



RACGP

# Practice Experience Program Specialist (PEP SP) Application Handbook



### Practice Experience Program Specialist (PEP SP) Application Handbook

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The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners Ltd  
100 Wellington Parade  
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002

Tel 03 8699 0414  
Fax 03 8699 0400  
[www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au)

ABN: 34 000 223 807

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*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and those emerging as leaders.*

V1 June 2024

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## Practice Experience Program Specialist

### Overview

The Practice Experience Program Specialist (PEP SP) is for Specialist International Medical Graduates (SIMGs) who hold a recognised overseas general practice specialist qualification and wish to qualify for specialist registration in Australia and be awarded Fellowship of the RACGP (FRACGP) via the [Medical Board of Australia's \(MBA\) Specialist Pathway – specialist recognition](#).

Before you can apply for entry into the PEP SP, the RACGP will assess your comparability to an Australian trained specialist general practitioner (GP) at the point of admission to Fellowship. The outcome of the comparability assessment will determine if you are eligible for entry into the PEP SP, and if so, which stream you must undertake.

The PEP SP has two streams: the Substantially Comparable (SC) stream and the Partially Comparable (PC) stream. Each stream has specific requirements you need to fulfill before you can apply for FRACGP and registration as a specialist GP in Australia.

During the program, you will spend a minimum of six months in comprehensive Australian general practice, during which you'll work under supervision and complete targeted educational activities to enable your successful transition to the Australian general practice system. You'll also have to sit assessments or exams to demonstrate that you have reached comparability with an Australian trained specialist general practitioner (GP) commencing practice (ie at the level of a new Fellow of the RACGP).

In this handbook, we'll focus on your PEP SP journey from the day you start the application process to the day you sign your program agreement. For information on the journey you'll take once you start the program, go to the [PEP SP Participant Handbook – Partially Comparable Stream](#) or [PEP SP Participant Handbook – Substantially Comparable Stream](#).





## Acronyms

AGPT	Australian General Practice Training program
AHPRA	Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
AKT	Applied Knowledge Test
AMC	Australian Medical Council
BLS	Basic Life Support
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DPA	Distribution Priority Area
ECFMG	Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
EMQ	Extended Matching Questions
EPIC	Electronic Portfolio of International Credentials
FRACGP	Fellowship of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
FSP	Fellowship Support Program
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GP	General Practitioner
KFP	Key Feature Problem
MBA	Medical Board of Australia
MBS	Medicare Benefits Schedule
MCQ	Multiple Choice Questionnaire
MMM	Modified Monash Model
PC	Partially Comparable
PEP SP	Practice Experience Program Specialist
RACGP	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
RVTS	Remote Vocational Training Scheme
SBA	Single Best Answer
SC	Substantially Comparable



Healthy Profession.  
Healthy Australia.

SIMG	Specialist International Medical Graduate
SPR	Summary of Preliminary Review
WDOMS	World Directory of Medical Schools



Healthy Profession.  
Healthy Australia.

## Training program contacts

### **RACGP National**

T: 1800 472 247

E: [education@racgp.org.au](mailto:education@racgp.org.au)

W: [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au)

### **RACGP offices**

W: [www.racgp.org.au/find-an-office](http://www.racgp.org.au/find-an-office)

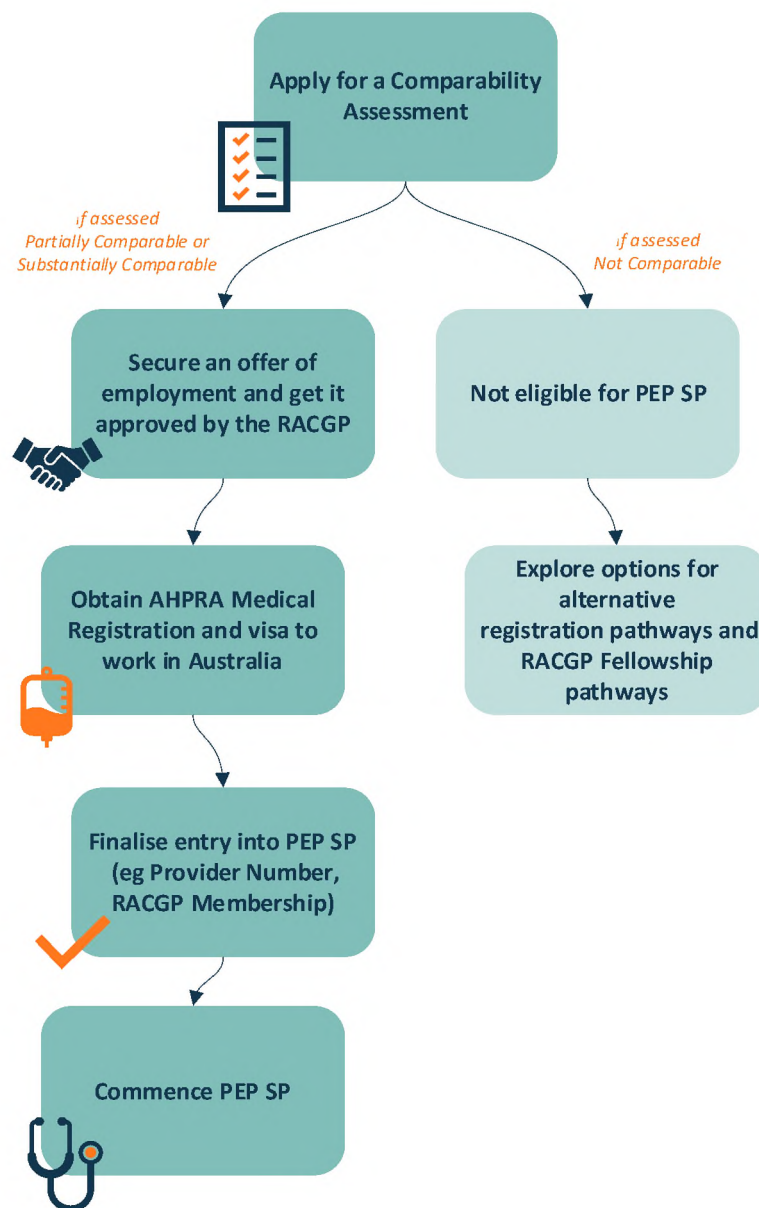
### **Education support team**

E: [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au)



## The PEP SP application journey

Applying for the PEP-SP can take some time and is complex to navigate. To make things simpler for you, we've broken down the application process into simple steps as illustrated below. Each step is explained in detail in this handbook.



