2015 Queensland Rural Advanced Skills Training (AST) Online Recruitment Process for Anaesthetics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Surgery

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is the Rural Generalist Pathway coordinating the recruitment and selection process for Advanced Skills Training positions across regional Queensland?
A: In 2011 the Rural Generalist Pathway was allocated funding to develop a state-wide recruitment and selection process into Advanced Skills Training. This process was established to ensure fair, equitable and open merit selection in line with Queensland Health’s recruitment and selection policy. The Rural Generalist Pathway, in conjunction with advanced skills training consultative committees, relevant Colleges and Regional Training Providers coordinate placement of trainees into Advanced Skills Training posts in the disciplines of Anaesthetics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Surgery annually.

Q: What are the benefits of the RGP’s centralised state-wide recruitment and selection process?
A: The key benefits to trainees are as follows:
   - A fair, equitable and open merit recruitment and selection process;
   - Safety for trainees i.e. to ensure trainees are not being pressured into Advanced Skills Training too early in their career;
   - Maximise training opportunities – to ensure trainees are aligning Advanced Skills Training with future career plans;
   - A supported process and environment – individual career planning and advice is provided on all levels.

Q: How does the process work?
A: Please refer to the flowchart located in the Advanced Skills Training section of the Rural Generalist Pathway website.

Q: How do I apply for a Rural Advanced Skills Training position in a discipline other than Anaesthetics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology or Surgery?
A: Trainees will be required to enter the Resident Medical Officers (RMO) Campaign and follow the usual process including speaking with the relevant Directors of Medical Services and Directors of specialty departments at training hospitals. Additionally, trainees should be discussing their training options with their Regional Training Provider and Director of Rural Generalist Training.
Q: If I am unsuccessful in securing a Rural Advanced Skills Training position in my preferred discipline and/or location what are my options?
A: Placements occur via meritorious ranking of applicants. If you are unable to secure your first preferred location, a member of the RGP team will contact you to discuss your options.

Q: If I am unsuccessful through the Advanced Skills Training application and/or interview process what are my options?
A: If you are unsuccessful in securing an AST post through the RGP centralised process you may enter the main RMO Campaign which opens in mid June to secure an alternate position. Other AST disciplines which Queensland Health Rural Generalist Trainees are able to train towards include emergency medicine, indigenous health, paediatrics, internal medicine, and mental health.
AST curriculum statements are available at the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) websites:

RACGP  http://www.racgp.org.au/education/rural-programs/advanced-skills/

Q: Am I able to speak with the relevant Director/s of Specialty Departments across regional Queensland about the position/s on offer for Advanced Skills Training?
A: Yes, trainees are encouraged to do so.

Q: What role does my Regional Training Provider have in this process?
A: Trainees must notify their Regional Training Provider (RTP) of their training intentions well in advance so that RTPs can assist in confirming that the position you wish to apply for is appropriately accredited. It is the responsibility of the candidate to be in close communication with department directors, the RGP and RTPs to assist in a smooth transition to placement. This could be by indicating your intention to undertake AST to your RTP and the RGP as soon as possible. Doctors with Vocational Registration should ensure the post they are applying for is accredited by contacting ACRRM or RACGP.

Q: Am I required to join Australian General Practice Training (AGPT) / the Remote Vocational Training Scheme (RVTS)?
A: Yes, this must be done prior to the end of PGY2. It is expected that you will have successfully secured an AGPT / RVTS training position prior to applying for an AST position. The exception to this is those doctors with Vocational Registration.

Q: Can I apply for an Advanced Skills Training position if I am not a Rural Generalist Trainee?
A: Yes, Rural Generalist Trainees, non Rural Generalist Trainees, Vocationally Registered doctors and those wishing to undertake a second Advanced Skill are able to enter this process through the same application and interview process.
Q: At what stage in my career should I apply for an Advanced Skills Training position?
A: Usually trainees on the Rural Generalist Pathway would enter Advanced Skills Training in postgraduate year three (PGY3) however this is dependent upon a range of factors for each individual, including ‘readiness’. This should be discussed in further detail with a Director of Rural Generalist Training and your Regional Training Provider.

Q: How do I decide on which discipline to select and the location?
A: A fair degree of consideration should be given to the discipline and location for Advanced Skills Training. Items to research and seek advice on include the particular discipline or skill mix desired at the hospital/location in which you wish to undertake your vocational training. For example, if you have a particular discipline in mind you will need to research if the hospital/location you are tracking toward requires that advanced skill. There will be little use in obtaining an advanced skill in O&G if the hospital you are tracking towards isn’t a confining hospital. Similarly, if you are applying for Advanced Skills Training in Surgery and the hospital you are tracking towards doesn’t have an Anaesthetist on staff or an outreach service it would be difficult to maintain your skill level. Assistance in making your decision can be obtained from a Director of Rural Generalist Training and the Executive Director of Medical Services (EDMS) at the hospital you are tracking towards as well as your Regional Training Provider.

Q: Do I need to have obtained membership with General Practice Education and Training (GPET) to be considered for a post?
A: Successful application to GPET demonstrates commitment to GP Training (vocational training). This may be taken into consideration during the short listing process.

Q: What will assist me in making successful application for a rural AST post?
A: Posts are allocated on merit to doctors committed to providing Advanced Skills in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Anaesthesics and Surgery in rural areas.

- Rural Generalist Pathway (RGP) trainees with Rural Generalist Medicine Prevocational Certification who are training toward fellowship (ACRRM or RACGP + FARGP) demonstrate commitment.
- Non RGP candidates are also eligible to make application. Interviews will address rural practises. Successful GPET application demonstrates commitment to General Practice.
- Interstate applicants may be considered.
- Fellowshipped doctors are able to apply as they are already demonstrating commitment to rural practice.

Q: What is the duration of Advanced Skills Training?
A: Usually, training in O&G and anaesthetics will occur over a 12 month period. Surgery AST takes 24 months.
Q: Where can I undertake Advanced Skills Training and in what discipline?
A: For information on available Advanced Skills Training positions please go to: http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ruralgeneralist/content/AST_PHO.asp

Q: Who can I contact to ask further questions about the Advanced Skills Training placement process?
A: For more information, please call Suzanne Edmondson on 1800 680 291. You can also email your query to rural_generalist@health.qld.gov.au.