This document sets out specific requirements for candidates who are enrolled or considering enrolment with the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (“the College”), for the award of Membership (MRACDS) and Fellowship (FRACDS) in General Dental Practice. This Handbook should be read in conjunction with the College Regulations leading to Membership and Fellowship in General and Specialist Dental Practice.
Terminology used in this document

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subscription</td>
<td>The process of signing up to access the College’s resources, including communications and the online Learning Management System.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>The process of signing up to participate in or undertake a specific College activity, including programs or examinations which may lead to the award of Fellowship or Membership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional Enrolment</td>
<td>The process of enrolment for the Final examination when approval of an application for exemption from the Primary examination is pending.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>The process by which candidates who have fulfilled the necessary requirements apply to be granted Fellowship or Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election</td>
<td>The process by which Council grants Fellowship or Membership to qualified candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Course (MRACDS(GDP) Program)</td>
<td>A continuing professional development or postgraduate course appropriate for the MRACDS and its module requirements. Selection of appropriate CPD is at the discretion of the candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-nominal</td>
<td>Letters placed after the name of an individual to indicate successful election to Fellowship or Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</td>
<td>A formal agreement between selected Universities or International Colleges relating to Membership examinations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All documents and forms referred to in this Handbook are obtainable from the College web site (www.racds.org) or from the College office.
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Histology
Microbiology
Pathology
Physiology
Prizes
Resources

PART 2 – FINAL EXAM
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Examination Format
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Marking
Results
Subjects and Curriculum Frameworks
General Dentistry
Electives
Oral Medicine, Oral Surgery and Oral Pathology
Restorative Dentistry and Periodontics
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Resources and Supporting Activities
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Section 1

Introduction

Who are we?
Philosophy
Vision, Mission Statement and Values
Qualifications
Definitions
General Dentistry
Registration
Examinations Calendar
Forms and Document Certification
Fees
Contact Us
Who are we?

The Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (‘the College’) provides the opportunity for dental study, training and qualifications, and continuing professional development through our Fellowship and Membership programs. The main focus of the College’s programs is to provide world standard, evidence based education, training and assessment in dentistry, leading to Fellowship (FRACDS) or Membership (MRACDS) in either General or Specialist Dental Practice.

Fellowship and Membership begins from the moment a candidate decides to aim for achievement by subscribing to the College. College qualifications demonstrate to patients that their practitioner is equipped with the knowledge and skills to practise clinical dentistry at the highest standards throughout their working life. The college also offers accredited education and training in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery for those dentists and doctors wishing to specialise in this discipline.

Philosophy

The college’s education programs are based on a philosophy of self-directed learning where the onus of responsibility for undertaking and fulfilling the requirements of programs rests with the candidate.

Universities form an essential part of the process of dental education and teach core competencies. The College helps candidates to build on these competencies to develop proficiency skills.

By participating in an education program, candidates will enhance their skills and knowledge as part of setting the pattern of lifelong learning and professional-development that is necessary for quality practice and which is expected of Fellows and Members of the College.

Vision

To be a respected international leader in the provision of postgraduate dental education and professional development

Mission Statement

The college advances oral health in the community by setting the standards that the international dental profession aspires to achieve.

This is achieved by:

- ongoing growth and development
- providing high quality professional education and examination
- advocating for oral health care and evidence based research
Values

In the delivery of our mission the RACDS will demonstrate:

- Patient orientation - understanding and reflecting the views of Fellows, Members and those undertaking College examinations and working with them to achieve the best outcome for patients.
- Quality improvement - performing to and upholding high standards.
- Fiscal responsibility and efficiency using the resources of the College prudently.
- Integrity, honesty and propriety - upholding professional and ethical values

Qualifications

The qualifications awarded by examination by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons are:

- Membership in General Dental Practice – MRACDS(GDP)
- Fellowship in General Dental Practice – FRACDS(GDP)
- Membership in Specialist Dental Practice (in a discipline) – MRACDS(SDP)
- Fellowship in Specialist Dental Practice (in a discipline) – FRACDS(SDP)
- Fellowship in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery – FRACDS(OMS)

**Membership** in General Dental Practice is achieved through completion of the Membership Program in General Dental Practice.

**Fellowship** in General Dental Practice is achieved through completion of:

a) Either the Primary Examination OR the Membership Program in General Dental Practice

AND

b) The Final Examination
Definitions

Membership is the first level of achievement in the progression of professional development with the RACDS.

A Member of the College:
- maintains high ethical standards and is a role model for others in the profession
- is a skilled and highly competent practitioner who has a broad base of experience in general dental practice
- has breadth and comprehension of scientific knowledge relevant to the practice of dentistry
- through comprehensive study and assessment has shown that this knowledge can be applied in clinical problem solving scenarios with proven ability in treatment planning and risk management that promotes better patient outcomes.

Fellowship is the highest academic level of achievement with the RACDS.

A Fellow of the College:
- maintains high ethical standards, is a role model and demonstrates leadership in the profession
- is a highly skilled and proficient practitioner with comprehensive experience in general dental practice
- has significant depth and breadth of scientific knowledge and comprehension of evidence based practice gained from enquiry, professional development and clinical experience
- through rigorous examination and assessment, has displayed critical evaluation and integration of this knowledge and understanding of contemporary dental evidence into their clinical practice.
General Dentistry

General Dental Practitioners are primary dental care providers with a registrable qualification. They provide oral health care for patients in all age groups. The General Dental Practitioner is responsible for the diagnosis, management and overall coordination of services related to patients' oral health needs and their ongoing maintenance.

General Dental Practitioners are well educated in all facets of oral health care. They have the ability to diagnose oral health conditions but are not necessarily skilled at the specialist level in performing all treatment requirements in dentistry.

General Dental Practitioners are educated and skilled in recognising those conditions that are beyond their scope of practice and are able to identify the correct specialist service(s) required to manage the particular condition(s).

General Dental Practitioners undertake regular continuing professional development in order to maintain and develop their skill levels.

Candidates are encouraged to refer to the Australian Dental Association for resources related to specific topics.

Registration

Fellowship and Membership with the College are **not** currently registrable qualifications in Australia and New Zealand (except Fellowship in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery). Candidates in other countries should seek advice from their relevant registering authority regarding the status of these qualifications.
## Examination Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary Examination</th>
<th>Final Examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>1 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment closes</td>
<td>1 October</td>
<td>1 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination dates</td>
<td>Last week of November (written) and first week of December (<em>viva voce</em>)</td>
<td>January (written and <em>viva voce</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>6 days over 2 weeks</td>
<td>5 days over 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Paper Locations</td>
<td>Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Auckland, Singapore, Hong Kong, Universiti Sains Malaysia</td>
<td>Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Malaysia, Auckland, Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>viva voce</em> Locations</td>
<td>Sydney, Hong Kong, Universiti Sains Malaysia</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Minimum candidate numbers apply to all venues and examination sittings may be cancelled at the discretion of the College if the required numbers are not met. Candidates enrolled at these venues will be offered a refund or the option to transfer to another venue.

### Forms and Requirements for Certified Documents

All forms are available for download from the College website. Supporting documents must be certified according to the certification guidelines which are available under Forms at www.racds.org.

### Fees

The fee schedule is available for view from the College website here.

### Contact Us

Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons  
Level 13, 37 York Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
AUSTRALIA  

Tel: +61 2 9262 6044  
1800 688 339  
Fax: +61 2 9262 1974

E-mail: info@racds.org  
Web: www.racds.org
Section 2
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Flow Chart - Steps to Membership and Fellowship (GDP)
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Enrolment
English Language
Examinations and Assessments
  *MRACDS(GDP) Program*
  *Primary Examination*
  *Final Examination*
Admission
Election
Post-Nominals
PATHWAY 1
Apply for Exemption from Primary Examination
Exemption Granted
Orientation Course (optional)
Primary - 6 Subjects
- Anatomy
- Cell Biology & Biochemistry
- Histology
- Microbiology
- Pathology
- Physiology
- 6 x Written Examinations (1/subject)
- 6 x viva voce Examinations (1/subject)
Enrol for the Primary Examination
Enrol for the MRACDS(GDP) Program
Induction Day (optional)
MRACDS(GDP) - 2 Year Program
(120 hours CPD)
6 Core Modules
- Infection Control
- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
- Law, Ethics & Risk Management/Practice Management
- Therapeutics in Dentistry, Pain & Pain Management
- Medical Emergencies
- Examination Technique & Dental Imaging
1 x Short Answer Question Assessment per module
Electives (3 of 6)
- Endodontics
- Periodontics
- Restorative Dentistry
- Paediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics
- Special Needs Dentistry & Oral Medicine/Oral Surgery
- Dentoalveolar Surgery
1 x Case Report per elective
Final Examination Workshop (optional)
Final - 2 Parts
General
- Written Examination
- viva voce
Elective
- Written Examination
- Case Review
- viva voce
Fellowship in General Dental Practice FRACDS(GDP)
Subscription

Subscription to the College is the first step for any candidate wishing to pursue Fellowship or Membership in General Dental Practice or a Specialist Dental Practice discipline and is intended to provide candidates with access to College communications and the online Learning Management System. Subscribers also receive discounts on some College-run workshops and exam courses. A fee applies however subscription is valid for a maximum of six years, or until such time as the candidate has fulfilled the requirements set out for election to Fellowship or Membership of the College.

Enrolment

In order to sit an examination or enter the MRACDS(GDP) Program, subscribed candidates are required to enrol and pay the full fee by the required date. Enrolment is only valid for that examination sitting or program except under certain circumstances, as per the Special Consideration Policy (see Policies section on RACDS website).

If a candidate withdraws enrolment for an examination or the MRACDS(GDP) Program, the fees paid may be refunded in part as specified in the College’s Refund Policy. Where a candidate fails to attend an examination the fees paid may be refunded under certain circumstances as per the College’s Special Consideration Policy.

If examinations are cancelled or postponed, the examination enrolment fee will be refunded in full. The College reserves the right to change the nominated examiners and to amend the timing and dates of examinations whenever conditions warrant. The College does not take any responsibility for any other costs incurred by the candidate.

Provisional enrolment and payment for the Final Examination may be accepted where an application for exemption from the Primary Examination is pending. The enrolment fee will not be refunded if the exemption is not approved. If the exemption is approved after the examination date has passed the enrolment fee will be rolled over to the next examination sitting.

English Language

The College does not set any specific requirements for demonstration of English language skills however it should be noted that all assessments are written and marked in English and that proficiency in English at the level equivalent to a 7.5 in all subjects in the IELTS (or a B in the OET) is expected of candidates in all assessments.
Examinations and Assessments

The College offers two pathways to Fellowship in General Dental Practice:

**Pathway 1** comprises two examinations, Primary and Final, each requiring a supported period of study and preparation. Candidates are eligible to apply for admission to Fellowship on completion of both examinations.

**Pathway 2** initially comprises the MRACDS(GDP) Program; a modular, self-paced education program. Candidates are eligible to apply for admission to Membership on completion of the program and may then opt to proceed to Fellowship via completion of the Final Examination.

The MRACDS(GDP) Program

The MRACDS(GDP) Program is a modular educational program for general dental practitioners which supports the ongoing acquisition of knowledge and skills relevant to practice and provides a systematic approach to Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The program is intended to be flexible and can be tailored to a candidate’s interests and schedule. Assessments are completed at a candidate’s own pace over a two year period.

The program has a limited intake of 30 candidates per calendar year with places allocated on a ‘first-come first served’ basis.

**Primary Examination**

The Primary Examination is a rigorous assessment of a candidate’s knowledge of the fundamental principles of the basic health sciences as they relate to dentistry. The examination is held annually in November/December at a number of locations across Australasia (see Examination Calendar in Section 2). Exemptions from the examination may be granted for candidates with appropriate qualifications (see Primary Examination Exemptions in Section 3). The examination is also open to non-dentists.

**Final Examination**

The Final Examination is an assessment of clinical and theoretical knowledge in an experiential context, over a broad base of general dental practice. The level of expectation is specifically set at the experienced general practitioner level and not the specialist level. The examination is held annually in January at a number of locations across Australasia (see Examination Calendar in Section 2). Non-dentists who have passed the Primary Examination will not be eligible to sit the Final Examination without subsequently submitting evidence of a recognised dental qualification and registration to practice dentistry.
Application for Admission to Fellowship or Membership

Candidates who have successfully completed the requirements for Fellowship or Membership must submit an Admission to Fellowship or Admission to Membership application and pay the relevant fee. Applications require approval from the College Council.

Election to Fellowship or Membership

Following a successful admission to Fellowship or Membership application, the candidate will be awarded a testamur certifying the examination passed or program completed.

Post-Nominals

A candidate who satisfies the relevant requirements and has been elected to Fellowship or Membership of the College and who has received their testamur may use the post-nominal descriptions as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fellowship in General Dental Practice</th>
<th>FRACDS(GDP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership in General Dental Practice</td>
<td>MRACDS(GDP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

1. Attainment of Fellowship in a discipline precludes the use of the Membership post-nominal in the same discipline.
2. A Fellow in General Dental Practice, if admitted to Fellowship or Membership in a Specialist Dental Practice discipline, may in addition use the post-nominal relevant to the Specialist Dental Practice discipline.
3. In those cases when Fellowship or Membership are held in different disciplines, the Membership post-nominal precedes the Fellowship post-nominal.
Steps to Membership and Fellowship

1. Subscription
2. Enrolment
3. Successful completion of Exams and/or Assessments
4. Application for Admission to Membership/Fellowship
5. Election to Membership/Fellowship
6. Receive Testamur and Post-Nominals
Section 3

Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility for MRACDS(GDP) Program
Eligibility for Primary Examination
Exemptions from the Primary Examination
Eligibility for Final Examination
Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility for the MRACDS(GDP) Program

The MRACDS(GDP) program is open to subscribed candidates who are registered to practice dentistry in Australia or New Zealand. The program has a maximum intake of 30 candidates per year and places are filled on a first-come first-served basis.