**Figure1** – PEP SP application journey

If you have any questions or need assistance as you progress through your application, you can contact the RACGP at [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au)

## Applying for a comparability assessment

The first thing to do as part of your PEP SP application is apply for a comparability assessment.

### What is a comparability assessment?

A comparability assessment is the process of assessing how your experience and training compare to an Australian trained general practitioner at the point of admission to Fellowship.

The RACGP will assess your comparability by considering several criteria, including your training, qualification(s), assessment methods, clinical experience, continuity of practice and ongoing professional development.

There are three possible outcomes to a comparability assessment. You can be assessed as Substantially Comparable, Partially Comparable, or Not Comparable.

**Tip!** For more information on the comparability criteria and how they are assessed, go to the [PEP SP Comparability Assessment Guide](#).

### Why do I need a comparability assessment?

The comparability assessment is an important part of your application into the PEP SP because its outcome will determine whether you are eligible for entry into the PEP SP and, if eligible, which PEP SP stream you can apply for.

The PEP SP has two streams: the Substantially Comparable stream and the Partially Comparable stream.

- If you are assessed as **Substantially Comparable**, you are eligible for the Substantially Comparable stream.
- If you are assessed as **Partially Comparable**, you are eligible for the Partially Comparable stream.
- If you are assessed as **Not Comparable**, you are not eligible for entry into the PEP SP. However, you may be eligible to gain medical registration via other registration pathways (eg [Standard Pathway](#) or [Competent Authority Pathway](#)), and to apply for entry into another [RACGP Fellowship Pathway](#). Please contact [becomeagp@racgp.org.au](mailto:becomeagp@racgp.org.au) for more information.

**Tip!** For more information about the program requirements for each stream, go to the [PEP SP Participant Handbook - Partially Comparable Stream](#) or [PEP SP Participant Handbook - Substantially Comparable Stream](#).

### Am I eligible to apply for a comparability assessment?

You can only apply for a comparability assessment if you meet the prerequisites below:

- you were awarded a primary qualification in medicine and surgery by a training institution recognised by both the [Australian Medical Council \(AMC\)](#) and the [World Directory of Medical Schools \(WDOMS\)](#),
- you have satisfied all the training and examination requirements to practice as a specialist general practitioner and have been awarded a specialist general practice qualification in your country of origin, and
- the curriculum of your specialist general practice qualification has been recognised by the RACGP.



### How can I check if my curriculum has been recognised by the RACGP?

The RACGP has reviewed curricula from various overseas specialist general practice qualifications and assessed them as 'substantially comparable', 'partially comparable' or 'not comparable' depending on their level of comparability to the [RACGP curriculum and syllabus for Australian general practice](#).

To check if your curriculum has been reviewed for comparability and how it was assessed, you can go to the [curricula classification](#).

If your curriculum is listed as:

- 'partially comparable' or 'substantially comparable', you may apply for a comparability assessment.
- 'not comparable', you are not eligible to apply for a comparability assessment or for entry into the PEP SP, but you may be eligible to apply for another registration pathway (eg [Standard Pathway](#) or [Competent Authority Pathway](#)) and [work towards Fellowship via a different pathway](#) (eg AGPT, RVTS or FSP).

If your curriculum is not listed, it means it has not been assessed by the RACGP. You will need to apply for a curriculum assessment as per the following instructions. You can contact the RACGP at [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au) for further information and to obtain the curriculum assessment application form. The RACGP will not charge a fee to undertake the curriculum assessment.

Note: If you hold the International Conjoint Fellowship of the RACGP (ICFRACGP) and you wish to apply for the PEP SP, please email us at [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au) for more information.

**Important!** The outcome of your comparability assessment is NOT solely determined by the outcome of your curriculum assessment. Eg even if your curriculum is assessed as 'substantially comparable', you may still be deemed Partially Comparable or Not Comparable after all other comparability criteria have been assessed.

For more information, please go to the [PEP SP Comparability Assessment Guide](#).

### Applying for a curriculum assessment

1. First, you will need to contact your college, training organisation or medical board to obtain these documents:
  - a copy of their specialist general practice curriculum,
  - an official letter from them confirming:
    - it is their curriculum,
    - the general practice qualification it leads to,
    - the curriculum year, and
    - the year you obtained your qualification.
  - an official document outlining the good medical practice guidelines and ethics for the country or region in which you completed the requirements for your international qualification.

**Important!** If any of these documents are not in English, you must provide a copy of the original and a certified official translation with your application.

2. Once you have gathered the required documentary evidence, you can complete the application form. You will need sign it, scan it and return it to [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au) along with copies of the documentary evidence listed above.
3. You will receive the outcome of the curriculum assessment within ten weeks of submitting your application.



### Primary source verification of your qualifications

Once you have confirmed that you meet the comparability assessment prerequisites, you must apply to have your overseas medical qualifications verified for authenticity. Your medical qualifications include your primary medical degree certificate and your specialist general practice qualification certificate.

Verification is done using the [Electronic Portfolio of International Credentials \(EPIC\)](#) service provided by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). Step-by-step instructions on how to apply for verification are available on the [ECFMG website](#).

During your application, you will obtain two important numbers – make sure you write them down as you will need to provide them with your comparability assessment application:

- **EPIC ID** (or EPIC number): this number provides evidence that you have applied for EPIC verification.
- **AMC candidate number**: this number provides evidence that you have established an AMC portfolio; it will be used by the RACGP to confirm that your qualification has been verified by EPIC.

