au).

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1. Under section 58(a) of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law), an individual is qualified for specialist registration if they hold an approved qualification for the specialty. The Board-approved qualification for the purposes of section 58(a) of the National Law is fellowship of an AMC-accredited specialist medical college.

2. The *Supervised practice plan* (SPPA-00) and supporting documents are available on the Board's website at [www.medicalboard.gov.au](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au).

## Specialist pathway

If you are a specialist international medical graduate (SIMG) who has completed the requirements of the Specialist pathway,<sup>3</sup> the evidence you need to provide to the Board will depend on when you completed the requirements of the pathway and may include:

- Work performance reports completed while you held limited or provisional registration. You do not need to re-submit reports that you have previously submitted to the Board. However, these reports must show that you have satisfactorily performed in a specialist position and at a minimum, confirm that your performance was consistently at the level expected in each performance criteria.

Reports will be accepted if they are in the format specified by the relevant specialist college or in the format specified by the Board (i.e., on the Board's *Work performance report* – WRIG-30 form).

- Report 2 (final assessment by an Australian specialist medical college for specialist recognition/ outcome of comparability assessment). If you have completed at least six months of supervised practice while on the Specialist pathway and have been recommended for specialist recognition, your Report 2 will show evidence that you have completed the required period of supervised practice. You do not need to provide this evidence – Ahpra will receive this directly from the specialist medical college.

## Previously qualified and have held specialist registration

If you have previously qualified and practised the specialty in Australia, you do not need to provide evidence of completing a period of supervised practice. If you have not practised the specialty in Australia, the Board may impose conditions on your registration requiring you to complete a period of supervised practice.

## Orientation to the Australian healthcare system

It is important that all registered medical practitioners understand the Australian healthcare system and what it is like to work in it. This includes having an understanding of cultural diversity and the social context of care, as well as the legal environment of medical practice.

The Board has set minimum requirements for orientation, which are outlined in the approved orientation report and the Board's *Policy: Orientation to the Australian healthcare system*. You must provide a completed and signed orientation report and any required attachments to demonstrate that you have completed an orientation to the Australian healthcare system.

You will be exempt from this requirement if you are currently registered or have previously been registered and practised as a medical practitioner in Australia within the past three years.

A list of resources to support your orientation to the Australian healthcare system is available at [www.medicalboard.gov.au](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au).

## Cultural safety education

Cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is important at all levels of medical education. It is a requirement in Australian medical school education, intern training and specialist education and in continuing professional development. Cultural safety education is also a minimum requirement in all doctors' orientation to the Australian healthcare system.

If you are applying for initial registration in Australia, your cultural safety education must meet the minimum requirements outlined in the Board's *Policy: Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration*. You will be required to provide evidence that you have completed cultural safety education, such as a course completion certificate or confirmation of completion from the education provider.

You will be exempt from this requirement if you are currently registered or have previously been registered and practised as a medical practitioner in Australia within the past three years.

All other applicants are required to provide evidence of completing cultural safety education.

The Board will publish further information on this requirement, including recommended resources, at [www.medicalboard.gov.au](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au).

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<sup>3</sup> The Specialist pathway is also known as the specialist recognition pathway, college assessment process or comparability pathway.

## Definitions

**Approved program of study** means a qualification obtained by successfully completing a program of study accredited by the AMC and approved by the Board as providing a qualification for the profession.

**Approved qualification for the specialty** means a qualification obtained by successfully completing a program of study accredited by the AMC and approved by the Board as providing a qualification for the specialty. Fellowship of an AMC-accredited specialist medical college is the approved qualification for specialist registration and holders are commonly referred to as Fellows.

**Accredited internship** is a 12-month period of supervised clinical training completed during postgraduate year 1, accredited by the postgraduate medical councils or intern training accreditation authorities approved by the Board.

**Cultural safety** is defined for the National Scheme at [www.ahpra.gov.au/About-Ahpra/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Health-Strategy](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-Ahpra/Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Health-Strategy).

**Expedited Specialist pathway** is the pathway which enables SIMGs to qualify for specialist registration on the basis of holding a qualification that the Board considers to be substantially equivalent, or based on similar competencies, to an approved qualification for the specialty.

**Initial registration** means the first time that you apply for registration as a medical practitioner in Australia.

**Full-time equivalent** is 38 hours per week.

A **specialist international medical graduate (SIMG)** is an individual who has completed specialist training and obtained a postgraduate specialist qualification from an authority outside of Australia.

## Appendix A – summary of documentary requirements

**Table 1: Requirements for applicants who are currently or have previously been registered in Australia and have practised in Australia**

**Note:** Any other required evidence will be based on the answers provided in response to the mandatory disclosure questions on the registration application form.