Eligibility for the Primary Examination

The primary exam is open to subscribed dentists and non-dentists however it should be noted that all six subjects are examined with a focus on dentistry.

Exemptions from the Primary Examination

Candidates who have completed a University higher degree in research or a degree leading to a specialist qualification in the health sciences which is no less than two (2) years full time study or its equivalent may be eligible for an exemption from the Primary Examination.

If you are granted exemption from the Primary Examination, then you must still pass the Final Examination to be awarded FRACDS(GDP).

Documentation that the College requires in order to apply for exemption from the Primary Examination:

- completion of Subscription to the College form (if not already subscribed)
- completion of Exemption form for the Primary Examination
- most updated Certificate of Registration to practice in your jurisdiction (must be verified)
- certificate of University BDS Qualification (must be verified)
- certificate of University postgraduate Master’s Degree qualification (must be verified)
- clear proof that the postgraduate qualification was two years, was full-time and the start and finish dates (if the university cannot provide the above information they must be contacted and advised of this)
- a two year postgraduate program can be: Masters, PHD or DClinDent.

Eligibility for the Final Examination

The Final Examination is open to candidates who have passed, or been granted exemption from, the Primary Examination, or have gained Membership in General Dental Practice through the MRACDS(GDP) Program.

Candidates must also have completed their undergraduate degree three years prior to enrolling, have a minimum of two years clinical experience and hold registration to practice dentistry with a recognised registering body.
Section 4

MRACDS(GDP) Program

Part 1 – Program Information

- MRACDS(GDP) Program Overview
- Sample Program Timeline
- Orientation Day
- MRACDS(GDP) Mentors
- Kenneth J.G Sutherland Award
- Academic Integrity
- Plagiarism
- Resources
- MGD/MRACDS(GDP) Conjoint Examination
- MRACDS(GDP) Assessment Policy
- MRACDS(GDP) Extension Policy

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- Assessment Rounds
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- Core Module Descriptions
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  - Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
  - Infection Control
  - Medical Emergencies
  - Practice Management, Law, Ethics and Risk Management
  - Therapeutics in Dentistry, Pain and Pain Management
- Elective Modules
- Case Reports
- Requirements for Case Reports
- Elective Module Descriptions
  - Combined Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology and Special Needs Dentistry
  - Combined Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics
  - Dentoalveolar Surgery
  - Endodontics
  - Operative Dentistry
  - Periodontics
- Continued Professional Development (CPD)
- viva voce
MRACDS(GDP) Program Overview

The MRACDS(GDP) Program is a two year program that runs from February through to November each year. With assessment rounds throughout the year, the College’s extended academic year enables candidates to tailor their assessment submissions around busy work and home schedules. The MRACDS(GDP) Program is predominantly a self-directed program tailored at general dental practitioners with the following aims:

- to enhance the knowledge and skills of GDPs
- to enable GDPs to provide an ongoing high standard of patient management, diagnosis and treatment for the benefit of the community
- to provide a structured approach to CPD
- to support and recognise involvement in CPD courses currently available
- to provide GDPs with an opportunity to obtain a recognised and highly regarded postgraduate qualification in general dental practice
- to encourage GDPs’ involvement in the College
- to enhance alliances between the College and other CPD course providers.

The program is broken up into the following:

- core modules (six compulsory subjects) which are assessed via eight Short Answer Questions (SAQ’s) per subject
- elective modules (choice of three out of six subjects) which are assessed via one case report per subject
- 120 hours of Continued Professional Development (CPD) over the course of the two year program
- *viva voce* examination at the completion of the above assessments.

The assessment process in this program tests the candidate’s ability to approach problems commonly encountered in practice from a contemporary, evidence-based perspective. Candidates are assessed based on their ability to communicate succinctly using professional language and to demonstrate an understanding of relevant scientific literature. The analysis expected is at the level of a skilled and highly competent practitioner who has a broad base of experience in general dental practice.

**Core Modules (Compulsory)**

- Clinical Examination Technique and Dental Imaging
- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
- Infection Control
- Medical Emergencies
- Practice Management, Law, Ethics and Risk Management
- Therapeutics in Dentistry, Pain and Pain Management

There are eight open-book short answer questions (SAQ’s) for each of the core modules. These questions are designed to be clinically relevant and appropriate for competent general
dental practitioners. The content of the SAQs will tend to be general and may take into account the content of courses approved by the Board of Studies for General Dental Practice.

Assessment rounds take place three times per year and are run over a period of five consecutive weekends per round. Candidates may apply for a maximum of one module per weekend for each assessment round and must nominate the date/s and module/s they wish to apply for one month prior to the round.

Candidates must complete three elective modules which focus on specialty interest areas of clinical dentistry.

**Elective Modules (Choose Three)**

- Combined Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology and Special Needs Dentistry
- Combined Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics
- Dentoalveolar Surgery
- Endodontics
- Operative Dentistry
- Periodontics

The three chosen elective modules are assessed via submission of one case report per elective that covers the candidate’s personal treatment of cases representing the broad range of issues covered in the chosen elective.

The aim of this assessment component is to enable candidates to present their own clinical work and also to reflect on the treatment provided. It enables discussion of possible alternatives, modifications of treatment or issues raised during treatment.

**Continued Professional Development (CPD)**

For the MRACDS(GDP) Program, candidates must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 120 hours of appropriate CPD over a two year period that is relevant to the core and elective modules.

It is recommended that candidates aim to complete approximately 12 hours of appropriate course content for all core and chosen elective modules. Candidates must dedicate a minimum of six hours relevant verifiable CPD to the content of each module, but must not exceed 18 hours.

Candidates must log their CPD in the CPD tracker on the Learning Management System (LMS).

**viva voce**

The *viva voce* is conducted three times per year, and in order to be eligible candidates must have completed all assessments prior to enrolling. The *viva voce* is assessed as pass/fail and candidates have a maximum of three attempts to complete the *viva voce*.

The *viva voce* is of 40 minutes’ duration and comprises:

- a 10 minute perusal of a provided unseen case. (If a second case is used, candidates will be provided with additional perusal time)
- a 30 minute assessment and discussion of the case/s
- assessment of the candidate’s knowledge in clinical dentistry.

**Mentoring**

During the MRACDS(GDP) Program candidates have the option of requesting a mentor for the program. One-on-one mentoring is available to candidates to assist them in all aspects of the program for the duration of the two years. Specialist mentoring is also available which allows mentors to be contacted if specific advice on particular subjects or components of the program is required.

**Third Year Extensions**

The MRACDS(GDP) Program is a two-year program. Candidates may apply to extend their anticipated completion date by up to twelve months through submission of the MRACDS(GDP) Enrolment Form prior to the two year anniversary of commencement of the MRACDS(GDP) Program. Candidates who extend on the two year program will be required to pay a third year enrolment fee.

### Core Modules
- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
- Clinical Examination Technique and Dental Imaging
- Infection Control
- Medical Emergencies
- Practice Management, Law, Ethics and Risk Management
- Therapeutics in Dentistry, Pain and Pain Management

### Elective Modules (choice of three)
- Combined Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology and Special Needs Dentistry
- Combined Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics
- Dentoalveolar Surgery
- Endodontics
- Operative Dentistry and Prosthodontics
- Periodontics
## Sample Program Timeline

### Year One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Orientation Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Online Academic Writing Course and Timeline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1 x SAQ Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assessment Round 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Report Preparation <em>(ongoing, throughout the year)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>2 x SAQ Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assessment Round 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1 x SAQ Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assessment Round 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1 x Case Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Year Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1 x Case Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1 x SAQ Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assessment Round 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Report Preparation <em>(ongoing, throughout the year)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1 x SAQ Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Assessment Round 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1 x Case Report (Last date to submit case reports)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td><em>viva voce</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Orientation Day

The MRACDS(GDP) Program holds an Orientation Day at the start of the year for each new cohort. The day is designed to provide information, guidance and a platform for new candidates to ask questions and meet integral representatives of the College.

MRACDS(GDP) Mentoring

Candidates in the MRACDS(GDP) Program are provided with a College mentor who will work in partnership with the candidate to provide encouragement, constructive feedback, shared experiences and evaluation.

The mentoring program aims to maximise candidates learning experience during the MRACDS(GDP) Program. Mentors assist candidates in achieving self-directed learning as well as influence, and encourage candidates to reach their goals and aspirations. Mentors provide knowledge, professional guidance and general support whilst completing the assessments within the program.

There are two mentor pathways available to candidates; long term mentoring and short term specific mentoring. Mentoring can be completed by phone, face to face, skype and email.

Mentoring Pathways

All candidates in the MRACDS(GDP) Program will be assigned a mentor from Orientation Day until the end of the first assessment round. In this time, candidates are encouraged to seek mentoring advice on the program expectations and requirements, support and advice in locating relevant and appropriate resources, support in reviewing pre-assessment material and advice and support during assessment resubmission.

At the end of the first assessment round of the year (three months into the program for new candidates) candidates will be asked to choose one of the following options:

OPT-IN Long Term Mentoring

Candidates who would like to retain their mentoring relationship will be required to opt-in to long term mentoring. In this instance, candidates will maintain contact with their mentor on a regular basis (once every four weeks) for the duration of their time in the program.

Long term mentoring will include support in all assessment areas including assessment rounds, case report submissions and viva voce preparation.

OPT-OUT Short Term Mentoring

Candidates who choose to opt-out will be removed from the mentoring arrangement but will have access to short term, specific mentoring on request.

Candidates who have an issue with a particular subject or require assistance with one aspect of the program (such as viva voce preparation) will be able to write to the College to request a mentor to assist with that particular area. The arrangement will be agreed on by both mentor and mentee, and the relationship will cease on completion of the task (i.e. assessment/case submission or viva voce) as arranged.
Mentoring is a voluntary service and it is the decision of the candidate as to whether they would like to participate. There are no penalties for candidates who choose to complete the program without a mentor. If at any time the relationship between the candidate and mentor is incompatible, there is no obligation for either party to continue the relationship. However, an alternative mentor will be sought if the candidate wishes to continue with the mentoring program.

Role of the Candidate

The candidate will:

- be open to feedback by accepting information the mentor provides without interpreting it as evaluation
- set realistic expectations with the mentor
- be open and sincere about their needs and deficiencies
- follow through on commitments and seek help when necessary
- be willing to discuss failures as well as successes
- take responsibility for liaising with their mentor on a regular basis to review plans and develop goals
- act on suggestions and guidance.

Candidates are responsible for ensuring contact with their mentors at regular intervals, with the expectation that this should happen at least once every four weeks throughout the program. It is important that mentors are aware of their candidate’s progress even if no assistance is required.

Candidates are responsible for their submitted assessment work. Mentors are not responsible for ensuring a pass grade in any submitted assessments.

Role of the Mentor

The MRACDS(GDP) mentor will:

- be a College Fellow or Member
- generally be a practicing general dentist
- be available to candidates on a regular basis (min. once every 4 weeks)
- be well versed in the MRACDS(GDP) program including current policies, processes and assessments
- establish realistic expectations for the relationship and their own involvement
- act as a sounding board for ideas
- offer new or different perspectives
- facilitate self-directed learning
- alert the candidate to possible professional development opportunities
- share information on their own successes and failures as appropriate
- give and receive constructive advice when needed
- be specific about which areas they are able to offer assistance in and which issues fall outside of their expertise
- provide encouragement
- share professional knowledge and resources.

The mentor has no role in the examination and assessment of the candidate, and will be required to temporarily withdraw from the mentoring relationship during assessment periods.
The mentor may assist the candidate to prepare an appeal to the examinations committee or request for an extension to the Board of Studies, but cannot represent the candidate by proxy in these processes.

Role of the College

The College will:

- maintain a list of nominated MRACDS(GDP) mentors
- communicate with MRACDS(GDP) mentors and candidates as required
- monitor mentoring arrangements as needed
- provide guidance on policies.

Kenneth J.G Sutherland Award

The Kenneth J.G. Sutherland Award is awarded to the candidate who, in the opinion of the Examinations Committee, demonstrated overall excellence in the MRACDS(GDP) Program viva voce.

Professor Kenneth Sutherland, AM, who endowed the Kenneth J.G. Sutherland Award, considered the College more than just an examining body. He believed the College represented a pathway and incentive to encourage a dentist in achieving the goal of excellence in clinical practice and knowledge.

The College Council established this award, which comprises a College Medal and a monetary amount, to be presented to the most outstanding candidate in the MRACDS(GDP) Program viva voce.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity and honesty is highly valued at the College and candidates are also required to demonstrate a high level of English proficiency within the assessments submitted to this program.

To support candidates in understanding the College’s expectations, candidates must complete the RACDS Academic Writing modules online via the Learning Management System (LMS) prior to commencing the first assessment round within the program.

The online modules focus on a number of areas of academic writing including critical analysis, academic honesty and plagiarism, referencing and research, hints and tips for spelling, grammar and proof-reading, terminology, writing habits, deconstructing examination questions, paraphrasing and elements of essay structure.
Plagiarism

As an academic-based organisation the College places great emphasis on appropriate academic writing in relation to all submitted works. Plagiarism, or the poor referencing of other people’s work, is not appropriate to a good academic writing style.

