

University of Toronto Approval Process: Application for Accreditation of an Area of Focused Competence (Diploma) Program

Introduction

a.) Area of Focused Competence (Diploma) Program

The Area of Focused Competence (Diploma) Program represents a new category of Royal College discipline recognition which Royal College Council approved on February 25, 2011. The Royal College defines the format for these programs in the following terms:

1. Typically one to two years of additional training, but competency-based
2. Built upon training in a broader discipline
3. Supported within the existing Specialty Committee of the primary discipline (unless one does not currently exist)
4. Assessed through summative portfolio
5. Training programs accredited by the Royal College ('C' Standards)
6. A separate annual dues fee and Maintenance of Certificate (MOC) requirements

Candidates successfully completing all requirements of an approved program would receive an added qualification known as a *Diploma of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada*, or DRCPSC.

For additional information:

<http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/education-strategy-accreditation/innovations-development/discipline-recognition/discipline-recognition-areas-focussed-competence-afc-programs-e>

<http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/education-strategy-accreditation/pgme-training-programs/accreditation-areas-focussed-competence-afc-programs-e>

b.) Recognition of a Discipline as an Area of Focused Competence

The Royal College must recognize a discipline as an Area of Focused Competence (AFC) before individual Faculty of Medicine fellowship programs can apply for accreditation. The Royal College estimates that it would typically take 12 months to process an application for recognition of a discipline as an AFC. The application process consists of the following steps:

1. An application for the proposed Area of Focused Competence is submitted to the Royal College with support from the relevant sponsoring parent specialty and national specialty society
2. Committee On Specialties (COS) Part I review of the application
3. A national consultation follows COS Part I approval
4. COS Part II review follows the consultation
5. Following Part II review, COS refers the application to Education Committee (EdC)
6. Following EdC approval, the Royal College sets:
 - i. Specific standards of accreditation for the AFC program
 - ii. Competency training requirements

- iii. Competency portfolio for educators
- iv. Competency portfolio for candidates
- 7. The application form for fellowship program accreditation becomes accessible through Royal College website

Fees:

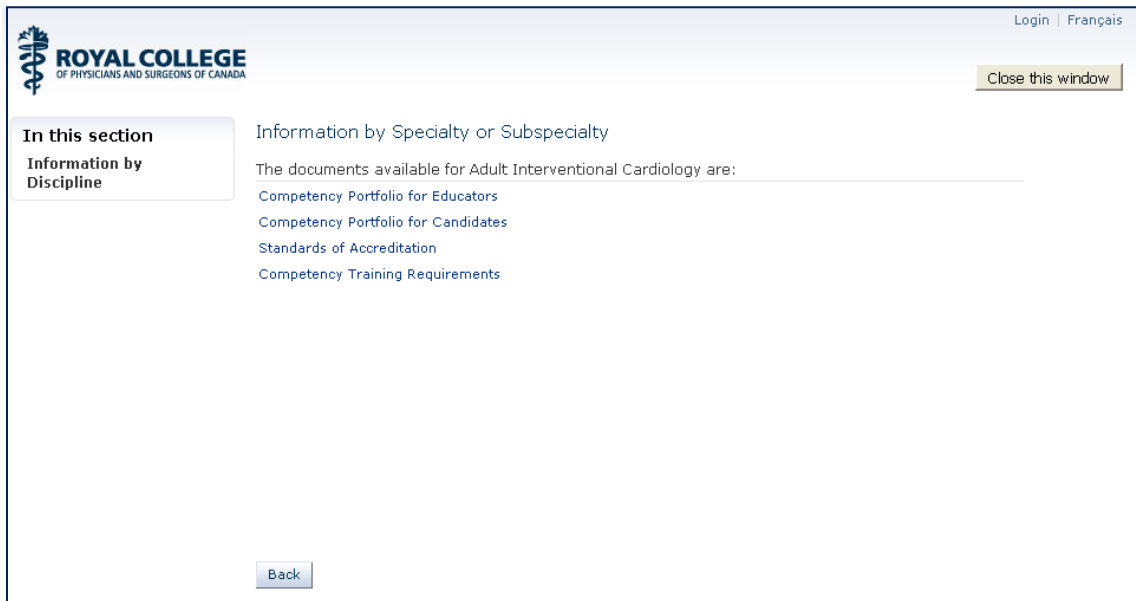
For 2016, the application fee for review by Committee on Specialties (COS) of a discipline to be an AFC-diploma program is \$14,000 (per discipline application).

