



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL AND CLINICAL SCIENTISTS FELLOWSHIP REGULATIONS

The AIMS Fellowship is an attractive and highly competitive option to academic post graduate degrees. The Fellowship is recognised by the Department of Health for meeting the requirements for supervision of category GX and GY laboratories.

The Examinations Council is responsible to the National Council for the administration and conduct of the Fellowship examinations within the Institute.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

To be eligible to enrol in the Fellowship programme an applicant shall:

- a) Be a Professional Member (MAIMS) or Member (Single Discipline) or Member (Research) of the Australian Institute of Medical Scientists for a minimum of two years; and
- b) Have a minimum of five (5) years professional practice approved by the Examinations Council; and
- c) Be a financial member of the AIMS at the time of application and for the period of the examination;
- d) Must be already participating or agree to participate in an approved continuing professional development program. The National Programs Manager will confirm that the each candidate is participating in an approved CPD program prior to the awarding of the FAIMS certificate.

DISCIPLINES

Qualification for the Fellowship shall be by EXAMINATION in one of the following disciplines:

Transfusion Science	Clinical Biochemistry
Cytology	Haematology
Histopathology	Immunology
Microbiology	General including Core Laboratory
Or other discipline areas as agreed to by National Council.	

On application to the Chair of the Examinations Council a candidate may vary the standard discipline module mix to accommodate a particular specialisation or need.

A Fellow may apply to sit the Fellowship in more than one complete discipline area.

A Fellowship shall not be granted by exemption.

VARIATIONS TO THE SET PROGRAM

On application to the Chair of the Examinations Council a candidate may vary the standard discipline module mix to accommodate a particular specialisation or need (for example, persons doing the General discipline often drop Microbiology and include a Haematology module instead).

An AIMS Professional Member who has two (2) years postgraduate experience but has not been an AIMS Professional Member for two (2) full years can complete the two (2) Core modules in their chosen discipline (Stage 1) prior to enrolling in the full program. These individuals will not have a mentor assigned to them (they may source their own mentor).

They will be awarded a completion certificate for each module successfully undertaken as well as 40 CEU credits. If all criteria for entry to the Fellowship program are met, advanced standing will be given for these

Core modules within the chosen discipline, provided that the modules were successfully completed within the five (5) years immediately prior to enrolment in the Fellowship program.

APPLICATION

An applicant may apply at any time provided they meet the general conditions. Applicants should complete the prescribed application form and forward it to the National Office. Examinations are held in June and November each year according to the subjects listed on the AIMS website. Prospective candidates must apply for the examination using the Fellowship *Examination Application Form* on the website.

At least three months' notice of intention to sit an examination must be provided.

FEES

The fee schedule can be found on AIMS web-site. Fees will not be refunded.

EXAMINATION

The examination process involves four (4) stages and each stage must be successfully completed before progressing to the next stage.

Stage 1 - The candidate must complete the two (2) Core modules in their chosen discipline. Each module requires a three (3) hour examination and can be undertaken separately or simultaneously. Each examination will contain a mixture of short answer questions (5 minutes) and essay style questions (30 minutes). In some examinations, clinical and laboratory management case based scenarios (10 minutes) will be included in the question mix. The mark required to pass the examination is 60%.

Stage 2 - The candidate must then complete two (2) of the Elective modules in their chosen discipline. Each module requires a three (3) hour examination and can be undertaken separately or simultaneously. Each examination will contain a mixture of short answer questions (5 minutes) and essay style questions (30 minutes). In some examinations, clinical and laboratory management case based scenarios (10 minutes) will be included in the question mix. The mark required to pass the examination is 60%.

Stage 3 - The candidate must then undertake a *viva voce* examination. The *viva voce* examination is to be completed within six (6) months of the successful completion of Stage 2. The candidate will receive a letter from National Office inviting them to attend. If a repeat examination is required this must be attempted within 3 months of notification of the outcome of the result. Three attempts at the *viva voce* examination are permitted. ***This will not be related to the candidate's written examinations alone and will present practical and clinical case material and/or scenarios to examine the breadth and depth of a candidate's knowledge and experience at a practical level.***

Stage 4 - The candidate must then present one of the following:

- i a scientific dissertation; OR
- ii a successful relevant research degree thesis completed within the last two years (eg Honours, Masters, PhD); OR
- iii a relevant paper published in a peer reviewed journal, provided the candidate is the primary author and the paper has been completed or published within the previous two years.

The scientific dissertation may take the form of:

- a) a review,
- b) development of a hypothesis,
- c) any other presentation which meets with the approval of the Examinations Council.

The candidate shall choose the topic which will relate to the particular discipline chosen for examination. The topic chosen will be submitted to the examiners by email to the National Office. Candidates are required to nominate at least one person as a supervisor for their dissertation. The supervisor shall be approved by the Examination Council.

The title and synopsis of approximately 250 words shall be forwarded to the Examination Council within six (6) months of successful completion of Stage 3. Detailed information on the format and presentation will be sent to the candidate upon approval of the proposed dissertation. The dissertation shall be original, in English and would normally consist of 5,000 to 7,000 words (without the references). Approval from the Examinations Council should be sought if the dissertation will exceed 7,000 words. The dissertation should conform to the requirements as detailed in the Australian Journal of Medical Science "Instructions to Authors". The dissertation must be submitted within six (6) months of the synopsis acceptance.

On the approved completion of Stage 4 the candidate will be admitted as a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Medical Scientists.

Examinations of Stage 1 and Stage 2 modules will be held twice a year as required usually in June and November.

Wherever possible the *viva voce* examinations will be held during an AIMS National Scientific Meeting or at a time and place determined by the Examinations Council. It is the responsibility of the candidate to meet the costs of presenting at their *viva voce* examination.

REPEATING MODULES AND VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION

A candidate who is unsuccessful can repeat any module or the viva voce examination by reapplying and paying the enrolment fee.

A candidate who is unsuccessful in the written examinations may pay a fee to have a brief assessment of their papers provided.

PROGRESS

Candidates are required to complete the programme within five (5) years. The Examinations Council may grant an extension for exceptional circumstances. Applications for extension should be forwarded to National Office including justification for the extension.

CERTIFICATION

As from 1st September 2013 applicants for enrolment into the Fellowship program must agree to participate in APACE (or other approved CPD recording program) as part of the application. Thereafter all Fellows must be engaged in CPD and must formally record the participation in an approved program.

APACE certification - 200 CEU credits on completion of the programme; pro rata CEU credits (40 per module) can be claimed at the completion of each module.

Completion Certificates will be issued for each module successfully undertaken.

EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

The Examinations Council consists of:

- a) The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, who are Fellows of AIMS, and are appointed by invitation of the Board.
- b) Membership of Examinations Council is by invitation of the Board and includes the module convenors.
- b) The Executive Officer will act as Secretary (non voting).

A Panel of Examiners shall be appointed in each discipline area by the Examinations Council to conduct the Fellowship examinations.

The Examinations Council shall submit the Examiners' recommendations to the Board.

The Examinations Council may use any reasonable means of establishing the *bona fides* of a candidate. Any enquiries so instituted shall be regarded as confidential. A candidate whose application has been rejected has the right of appeal to the Board.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The statement of academic integrity must be signed by all fellowship candidates and any cheating or dishonesty committed at any stage during the program may result in being expelled from the Fellowship program

Enquiries should be directed to: National Programs

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