Instances of plagiarism can be detected by software systems that can identify levels of originality by searching databases. The College has implemented one such software system called Turnitin. This system is commonly used in universities and other higher education institutions.

Turnitin is a comprehensive cloud-based solution to help facilitate marking through:
- electronic submission of candidate assignments
- checks for originality in candidate work.

Turnitin checks submitted assignments for originality against other candidates’ assignments, against current and archived Internet content, and against the content of major professional journals, periodicals and business publications, and can create an originality report for submitted assignments.

Resources

Learning Management System (LMS)

Candidates will have access to various resources, modules, presentations, forum groups, documents and past exam papers on their tailored LMS homepage.

Regional Committee Candidate Advisors

To ensure that Fellows, Members and those enrolled in any of the College programs have a local point of contact, the RACDS is organised into Regional Committees. They are College Fellows who can be contacted by candidates for guidance and support. In some locations, preparation programs are offered by the College Regional Committee. This includes study days, tutorials, development and management of study groups and general advice and exam tips. Regional Committee Candidate Advisors can be contacted via the website for each region.

Academic Writing Course

To provide candidates guidance on writing style expected during the program. The Academic Writing Course is a prerequisite to sitting any module in the program.

Mentors

For guidance, advice and support, proofreading, practice *viva voces*.

Third Year Extensions

The MRACDS(GDP) Program is a two-year program. Candidates may apply to extend their anticipated completion date by up to twelve months through submission of the MRACDS(GDP)
Enrolment Form prior to the two year anniversary of commencement of the MRACDS(GDP) Program. Candidates who extend on the two year program will be required to pay a third year enrolment fee.

MGD/MRACDS(GDP) Conjoint Examination

In 2010, RACDS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the College of Dental Surgeons of Hong Kong (CDSHK).

Candidates undertaking the Membership in General Dentistry program with the College of Dental Surgeons of Hong Kong can elect to undertake a conjoint *viva voce* examination with the RACDS, which if successful, will enable those Hong Kong graduates to be admitted into the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons as Members in General Dental Practice, MRACDS(GDP).

This opportunity takes place every two years and RACDS examiners are present to observe the process and examine candidates.

The conjoint opportunity enables growth and expansion of the College into Asia and beyond.

MRACDS(GDP) Assessment Policy

Please see *Appendix A* for the MRACDS(GDP) Assessment Policy. This policy prescribes the process of submission and marking of MRACDS Short Answer Questions (SAQ’s), case reports and undertaking the *viva voce* examination.
Assessment Rounds

An assessment round is an opportunity for MRACDS(GDP) candidates to be tested on their knowledge of the six core modules of the program.

Core Modules

- Clinical Examination Technique and Dental Imaging
- Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
- Infection Control
- Medical Emergencies
- Practice Management, Law, Ethics and Risk Management
- Therapeutics in Dentistry, Pain and Pain Management

Assessment rounds take place three times per year and are run over a period of five consecutive weekends per round. Candidates may apply for a maximum of one module per weekend for each assessment round and must nominate the date/s and module/s they wish to apply for one month prior to the round.

Short Answer Questions (SAQs)

Each of the six compulsory core modules is assessed by a set of eight open book short answer questions (SAQs). These questions are designed to be clinically relevant and appropriate for competent general dental practitioners. The content of the SAQs will tend to be general and may take into account the content of courses approved by the Board of Studies for General Dental Practice. Undertaking continual professional development assists candidates in this assessment component.

- The SAQ's include case-based scenarios and are structured to enable candidates to demonstrate their broad understanding of underlying principles and clinical relevance using valid scientific and clinical evidence.

- To prepare for a SAQ assessment, candidates should review their primary text(s) and lecture notes, make a list of important terms and research and practice questions related to each of those terms. Candidates can discuss preparation with their mentor for an SAQ assessment before a round, but not during the weekend of the assessment that they are enrolled in. Mentors are not allowed to assist candidates in answering their SAQ assessments.

- The answers to the SAQ's should provide sufficient detail and clarity of information to reflect the candidate's broad understanding of each of the core modules. In this regard, answers are to be provided in a synthesised form, rather than lists and dot points, unless these are incorporated in the body of the text of the answers. The answers should demonstrate that the candidate has a clear understanding of each topic as outlined in the question.

- The answers to the SAQ’s are to be presented in a written paper format with close attention paid to typographical, spelling and grammatical presentation. Candidates
are to insert the original questions, presented and numbered in the original order with their answers.

Answers to each question must be typed in a word document and must consist of between 250 - 500 words per answer. The 500 word limit must be strictly adhered to. Submissions must be in PDF format. The questions and the list of references will not be included in the word count.

Candidates are required to address the major salient points plus provide further supporting information by quoting at least two relevant book and/or journal article references in each answer.

Quoting other evidence-based sources such as lecture handouts, course material and professional publications is acceptable as an adjunct to quoting from the more academic texts. In-text referencing must be used and references should be listed at the end of the text of each answer using the Harvard Referencing System.

SAQs will be provided electronically to candidates at 5:00pm AEST/AEDT on the Friday of the assessment weekend, and close for submission of answers 48 hours later at 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the Sunday evening of that same weekend. College staff monitor emails throughout the assessment weekend and are candidates first point of contact if they have any issues during a round.

Questions are marked on a pass/fail basis. To obtain a pass in an SAQ module, candidates must pass all 8 questions. If a candidate fails 1 or 2 questions in the module they may be asked to make minor corrections to those questions and resubmit them within 1 week of receiving the outcome notification. If a candidate fails more than 2 questions, they will be sent detailed feedback and will be required to re-enrol for the module at a later date and pay a repeat module fee in that instance.

Candidates who have enrolled in an assessment round but can no longer participate need to advise the College as soon as possible. If the assessment questions have not been made available electronically, then the candidate will be able to withdraw from the round and apply at a later time. If the assessment questions have been sent to the candidates, then they will need to notify the College that they cannot complete the assessment and apply for special consideration to re-sit the module at another time.

Core Module Descriptions

Each of the six compulsory core modules assessed by SAQ's are outlined on the following pages.
Description

This module examines a candidate’s ability to conduct comprehensive patient interviews and clinical examinations drawing on evidence from record histories and clinical findings. Candidates consider how they assess a patient’s signs, symptoms and oral and medical histories, as well as the patient’s vulnerability to environmental factors that may affect oral health. Focus is given to how this diagnostic and evaluative information may determine the type of imaging to be used or the frequency of its use.

Candidates should consider:
- the ordering of radiographs against the expected additional diagnostic information
- guidelines to optimise patient care
- minimising radiation exposure
- the cost to the patient and responsible allocation of health care resources.

There is an emphasis on the ability to provide differential diagnoses of oral disease and to analyse and understand radiology and photography technology and techniques.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:
- enhanced ability to conduct a comprehensive patient interview and clinical examination to accurately record history, clinical findings and differential diagnose of the most common oral diseases
- enhanced understanding of radiology and photography techniques and technologies, knowledge in the differential diagnosis of periapical and bitewing radiographs, orthopantomographs, lateral skull and cephalogram images, TMJ views, CT scans and tomograms
- enhanced ability to record and utilise clinical and intraoral photographs.

Areas of Professional Development:
- interviewing patients, take history and clinically examine
- evaluation of clinical findings
- differential diagnosis of common oral diseases
- radiology and photography techniques and technologies
- differential diagnosis of periapical and bitewing radiographs, orthopantomographs, lateral skull and cephalogram images, TMJ views, CT scans and tomograms
- recording and utilising clinical and intraoral photographs.
Description

Collaborative, holistic and interactive treatment plans are core to best practice dentistry. The diagnosis and treatment planning module emphasises the philosophy of total oral healthcare for patients. This translates to the collaboration and interaction of general practitioners with specialists and other health professionals and providers. A large component of this module centres around the importance of communication styles.

Candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to communicate at appropriate levels with patients and other practitioners about:
- clinical cases
- oral health status
- treatment options
- potential outcomes and risks.

Candidates are challenged to consider not only the diagnostic tools they use every day and why they use them, but their decision-making process and how that is communicated to patients and other healthcare professionals. The module teaches that to successfully achieve this, the practitioner must become aware of the uncertainties of each case, be able to modify their judgement on the basis of accumulated evidence, and balance the risks of each decision.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:
- an understanding of the philosophy of total oral healthcare for each patient and the interactions of the general dental practice with specialists in the overall treatment plan for the individual
- the capacity to communicate about clinical cases with other health professionals/providers
- the capacity to communicate with the patient about their oral health status/treatment options and potential outcomes.

Areas of Professional Development:

- activities and CPD that focuses on diagnostic techniques, occlusion, treatment planning, treatment outcomes and risk management
- find or create a local peer group e.g. Australian Dental Association (ADA) or the College’s community forum on the Learning Management System (RACDS Learning).
Description

Basic and advanced up-to-date infection control knowledge is imperative to best dental practice. This module has a primary focus on protocols and current developments in infection control in the practice of dentistry and the responsibilities of dental practitioners and their clinical support staff. The module emphasises the requirement for practitioners to show professional judgement in all routine work practices and be the primary educator for staff and patients.

Candidates are required to demonstrate a high level of understanding of:
- the regulatory and clinical aspects of infection control
- protocols for maintaining high standards of infection control
- the importance of surgery design based on occupational health and safety (OH&S) and sterilisation principles
- patient education for post-procedural care.

As each dental practitioner is responsible for implementing best practice infection control standards in their clinic, it is extremely important that procedures are current and a priority. This module ensures practitioners are focusing and complying with procedures and refreshing knowledge on the rationale behind requirements.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:
- an understanding of the regulatory and clinical aspects of infection control issues applicable to the practice of dentistry
- that they can develop infection control working protocols
- an understanding of surgery design, particularly in relation to OH&S and sterilisation, which is of a high standard in keeping with requirements
- an understanding of the principles of sterilization
- an understanding of occupational health and safety issues
- up-to-date knowledge in relation to infection control developments.

Areas of Professional Development

Surgery design including:
- ergonomics, surfaces, sterilisation areas, equipment selection and maintenance and single-use vs disposable.

Principles of sterilisation including:
- microbiology – general and dental
- sterilisation procedures
- aseptic/antiseptic techniques
- private vs public dentistry
- surgical vs conservative dentistry
- cross infection control and
- instrument tracking.
Updating knowledge on occupational health and safety including:
- staff training
- practice manuals
- Identifying key personnel
- Regulatory requirements.
Description

Managing a medical emergency is vital to best practice dentistry and this module provides the opportunity for ensuring that skills in identifying and responding to medical emergencies in dental practice are proficient and up-to-date. This medical emergencies module focuses on candidates being able to demonstrate application of systematic principles in emergency management for everyday possible scenarios in clinical practice.

By the completion of the module candidates will have:

- a high level of understanding of the basic sciences as they relate to medical emergencies
- refreshed their knowledge of advanced CPR
- the ability to correctly identify and manage common medical emergencies
- a sound knowledge of the content and upkeep of emergency first aid and drug kits
- an understanding of the importance of maintaining staff training in emergency response.

Medical emergencies will occur intermittently throughout a practitioner’s work life. Being prepared, up-to-date and competent is essential to best practice. The medical emergencies module ensures that patients in the event of an emergency receive the best possible care from a skilled and educated practitioner.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:

- how to respond rapidly in an emergency and apply systematic principles of emergency management
- an understanding of the basic sciences relevant to medical emergencies in general dentistry
- an understanding of the contents of emergency drug kits for dental practice surgeries
- staff training requirements in the management of medical emergencies.

Areas of Professional Development:

- enhance understanding of basic sciences including anatomy, physiology, pathology, pharmacology, microbiology and biochemistry
- understanding the common medical emergencies including:
  - vasovagal syncope
  - hypoglycaemia
  - cerebrovascular accident
  - angina and acute myocardial infarction
  - anaphylaxis
  - adrenal suppression.
- maintain proficiency in advanced CPR including airway management, foreign bodies, cardiac massage and monitoring techniques
- ensure staff training in medical emergencies including induction and ongoing staff manuals
• ensure up to date knowledge of emergency drug kits including basic pharmacological agents and their administration—sublingual, oral, inhalation, subcutaneous, intramuscular and intravenous.
Description

This module focuses on the national laws and legal requirements of dental practitioners. Emphasised in this program are the legislative frameworks around dental practice, privacy, infection control application in different jurisdictions and basic techniques to ensure patients’ legal and ethical rights are consistently being met.

Candidates will be required to demonstrate a higher understanding of:
- the appropriate methods of maintaining clinical and accounting records
- methods of providing evidence that shows the application of ethical practices in dentistry
- preventing risk factors in practice
- legal and professional obligations in managing a dental practice, which includes but is not limited to the employment and maintenance of staff, administrative, financial and legal requirements and professional development and progression.

This module provides an important opportunity to put the legal and ethical aspects of clinical work to the forefront of a practitioner’s daily practice. Candidates are encouraged to reflect on and adjust their current practices to ensure best legal and ethical frameworks are implemented and incorporated into everyday scenarios. This module is suited to both new practitioners and as a refresher to more experienced professionals.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:
- a working knowledge of - the laws, legal and clinical aspects applicable to general dental practice, including an understanding of the legislative frameworks around dental practice
- privacy
- infection control in the candidate’s jurisdiction
- the ability to maintain and audit of up-to-date clinical and accounting records
- the application of a commitment to ethical practices in dentistry
- apply ethical and jurisprudence principles to professional dental practice
- how to prevent avoidable harm to patients and reduce risk in their dental practices
- sound working knowledge of patient management, case selection, assessment and informed consent requirements. Ensure maintenance of up-to-date patient records
- an understanding of the legal and professional obligations including an understanding of the legal, financial and administrative requirements and systems associated with practice management
- an understanding of general human resource and management issues
- an understanding of medical indemnity issues
- use of professional debt and financial planning skills.
Areas of Professional Development

Employing dentists including:
- methods of employment
- service contracts and appropriate work agreements
- legal structures
- service companies
- remuneration
- responsibilities.