You may submit your Comparability Assessment application even if the EPIC verification hasn't been completed yet, provided you give us your EPIC ID as evidence that you have applied for verification. Your application will not be finalised until we can confirm EPIC verification.

You and the AMC will be notified when the verification of your qualification has been completed.

#### Checklist – What to do before you can apply for a comparability assessment

- I have checked that my primary qualification in medicine and surgery is from a training institution recognised by both the [Australian Medical Council \(AMC\)](#) and the [World Directory of Medical Schools \(WDOMS\)](#).
- I have satisfied all the training and examination requirements to practice as a specialist general practitioner and have been awarded a specialist general practice qualification in my country of origin.
- I have checked that the curriculum of my specialist general practice qualification has been assessed as 'substantially comparable' or 'partially comparable' to the RACGP curriculum.
- I have applied for primary source verification of my medical qualifications via EPIC.
- I understand that the outcome of my comparability assessment is NOT solely based upon the outcome of my curriculum assessment. All comparability criteria must be assessed before the RACGP can confirm my final comparability assessment outcome.

## How do I apply for a comparability assessment?

Applying for a comparability assessment is the first step of your application for PEP SP. You must access the [PEP SP application platform](#) and complete **Part A – Comparability Assessment application**.



The Practice Experience Program (PEP) is an Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited education program for medical practitioners. The [PEP Specialist Stream](#) aims to support overseas specialist general practitioners and is supported by the Australian Government's Stronger Rural Health Strategy for doctors working in MMM2 to MMM7 areas.

To start your application, you can click on the green 'log in' button on this page. You will need to have your RACGP ID handy to access the application form.

If you don't have an RACGP account, you will first need to [sign up](#) to receive a unique user ID. The process will take approximately five minutes and then you can come back to this page to start your application.

Here are some steps to completing the program for your future practice in Australia.

1. **Part A: Comparability Assessment application**
  - After assessment, a comparability outcome is determined as substantially, partially or not comparable. Outcomes deemed to be not comparable can apply for the [PEP Standard Program](#).
  - Information about your job offer(s) in Australia (scope of practice and location) is reviewed by the RACGP. Once a job offer is approved, applicants can apply for AHPRA Medical Registration.
2. **Part B: Job Offer Approval application**
  - Information about your job offer(s) in Australia (scope of practice and location) is reviewed by the RACGP. Once a job offer is approved, applicants can apply for AHPRA Medical Registration.
3. **Part C: Right to Work application**
  - Visa details and a form to request a RACGP provider number is completed.

For more information about the program, please visit the [PEP Specialist Stream FAQs](#) or email [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au)

We estimate it will take about 90 minutes to complete Part A. You may nominate an agency or a third-party to complete the application on your behalf.

You'll need an RACGP ID number to start your application. If you don't have one yet, you can register at no cost on the [RACGP website](#).

Once you have started your online application, you can complete it in any order you want, save it and come back to it at any time. It will be accessible for six months from the day of payment.

If you have questions or require assistance with the application process, you can contact the RACGP by phone on 1800 472 247 or by email at [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au)

Your application will not be processed until the [comparability assessment application fee](#) has been paid in full. The RACGP accepts payments via Visa, MasterCard, American Express and PayPal.

**Tip!** Do not complete **Part B – Job Offer Approval Application** and **Part C – Right to Work application** at this stage. You must wait until you have received your comparability assessment outcome.

### Documentary evidence

In this section, we will look at the type of evidence you must submit with your comparability assessment application.

All information submitted in your application will be handled as per our [Privacy Policy](#). The RACGP will take reasonable steps to verify the information provided. Submission of plagiarised, false or misleading information will be handled as per the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

**Important!** If you are submitting documents that are in a language other than English, you must provide certified official English translations of these documents with your application in addition to the original version.

You must also make sure that all copies of documents submitted with your application have been verified as true copies of the original by an authorised witness. Please go to [Statutory Declaration](#) for more information.

### Personal details

If your name is inconsistent in any of the documentation provided in the application, you must provide official evidence supporting your name change. Evidence of name change must include your previous name and new name.

### Curriculum Vitae (CV)

You must complete a CV using the template provided in the application form. Your CV must be completed and dated within the three months preceding the submission of your application. It must list all your clinical experience from graduation to current and include a written explanation for any gaps in clinical practice greater than three calendar months.



### Clinical experience in the past 48 months

In addition to your CV, you must provide evidence of all the clinical posts you've held in the past 48 calendar months.

For each post, you must provide a letter of support from the practice where you worked. Each letter must:

- be on practice letterhead,
- be dated and signed by the Practice Principal (preferably), Senior Medical Director, CEO, Director, or Practice Manager, and
- state the following:
  - the specific dates you were employed in the practice,
  - whether you worked full-time or part-time,
  - the average amount of hours worked each week,
  - the duration of your weekly sessions (eg Monday to Friday, 9am-12:30pm and 1:30pm-5pm), and
  - a detailed description of the duties you were required to perform.

**Important!** The letter of support must give a detailed summary of the patients and presentations you treated while in the role. Vague statements such as "the duties included everything a general practitioner does" will not be accepted.

### Academic qualifications

You will need to upload copies of:

- your primary medical degree certificate,
- your specialist general practice qualification certificate,
- your certificate of completion of training (where relevant),
- a confirmation letter from the body which awarded your specialist qualification, stating the pathway followed and the summative assessments undertaken to gain the specialist qualification (this letter is sometimes referred to as a Letter of Good Standing), and
- a description of the theoretical and practical summative assessments undertaken as part of your specialist general practice qualification (100-300 words each). These descriptions can be drawn from official resources of the awarding body or can be written in your own words.

A list of the recognised summative assessments is available in [Appendix 1](#). If you have completed assessments that are not listed in [Appendix 1](#) you may provide evidence outlining why these assessments should be taken into consideration as part of the comparability assessment. This could include a letter of support from the specialist college outlining the assessment's requirements and structure. Colleges should provide as much information as possible, preferably including sample exam questions, psychometrics, and public reports when available.



