

## 2018 Queensland Advanced Skills Training (AST) Campaign for Anaesthetics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Surgery, Mental Health and Internal Medicine

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Q: Why is the Queensland Rural Generalist Pathway (QRGP) coordinating the recruitment and selection process for AST positions across regional Queensland?**

A: This process was established to ensure fair, equitable and open merit selection in line with Queensland Health's recruitment and selection policy. The QRGP, in conjunction with AST consultative committees, relevant Colleges and Regional Training Organisations (RTOs) coordinate the placement of trainees into AST posts in the disciplines of anaesthetics, obstetrics and gynaecology, internal medicine, mental health and surgery annually.

#### **Q: What are the benefits of the QRGP's centralised state-wide recruitment and selection process?**

A: The key benefits to applicants are as follows:

- A fair, equitable and open merit recruitment and selection process;
- Safety for trainees – to ensure trainees are suitably experienced and personally and professionally ready to progress to AST;
- Maximise training opportunities – to ensure trainees are aligning AST intentions with future career plans and community need;

#### **Q: How does the process work?**

A: Please refer to the flowchart located on the AST page of the Rural Generalist Pathway website.

#### **Q: How do I apply for an AST position in a discipline other than anaesthetics, obstetrics and gynaecology, internal medicine and mental health or surgery?**

A: Trainees will be required to enter the Resident Medical Officer (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 RTO and Director of Rural Generalist Training.

#### **Q: If I am unsuccessful in securing an AST position in my preferred discipline and/or location what are my options?**

A: Placements occur via the meritorious ranking of applicants. If you are unable to secure your first preferred location, a member of the QRGP team will contact you to discuss your options.

**Q: If I am unsuccessful through the AST application and/or interview process what are my options?**

A: If you are unsuccessful in securing an AST post through the QRGP centralised process you may enter the main RMO Campaign which opens in mid-June to make application for an alternate position.

Other AST disciplines which Rural Generalist trainees are able to train towards include emergency medicine, indigenous health and paediatrics.

**Q: How do I know what my AST will cover?**

A: AST curriculum statements are available from the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM) and Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) websites:

ACRRM [www.acrrm.org.au/advanced-specialised-training-curricula](http://www.acrrm.org.au/advanced-specialised-training-curricula)

RACGP <http://www.racgp.org.au/education/fellowship/ruraladvantage/essential-fargp-information/>

**Q: Am I able to speak with the relevant department directors across regional Queensland about the positions on offer for AST?**

A: Yes, trainees are encouraged to do so.

**Q: What role does my RTO have in this process?**

A: Applicants must notify their RTO of their training intentions well in advance so that RTOs can assist in confirming that the position you wish to apply for is appropriately accredited. It is the responsibility of the applicant to be in close communication with department directors, the QRGP and RTO to assist in a smooth transition to placement.

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) or the ACRRM Independent Pathway or RACGP Practice Eligible Pathway prior to application?**

A: It is beneficial for applicants to have successfully applied to AGPT / RVTS or a college led pathway prior to applying for an AST position. This helps to ensure that the position counts towards your training and demonstrates commitment to rural generalist training. We recognise that some trainees may not have applied at the time of AST application for various reasons; this will be discussed with applicants during the selection process.

If you are not enrolled with AGPT / RVTS or a college pathway at the time of commencing your AST you will need to ensure you thoroughly document your training experience for RPL purposes, unless you are already vocationally registered.

**Q: Can I apply for an AST position if I am not a Rural Generalist trainee?**

A: Yes. The QRGP accepts applications from trainees on the Pathway, those who are external to the Pathway and fellowed doctors.

**Q: At what stage in my career should I apply for an AST position?**

A: Usually trainees on the QRGP would apply in postgraduate year two (PGY2); however, this is dependent upon a range of factors for each individual, including their professional and personal 'readiness'. This should be discussed in further detail with a Director of Rural Generalist Training and your RTO.

**Q: Can I apply for a second AST position prior to fellowship if I have already completed one?**

A: Australian General Practice Training policies allow for completion of a second advanced skill in certain circumstances, provided applicants are training with a state run pathway such as the QRGP. You should contact the QRGP and your Regional Training Organisation for more information. If you are training via a college led pathway you should seek information directly from your college contact.

**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 AST. 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 and determine 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 AST in surgery and the hospital you are tracking toward 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 RTO.

**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 obstetrics and gynaecology, anaesthetic, internal medicine, mental health and surgical services in rural areas.

- QRGP trainees with Rural Generalist Medicine Prevocational Certification who are training toward fellowship (ACRRM and/or RACGP plus FARGP) demonstrate commitment, as do senior vocational trainees and Fellows.
- The interview process will address commitment to rural procedural practice. Achieving milestones such as successful AGPT application demonstrates commitment.
- Interstate applicants may be considered.

**Q: What is the duration of AST?**

A: Usually, training in O&G, anaesthetics, internal medicine and mental health will occur over a 12 month period. Surgery AST takes 24 months.

**Q: Where can I undertake AST and in what discipline?**

A: For information on available AST positions please go to:  
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ruralgeneralist/advanced-skills>

**Q: Who can I contact to ask further questions about the Advanced Skills Training placement process?**

A: For more information, please call the RGP team on 1800 680 291. You can also email your query to [rural\\_generalist@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:rural_generalist@health.qld.gov.au)