Surgery design including:
- ergonomics
- IT
- cabinetry
- surfaces
- sterile vs non-sterile areas
- equipment selection
- maintenance
- disposable vs single-use
- stock control.

Purchase and disposal of a practice including:
- valuations
- legal obligations
- choice of location
- squatting vs existing practice.

Records management:
- clinical and accounting
- history taking
- privacy laws.

Human resources including:
- hiring and firing
- choosing and managing a team
- employment awards
- contracts
- remuneration
- reviewing performance
- employer and employee responsibilities
- practice manuals
- induction of new staff.

Productivity including:
- marketing - internal and external
- appointment management
- case presentation and educating patients
- treatment planning and organisation
- managing patient financial agreements and third party insurers.
Business of dentistry including:

- accounting
- practice structures (trusts, service companies)
- regulatory requirements
- taxation (personal, P/L, PAYG, FBT, GST, CGT)
- managing BAS, superannuation (staff, personal, self-managed funds)
- investing
- the Dental Practice Act, private v public, legal issues and jurisprudence
- informed consent, pre-treatment assessments and case selection – patient and dentist criteria
- infection control.
Description

This module explores the range of current medications and other therapeutic treatments applicable to general dentistry. The module affords working practitioners the opportunity to assess their own therapeutic and pain management treatment practices and consider alternative or updated medications or plans. Therapeutics in dentistry, pain and pain management brings the focus back to the principles of diagnosis and prescribing, pharmacology, under and over prescribing and pre- and post-treatment pain management.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:

- ability to assess the actions, side effects and interactions of various medical and therapeutic treatments
- how to form a plan to reduce the risk of emergency patient care
- a high level of knowledge of the uses and risks of local anesthesia
- the scientific basis of pain and the control of pain within clinical hygiene and practice
- an understanding of the importance of staff training in pain management
- an understanding of a range of medications and other therapeutic treatments including antimicrobials, antibiotics, anti-virals, anti-fungals, herbal and non-prescribed medications, anti-inflammatories, analgesics, fluoride, mouthwashes and bleaching
- assess the actions, side effects and interactions of various medications and therapeutic treatments
- perform a patient assessment and formulate a plan that reduces the risk of an emergency occurring during patient care
- safely practice pain control techniques.

Areas of Professional Development:

- update your knowledge on the actions, side effects and interactions of medications including, but not limited to antimicrobials, antibiotics, anti-virals, anti-fungals, herbal and non-prescribed medications, anti-inflammatories, analgesics, fluoride
- research other mechanisms of caries control
- ensure up to date knowledge on the use of mouthwash and bleaching
- join a peer group that encourages clinical presentation discussion and/or differential diagnosis
- update your knowledge on scientific basis of pain including: biochemistry, physiology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, histopathology
- ensure training of staff from reception to operatory
- update your knowledge on diagnosis and management including pain of systemic origin and orofacial pain
- update your knowledge on anesthesia (local, sedation, general).
Elective Modules

Candidates must complete three elective modules, which focus on specialty interest areas of clinical dentistry.

Elective Modules (Choose Three)

- Combined Oral medicine, Oral Pathology and Special Needs Dentistry
- Combined Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics
- Dentoalveolar Surgery
- Endodontics
- Operative Dentistry
- Periodontics

Case Reports

The three chosen elective modules are assessed via submission of one case report per elective that covers the candidate's personal treatment of cases representing the broad range of issues covered in the chosen elective.

Each report should be from a different elective module so that examiners can assess the candidate’s range of knowledge. Case reports can be submitted at any time throughout the duration of the program (two years). Case reports must be presented for assessment electronically via email, no later than three months prior to the *viva voce* examination for which the candidate intends to present. A case report submitted under a topic not included in the program will not be accepted or marked.

The aim of this assessment component is to enable candidates to present their own clinical work and also to reflect on the treatment provided. It enables discussion of possible alternatives, modifications of treatment or issues raised during treatment.

Candidates are encouraged to discuss their case preparation with their mentor. Mentors should be given ample warning and time to review candidate case reports before submission. If a candidate is having difficulty accessing appropriate cases, they should discuss with their mentor or a colleague who may be able to get you access to patient cases. If this is not possible, the candidate will need to contact the College.

Case reports are marked on a Pass/Fail basis. Where minor corrections are required, a candidate may be asked to resubmit a case report following detailed feedback from examiners. Candidates that fail the resubmission, will be sent further detailed feedback and be required to re-enrol for the module and will be required to pay a repeat module fee in that instance.

Case reports should be of high quality, such that they could be used as presentations at dental meetings or where appropriate as the basis for case-report publications in journals. They must conform to appropriate layout and format detailed below. Candidates should submit before and after images (photographs/radiographs) to support their case reports. Expression, language and terminology used should be clear and precise and of a professional standard. A proficient level of English is expected when presenting assessments.
Case Reports Continued

It is expected that case reports include the following headings/subheadings where relevant:

- **History and Examination**: A concise description of the patient's dental, medical and social history.
- **Labeled, clear charts of the dentition and periodontium will be required. Patients’ initials, and not full names, should be used.**
- **Diagnosis**: The diagnosis of presenting conditions and aetiological factors.
- **Treatment Options**: A list in general terms of the realistic options for the management of the case.
- **Treatment Plan**: A more detailed, sequential list of the procedures planned. The aims of the treatment should be clearly stated. Actual patient treatment notes are not required.
- **Rationale for the Treatment Plan**: A comprehensively argued case for the final treatment decisions.
- **Progress of Treatment**: A report on the way treatment progressed including any complications or variations on the original plan.
- **Final Evaluation**: An assessment of the outcome with regard to the patient’s expectations and to the quality of the work provided. An assessment of prognosis should also be included.
- **References**: A reference list of quoted literature in the Harvard Referencing System.
Requirements for Case Reports

- Case reports should be presented in a written format and are structured to enable the candidate to demonstrate their understanding of their chosen electives and clinical relevance using valid scientific and clinical evidence.

- The case report should outline the narrative of the patient’s history, presenting concern, timeline and diagnosis, treatment plans, interventions, unanticipated events and future prognosis, and enable discussion of possible alternatives, modifications of treatment or issues raised during treatment.

- Case reports should cover a range of topics and candidates should address the entire treatment of a patient in the case report rather than focusing only on the presenting issue/complaint.

- Each case should demonstrate an understanding of the elective chosen using valid scientific and clinical evidence. Case reports should show integration of the treatment within the patient’s overall oral and general health, and should be designed to show the range of the candidate’s clinical expertise and skills, while being of a type and complexity managed in general dental practice.

- Appropriate, comprehensive management of the case is expected. A discussion and critical analysis of rationale for treatment and the overall outcome for the patient must be provided.

- Referrals to specialists for complex components of the treatment are acceptable and referral letters, radiographs etc. should be included. The candidate should be able to demonstrate knowledge of their limitations and indicate where they would refer to a different expert or specialist.

- Radiographs need to be of excellent resolution and diagnostic quality. Photographs should be of excellent resolution and quality and should be limited to a maximum of five preoperative and five postoperative views for each case (such as anterior, left and right buccal, upper and lower occlusal) and a maximum of five other views to illustrate key stages in treatment. Radiographs may be substituted for clinical images for endodontic case reports. Electronic images need to be of a suitable size. Maximum size files should be no larger than 250 - 300 KB with images saved as jpeg files with a pixel size of 800 x 600.

- Case reports should be submitted in PDF format with a clearly set out structure that includes sub-headings. The file name should include the candidate’s ID number and the topic of the case report. The candidate’s name should never be included in the case report.

- Candidates must submit a complete case. Cases that are unfinished will be sent back to the candidate until treatment can be completed, or a new case submitted. Examiners expect good quality images within cases, and candidates who submit images that are difficult to read may be asked to resubmit.

- Supporting evidence must be cited using the Harvard Referencing System, including in text referencing. As a guide, at least three-four references from current, peer reviewed journals and texts should be provided in case reports.
The text of each report must be on single-sided pages and be between 1200 and 1500 words in length (not including attachments, footnotes and references).

Written consent must be obtained from patients prior to taking photographs and using details for their records in the case report. Images should be placed within the body of the text and labelled. Alternatively they can be labelled and included at the end of the text provided they are referred to within the body of the text.

Each case report must contain a declaration, signed and dated by the candidate. All information included in the reports including: patient’s details, photos, radiographs and documentation including referral letters and specialist reports should be de-identified and a copy of the patient consent form included in the submission.

**Elective Module Descriptions**

Each of the elective modules assessed by case reports are outlined on the following pages. Candidates choose three elective modules.
Description

This is a collaborative module that involves an understanding of the appropriate methods of conducting pre-clinical patient assessment, advocacy, access and consent while communicating effectively with carers and allied health professionals. Candidates will be proficient in conducting a history and examination of an OM/OP/SND patient and will be well versed in medical testing and investigations required to aid diagnosis. An understanding of the appropriate treatment phases and referral processes, as well as demonstration of competent management of oral medicine and pathology, is required.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:

- an understanding of how to conduct a pre-clinical assessment including issues of advocacy, access and consent, and the importance of communicating effectively with carers, GPs and other allied health providers
- how to conduct a thorough history for the OM/OP/SND patient
- how to conduct an examination for the OM/OP/SND patient
- understanding of the special medical tests and investigations relevant to the OM/OP/SND patient
- an understanding of OM/OP/SND treatment pathways including treatment phases and specialist referral
- competency in the management of common oral medicine and oral pathology problems.

Areas of Professional Development:

- enhanced understanding of varied communication methods with carers, GPs and other allied health professionals
- enhanced knowledge of the history and examination for the OM/OP/SND patient, special medical tests and investigations relevant to the OM/OP/SND patient, treatment pathways, management of common oral medicine and common oral pathology problems and assessment, advocacy, access and consent.
Description

In this module candidates must demonstrate an understanding of the appropriate methods of examination, treatment and consent when communicating with patients and carers.

This module places emphasis on the candidate’s understanding of:
• dental trauma, injury, and behaviour management, including pain and anxiety control
• an ability to correctly undertake orthodontic assessment with regard to the growth and development of the paediatric patient.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:
• an understanding of history taking, clinical examination, treatment planning, obtaining informed consent and communication with patient and parent/carer of the paediatric dental patient
• the ability to provide preventative treatment and caries management, interceptive treatment, restorative treatment, pulp treatment in the primary dentition, and pulp treatment in the immature permanent dentition
• an understanding and knowledge of dental trauma in paediatric patients and management of injuries in the developing dentition
• knowledge of behaviour management, pain and anxiety control techniques in local anesthesia, general anesthesia and sedation
• the ability to undertake an orthodontic assessment including radiographs, study models and an understanding of the growth and development of the child, stages of dental development, occlusal development and principles of dento-facial anomalies.

Areas of Professional Development:

• enhance knowledge of patient history taking, clinical examination, treatment planning, obtaining informed consent, communication with patient and parent/carer of the paediatric dental patient
• enhance understanding of patient preventative treatment and caries management, interceptive treatment, restorative treatments, pulp treatment in the primary dentition, pulp treatment in the immature permanent dentition, dental trauma and management of injuries in the developing dentition
• enhance knowledge and understanding of behaviour management, pain and anxiety control, orthodontic assessment
• enhanced understanding of the growth and development of the child
• enhanced understanding of interceptive orthodontics, space maintainers, removable appliances and conditions requiring referral, stages of dental development, occlusal development, principles of dento-facial anomalies and paediatric radiography.
Description

In this module candidates will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the basic principles of dentoalveolar surgery and the impact of the basic sciences in its application. Candidates should focus on the assessment, planning and procedures required within dentoalveolar surgery and provide and plan for clinical services applicable to dentoalveolar surgery in general dental practice.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:

• a sound understanding of the principles and current issues applicable to dentoalveolar surgery in particular anatomy, physiology, microbiology and pharmacology
• an understanding of patient assessment, treatment planning, treatment procedures and transitional treatment planning concepts in dentoalveolar surgery
• how to plan and provide clinical services applicable to dentoalveolar surgery in general dental practice.

Areas of Professional Development:

• enhance understanding of applied science including: anatomy, pathology, microbiology and pharmacology
• enhance knowledge for patient diagnosis, management and procedure treatment.
Description

This module requires candidates to demonstrate a sound understanding of the principles and issues of endodontics relevant to the general practitioner and the basic sciences that are inherent in this dental discipline. Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate the appropriate assessment, treatment planning and procedures applicable to endodontic treatment and provide the appropriate services relevant to general dental practice.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:

- a sound understanding of the principles and current issues applicable to endodontics, in particular anatomy, pathology, microbiology, pharmacology and neuroanatomy
- an understanding of the patient assessment, treatment planning, treatment procedures and transitional treatment planning concepts in endodontics
- planning and provision of dental services relevant to endodontics in a general dental practice.

