

# 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 designation.

Physicians and surgeons who have been certified by the Royal College can join as **Diplomates**. Diplomates must also be Fellows of the Royal College. Diplomates can use the DRCPSC designation and the Royal College Fellowship designation (FRCPC/FRCSC). Physicians and surgeons who have not been certified by the Royal College can become **Diplomate Affiliates**.

Only those who maintain their status as a Diplomate or Diplomate Affiliate can use the designation DRCPSC (Diplomate of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada). Please note that a DRCPSC designation does not grant Fellowship in the Royal College. Diplomate Affiliate status does provide access to the [Maintenance of Certification \(MOC\) Program](#). Participation in MOC is a requirement for ongoing Diplomate Affiliate status.

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 2017, 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***

Overall, the application process can take approximately 8 – 10 months for a new program to complete.

Once the Royal College has recognized a discipline as an Area of Focused Competence and has approved the specialty specific documents, then programs can apply for accreditation. In order to obtain a copy of a discipline-specific AFC application form, please contact [pgmecordinator@utoronto.ca](mailto:pgmecordinator@utoronto.ca) at the PGME Office to receive an electronic copy.

**Documentation:**

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) <sup>1</sup>
- Appendix F – Signed Agreements of affiliation (if required)
- Appendix G – Curriculum of the program

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

Please contact [pgmecoordinator@utoronto.ca](mailto:pgmecoordinator@utoronto.ca) if you have questions regarding the application package or curriculum documents. A tip sheet and sample resources are available.

Additionally, the accreditation unit can review new applications and provide comments prior to finalization and submission to the Vice Dean Post MD Education.

### **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:**

<b>Credentialing and assessment fee:</b>	<b>\$850 (per candidate)</b>
<b>Annual dues:</b>	<b>\$250 (per Diplomate or Diplomate Affiliate) <sup>2</sup></b>

### **University of Toronto Approval Process**

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 45 days prior to the Royal College deadline for submission of the application.
3. 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 summative portfolios for assessment by the Royal College once the program has an accredited status.
4. The Vice Dean Post MD Education will refer the application package to the Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC) for review and advice. In addition to welcoming input from FEAC members on an individual basis, the FEAC will respond to the Vice Dean Post MD Education by means of a review panel consisting of at least three FEAC members, including at least one standing member of the committee. With the approval of the FEAC Chair, PGME will

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<sup>2</sup> Per <http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/membership/dues-information-e>

support the review panel's work while ensuring timely compliance with the Royal College's application deadlines for AFC program accreditation.

5. Following 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.

**Timeline:**

Please see the PGME website for updated timelines for the submission of new AFC Applications.