### Medical registration

You will need to provide evidence of medical registration for all jurisdictions of practice since you obtained your specialist general practice qualification (with expiry dates if applicable).

You must also disclose to the RACGP details of any:

- addenda on your medical registration, whether in Australia or overseas, and
- regulatory authority activity, whether in Australia or overseas, that:
  - has led or may lead to a change in registration status, or
  - has led to an adverse finding or forms part of an ongoing investigation, and
- other Notifiable Conduct.

If you fail to disclose this information, it will be handled as per the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

You will need to provide evidence that you have completed 50 hours of CPD in the 12 months prior to applying for your comparability assessment.

The RACGP will only consider CPD activities substantiated robust evidence; this will be typically in the form of an official certificate or statement of completion issued by the body that delivered the activity.

All CPD evidence must clearly show:

- the nature of the activity,
- the date(s) the activity was undertaken, and
- the number of hours completed per activity.

**Important!** Where a certificate or statement of completion shows CPD credits or points, but not the number of CPD hours completed, you must seek a statement from the issuing body that provides a conversion of credits or points into hours. The RACGP will not accept credits or points statements on their own.

### Statutory declaration

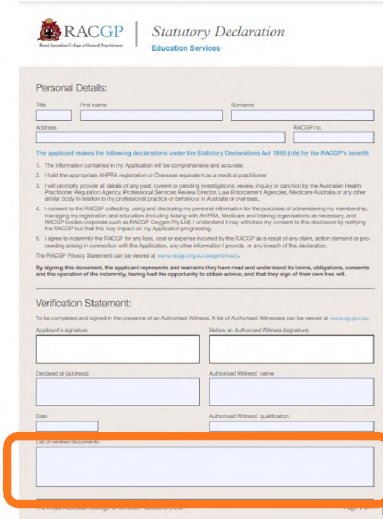
To finish your application, you'll need to complete the [RACGP Statutory Declaration](#) and sign it in the presence of an authorised witness.

For a list of authorised witnesses please visit the [Australian Government Attorney-General's Department website](#).

You'll also need to get copies of the documents below verified by an authorised witness to confirm they are true copies of the originals:

- medical registrations for all jurisdictions of practice, and
- letters of support from your practices for the previous 48 months.

Once these documents have been verified, the authorised witness must list them in the space provided at the bottom of the RACGP Statutory Declaration.



The screenshot shows the RACGP Statutory Declaration form. It includes sections for Personal Details, a list of declarations, a Verification Statement, and a list of verified documents. The 'List of verified documents' section is highlighted with an orange box.

**Important!** The date you sign the initial statutory declaration is considered as your official comparability assessment application date. This is important to remember since the application date will be used as a reference point when assessing certain comparability criteria, eg your recency, general practice experience or CPD.

Once you have completed your application and uploaded all the required documentation, you are ready to submit your application. You will not be able to amend your application once you have submitted it.

### Checklist – documents to be provided with your comparability assessment application

- Name change documentation (if applicable)
- Your curriculum vitae
- Letters of support for clinical posts you held in the past 48 calendar months
- Your primary medical degree certificate
- Your specialist medical degree certificate
- A letter of good standing from the organisation that issued your specialist qualification
- Evidence of medical registration for all jurisdictions of practice since you graduated
- Evidence of 50 hours of CPD
- Certified translations for documents in a language other than English
- Signed statutory declaration

## When will I find out the outcome of the comparability assessment?

It can take up to ten weeks to assess an application, provided you have submitted all the required information and documentary evidence.

If the RACGP requires supplementary information to complete their assessment, they will contact you via email. Any request for additional information is likely to extend the assessment timeframe beyond the normal ten weeks.

Once the RACGP has assessed your application, we will email you a Summary of Preliminary Review (SPR) to advise whether you have been deemed Substantially Comparable, Partially Comparable or Not Comparable to an Australian trained general practitioner at the point of admission to Fellowship.

After you receive the SPR, you must respond to the RACGP via email to confirm whether you accept the SPR findings. If you believe there were errors, gaps or omissions in the information assessed in the SPR, you will have 21 days to contact the RACGP and provide clarification or additional information to be considered in the assessment. If you do not provide clarification or additional information by the end of the 21-day timeframe, the original SPR findings will be upheld.

Once you have confirmed that you accept the SPR findings, the RACGP will email you a Comparability Assessment outcome letter. The outcome of your comparability assessment will be valid for 12 calendar months from the date of the outcome letter. This means that you have 12 calendar months from the date of your outcome letter to submit your complete PEP SP application (ie **Part B – Job Offer Approval Application** and **Part C – Right to Work application**) and to sign your program agreement.

**Important!** If you don't complete your PEP-SP application within 12 calendar months after receiving your outcome letter, you will have to apply for a new comparability assessment to ensure you still meet the eligibility requirements.

If, after you have received your outcome letter, you believe the Comparability Assessment was made incorrectly, you may apply for reconsideration of the assessment outcome as per the [Dispute, Reconsideration and Appeals Policy](#).

You may re-apply for another comparability assessment at any time, but only if you can demonstrate that there have been significant changes to your training and/or experience since your initial assessment. If you are planning to re-apply for a comparability assessment, please contact [educationsupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationsupport@racgp.org.au) for guidance tailored to your circumstances.