Areas of Professional Development:

- enhance understanding of applied sciences including: anatomy, pathology, microbiology, pharmacology and neuroanatomy
- enhance understanding of diagnostic techniques and treatment techniques.
Description

This module requires the candidate to explore the principles and issues applicable to operative dentistry and fixed and removable prosthodontics with a focus on patient assessment, treatment planning and procedures.

The operative dentistry and prosthodontics module includes the science of diagnosis, prevention, treatment, and prognosis of diseases or trauma to teeth. The module also examines the process of planning and implementing clinical sieves applicable to preventative dentistry and the restoration and replacement of teeth in general dental practice.

Training Objectives

On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:

• a sound understanding of the principles and current issues applicable to operative dentistry and prosthodontics
• an understanding of patient assessment, treatment planning, treatment procedures and transitional treatment planning concepts in operative dentistry and prosthodontics
• the ability to plan and provide clinical services applicable to operative dentistry and prosthodontics in a general dental practice.

Areas of Professional Development:

• enhance knowledge and understanding on materials and material science
• enhance knowledge and understanding of patient assessment and case selection
• enhance knowledge on minimum intervention
• enhance knowledge of bonding involving apex to crown and of direct and indirect techniques.
Description
The periodontics module requires the candidate to illustrate their understanding of the principal issues of periodontics relevant to the general practitioner including pathology, microbiology, pharmacology and immunology. Candidates must focus on the correct processes of patient assessment and treatment planning in providing clinical services relevant to periodontal treatment in general dental practice.

Training Objectives
On completion of the module the candidate should be able to demonstrate:
• a sound understanding of the principles and current issues applicable to periodontics, in particular pathology, microbiology, pharmacology and immunology
• an understanding of patient assessment, treatment planning, treatment procedures and transitional treatment planning concepts in periodontics
• how to plan and provide clinical services applicable to periodontics in a general dental practice.

Areas of Professional Development:
• enhance understanding of applied science including: pathology, microbiology, pharmacology, and immunology
• enhance knowledge for case selection criteria, interdisciplinary management and maintenance and outcome measurements.
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

For the MRACDS(GDP) Program, candidates must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 120 hours of appropriate CPD over a two year period that is relevant to the core and elective modules.

It is recommended that candidates aim to complete approximately 12 hours of appropriate course content for all core and chosen elective modules. Candidates must dedicate a minimum of six hours relevant verifiable CPD to the content of each module, but must not exceed 18 hours.

It is at the discretion of the candidates to match relevant courses to module completion. Candidates will be allowed flexibility in relation to their choice of courses, provided the standard and breadth of content is appropriate. Candidates must be able to show that they have attended or been involved in verifiable CPD by, for example, keeping certificates or course registration documents.

The College supports candidates in the MRACDS(GDP) Program by hosting a range of module specific CPD masterclasses throughout the year. Attendance at College masterclasses is optional but highly recommended for candidates in the program. A list of the CPD events is available on the College website.

The College has a CPD tracker in the Learning Management System (LMS) and candidates are required to log CPD hours in this database for easy documenting and printing of CPD reports.

viva voce

Once candidates have passed all core and elective modules as well as completed 120 hours of CPD, they are eligible to present for the viva voce examination. The aim of the viva voce examination is to enable candidates to demonstrate their understanding of a case or cases describing a clinical scenario. The candidate is expected to discuss various aspects of the case with the examiners.

The viva voce examination will be conducted by two examiners and an observer nominated by the Board of Studies for General Dental Practice. Candidates should note that if fewer than three candidates have enrolled to present for the viva voce examination, it may be cancelled and enrolment fees refunded. The viva voce is held on three occasions each year or as determined by the Board.

The viva voce is of 40 minutes’ duration and comprises:

• a 10 minute perusal of a provided case. (If a second case is used, candidates will be provided with additional perusal time.)
• a 30 minute assessment and discussion of the case/s
• assessment of the candidate’s knowledge in clinical dentistry

Candidates may take notes during the perusal time and these may be taken into the examination room. Any notes taken must not be removed from the examination room after the completion of the viva voce examination.

Candidates should be aware that an observer may be present during the viva voce examination. The purpose of the observer is to oversee the examination process to ensure fair and consistent processes are being upheld. Observers will not comment on a candidate’s performance during the examination and will have no say in the outcome of the
Results will be emailed to the candidate as well as securely posted on the College website within one week of the examination. Candidates who pass are eligible for Admission to Membership and the post-nominal MRACDS(GDP). Candidates who fail are provided with thorough feedback within three weeks of the examination and are able to re-present at a future date. Candidates are permitted a maximum of three attempts at the viva voce examination.
Section 5
FRACDS(GDP)

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  Cell Biology and Biochemistry
  Histology
  Microbiology
  Pathology
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Prizes
Resources

Part 2 – Final Examination

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Electives
  Oral Medicine, Oral Surgery and Oral Pathology
  Restorative Dentistry and Periodontics
  Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics
Prizes
Resources and Supporting Activities
PART 1
Primary Examination

Overview

The Primary Examination assesses theoretical knowledge in six basic science subjects from a clinical dental perspective. The focus is on the candidate’s ability to effectively communicate knowledge in written papers and *viva voce* examinations. Candidates will not be required to carry out clinical treatment.

The subjects of the examination are:

- Anatomy
- Cell biology & Biochemistry.
- Histology
- Microbiology
- Pathology
- Physiology

Candidates should also be familiar with standard statistical methods and Pharmacology.

Note: while not examined as a separate subject, Pharmacology is relevant across all disciplines and may be examined. Two hours of lectures on Pharmacology are included in the Orientation Course and notes.

Examination Format

**Written papers**

Written papers are the first component of the Primary Examination. The objective of the questions is to assess the candidates’ knowledge and understanding in a fair and impartial manner.

There are six written papers, one in each subject. The papers are of two hours duration each and conducted over three days. Written papers will be short-answer or essay format only with no multiple-choice questions. The number and structure of questions will vary according to the individual subject. There may be one or more questions, from which there may be optional and/or compulsory sections.

**viva voce (oral) examinations**

The *viva voce* examinations are the second component of the Primary Examination. The purpose of a *viva voce* is to assess the ability of a candidate to effectively communicate their knowledge and demonstrate their thinking process.

A *viva voce* of ten minutes duration is conducted in each of the six subjects.
Examination Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Examiners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: 6 Written Papers</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>Morning: 1 x 2-hour paper Afternoon: 1 x 2-hour paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2: 6 viva voces</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>2 x 10min sessions per day*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Except Hong Kong – 1 day: 3 x 30min sessions

Please note: while every effort is made to ensure that candidates have a fair spread of viva voce examinations across the three days, there is no guarantee. Candidates may sometimes have to complete more than two viva voce examinations in one day.

Marking

Written Examination

Each examination subject paper is prepared by two College examiners specialising in that subject matter.

viva voce

Questions during the viva voce examination are based on the subject material. Examinations are conducted by one College-appointed examiner, with an observer present.

- The marks awarded to each candidate are presented at the examiners’ meeting which is held at the conclusion of the examination process. The examiners’ meeting is attended by examiners and College staff, and is chaired by the Registrar. The final result is authorised by the Registrar in General Dental Practice.

- A mark out of 100 is awarded to a candidate for each subject, of which 75% is the written paper and 25% is the viva voce. A minimum overall mark of 50 is required for a pass in each subject.

- Candidates are required to pass all subjects in order to pass the examination.

- Candidates who pass at least four subjects in a single sitting will be given credit for the subjects satisfactorily completed. This credit is valid for a maximum period of three years.

- A candidate who is unsuccessful in three or more subjects in a single sitting will be required to re-present for all six subjects at their next attempt at the examination.
Results

- The result of the examination is emailed to candidates in a letter on the date advised prior to the examination. The results are also uploaded onto the College website, listed by candidate number only on the results release date.

- Candidates are advised of a pass or fail grade only in each subject. Candidates do not receive a breakdown of their marks.

- A candidate who is unsuccessful in any subject will receive written feedback from the Registrar within six weeks following all examiner meetings. Feedback will be qualitative only and will not contain marks awarded for specific questions or components.

- Examination results and any feedback on the examination from examiners including a copy of the failed candidate report will be forwarded to the relevant Board of Studies for noting.

- Candidates may request reconsideration, review and finally appeal of any examination result if they believe they have grounds under the College’s Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy (see Policies section on RACDS website).

Please note: Candidates who pass the Primary Examination are not awarded Membership and/or any qualifications. Candidates receive a letter advising of their participation and pass ONLY.

Subjects and Curriculum Framework

The College Pathways to Fellowship are intended for self-motivated, independent candidates and are based around the principles of adult learning. These include the concepts that adult learning is problem-centered and experience-based, a focus on the relevancy of topics, and the responsibility of the candidate for the overall planning and evaluation of their own learning.

The College provides guidelines and resources for candidates in the pathways, but it is expected that candidates will develop a structured learning plan according to their own interests and timeframe, as well as critically analysing the suggested resources and seeking out further resources as needed. Such resources may include written material such as textbooks and journals, as well as collaboration with colleagues and mentors.

The College has a dedicated education team to assist candidates.

Please see below the breakdown of expected knowledge and suggested reading lists for each subject.
Candidates should:

**Head and Neck**
- Be able to demonstrate a detailed knowledge of the anatomy of the head and neck, including that of the skull and the vertebral column. Particular emphasis will be placed on the anatomy of the oral cavity and the peri-oral region including the infra temporal region, paranasal sinuses, salivary glands, pharynx, and anatomy related to function of the mandibular mechanism.

**Neuroanatomy**
- Possess a general knowledge of the morphology of the brain and spinal cord, and detailed knowledge of the functional components of the cranial nerves, their branches and the central connections of those components. Specific emphasis will be placed on the Trigeminal, Facial, Glossopharyngeal, Vagus and Hypoglossal nerves. An understanding of the embryology of the nervous system is also helpful.

**Thorax**
- Possess general knowledge of the contents of the thoracic cavity, together with general knowledge of the cardio-pulmonary circulation.

**Dental Anatomy**
- Be familiar with the anatomy of the teeth and how this relates to the structure and function of the wider facial skeleton and the associated soft tissues of the head and neck.

**Dental Embryology**
- Possess a general knowledge of the development of the embryo, facial development, and of the derivatives of pharyngeal arches and pouches.

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**Suggested Reading List**

(Updated April 2017)

1. The course notes: *Lecture Notes in Anatomy, by Prof Marc Tennant published by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons, 2017.*

2. Principal texts: These cover most of the material in the Orientation Course and requirements for the Primary Examination.
Comment: This text, using Netter’s outstanding illustrations, with relevant text written by NS Norton, was published in 2007. Many of the same illustrations as seen in the Atlas (below) are used in this text book.


Comment: This is the longstanding and user-friendly book on Embryology. It has been used for decades and the latest edition (above) is excellent for basic embryology.

3. Alternative Texts:


Comment: This was the previously recommended principal text and it is an excellent book on all aspects of anatomy but is brief on neuroanatomy and embryology. Thus some supplementary references are recommended below.


Comment: This atlas is very useful for viewing anatomy and neuroanatomy. Now that Norton has published Netter’s Head and Neck Anatomy for Dentistry (2007), many of the images in the Atlas are in the text, thus it is not really necessary to have both books. Note: Netter also publishes Flash Cards of the illustrations for rapid reference. ISBN: 1-929007-08-6.


Comment: This atlas has excellent photographs of the skull and component bones, together with high quality and well labelled photographs of anatomical dissections. It is well-suited for revision and preparation for the viva voce, where many anatomical specimens will be used.


Comment: Gray’s is the long established “encyclopedia” of anatomy and is most useful as a reference book. Some candidates prefer to use this traditional, comprehensive and up-to-date book from which to study all aspects of Anatomy, because it includes all the embryology and neuroanatomy as well, although in more detail than required in some areas.

Comment: this is also a general book on anatomy of the whole body and is not as applicable to the head and neck as the principal texts listed above. Some candidates have this from undergraduate days and it is useful if one is familiar with its content.

4. Additional References

Neuroanatomy: Any modern text on neuroanatomy will be adequate. Be sure to study the book carefully before purchasing, because many books are too complex and specialised for what is needed in the Orientation Course.


Comment: Kiernan and Barr have published informative books on neuroanatomy for many years. This latest book is more than adequate for the Primary Examination, and is recommended for those who need to understand more about neuroanatomy. It is well written, and comprehensive.


Comment: Dr Goldberg had gone to an enormous amount of trouble to simplify and demystify neuroanatomy. His book is excellent for those who find the topic daunting. The book is brief, inexpensive, and very easy to read. It has humour and simple diagrams.

Embryology


Comment: Netter is famous for his outstanding illustrations and this book is no exception. The diagrams will certainly help candidates understand the events which occur in embryology: The understanding of which is fundamental for learning meaningful anatomy. It also has graphically illustrated versions of various developmental abnormalities.


Comment: Moore’s book is also a long standing text it is quite detailed and comprehensive. Its section on birth defects is most informative.
Candidates are expected to have knowledge of the general principles and application of nutrition, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Cell Biology to the study of human health and especially Dental Science that is at least as extensive as their knowledge of the topics covered in their undergraduate degree, but with particular focus on the areas listed below.

Candidates should be aware of and be able to discuss:

**The effects of diet and exercise on metabolism**
- chemical nature of the macronutrients and micronutrients; including carbohydrates, proteins, fats, water soluble vitamins, fat soluble vitamins and the major minerals including calcium, iron and zinc
- sources of and dietary guidelines for the macronutrients and the micronutrients
- processes of digestion and absorption of nutrients, with special emphasis on the role of the oral cavity
- functions of the macronutrients and the micronutrients
- normal metabolism of the macronutrients during the fed and fasted states
- biochemical and clinical consequences of decreased or increased macronutrient and/or micronutrient intakes.

