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RCPA
The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia

Policy

Subject: **Fellowship of the Faculty of Science (Pathology Informatics) RCPA**
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Overview

1. Pathology Informatics is an evolving field with increasing significance across all areas of Pathology, spanning many sub-disciplines, including information science, bioinformatics, cybersecurity, data analytics, artificial intelligence, and software engineering. The Faculty of Science RCPA recognises the significance of Pathology Informatics for innovation and quality in Pathology and thus seeks to encourage leading professionals in Pathology Informatics to be active members in the Faculty.

2. Fellowship of the Faculty of Science (Pathology Informatics) RCPA may be granted to persons who are eligible to apply under the By-laws pertaining to the Faculty of Science RCPA and who submit documented evidence of achievement of sufficient distinction in pathology informatics.

3. The Fellowship in pathology informatics recognises professional leadership in Pathology Informatics. The Fellowship does not imply any particular suitability for employment as may be attached to other College Fellowships, such as suitability to be delegated responsibility to supervise relevant laboratory practises for diagnostic purposes, however the standard of professional practice in pathology informatics is required to be equivalent to the standard required by examination in diagnostic pathology.

4. Documentary evidence should follow the recommended format (see below) and indicate that the candidate has made significant and continuing contributions to pathology in the form of innovation, development and leadership in the field of pathology informatics.

5. The assessors take account of the experience relevant to pathology informatics (normally not less than five years), the quality of the work and the extent of the candidate's responsibility in individual or joint projects or publications. The required standard is unlikely to be reached without the submission of at least 30 items that provide evidence of substantial high-quality contributions the field of pathology informatics (See Table 1 for acceptable examples), with at least three items in each of the major categories. A relevant formal qualification from a recognised academic institution may be deemed as equivalent to a range and number of items at the discretion of the Principal Examiner in Pathology Informatics.

The candidate should be the leading contributor, for example in the case of a peer-reviewed publication recognised as either first, co-first, senior or co-senior author, to a minimum of ten of the submitted items. Weighting will be given to contributions with international, national or statewide applicability. The College will consider applications based on publications which are limited by confidentiality (see below).

6. A sponsor, who should be a Fellow of the College or Fellow of the Faculty of Science RCPA, must support candidates wishing to submit their evidence for informal review and full formal application. Candidates are strongly advised to obtain advice on the suitability of their items from their sponsor. Potential sponsors who have doubts about the quality of an application are encouraged to seek the advice of the Faculty of Science Principal Examiner in Pathology Informatics.

Sponsors are requested at the formal application stage to provide commentary on the major contribution to practice or knowledge made by the candidate in pathology informatics, to indicate the standard of the work and to identify the candidate's innovative contribution to the field. When items from teams or multiple contributors are submitted, sponsors are required to verify and comment on the relative contribution made by the candidate to each item. Although such estimates are often difficult, they are essential for the assessors' evaluations.

The Application Process:

1. There is a two-stage process in applying for Fellowship. Before submitting a formal application, potential candidates must complete an informal review application form, together with any required fee and forward their CV and a list of their items, formatted as for a formal application (see below), for assessment by the Faculty of Science Principal Examiner in Pathology Informatics.

Evidence lists that are not formatted according to the guidelines will not be considered.

The name and contact details for the sponsor they have consulted must also be provided but the sponsor is not required to submit a formal report. Although the College is unable to state whether a formal application will be successful, advice can be given as to whether or not the proposed application is likely to meet the College's minimum requirements.

2. Candidates may submit a formal application within 12 months of receiving the outcome to proceed from the informal review. Candidates then provide a brief summary of their leadership, development and innovation in pathology informatics in addition to the following:

- the items list
- two copies of all documents on separate electronic media
- the sponsor's commentary, and
- payment of the fee

Documentary evidence must reference the categories of (A) Research & Scholarly Activities; (B) Information Technology Expertise; and (C) Innovation, Development and Leadership. Documents must be presented in logical order relevant to specific projects, with documents numbered consecutively throughout the list. Complete documents and reports are not required. Brief descriptions, executive summaries or abstracts are preferred. Evidence related to projects may be followed by other standalone items, as appropriate. Suitable items could include:

Table 1. Examples of evidence criteria of leadership in Pathology Informatics.

A. Research and Scholarly Activities
• Peer reviewed publications • Books or book chapters • Substantial reports, white papers or briefs of state/national significance • Invited or keynote presentations to recognised conferences/seminars • Funding applications • Substantial and relevant education programs developed/delivered • Significant awards or prizes for relevant achievements
B. Information Technology Expertise (particularly in relation to Pathology)
Demonstrated expertise in one or more of the following: • Data analytics (data science, information modelling, bioinformatics) • Software design, including apps for pathology • Hardware, network, and/or cloud infrastructure design relevant to pathology • Privacy and confidentiality management in pathology including cybersecurity • Data management and storage • Instrument interfacing and messaging with EMRs
C. Innovation/Development/Leadership (includes Project Development and Management; Business Management)
• Development of standards in pathology informatics • Innovation in the delivery of pathology informatics • Leadership roles in relevant professional societies • Active participation on major boards and committees or advisory roles • Demonstrated knowledge of NATA/NPAAC requirements for pathology informatics • Senior role in management of pathology informatics projects (e.g. disaster recovery plans, quality management activities)

Documents written in languages other than English should be accompanied by a summary in English.

3. Applications for Fellowship may be made on the basis of confidential reports that are not in the public domain. This is often appropriate for applicants from commercial or government institutions whose work is not permitted to be published, and it is accepted that sensitive or commercial-in-confidence details may need to be omitted. De-identified summary reports will be acceptable in such cases. Arrangements are made for the examination of such material by assessors who accept the constraints of confidentiality. However, the standards required of this work are no less than the standards required of published, peer reviewed material.

4. On receipt of a formal application, the application form and item list (not the items themselves) are sent to the Faculty of Science Principal Examiner in Pathology Informatics. If the CV and item list are so clearly outstanding, fast track may be recommended with a direct proposal to the Board of Education and Assessment that the candidate be recommended to the Board of Directors for Fellowship. The fast track application will not be sent to two assessors; the Principal Examiner will make a recommendation to the Chief Examiner. The applicant will then be asked to submit a sponsor's commentary, the formal application form, the list of evidence, certified copies of qualifications and the fee payable for formal application. Complete reports or

publications will not be required. Once these documents have been received, an application for Fellowship may be sent to the applicant.

5. Most applications will be sent to two assessors from the appropriate Panel of Examiners in Pathology Informatics. If both assessors agree on their recommendation, this is reported to the Board of Education and Assessment via the Chief Examiner of the Faculty of Science. If there is disagreement between the initial two assessors, the publications are sent to a third assessor. The results are then presented for discussion to the Faculty of Science Principal Examiner in Pathology Informatics, and once agreement is reached a recommendation forwarded to the Board of Education and Assessment via the Chief Examiner of the Faculty of Science.

6. When an application is accepted by the Board of Education and Assessment, the recommendation of Fellowship is submitted for approval by the Board of Directors.

7. The decision of the Board of Directors is final.