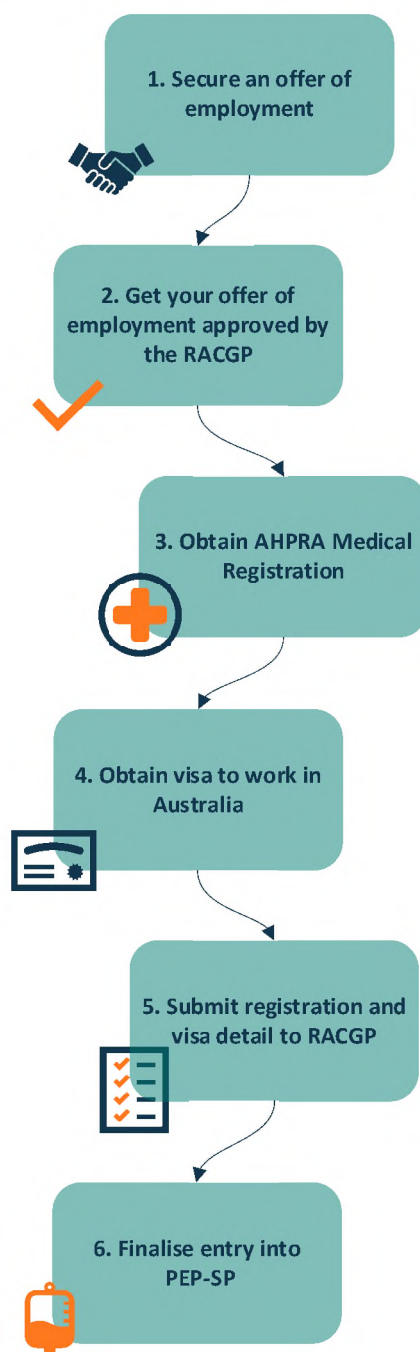
## What do I do now that I have my comparability outcome letter?

- If you were assessed as Partially Comparable or Substantially Comparable, you may progress with the PEP SP application process.
- If you were assessed as Not Comparable, you are ineligible for PEP SP and therefore cannot progress with the PEP SP application process. Components of the assessment outcome may be used to inform your eligibility for [other RACGP Fellowship pathways](#).



### Next steps of the PEP SP application

If you were assessed as Substantially Comparable or Partially Comparable, you may progress through the next steps of the PEP SP application, as described in the diagram below.



**Figure 2** – PEP SP application journey for applicants assessed as PC or SC

Each step is described in more detail in the following sections.

**Important!** If you are accepted into the PEP SP, you'll need to provide evidence that you hold a valid Basic Life Support (BLS) certification when you sign your program agreement. If you don't already have BLS certification, or it is close to expiring, we recommend you complete a BLS course as you progress through your PEP SP application.

You can find more information about BLS, approved instructors and course centres in the [Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support Guide](#).

## Securing an offer of employment in general practice

The next step in your application will be to secure an offer of employment in general practice in Australia. The place where you secure employment is where you'll be completing your period of supervised practice.

The RACGP does not have any role in finding you suitable employment- it is solely your responsibility. You may contact a [Rural Health Workforce Agency](#) or a medical recruitment agency for assistance.

To be approved by the RACGP, your job offer must be in a practice that:

- is accredited against the [RACGP Standards for general practices](#),
- meets the requirements of [Comprehensive Australian general practice](#), and
- meets the location requirements as per the [General Practice Fellowship Placement Guidelines](#)<sup>1</sup>.

**Important!** PEP-SP participants will typically complete their period of supervised practice in a regional, rural or remote area (ie an area classified as MM2-MM7 under the [Modified Monash Model](#)), unless they qualify for an exemption as per the [General Practice Fellowship Placement Guidelines](#). SC participants may work in a metropolitan area (ie classified as MM1), provided it is classified as a [Distribution Priority Area](#) (DPA).

The following definitions of full-time and part-time work will apply while you complete your period of supervised practice:

**Full-time general practice experience** is defined as at least 38 hours distributed over a minimum of four days per week. A minimum of 27 hours must be in face-to-face, rostered, patient consultation time undertaking general practice activities. Work periods of less than three consecutive hours, or of less than 4 calendar weeks in any one practice will not be considered. Hours worked beyond this fulltime definition will not be considered.

**Part-time general practice experience** is defined as at least 14.5 hours distributed over a minimum of two days per week, of which at least 10.5 hours is face-to-face, rostered, patient consultation time, undertaking general practice activities. Work periods of less than three consecutive hours, or of less than 4 calendar weeks in any one practice will not be considered.

**Tip!** For further information about where you can work in Australia as an international medical graduate, visit the [Health Workforce Locator](#).

<sup>1</sup>Location requirements are determined by the Department of Health and Aged Care and are subject to change outside the control of the RACGP.



## Getting your offer of employment approved by the RACGP



The Practice Experience Program (PEP) is an Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited education program for medical practitioners. The [PEP Specialist Stream](#) aims to support overseas specialist general practitioners and is supported by the Australian Government's Stronger Rural Health Strategy for doctors working in MMM2 to MMM7 areas.

To start your application, you can click on the green 'log in' button on this page. You will need to have your RACGP ID handy to access the application form.

If you don't have an RACGP account, you will first need to [sign up](#) to receive a unique user ID. The process will take approximately five minutes and then you can come back to this page to start your application.

There are three steps for commencing the program to attain Fellowship of the RACGP:

1. **Part A: Comparability Assessment application**
  - After assessment, a comparability outcome is determined as substantially, partially or not comparable. Outcomes deemed to be not comparable can [appeal the PEP Specialist Stream](#).
2. **Part B: Job Offer Approval application**
  - Information about your job offer(s) in Australia (scope of practice and location) is reviewed by the RACGP. Once a job offer is approved, applicants can apply for AHPRA Medical Registration.
3. **Part C: Right to Work application**
  - Visa details and a form to request a RACGP provider number is completed.

For more information about the program, please visit the [PEP Specialist Stream FAQs](#) or email [educationssupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationssupport@racgp.org.au)

Once you have secured employment, you'll need to go to the [PEP SP application platform](#) and complete **Part B – Job Offer Approval application**.

You will be required to submit a letter of offer from your intended practice that includes:

- the supervisor's details,
- the scope of practice,
- the intended hours of work,
- the duties,
- the practice location, and
- the commencement date.

The letter of offer must be signed no more than six calendar months before it is submitted to the RACGP for approval.

The RACGP may take up to three weeks to review your job offer. The RACGP will contact you via email to let you know whether your job offer is approved or not.