**The control of metabolism (Endocrine and Signal Transduction Biochemistry)**
- chemical nature of the water and fat soluble hormones
- mechanisms of action of these hormones including their synthesis, secretion, transport, receptors types and degradation
- signal transduction mechanisms including receptors, ion channels, second messengers (calcium and cyclic nucleotides), protein kinases and phosphatases, structure-function relationships of proteins, reactive oxygen species, lipid signal and transcription factors
- normal functions of the hormones
- biochemical and clinical consequences of altered hormone action, with particular emphasis on NIDDM and IDDM, thyroid disease and other endocrine disorders relevant to clinical practice.

**Cell division, growth, differentiation and death (Molecular and Cellular Biology)**
- DNA replication, transcription and translation, and how these events play a role in recessive and dominant inheritance
- normal processes of cell division, growth, differentiation and death
- control mechanisms for cell division, growth, differentiation and death
biochemical and clinical consequences of genetic, cellular and molecular abnormalities, with particular emphasis on cancer and other disorders relevant to clinical practice.

Suggested Reading List

(Updated April 2017)

1. Recommended texts: Texts listed may be adequate for more than one of the topics listed.

The effects of diet, exercise and trauma on metabolism: Access to recent textbooks in Nutrition and in Biochemistry such as one of those listed below is essential.


The control of metabolism (Endocrine and Signal Transduction Biochemistry): Access to recent textbooks in endocrinology and biochemistry such as one of the following is essential.


Cell division, growth, differentiation and death (Molecular and Cellular Biology): Access to recent textbooks in molecular and cellular biology such as one of the following is essential.


In general, candidates will be expected to have knowledge of the structure of the basic tissues both at the level of light microscopy and electron microscopy.

The major effort should, however, be concentrated on the more specialised oral and dental tissues. Of particular concern should be:

- the structure, development and functional changes of the teeth and the component tissues - enamel, dentine, pulp and cementum
- the structure of the periodontium
- the specialisations of the oral and nasal mucosa
- the structure and the products of the salivary glands
- the structure and functional adaptation of the temporomandibular joint.

The essence of study should be the relation of structure to function and the implications for the oro-dental clinician.

**Suggested Reading List**

(Updated March 2017)

1. The course notes: *Lecture Notes in Histology*, by A/Prof Alex Forrest published by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons, 2017.

2. Principal Text:

3. Alternative Texts:
On presentation to the Primary Examination, candidates should be able to:

**Appreciate**
- the varying nature of infectious agents
- the range of techniques used for diagnostic microbiology
- the varying growth requirements of bacterial species in the oral cavity
- the principles of disease transmission in the oral cavity and the dental environment
- the ecological determinants of the oral flora
- the protective immune response to infective agents, including the role of both humoral and cellular aspects of the immune system
- the principles and application of vaccination
- side effects of commonly prescribed antimicrobial agents.

**Understand**
- the role of bacteria in the aetiology of diseases of the oral cavity
- the management of dental infections using microbiological principles
- the use of salivary diagnostics and caries activity tests in clinical patient care
- the differing mechanisms of disease causation with bacteria, fungi, viruses and prions
- principles of instrument reprocessing
- the mechanisms of operation and limitations of commonly used sterilisation methods
- the role and interpretation of quality assurance tests for sterilisation.

**Describe**
- the formation of biofilms, including dental plaque
- the role of oral bacteria in systemic diseases such as infective endocarditis
- protocols for antibiotic cover
- the role and selection of disinfectants in clinical dentistry
- the mechanism of action of common classes of antimicrobial agents
- the clinical manifestations of infections of the oral cavity
- oral lesions associated with immune suppressed states such as AIDS
- pathways of the spread of infection involving inanimate surfaces in the dental surgery
- clinical follow up for a sharps injury from a patient with a blood-borne viral infection.
Suggested Reading List

(Updated March 2017)


2. Recommended Textbooks: Candidates may benefit from supplementing the course notes with the current edition of a textbook in dental microbiology.
   

Clinical practice is by definition only required because patients suffer disease processes, and the Primary Examination in Pathology is intended to specifically test understanding of the mechanisms which underlie human disease. Although some understanding of the role of clinical diagnostic Pathology is expected, this is not a major focus of the examinations, and candidates will not be required to make diagnosis of specific oral disease from histological sections. Instead, the emphasis in the Primary Examination has traditionally been upon basic disease processes such as wound healing, inflammation, immunity, thrombosis, and neoplasia.

Candidates are expected to:

- have a knowledge and understanding of the basic principles of general pathology at the levels expected of an undergraduate dental student
- relate their knowledge of fundamental general pathological mechanisms to various clinical situations concerned with the care of their patients.

During study, particular emphasis should be placed on the general pathological concepts that are of particular relevance to clinical dentistry. Aspects of systemic pathology that are specifically highlighted are those which deal with common and important chronic systemic conditions that may have an impact on dental treatment planning or the delivery of dental care. Whilst it is expected that candidates will be able to describe the general relevance of systemic conditions to the management of dental patients, precise details regarding drug use and treatment planning for medically complex patients is more properly dealt with in the clinical province of ‘Medically Complex Dentistry’, and is beyond the scope of the Primary Examination. Instead an understanding of the pathological processes which underlie clinical decisions is examined in the Primary Examination.

Candidates are encouraged to try and develop a good overview and general understanding of the relevant pathological processes. It would be both impossible and inappropriate for candidates to seek to memorise everything known about basic pathological processes and systemic disease. They are advised instead to approach pathology from the perspective of: “first principles on processes and conditions relevant to general dental practice such that coherent understanding should supplant the otherwise impossible task of memorising everything that might be relevant.”

The titles of the lectures given for Pathology in the Orientation Course provide a reasonable impression of the scope of the material covered:

- The Cellular and Tissue Response to Injury.
- Acute Inflammation.
- Chronic Inflammation.
- Mediators of Immunity.
• The Immune Response in Disease.
• Haemostasis and Thrombosis.
• Wound Healing, Tissue Renewal and Repair.
• Diseases of the Blood and Bleeding Disorders (including General features of anaemias; neutropenia; lymphomas; leukaemia's).
• Overview of Cardiovascular Disease (including Atherosclerosis, Ischaemic heart disease; valvular heart disease including infective endocarditis).
• Overview of Respiratory and Liver Disease (including Asthma; pneumonia and lung abscess; bronchiectasis; tuberculosis; bronchial carcinoma, Jaundice; hepatic failure; viral hepatitis; cirrhosis).
• Endocrine Disorders.
• Neoplasia (including properties of benign and malignant tumours; nomenclature; carcinogenesis and oral squamous cell carcinoma).

**Suggested Reading List**

(Updated April 2017)

1. The course notes: *Lecture Notes in Pathology, by Dr Suma Sukumar, Dr Ruta Gupta and A/Prof Norman Firth*, published by the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons, 2017.


NB: No single textbook of Pathology provides ideal coverage at appropriate depth for use by candidates. This text is perhaps the best available compromise. Candidates are advised to study Chapters 2-6, 10-13, 16 and 20 inclusive of the book in depth, to gain an overall perspective of processes in Pathology. However, portions of "Basic Pathology" are beyond the scope of the examination requirements.
A knowledge and understanding of human physiology above the levels expected of an undergraduate dentistry student is required. During study, particular emphasis should be placed on understanding the physiological concepts and principles that are especially relevant to dentistry. A detailed understanding of less dentally-relevant topics, such as the special senses or reproductive physiology, is not expected.

Candidates will be expected to be able to relate their knowledge of fundamental mechanisms of Physiology to clinical situations concerned with the care of their patients, not only to basic diagnosis and treatment, but also to management of dental patients who have pre-existing general medical conditions, or who experience medical problems while undergoing dental treatment.

Areas of special emphasis include:

- physiological control systems, including the autonomic nervous system and the endocrine system
- homeostasis and the body's response to "stress"
- sensory physiology with an emphasis on nociception and pain perception
- muscle physiology, particularly as it relates to mastication
- saliva and salivation
- autonomic physiology and pharmacology
- respiratory physiology
- cardiovascular physiology and body fluid balance
- haemorrhage and shock
- physiological principles of drug action, particularly as they relate to analgesia and local anaesthesia.

**Suggested Reading List**

(Updated March 2017)

Candidates are advised to use current (or very recent) editions of textbooks of Physiology and Pharmacology suitable for dental undergraduate students in Australia. Study should be directed towards gaining an understanding of the basic principles and concepts of Physiology and their application to situations that are relevant to the practice of dentistry.

A recent text of general physiology is essential.

1. **Principal text:** *Miles TS, Nauntofte B, Svensson P. Clinical Oral Physiology, Copenhagen, Quintessence, 2004.*

2. **Recommended texts:**
3. Recommended text for management of medical emergencies:

4. Useful reference books:
      Accessible also from Authors Online at www.racds.org
Prizes

Commendations

- Candidates who pass all subjects in one examination diet and achieve over 70% in at least four subjects will receive a Letter of Commendation from the Registrar in General Dental Practice.

- Candidates who pass all subjects in one examination diet and achieve over 80% in at least four subjects will receive a Letter of Commendation with Distinction from the Registrar in General Dental Practice.

- Candidates who achieve the highest mark in each subject will receive a congratulatory letter from the Registrar in General Dental Practice.

- The candidate who passes all six subjects and achieves the highest overall aggregate mark will be awarded the F.G. Christensen Memorial Prize.

F.G. Christensen Prize

Frederich George Christensen served the College in the formative years as a Councillor, lecturer, examiner and Chairman of the Queensland Regional Committee. He found in the College an admirable vehicle for using his talents in helping energetic and enthusiastic practitioners to achieve the status of Fellowship in the College. It was not surprising that his death in 1969 did not mean an end to his endeavours, for he ensured that a tangible expression of his interests should persist in the form of a Prize for the successful candidate with the highest marks with outstanding proficiency at the Primary Examination held by the College. The examination is of a high standard and has achieved an international reputation.

The F.G. Christensen Prize is offered to the candidate with the highest marks at the Primary Examination. The prize consists of a Medal and a monetary award of AU$500.

Resources

Orientation Course

This course is highly recommended for those candidates enrolled in or wanting to complete the Primary Examination. This two-week course, run in July, comprises approximately 60 hours of lectures in the six basic sciences of;

- Anatomy
- Cell Biology and Biochemistry
- Histology
- Microbiology
- Pathology
- Physiology

With additional lectures in Pharmacology, it is a highly intensive preparation course designed to provide candidates with valuable knowledge and insight into the Primary Examination and equip them for success. Examiners in the Primary Examination will be lecturing and
providing the resource materials. Candidates who attend the Orientation Course will be awarded CPD (60 hours) upon completion.

**Learning Management System (LMS)**

Candidates will have access to various resources, modules, presentations, forum groups, documents and past exam papers on the LMS.

**Regional Committee Candidate Advisors**

To ensure that Fellows, Members and those enrolled in any of the College programs have a local point of contact, the RACDS is organised into Regional Committees. These are College Fellows who can be contacted by candidates for guidance and support. In some locations, preparation programs are offered by the College Regional Committee. This includes study days, tutorials, development and management of study groups and general advice and exam tips. Regional Committee Candidate Advisors can be contacted via the website for each region.

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**IN SUMMARY**

Enrol in and attend the Orientation Course (optional)

- Enrol for the Primary Examination
- Complete written paper components
- Complete *viva voce* components
- Receive results
Overview

The Final Examination is an assessment of clinical and theoretical knowledge in an experiential context, over a broad base of general dental practice. The level of expectation is specifically set at the experienced general practitioner level and not the specialist level. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a greater breadth of knowledge about general dental practice and a greater depth of knowledge about specialist dental practice than the average general dental practitioner.

The focus is on the candidate’s ability to:

- make an informed clinical assessment and analysis
- consider a diagnosis with evidence of application of diagnostic or surgical sieves and selection of appropriate treatment modalities
- demonstrate the ability to justify the management options with reference to current literature and evidence-based practice.

The College is dedicated to an examination process in which candidates are able to approach the Final Examination from all types of practice or institutional tenure, irrespective of geographic locations. Whilst the examination is established as a fair and equitable assessment of dentists from a variety of environments, it is a rigorous process and candidates must accept a responsibility to prepare appropriately.

The Fellowship qualification of the College represents a level of personal and professional achievement. The maintenance and perpetuity of these standards are the responsibility of examiners and candidates alike.
Examination Format

The Final Examination consists of two sections:

**Section 1: General Dentistry**

- Written paper of three (3) hours duration
- *viva voce* examination of 20 minutes’ duration

**Section 2: Elective**

Candidates select one of the following three sections:

I. Oral Medicine, Oral Surgery, Oral Pathology
II. Restorative Dentistry and Periodontics
III. Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics

Candidates will complete:

- Written paper of three (3) hours’ duration
- Case presentation (30 minute review, 20 minute presentation)
- *viva voce* examination of 25 minutes’ duration

Examination Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1: Written papers</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Examiners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>1 x 3-hour paper</td>
<td>Double-marked</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 2: Written papers</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Examiners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>1 x 3-hour paper</td>
<td>Double-marked</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 3: <em>viva voce</em> &amp; case presentations</th>
<th>Specifics</th>
<th>Examiners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>1 x 20min <em>viva voce</em></td>
<td>2 examiners per <em>viva voce</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elective

(1 x 30min review period +
1 x 20min presentation)
1 x 25min *viva voce*
Marking

Written: The General and Elective papers are prepared by appropriately qualified College examiners, along with a marking guideline. The papers and marking template are reviewed by the Registrar in General Dental Practice.