How applicant qualifies for specialist registration	Six months of full-time equivalent satisfactory supervised practice in the specialty in Australia	Orientation to the Australian healthcare system and cultural safety education
Australian or New Zealand graduate awarded fellowship of an AMC-accredited specialist college following completion of an approved program of study for the specialty in Australia	N/A – exempt from this requirement	N/A – no evidence required
Awarded fellowship of an AMC-accredited specialist medical college following completion of an approved program of study for the specialty in a country other than Australia	N/A – exempt from this requirement	<p>You are exempt from these requirements if you are currently registered or have previously been registered and practised as a medical practitioner in Australia within the past three years.</p> <p>If the above does not apply, you are required to provide a completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's Policy: <i>Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing cultural safety education that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's Policy: <i>Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i>.</p>
Awarded fellowship of an AMC-accredited specialist medical college following completion of the Specialist pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. work performance reports (WRIG-30) covering a period of six months satisfactory supervised practice in a specialist level position, or</li> <li>b. evidence of being awarded fellowship following completion of the specialist pathway, or</li> <li>c. Report 2 confirming completion of at least six months satisfactory supervised practice and a recommendation for specialist recognition.</li> </ul>	Completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's Policy: <i>Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing cultural safety education that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's Policy: <i>Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i> .

<p>Expedited Specialist pathway</p>	<p><b>If supervised practice is, or was, completed while holding general or specialist registration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A minimum of two <i>Supervised practice reports</i> (TSPR-00) to be submitted in line with imposed conditions after the satisfactory completion of three months of supervised practice in a specialist level position (interim report) and at the satisfactory completion of six months of supervised practice (final report) in a specialist level position, and</li> <li>b. A multisource feedback assessment and other assessment type/s (Mini-CEX, DOPS or CBD) as nominated by the SIMG in their <i>Supervised practice plan</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b>If supervised practice is, or was, completed while holding limited or provisional registration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Work performance reports</i> (WRIG-30) covering a period of six months satisfactory supervised practice in a specialist level position; and</li> <li>b. A multisource feedback assessment and other assessment type/s (Mini-CEX, DOPS or CBD) as nominated by the SIMG</li> </ul>	<p>Completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's <i>Policy: Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing cultural safety education that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's <i>Policy: Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i>.</p>
<p>Specialist pathway: Recommended for specialist recognition by an AMC-accredited specialist medical college following completion of the Specialist pathway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>Work performance reports</i> (WRIG-30) covering a period of six months of satisfactory supervised practice in a specialist level position, or</li> <li>b. Report 2 confirming completion of at least six months of satisfactory supervised practice and a recommendation for specialist recognition.</li> </ul>	<p>Completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's <i>Policy: Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing cultural safety education that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's <i>Policy: Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i>.</p>
<p>Previously deemed qualified for specialist registration and previously held specialist registration in Australia</p>	<p><b>If previously practised in Australia:</b></p> <p>You are exempt from these requirements if you have previously practised as a medical practitioner in a specialist level position in Australia.</p> <p><b>If not previously practised in Australia:</b></p> <p>The Board may require a period of supervised practice. <i>Supervised practice reports</i> (TSPR-00) submitted at a frequency determined by the Board, will confirm satisfactory completion of supervised practice.</p>	<p><b>If previously practised in Australia:</b></p> <p>You are exempt from these requirements if you are currently registered or have previously been registered and practised as a medical practitioner in Australia within the past three years.</p> <p><b>If not previously practised in Australia:</b></p> <p>Completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's <i>Policy: Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing safety training that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's <i>Policy: Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i>.</p>

**Table 2: Requirements for applicants applying for initial registration in Australia**

**Note:** Any other required evidence will be determined by the answers provided in response to the mandatory disclosure questions on the registration application form.

<b>How applicant qualifies for specialist registration</b>	<b>Six months of satisfactory supervised practice in the specialty in Australia</b>	<b>Orientation to the Australian healthcare system and cultural safety education</b>
<p>Awarded fellowship of an AMC-accredited specialist medical college following completion of an approved program of study for the specialty in a country other than Australia</p>	<p>N/A – exempt from this requirement</p>	<p>Completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's <i>Policy: Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing cultural safety education that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's <i>Policy: Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i>.</p>
<p>Expedited Specialist pathway</p>	<p>a. A minimum of two <i>Supervised practice reports</i> (TSPR-00) to be submitted in line with imposed conditions after the satisfactory completion of three months of supervised practice in a specialist level position (interim report) and at the satisfactory completion of six months of supervised practice (final report) in a specialist level position, and</p> <p>b. A multisource feedback assessment and other assessment type/s (Mini-CEX, DOPS or CBD) as nominated by the SIMG in their <i>Supervised practice plan</i>.</p>	<p>Completed orientation report in accordance with the Board's <i>Policy: Orientation to the Australian healthcare system</i> and evidence of completing cultural safety education that covers the minimum topics outlined in the Board's <i>Policy: Cultural safety education requirements for specialist registration</i>.</p>