**Important!** If there are any changes to your employment offer after you have submitted it for approval, you must notify the RACGP as soon as possible at [educationssupport@racgp.org.au](mailto:educationssupport@racgp.org.au)

## Applying for AHPRA Medical Registration

Once your job offer is approved, you must apply for AHPRA medical registration via the [AHPRA website](#).

The type of registration you can apply for will depend on the outcome of your comparability assessment:

- If you were assessed as Substantially Comparable, you must apply for provisional registration.
- If you were assessed as Partially Comparable, you must apply for limited registration.

You must check that you meet the [Medical Board of Australia's registration standards](#) before you apply for registration. This may include applying for a [criminal history check](#) and completing an [English language test](#).

AHPRA will assess your application against the registration standards and decide if you are eligible for registration. This usually takes six to eight weeks. Once your registration has been approved, you will be notified by AHPRA and your name will be published on the [National Register of Health Practitioners](#) within two weeks.

**Important!** In-principle approval may be granted if you have applied for medical registration from overseas and can only provide the minimum evidence of identity with your application. You will then be required to present in person at an AHPRA office or at your practice office for an ID check, after which your name will be published on the National Register of Health Practitioners.



## Applying for a visa to work in Australia

After your job offer has been approved and your medical registration has been granted, you will need to apply to the Department of Home Affairs for a suitable visa, if required.

The [Temporary Skill Shortage Visa \(subclass 482\) Medium-term stream](#) is the most common pathway for migrating to Australia as a doctor and requires that you be sponsored by an Australian medical practice or hospital.

There may be other visa options available to you depending on your plans and circumstances. Check out the [Department of Home Affairs' website](#) to explore visa options.

## Submitting registration and visa detail to RACGP



The Practice Experience Program (PEP) is an Australian Medical Council (AMC) accredited education program for medical practitioners. The [PEP Specialist Stream](#) aims to support overseas specialist general practitioners and is supported by the Australian Government's Stronger Rural Health Strategy for doctors working in MMM2 to MMM7 areas.

To start your application, you can click on the green 'log in' button on this page. You will need to have your RACGP ID handy to access the application form.

If you don't have an RACGP account, you will first need to [register](#) to receive a unique user ID. The process will take approximately five minutes and then you can come back to this page to start your application.

There are three steps for commencing the program to attain Fellowship of the RACGP:

1. **Part A: Comparability Assessment application**
    - After assessment, a comparability outcome is determined as substantially, partially or not comparable. Outcomes deemed to be not comparable can apply for the [PEP Standard Program](#).
  2. **Part B: Job Offer Approval application**
    - Information about your job offer(s) in Australia (scope of practice and location) is reviewed by the RACGP. Once a job offer is approved, applicants can apply for their medical registration.
  3. **Part C: Right to Work application**
    - Visa details and a form to request an RACGP provider number is completed.
- For more information about the program, please visit the [PEP Specialist Stream page](#) or email [education.support@racgp.org.au](mailto:education.support@racgp.org.au)

Once your registration and visa have been granted, you'll need to go to [PEP SP application platform](#) and complete **Part C – Right to Work application**.

You will be required to submit evidence that you hold:

- a valid visa (including visa type), and
- AHPRA medical registration.

## Finalising your entry into PEP SP

Once you have successfully completed all three sections (Part A, B and C) on the [PEP SP application platform](#), your application will be formally approved by the RACGP.

There are a few more things you'll need to finalise before you can officially start on the program. You will need to:

1. sign your program agreement and pay the program fees,
2. show evidence of a valid Basic Life Support certification,
3. become an RACGP financial member, and
4. complete the Medicare provider number form and wait until it's approved.

## Sign your program agreement and pay the program fees

After we have confirmed that you have successfully completed Part A, B and C on the [PEP SP application platform](#), the RACGP will email you the PEP SP program agreement and an invoice for the [program fees](#).

You must pay the fees and return a signed copy of the program agreement to [pepspecialistadmin@racgp.org.au](mailto:pepspecialistadmin@racgp.org.au) to accept your training offer and confirm your commitment to the program.

**Important!** You must commence work in your RACGP-approved practice within 6 calendar months of signing your program agreement.

## Show evidence of Basic Life Support certification

As you return the signed program agreement, you must provide evidence that you hold a valid Basic Life Support (BLS) certification. Expired certifications will not be accepted. You will find more information about BLS, approved instructors and courses centres in the [Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support Guide](#).

## Become an RACGP Member

You must be a financial member of the RACGP throughout the PEP SP, including while you are sitting the Fellowship exams and being admitted to Fellowship. We will send you information about RACGP membership with the PEP SP program agreement. You must join and pay your membership fees before you commence work in the RACGP-approved practice.

**Important!** If you do not maintain RACGP membership, you will be suspended or withdrawn from the program.

## Complete the Medicare provider number form

The RACGP will email you a Medicare provider number application form after your application has been approved. Make sure you complete it and return it to the RACGP at [approvedplacement@racgp.org.au](mailto:approvedplacement@racgp.org.au) as soon as possible.

The RACGP is authorised to approve A1 Medicare provider numbers for PEP SP participants working in approved practices. This will allow your patients to access A1 rebates, which are the standard rebates for qualified GPs and GPs in training.

**Important!** You will be able to access the highest value Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items while you are on the PEP SP.

It can take up to 12 weeks for the application to be processed by the RACGP, the Department of Health and Aged Care, and Services Australia. Once processed, you will receive an approved placement outcome letter from Services Australia outlining your provider number, placement address, exemption/s, and placement start and end dates.

### **Congratulations, you are now ready to commence work in your RACGP-approved practice!**

You will find useful information about the program in the [PEP SP Participant Handbook - Partially Comparable Stream](#) or [PEP SP Participant Handbook - Substantially Comparable Stream](#).



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## Fee schedule

For detail about the application and program fees, please go to the [PEP SP Fees](#) page.