Papers are marked according to the following scale:
- 8 - Outstanding
- 7 – Significantly above pass
- 6 – Clear pass
- 5 – Conceded pass
- 4 – Poor
- 3 – Absolute failure

**Viva voce & case presentation:** Questions are based on the subject material and are not pre-prescribed. Both the viva voce and the case presentation are stand-alone components and marking is not biased by the outcome of the written examination. Examinations are conducted by two College-appointed examiners. An observer may also be present. Marks are agreed upon according to the above scale.

Overall Marks

- The marks awarded to each candidate are presented at the examiners’ meeting which is held at the conclusion of the examination process. The examiners’ meeting is attended by examiners and College staff, and is chaired by the Registrar. The final result is authorised by the Registrar.

- In the General section a final mark will be awarded from 6-16, which is a compilation of the marks from the written paper and the **viva voce**. A minimum final mark of 12 is required for a pass.

- In the Elective section a final mark will be awarded from 9-24, which is a compilation of the marks from the written paper, the case presentation and the **viva voce**. A minimum final mark of 18 is required for a pass.

- Where the overall mark for either the General or Elective section indicates a borderline result, a high mark in the respective **viva voce** may allow an overall pass to be awarded for that section. A low mark in the respective **viva voce** will not result in the overall mark being lowered for borderline case.

- Candidates are required to pass both the General and Elective sections in order to pass the examination.

- A candidate who is successful in the General or Elective section only will be granted credit for that section. The candidate may then present at a later examination for the section which they have failed. This credit is valid for a
maximum period of three years, following which the candidate will be required to present for the full examination (both General and Elective sections).

Results

- The result of the examination is emailed to candidates on the date advised prior to the examination. The results are also uploaded onto the College website, listed by candidate number only on the exam results release date.

- Candidates are advised of a pass or fail grade only in each section. Candidates do not receive a breakdown of their marks.

- Candidates will receive a copy of the pass or fail mark via a formal letter which is emailed to them on the exam result release date.

- A candidate who is unsuccessful in any subject will receive written feedback from the Registrar within two months following all examiner meetings. Feedback will be qualitative only and will not contain marks awarded for specific questions or components.

- Examination results and any feedback on the examination from examiners including a copy of the failed candidate report will be forwarded to the relevant Board of Studies for noting.

- Candidates may request reconsideration, review and finally appeal of any examination result if they believe they have grounds under the College’s Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy (see Policies section on RACDS website).

- Candidates who pass the Final Examination will be required to complete an Admission to Fellowship form, to be sent back to the College. All new Fellows will be accepted into the College at the next available Council meeting. Once they have been accepted, candidates will be sent a copy of their Testamur indicating their Fellowship status.

Subjects and Curriculum Frameworks

A breakdown of expected knowledge and suggested reading lists for each subject in the Final Examination follows.
It is assumed that preventive dentistry will be a basic principle in all sections of the examination.

Candidates are required to:

- have a broad understanding and be able to articulate the relationship of general and oral health including common risks
- critically discuss and cite current literature. For example, when answering questions, the position should be supported by reference to the current literature
- identify and evaluate a range of conditions, develop a differential diagnosis, and formulate a treatment plan. When the patient cannot be managed in the general practice setting, the candidate should be aware of other investigations and current treatment modalities that can be provided by specialists. This would include gaining an understanding of and being able to discuss areas of practice the dentist does not participate in directly
- be able to apply the basic sciences current literature to clinical care
- have knowledge of the following:
  - management of medical emergencies in dental practice
  - infection Control Protocols including environmental protection legislation relevant to the candidate’s national and regional authorities
  - pharmacology, therapeutics and dental biomaterials
  - radiology, radiography and its interpretation
  - ethics, jurisprudence and dental informatics
  - responsibilities of the dental surgeon as a health care professional in the community
  - management of the anxious patient.

The reading requirements for General dentistry are broad and should be regarded as including consultation with knowledgeable colleagues and academics. This should cover contemporary knowledge and evidence in all areas seen in general practice dentistry. This reading and consultation with colleagues and academics should provide sufficient depth of understanding to allow a balanced discussion and active participation in decision making.

The major dental journals content should be reviewed. Sources such as; ADA EBD site, Scottish dental Clinical effectiveness programme, the Evidence based dental Journals as well as the American Academy of periodontics, the American Academy of paediatric dentistry and the International Association of dental traumatology.
Topics examined:

- various branches of Oral medicine, Oral Surgery and Oral Pathology
- pharmacology and therapeutics as applied to Oral Medicine and Oral Surgery
- principles, techniques and drugs used in local anesthesia
- techniques, administration and properties of drugs used in general anesthesia
- principles of the surgical removal of teeth and retained roots, surgical management of cysts, periapical infections, and fractures of the jaws
- common oral tumors
- pre-prosthetic surgery.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate advanced knowledge of:

- diagnosis of lesions of the hard and soft tissues of the oral cavity
- biopsy techniques
- common oral manifestations of systemic diseases
- common disorders of the dentition.

Candidates will not be required to demonstrate a detailed knowledge of operative techniques of major oral surgery, treatment of oral malignancies, or extra oral operations.

Suggested Reading:

1. Journal of Oral Pathology & Medicine and Oral Diseases
2. Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology and Endodontics
6. Cawson and Odell “Essentials of Oral Pathology and Medicine”
Candidates will be expected to demonstrate advanced knowledge and skill in the areas below, particularly in relation to preventive measures and disease management, diagnosis, comprehensive and staged treatment planning, and details of the treatment required for the preservation of teeth:

- the epidemiology and disease processes of dental caries, oral and Periodontal diseases; diet and nutrition and concepts of disease prevention
- identification and management of dental caries and Periodontal diseases within the context of overall patient care as it applies to from a young adult through to the elderly patient
- diagnosis and integrated treatment planning for individuals and communities
- management of dental caries at its early stage through to surgical management of cavitated lesions
- prosthodontics including single unit indirect restorations, fixed and removable, complete denture treatment and use of implants
- understand current evidence in relation to biomaterial selection and how it may influence the success and longevity of restorations/prostheses
- endodontics and periodontics in relation to restorative treatment
- treatment planning for complex restorative cases, including the integration of orthodontic, periodontic and oral surgical pre-treatment procedures
- the influence on occlusion on comprehensive management of patients including occlusal splint therapies
- the conservative treatment of temporomandibular joint problems.

**Suggested Reading**

1. *Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry*
2. *Journal of Gerodontology*
3. *Dental Update*
4. *Australian Dental Journal*
6. *Journal of Clinical Periodontology*
8. *Current clinical guidelines.*
9. *Journal of the American Dental Association*
Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics covers the following topics in relation to individuals from birth to the end of adolescence:

- growth and development of the head, face and oral cavity
- common medical conditions
- childhood psychomotor and psychosocial development and how it may influence behaviour especially in the dental clinic environment
- diet and nutrition and its relation to the oral cavity
- dental caries, oral and periodontal diseases
- oral manifestations of systemic diseases
- diagnosis, treatment planning and management
- trauma to the alveolus, primary and permanent dentitions
- anomalies of the primary and permanent dentitions
- diagnosis and treatment planning of malocclusions and oral habits that are amenable to removable appliance or simple fixed appliance treatment
- recognition of complex malocclusions and the need for specialist referral.

Suggested Reading

Text Books:

Text books serve to indicate the scope of Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics and the traditional approach to management. However, the candidate is reminded of the need to read the current scientific literature in order to gain a contemporaneous knowledge of the various topics and to be able to make appropriate references to the literature in their examination answers.


Journals:

1. Pediatric Dentistry
2. International Journal of Paediatric Dentistry
3. Clinical Pediatric Dentistry
4. European Archives of Paediatric Dentistry
5. Australian Orthodontic Journal
6. European Journal of Orthodontics
7. The Angle Orthodontist
Prizes

Kenneth J. G. Sutherland Prize

Professor Kenneth Sutherland, AM, who endowed the Kenneth J.G. Sutherland Award, considered the College more than just an examining body. He believed the College represented a pathway and incentive to encourage a dentist in achieving the goal of excellence in clinical practice and knowledge.

The Kenneth J.G. Sutherland Award is awarded to the candidate who gains the highest marks in general dentistry. The prize is a College Medal and AU$500.

Resources and Supporting Activities

Final Examination Workshop

A three-day workshop which provides candidates with the opportunity to participate in interactive sessions which have been modelled on the format of the Final Examination. The focus of the examiner facilitated sessions is case diagnosis, analysis and treatment planning with an emphasis on peer interaction, problem solving and communication skills. The principle aim of the workshop is to assist candidates in understanding what they need to do to prepare for the Final Examination. It is modelled on developing some core skills necessary for the exam and giving an insight into the requirements and processes of the exam. The workshop also includes a half day of evidence based practice guidelines. This includes techniques and information to assist candidates to find, evaluate cite and translate that information into their clinical practice. All contributing lecturers are also examiners for the Final Examination, and will be providing valuable insight into how to achieve the best results. Candidates will gain CPD points for their attendance.

Web-Based Education

The Web Based Education Program is run over four months in the lead up to the exam. The course has been designed to enhance the candidate’s examination and viva voce technique and providing them with a structured format for the examination. The course is made up of four modules completed online on a time-release program. Candidates are required to submit answers to a number of case studies for which they are then provided feedback by examiners. The Web Based Education Program will be available as a package on the RACDS Learning Management System (LMS). On the date of release for Block 1, candidates will be sent an invitation to sign up to the LMS. Once enrolled on the LMS, candidates will be able to enrol in the Web Based Education Program and begin reviewing the content. Candidates can choose to use this as a means to assist in preparing topic areas for the examination or to review and have feedback provided in how they present that information in an examination format. Candidates receive CPD points for their participation.
Web Based Education - Course Outline

- Course 1 is an introductory course and details on how the exams are to be answered.
- Course 2 covers the general exam and structure/diagnosis/clinical application.
- Course 3 covers how to complete the *viva voce* portion of the exam.
- Course 4 tests candidates on their chosen elective.

Learning Management System (LMS)

Candidates will have access to various resources, modules, presentations, forum groups, documents and past exam papers on their tailored LMS homepage.

Regional Committee Candidate Advisors

To ensure that Fellows, Members and those enrolled in any of the College programs have a local point of contact, the RACDS is organised into Regional Committees. They are College Fellows who can be contacted by candidates for guidance and support. In some locations, preparation programs are offered by the College Regional Committee. This includes study days, tutorials, development and management of study groups and general advice and exam tips. Regional Committee Candidate Advisors can be contacted via the website for each region.

IN SUMMARY

Enrol in and attend the Final Exam Workshop (FEW) (optional)

Enrol in the Web-Based Education Program (optional)

Enrol for the Final Examination

Complete written paper components

Complete *viva voce* components

Receive results
MRACDS(GDP) ASSESSMENT POLICY

2017 - 2019
**Document Information**

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<th>Amended Policy</th>
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<td>Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy</td>
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<td>Special Consideration in Assessment Policy</td>
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1. **Purpose and scope**

This Policy prescribes the process of submission and marking of MRACDS Short Answer Question (SAQs), Case Reports and undertaking the *viva voce* examination. The Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons requires candidates in the MRACDS(GDP) Program to complete assessments and the *viva voce* examination within the designated scheduled time. These procedures and policies apply to candidates undertaking written assessments, case reports and the *viva voce* examination in the MRACDS(GDP) Program.

If a candidate has entered into an assessment process and believes their performance is likely to be seriously affected by illness or personal circumstances they should consult the Special Consideration in Assessment Policy.

2. **Vision**

To be a respected international leader in the provision of postgraduate dental education and professional development.

3. **Mission**

To promote the study of the science and art of dentistry; to encourage research in clinical science and the practice of dentistry. The RACDS exists to promote excellence in the provision of dental education, examination and professional development in Australia, New Zealand and Asia.

4. **Values**

In the delivery of our mission the RACDS will demonstrate:

- Patient orientation - understanding and reflecting the views of Members, Fellows and those undertaking College examination and working with them to achieve the best outcome for patients.
- Quality improvement - performing to and upholding high standards.
- Fiscal responsibility and efficiency using the resources of the College prudently.
- Integrity, honesty and propriety - upholding professional and ethical values

5. **Background**

The MRACDS(GDP) program is a two year modular based educational learning program. Candidates may take up to three years to complete the MRACDS(GDP) Program. Candidates must apply for an extension after two years and pay a third year fee.

Each MRACDS(GDP) candidate is required to satisfactorily complete nine modules (six core and three elective) with at least 120 hours of relevant CPD activities over a two year period.

Assessment is conducted by the College and consists of the following components:

- Eight open book Short Answer Questions (SAQs) for the core modules.
- One case report per elective module, three in total, to be submitted no later than three months prior to the *viva voce* examination for which the candidate intends to present.
- A thirty minute face-to-face *viva voce* examination prior to completion of the MRACDS(GDP) Program.
6. Policy statement

1. Assessments

Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they have adequate access to the required tools to complete assessments. These tools include but may not be limited to: a computer with Microsoft Office (or equivalent) applications, internet connection, and email capability. Failure to have access to these tools does not constitute grounds for special consideration.

1.1. Core Modules – Short Answer Questions
Each of the six compulsory core modules is assessed by a set of eight open book Short Answer Questions (SAQs). For more information regarding the SAQs please see the Handbook for Membership and Fellowship in General Dental Practice.