The PGME Office is not responsible for payment of this fee.

c.) Application for Accreditation of an Area of Focused Competence (Diploma) Program

Once the Royal College has recognized a discipline as an Area of Focused Competence and has approved the specialty specific documents, then the standards and evaluation documents, along with a downloadable application form, will be posted on the Royal College website at http://www.royalcollege.ca/rc/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pages/ibd.jspx?_afLoop=21126433827534266&_afWindowMode=0&_afWindowId=null#!%40%40%3F_afWindowId%3Dnul1%26_afLoop%3D21126433827534266%26_afWindowMode%3D0%26_adf.ctrl-state%3D264qu9ye4_30

Below is a sample from the Royal College website:



The following documents must be included in the application:

- Appendix A – Supporting documentation including:
 - Appendix A.1 – Covering letter indicating that the Faculty has approved and supports this program
 - Appendix A.2 – Covering letters from the Chief Executive Officer of each of the participating institutions indicating support for the program
- Appendix B – terms of Reference for the AFC program committee (if applicable)
- Appendix C – Research support in the form of operating grants
- Appendix D – Peer-reviewed publications of faculty members

- Appendix E – Objectives for the educational experiences (Standard C3.1; C3.2) ¹
- Appendix F – Signed Agreements of affiliation (if required)
- Appendix G – Curriculum of the program

Fees:

AFC programs are invoiced for an annual registration fee (\$2,000) once they have been granted Accredited New Program status by the Areas of Focused Competence – Accreditation Committee. This fee covers the current academic year and does not depend on the date within that year when the program became accredited. All AFC programs, including those without trainees, are invoiced each April for the annual program registration fee, for the upcoming academic year (July 1 – June 30). Please note that this fee is a single, university-wide fee; it is *not* payable per hospital site.

The PGME Office is not responsible for payment of this fee.

Candidates for the DRCPSC qualification must pay the following fees to the Royal College:

Credentialing and assessment fee:	\$850 (per candidate)
Annual dues:	\$425

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The Royal College application form for accreditation of an AFC program requires the signature of the Vice Dean Post MD Education, as well as a covering letter indicating Faculty approval and support for the program.

1. Prior clinical departmental educational review and approval, in accordance with established departmental governance of fellowship training, including approval and input from departmental PGME committee(s), must precede the submission of an application to the Vice Dean Post MD Education for approval. The Vice Dean Post MD Education must receive evidence of prior departmental approval (for example, a letter of approval by the Chair or the Vice Chair of Education in place of the Chair, and, where applicable, the divisional Chair or Head) together with the application.
2. The Vice Dean Post MD Education must receive the *complete* application package, including the completed Royal College application form and all of the required supporting documentation, at least 30 days prior to the Royal College deadline for submission of the application.

Royal College deadlines² for the submission of applications for accredited AFC-diploma programs:

- **September 1** for review in the following November/December
- **November 30** for review in the following February/March
- **February 28** for review in the following May/June

Due to the competency-based nature of AFC (diploma) programs, the concept of retroactivity does not apply in the context of AFC (diploma) programs. Trainees are able to submit their

¹ The General Standards of Accreditation applicable to AFC programs include the [A Standards](#), which apply to the university and postgraduate dean's office and the [C Standards](#), which apply to each AFC program.

² Updated deadlines confirmed by the Royal College March 18, 2015.

summative portfolios for assessment by the Royal College once the program has an accredited status.

3. The Vice Dean Post MD Education will refer the application package to the Postgraduate Medical Education Advisory Committee (PGMEAC) and the Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC) for review and advice.
4. Following PGMEAC and FEAC review, the Vice Dean Post MD Education will indicate approval of the application by signing the application form and providing a supporting letter to the Royal College on behalf of the Faculty of Medicine.

Fees and Clerical Support:

Please note that the PGME Office does not provide clerical support or financial assistance to University of Toronto programs either to complete the application for accreditation or to maintain AFC program accreditation status once attained. Consultation with PGME Directors, the Associate Dean PGME and the Vice Dean Post MD Education is available.