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## Useful contacts

### **Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency**

T: 1300 419 495 (in Australia); +61 3 9285 3010 (outside Australia)

W: <https://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-Ahpra/Contact-Us.aspx>

### **Australian Medical Council**

W: <https://www.amc.org.au/contact/>

### **Medical Board of Australia**

T: 1300 419 495 (in Australia); +61 3 9285 3010 (outside Australia)

W: [www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates.aspx](http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates.aspx)

## Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Addenda</b>	Includes, but is not limited to, restrictions, conditions, limitations, reprimands, supervision requirements, tribunal outcomes, suspensions, undertakings and/or any other remarks or changes on the Applicant's medical registration.  Refer to <a href="#">AHPRA's website</a> for more information.
<b>AHPRA Medical Registration</b>	Registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), which allows the registrant to practise medicine.  Refer to <a href="#">AHPRA's website</a> for more information.
<b>Applicant</b>	The Specialist International Medical Graduate applying for entry into the Practice Experience Program Specialist.
<b>Basic Life Support (BLS) course</b>	As per the requirements listed in the <a href="#">Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support Guide</a> .
<b>Business day</b>	A day when the RACGP national office is operating.
<b>Comparable / Comparability</b>	The extent to which an SIMG's recency, continuity of practice, continual professional development, assessment, training, qualifications and clinical experience are assessed as equivalent to an Australian-trained specialist general practitioner at the point of admission to Fellowship.
<b>Comparability assessment</b>	The process of determining the extent to which an SIMG is comparable to an Australian-trained general practitioner at the point of admission to Fellowship.
<b>Comprehensive Australian general practice</b>	As defined in the <a href="#">Comprehensive Australian General Practice Guide</a> .
<b>Fellowship</b>	Admittance to either:  i.Fellowship of the RACGP (FRACGP), or  ii.FRACGP and Rural Generalist Fellowship (FRACGP-RG).
<b>Fellowship exams</b>	The exams run by the RACGP to assess the Candidate's competency for unsupervised general practice anywhere in Australia, including:  i.Applied Knowledge Test (AKT),  ii.Key Feature Problem (KFP), and  iii. Clinical Competency Exam (CCE).

Term	Definition
<b>Financial RACGP member</b>	An RACGP member who has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i.met the membership category requirements,</li> <li>ii.had their complete membership application form accepted, and</li> <li>iii.paid their current membership fee in full.</li> </ul>
<b>Full-time general practice experience</b>	A 38-hour working week, over a minimum of four days per week. A minimum of 27 hours must be in face-to-face, rostered, patient consultation time undertaking general practice activities. Work periods of less than three consecutive hours, or less than 4 calendar weeks in any one practice, will not be considered. Hours worked beyond this definition of full time will not be considered.
<b>Level 3 Supervision</b>	As defined in the <a href="#">Medical Board of Australia's Supervised practice for international medical graduates guidelines</a> .
<b>Maximum timeframe</b>	The maximum amount of time a Participant can remain on the PEP SP from the day they start their Training Program to the day they are admitted to Fellowship of the RACGP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Substantially Comparable stream: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Participants who are working in their RACGP-approved practice on a full-time basis must be admitted to FRACGP within 12 calendar months of starting their training program.</li> <li>b. Participants who are working in their RACGP-approved practice on a part-time basis must be admitted to FRACGP within 24 calendar months of starting their training program. Their maximum timeframe will be calculated proportionally to their part-time status.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. Partially Comparable stream: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Participants who are working in their RACGP-approved Practice on a full-time basis must be admitted to FRACGP within 24 calendar months of starting their training program.</li> <li>b. Participants who are working in their RACGP-approved practice on a part-time basis must be admitted to FRACGP within 48 calendar months of starting their training program. The maximum timeframe will be calculated proportionally to their part-time status.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Not Comparable</b>	A Specialist International Medical Graduate who has been assessed as not comparable to an Australian trained specialist general practitioner at the point of Fellowship, as per the <a href="#">PEP SP Comparability Assessment Guide</a> .
<b>Notifiable conduct</b>	Notifiable conduct holds the same definition as the <a href="#">Medical Board of Australia's Guidelines for mandatory notifications about registered health practitioners</a> .



Term	Definition
<b>Partially Comparable participant</b>	A Specialist International Medical Graduate who has been assessed as partially comparable to an Australian trained specialist general practitioner at the point of Fellowship, as per the <a href="#">PEP SP Comparability Assessment Guide</a> .
<b>Participant</b>	A Specialist International Medical Graduate who has been accepted into the PEP SP.
<b>Part-time general practice experience</b>	<p>Calculated pro-rata against the definition of full-time general practice experience.</p> <p>Part time general practice must comprise a minimum of 14.5-hour working week, over a minimum of two days per week, of which a minimum of 10.5 hours must be in face-to-face, rostered, patient consultation time undertaking general practice activities.</p> <p>Work periods of less than three consecutive hours, or of less than four calendar weeks in any one practice, will not be considered.</p>
<b>Practice Experience Program Specialist (PEP SP)</b>	The route to Fellowship available to Specialist International Medical Graduates who have been assessed as Substantially Comparable or Partially Comparable to an Australian-trained specialist general practitioner at the point of admission to Fellowship.
<b>RACGP-approved practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A practice approved by the RACGP for the placement of PEP SP Participants. The practice must be accredited against the <a href="#">RACGP Standards for general practices</a>,</li> <li>ii. meet the requirements of <a href="#">Comprehensive Australian general practice</a>, and</li> <li>iii. meet the location requirements as per the <a href="#">Department of Health and Aged Care's General Practice Fellowship Program Placement Guidelines</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist International Medical Graduate (SIMG)</b>	<p>An overseas-trained medical practitioner who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. holds a primary qualification in medicine and surgery awarded by a training institution recognised by both the <a href="#">Australian Medical Council (AMC)</a> and the <a href="#">World Directory of Medical Schools (WDOMS)</a>,</li> <li>ii. has satisfied all the training and examination requirements to practise as a specialist general practitioner and has been awarded a specialist general practice qualification in their country of origin, and</li> <li>iii. had their specialist general practice qualification's curriculum assessed by the RACGP as comparable or partially comparable to the <a href="#">RACGP curriculum and syllabus for Australian general practice</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Substantially Comparable participant</b>	A Specialist International Medical Graduate who has been assessed as substantially comparable to an Australian trained specialist general practitioner at the point of Fellowship, as per the <a href="#">PEP SP Comparability Assessment Guide</a> .