There are three scheduled assessment rounds per calendar year. Candidates must enrol for each module within the nominated assessment round, as per the dates set out on the RACDS website (see 2: Applying for SAQ Assessment).

1.2. Elective Modules – Case Reports:
Candidates must choose three out of the six elective modules. Each module is completed through submission of a case report in the chosen elective topic. For more information please see the Handbook for Membership and Fellowship in General Dental Practice.

Case reports may be submitted at any point throughout the program provided that they are submitted at least three months prior to enrolment for the viva voce.

1.3. Viva voce Examination
Once all core and three elective modules are successfully completed candidates are eligible to enrol for the viva voce examination. The viva voce is the final examination in the program, and successful completion enables eligibility for Admission to Membership (MRACDS(GDP)). The aim of the viva voce examination is for candidates to demonstrate their understanding of a case or cases describing a clinical scenario. The candidate is expected to discuss various aspects of the case with the examiners.

CORE MODULES – Short Answer Questions (SAQs)

2. Applying for SAQ assessment

The College sends regular communication to MRACDS(GDP) candidates regarding the annual assessment round schedule. These dates are also available on the College website.

2.1. SAQ assessment rounds are conducted three times a year. Each assessment round runs across five consecutive weekends.

2.2. Candidates are required to submit an Assessment Application Form (MGDP02) one month prior to an assessment round to nominate the date/s and module/s they wish to enrol for.

2.3. Candidates may be asked to resubmit an SAQ assessment and should be available to do so within seven weeks of undertaking an assessment.

2.4. Candidates may enrol for a maximum of one module per weekend for each assessment round.

2.5. Candidates are not required to participate in every assessment round but are responsible for planning their participation to ensure completion of all modules within two years.

2.6. Following receipt of the Assessment Application Form candidates receive a confirmation email from the College providing a summary of the modules for which they have been enrolled in the assessment round.
2.7. Candidates may withdraw from a nominated SAQ assessment at any time by submitting notice in writing, provided they have not yet been sent the assessment questions.

3. Undertaking SAQ assessment

3.1. Candidates are emailed the eight SAQs for the nominated module by 5:00 pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) or Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) on the Friday of each nominated assessment weekend and responses must be submitted within 48 hours, i.e. no later than 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the Sunday of that weekend.

3.2. SAQ responses should be submitted as a PDF document with the SAQ topic clearly stated in the title of the document.

3.3. Candidates should use their ID numbers only. Candidate names are not to be included in submissions.

3.4. When preparing for SAQ assessments, candidates should refer to the MRACDS(GDP) Notes for Candidates – Short Answer Questions document.

3.5. An SAQ cover sheet for assessments can be accessed on the Learning Management System (LMS) and candidates are encouraged to download and use this for each SAQ submission.

4. Failure to submit SAQ assessment responses on time

4.1. Candidates who do not submit their assessment responses by 5:00pm AEST/AEDT on the Sunday following receipt of the assessment will receive an automatic fail for the assessment and be required to repeat that module.

4.2. Failure to submit any responses to an SAQ assessment after the questions have been sent to a candidate constitutes a failure of the assessment.

4.3. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure they are aware of any time zone differences when receiving their SAQ assessment and submitting their assessment responses, and that all references to timings use Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) or Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT).

4.4. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure they have access to email and internet to allow submission of assessment responses on time.

4.5. If a candidate has entered into an assessment round and believes their performance or their ability to submit the assessment on time to be seriously affected by illness or personal circumstances, they should notify the College immediately and should consult the Special Consideration in Assessment Policy.

5. Marking and results

5.1. Candidates will receive the result of their assessment within six weeks of submission.

5.2. Questions are marked on a pass/fail basis. To obtain a pass in an SAQ module a candidate must pass all eight questions.

5.3. Candidates who do not pass up to two questions in a SAQ module will be given the opportunity to resubmit answers to those questions (see 6: Resubmission).

5.4. Candidates who are unsuccessful in a SAQ module will receive feedback in writing within six weeks of the assessment weekend.

5.5. Failed candidates are required to re-sit that module’s assessment and must pay a repeat module fee on reattempting that module.

5.6. All resubmissions and failures are reviewed by the Examinations Committee and Registrar/Assistant Registrar.
6. **Resubmission**

6.1. Candidates who are requested to resubmit assessments are provided with brief constructive comments regarding the level of changes that are required to meet the assessment pass mark.

6.2. A candidate must resubmit their SAQ assessment within seven days of receipt of the notification from the College. Resubmissions must be received by 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the seventh day following notification.

6.3. Candidates who do not resubmit by 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the nominated day will receive an automatic fail for the assessment and be required to repeat that module.

6.4. Candidates will be advised of the result of their resubmission within one to six weeks of resubmission. Candidates may need to factor this in when considering enrolment for additional modules.

6.5. Failure of the resubmission results in failure of the module. The candidate must pass all resubmitted questions to pass the module.

6.6. Where resubmission overlaps with a new assessment module the candidate is encouraged to contact the College to discuss the upcoming assessment.

6.7. If a candidate has resubmitted an assessment and believes their performance or their ability to resubmit the assessment on time to be seriously affected by illness or personal circumstances, they should consult the Special Consideration in Assessment Policy.

6.8. Candidates are advised and encouraged to contact a mentor if they wish to receive further advice regarding resubmission. If a candidate’s mentor is not available, the College will provide another mentor for this purpose. A candidate being unable to contact their own mentor is not grounds for extension for resubmission.

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**ELECTIVE MODULES – Case Reports**

7. **Applying for case report assessment**

Candidates may submit case reports at any time during their program.

7.1. Candidates must choose case report topics from the electives offered in the program. A case report submitted under a topic not included in the program will not be accepted or marked. Candidates should ensure that the submitted case is a reflection of the elective subject chosen.

7.2. Case reports should be submitted as a PDF document and the subject of the elective should be clearly stated in the title of the document.

7.3. Candidates should use their ID numbers only. Candidate and patient names should not be included in reports. Correspondence including referral letters and specialist reports should also be de-identified – practice logos/letterheads and names of specialists should be removed.

7.4. Case reports should reflect a completed treatment. If a case has not been completed then the report will be returned to the candidate unmarked.

7.5. Candidates may be asked to resubmit an assessment and should be available to do so within eight weeks of submitting a case report.

8. **Undertaking case report assessment**

8.1. Candidates can submit case reports at any time of the year over the course of the program duration however case reports must be submitted a minimum of three months prior to enrolling for the *viva voce* examination.

8.2. When submitting a case report candidates should refer to the MRACDS(GDP) Notes for Candidates - Case Reports document.
9. Failure to submit Case Reports on time

9.1. Candidates must submit case reports three months prior to enrolling for the viva voce.

9.2. It is a candidate’s responsibility to ensure that they are aware of their expected completion dates and viva voce eligibility timeframes.

9.3. If a candidate is unable to submit case reports within the nominated two year timeframe, they must apply for an extension of the MRACDS(GDP) Program.

10. Marking and results

10.1. Candidates will receive the result of their assessment within six weeks of submission.

10.2. Case Reports are marked on a pass/fail basis however in some instances a resubmission may be allowed (see 11: Resubmission).

10.3. Candidates who are unsuccessful in a case report module will receive feedback in writing within six weeks of submission of the assessment. Feedback will include brief constructive comments on their performance.

10.4. Failed candidates are required to re-sit the elective module by submitting a new case report and must pay a repeat module fee on reattempting that module.

10.5. All resubmissions and failures are reviewed by the Examinations Committee and Registrar/Assistant Registrar.

11. Resubmission

11.1. Candidates who are requested to resubmit case reports are provided with brief constructive comments regarding the level of changes that are required to meet the assessment pass mark.

11.2. A candidate must resubmit their case report within two weeks of receipt of the notification from the College. Resubmissions must be received by 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the fourteenth day following notification.

11.3. Candidates who do not resubmit by 5:00 pm AEST/AEDT on the nominated day will receive an automatic fail for the reassessment and will be required to repeat that module and pay the associated repeat module fee.

11.4. Candidates will be advised of the result of their resubmission within one to six weeks of resubmission. Candidates may need to factor this in when considering enrolling for additional assessment rounds or the viva voce examination.

11.5. Failure of the resubmission results in failure of the module. The candidate must pass the case report to pass the module.

11.6. Where resubmission overlaps with a new assessment module the candidate is encouraged to contact the College to discuss the upcoming assessment.

11.7. Where resubmission overlaps with viva voce enrolment, the candidate is advised to contact the College to discuss the options available.

11.8. If a candidate has resubmitted an assessment and believes their performance or their ability to resubmit the assessment on time to be seriously affected by illness or personal circumstances, they should consult the Special Consideration in Assessment Policy.

11.9. Candidates are advised and encouraged to contact a mentor if they wish to receive further advice regarding resubmission. If a candidate’s mentor is not available, the College will provide another mentor for this purpose. A candidate being unable to contact their own mentor is not grounds for extension for resubmission.
12. Unsuccessful case reports

12.1. An unsuccessful case report may fall into either of two categories:

I. Marginal – The case is deemed appropriate but the report falls short of the standard required and the candidate is given an opportunity to redeem the report. In this case, the candidate should read through the examiner’s feedback and the report very carefully to identify where the problems have occurred and rectify them before resubmission. A mentor should be approached to assist candidates in reviewing the case report.

II(a). Failed - The case is deemed appropriate but the report is failed. The case may be re-used after an extensive re-write of the report.

II(b). Failed (new case required) - Either the case is deemed unsuitable for an MRACDS(GDP) case presentation (this may be because the case was too simple or did not meet the category selected), or, the case itself may be suitable but the course of treatment provided deemed inappropriate and the report not considered to be redeemable. In these instances, the case report must be set aside and a new case needs to be prepared for assessment.

VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION

13. Applying for the viva voce Examination

13.1. Once candidates have passed all core and elective modules they are eligible to present for the viva voce Examination.

13.2. The viva voce is held on three occasions each year or as determined by the Board of Studies MRACDS(GDP).

13.3. A candidate must enrol for the viva voce Examination. It is a candidate’s responsibility to ensure that they have completed all assessments prior to enrolling for the viva voce Examination.

13.4. Candidates enrolled for the viva voce examination will receive a candidate memo containing the timetable and relevant information. This will be available to candidates two to four weeks prior to the viva voce.

13.5. Candidates should note that if fewer than three candidates have enrolled to present for the viva voce Examination, it may be postponed or cancelled and enrollment fees refunded.

14. Undertaking the viva voce Examination

14.1. The viva voce Examination will be conducted by two examiners nominated by the Chair of the MRACDS(GDP) Examinations Committee for General Dental Practice.

14.2. Prior to the commencement of the viva voce Examination, the candidate will be allocated ten (10) minutes to peruse the provided case. If a second case is used, additional perusal time will be allocated.

14.3. The viva voce is of thirty (30) minutes duration and comprises:
   a) assessment and discussion of the case/s
   b) assessment of the candidate’s knowledge of general practice clinical dentistry

14.4. Candidates may take notes during the perusal time and these may be taken into the examination room. Any notes taken must not be removed from the examination room at the completion of the viva voce examination.

14.5. Candidates should be aware that an observer may be present during the viva voce Examination. The purpose of the observer is to oversee the examination process to ensure fair and consistent processes are being upheld. Observers will not comment on a candidate’s performance during the examination and do not participate in assessment. (Refer to the RACDS Observer Policy which can be found on the website at www.racds.org)
15. Marking and results

15.1. The examination is marked on a pass/fail basis.

15.2. A candidate who does not pass will receive written feedback within three weeks.

15.3. A candidate who fails the *viva voce* Examination must pay a repeat examination fee to re-sit the *viva voce*.

15.4. Failure to attend the *viva voce* examination constitutes a failure unless a successful application is made under the *Special Consideration in Assessment Policy*.

15.5. Candidates are permitted a maximum of three attempts at the *viva voce* Examination.

15.6. All unsuccessful *viva* results are reviewed by the Examinations Committee and Registrar/Assistant Registrar.

15.7. If a candidate does not pass their final *viva voce* Examination, they are expected to sit the next scheduled *viva voce*.

15.8. Candidates may request reconsideration, review and finally appeal of any examination result if they believe they have grounds under the *Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy*.

16. Submission of CPD

16.1. Candidates must satisfactorily complete nine modules with at least 120 hours of relevant courses over a two year period.

16.2. Candidates must complete at least six hours of relevant CPD content per module. It is expected that candidates complete twelve hours relevant CPD content per module.

16.3. CPD activities may be completed at any time over the course of the program.

16.4. Candidates should submit a logbook of completed CPD at the time of enrolling for the *viva voce* examination.

16.5. If a candidate has not accrued the required CPD, Admission to Membership will be postponed until the required completed CPD logbook can be submitted.

17. Three strikes

In the event of a failure in any one of the SAQ Modules, or Case Reports, a candidate may be deemed eligible to re-sit no more than two times (three submissions in total). In the event that a candidate does not pass on their third attempt, the candidate may be removed from the MRACDS(GDP) Program. This decision will be at the discretion of the Board of Studies MRACDS(GDP) in consultation with the Registrar/Assistant Registrar.

18. Appeals

Decisions relating to assessment outcomes may be appealed in accordance with the RACDS Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy accessible on the College’s website [www.racds.org](http://www.racds.org)

19. Application to current candidates

This policy will apply to all candidates enrolled in the MRACDS(GDP) Program at the time of approval of this policy (refer to policy document information) regardless of their current history of assessments.