Term	Definition
<b>Supervision / supervised practice</b>	Supervision in line with the principles of supervision and supervised practice, based upon the prescribed <a href="#">Medical Board of Australia's Supervised practice for international medical graduates guidelines</a> .
<b>Supervisor</b>	A general practitioner who is both a clinician and a role model, who takes responsibility for the educational and training needs of the PEP SP Participant while in the practice, in adherence with the <a href="#">Medical Board of Australia's Supervised practice for international medical graduates guidelines</a> .
<b>Workplace-based assessment (WBA)</b>	A framework for evaluating a doctor's performance and progress in those areas of practice best assessed in the context of the workplace. The aim is to provide evidence that the SIMG is competent for unsupervised practice in Australia.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 - Validated assessment instruments

#### Theoretical

Applicants applying to the PEP SP must have completed a theoretical summative assessment in **at least one** of the following formats to be assessed as comparable under the PEP SP comparability assessment process.

These formats are accepted as rigorously assessing a candidate's capacity for knowledge and clinical reasoning, which can be defined as thinking through the various aspects of patient care to arrive at a reasonable decision regarding the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of a clinical problem in a specific patient. Patient care includes history taking, conducting a physical exam, requesting laboratory tests and diagnostic procedures, designing safe and effective treatment regimens or preventive strategies, and providing patient education and counselling.

Clinical reasoning plays a major role in a doctor's ability to make diagnoses and decisions. It can be considered as the physician's most critical competence.

Format	Summary
<b>MCQ</b>  Multiple Choice Questions	<p>This style of assessment requires candidates to analyse a clinical scenario, or stem, and choose the most appropriate answer from a list of possible options.</p> <p>The assessment tests clinical knowledge, requiring candidates to synthesise the information provided in the clinical stem and use only the relevant clinical components to select an answer. It demonstrates a candidate's ability to discard irrelevant clinical components and incorrect answers, or distractors.</p>
<b>EMQ</b>  Extended Matching Questions  (R-type MCQs)	<p>This is a variation on the MCQ structure but includes a series of clinical scenarios or stems rather than just a single scenario. This format allows for more in-depth assessment of clinical reasoning and problem-solving skills. Candidates are required to assess these thematically linked scenarios while discarding distractors and irrelevant clinical information to select the most appropriate answer from a common list of possible options.</p> <p>The EMQ format comprises four parts for each question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A theme. This might be a symptom, investigation, diagnosis or treatment (eg back pain, dyspnoea, diabetes, corticosteroids)</li> <li>2. The clinical scenario, or stem, which outlines the scenario.</li> <li>3. The lead-in statement, which outlines what is required of the candidate (ie provide the most likely diagnosis).</li> <li>4. A possible list of answers, or options.</li> </ol>



Format	Summary
<b>SBA</b> Single Best Answer	<p>This format offers a single question with multiple alternative answers, from which the candidate must choose the single best answer.</p> <p>Unlike other methods, the format does not offer many incorrect answers and one correct answer. Instead, it requires careful analysis of the information provided to determine which of the answers is most likely or the 'best fit'.</p>
<b>AKT</b> Applied Knowledge Test	<p>This assessment may incorporate elements of the above formats; it is designed to test the application of knowledge in a clinical context, rather than knowledge alone.</p> <p>The questions, whether SBA or EMQ, comprise a clinical stem, a lead in statement informing the candidate of the question's requirement, and a set of answer options.</p>
<b>KFP</b> Key Feature Problem	<p>This assessment is designed to test clinical reasoning and clinical decision-making by assessing how candidates analyse patients in the context of a given scenario, and how they consider the key features, or critical steps, required to resolve the clinical problem.</p> <p>It is not a simple short-answer assessment, instead requiring candidates to write in their own answer (when appropriate, referring back to demographic, clinical and geographic information provided in the clinical stem).</p>
<b>Short notes paper</b>	<p>These papers require candidates to provide a written response in the format of short notes, bullet points, short paragraphs or essays on given topics or on a clinical scenario.</p>

### Practical

Format	Summary
<b>Clinical Examination</b>	<p>Clinical Examination, which depending on the time of sitting, is the Objective structured Clinical Exam (OSCE), the Remote Clinical Exam (RCE) or the Clinical Competency Exam (CCE).</p> <p>This exam is designed to assess how a candidate integrates their applied knowledge and clinical reasoning when presented with clinical scenarios. It tests not only knowledge and reasoning but communication skills and professional attitudes in the context of consultations, patient exams or peer discussions.</p> <p>Clinical Examinations classically comprise a circuit of multiple clinical stations:</p>

Format	Summary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter stations do not focus on the entire consultation, rather focusing on certain aspects of a consultation.</li> <li>• Longer stations require the candidate to manage entire consultations, including outcome of investigation and follow up visits.</li> </ul> <p>Other multi-station clinical practical assessments may be equivalent to the RACGP Clinical Examination; see <a href="#">Academic qualifications</a> for information on evidence required to demonstrate equivalence.</p>

### Providing additional evidence

The RACGP recognises that international specialist colleges may run assessments that differ terminologically from the above instruments, but which may, nonetheless, be equivalent or comparable in principle and structure.

Applicants who have completed assessments not named above may provide evidence as part of their application outlining why these assessments should be taken into consideration as part of their comparability assessment. This could include a letter of support from the applicant's specialist college outlining the assessment's requirements and structure. Colleges should provide as much information as possible, preferably including sample exam questions, psychometrics, and public reports when available.



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