Fellowship of the Australian Society of Cytology (FASC)

Pathway

Enrol by end of January year 1
1. Provide evidence of: Degree qualification, CT(ASC) and ASC CEC enrolment
2. Nominate mentor.
3. Apply for Part 3 exemption if relevant.
4. Pay fee for Part 1.

⇩

PART 1
Submit **Casebook** by end of January the following year.

⇩ passed Part 1

PART 2
Dissertation topic submitted within 3 months and approved.
Fee for Part 2 paid.

PART 3
Apply to sit **examination** anytime but must give 3 months notice.
Fee for Part 3 paid.

⇩ passed both Parts 2 & 3

PART 4
Apply to sit **viva**.
Viva held in conjunction with ASC ASM.
Fee for Part 4 paid.

⇩ passed Part 4

FASC awarded.

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Requirements

Expected standard
This qualification denotes competency to direct the scientific practice of a large or complex Cytology department and fulfil a senior diagnostic role.

Prerequisites
A degree in Medical Laboratory Science (or equivalent)
CT(ASC)
Minimum of 8 years fulltime diagnostic experience in cytopathology (or equivalent).
Current financial member of the ASC
Enrolled in the ASC CEC for at least two years.
Currently employed in a diagnostic Cytology laboratory.

Proposed pathway.
Employment in a Cytology laboratory for a minimum two years full-time.
↓
Awarded CT(ASC)
↓
Eight years fulltime (or part-time equivalent) diagnostic experience in a Cytology laboratory (this may include diagnostic time spent as a trainee).
↓
Commence FASC
↓
Complete in two-three years

Format/timeframes
The qualification must be completed in a maximum of four years, unless the Fellowship Board grant an extension. The minimum time for completion is two years.

1. Enrol. Show proof of qualifications, experience and CEC Certificate of Participation for the previous two years. Nominate a mentor (this should be Cytopathologist or a Senior Scientist with >10 years experience or a postgraduate qualification. Apply for an exemption to Part 3 if applicable (see attached application form).
2. In year 1 submit casebook.
3. Submit dissertation and sit examination at any time in the next two years.
4. Sit viva following successful completion of parts 1-3. Viva to be held in conjunction with the ASC ASM.

Any application for extension of timelines must be made in writing to the Fellowship Committee. All communication should be addressed to the Fellowship Board via the ASC Office.

Fees
$300 per part payable on commencement unless an exemption is granted.

Part 1 Casebook
A collection of four case descriptions of publishable standard. All cases must have histological or other followup data and be referenced and illustrated with a minimum of six high quality photomicrographs/illustrations. The text should be succinct and no more than five typed, single spaced pages with 10-20 references. Referencing should be in Vancouver style, numbered in the order in which references appear in the text (see Instructions for Authors in the journals Cytopathology or Diagnostic Cytopathology for details). The discussion should include a critical, selective appraisal of the relevant literature.

The format should be arranged under the following headings:

- Clinical presentation
- Cytological findings
- Additional relevant testing (if applicable)
- Histological findings/follow-up
- Case discussion (including differential diagnoses and clinicopathological correlation). This section should be at least twice as long as the other sections.

Figures must be of publishable standard and clearly demonstrate the features discussed. Figure captions should be stand-alone in the format: Specimen: brief summary of principle features illustrated, followed by stain and magnification in parenthesis. For light microscope images the objective power is sufficient.

The cases may include either or both gynaecological and non-gynaecological cytology but must include examples of the following:

1. A diagnostic challenge
2. A case that illustrates a useful teaching lesson
3. A case that demonstrates a failure of quality systems
4. A case where adjunctive testing was valuable (for gynaecological cytology this may include liquid based and image analysis techniques).
5. A case highlighting the contribution of cytology to clinical management

At least one of the cases must be a benign condition.

The casebook must be accompanied by a completed Declaration (attached) witnessed by the mentor, attesting that the cases have been reported from the candidate's laboratory in the previous five years, that the work is original and the case has not previously been published or submitted as part of a course of study.

Submission of the casebook
Casebooks should be submitted to the ASC office as two hard-bound copies and two e-copy on CD. Elaborate binding or presentation is not necessary. Pages should be numbered.

Marking
Casebooks will be rejected, accepted without revision or accepted subject to correction.

Candidates will not be allowed to continue on to other parts until the casebook is passed. Candidates may be invited to publish cases in Cytoletter and/or present cases at ASC meetings.

Exemption
Exemption from one case will be granted for each case report that the candidate has published as first author in a peer reviewed journal.

Part 2. Examination
This will comprise an essay section and a short answer component. The examination will include both gynaecological and non-gynaecological cytology topics, however candidates will be allowed to choose topics from only one of these if they wish (ie choose to slant the exam to gynae or non-gynae).

Candidates will have to answer 12 short answer questions from a choice of 20 in two hours. Two essays must be answered from a choice of four in one hour.
Topics examined in the written tests include those covered in the CT(ASC) syllabus, however, a significantly greater depth of knowledge is expected. It should be emphasised that candidates are expected to be familiar with recent cytology literature.

A few example questions are appended.

Candidates must apply to the Fellowship Board three months prior to sitting. The examination may be supervised in the candidate's laboratory by an invigilator approved by the committee.

Marking
Candidates are expected to obtain a high standard (>75%). The Chair of the Fellowship Board will have discretion to review marking.

Part 3. Dissertation.
The dissertation topic and a brief outline (<250 words) must be submitted to the Fellowship Board for approval within three months of notification of passing Part 1.

The dissertation is an original literature review of a topic relevant to diagnostic cytopathology. The review should comprise around 5000 words (24 double spaced pages) and approximately 50 references and cannot have been submitted previously for publication or as part of a higher degree thesis.

Submission of the dissertation
Dissertations should be submitted to the ASC office as two hard-bound copies and two e-copies on CD. Elaborate binding or presentation is not necessary.
The manuscript should be double spaced and referenced in the Vancouver style, as for the casebook.
The dissertation should be accompanied by a declaration from the mentor that the manuscript has been reviewed (see below).

Exemption
An exemption to the dissertation may be granted to candidates who have successfully completed a higher degree in a discipline relevant to Cytopathology with a thesis or

dissertation component. Application for an exemption should be made with the initial enrolment application.

Marking
Dissertations will be rejected, accepted without revision or accepted subject to correction. Candidates may be invited to publish the dissertation in Cytoletter, present it at ASC meetings or encouraged to submit the review to a peer reviewed journal.

Part 4. Viva.
The viva will be conducted by at least two examiners chosen by the Fellowship Committee and held concurrently with ASC ASM. Slanting of the viva towards gynaecological or non-gynaecological cytology is allowed.

The viva will take the form of case discussions on a multiheaded microscope and is aimed to test diagnostic skill, problem solving strategies and to assess the candidate's ability to correlate cytological findings with clinical information.

Example Questions
Short answer
Write notes on:
1. Detection of HPV in fluid-based cytology specimens
2. Benign mimics of malignancy in peritoneal washing specimens.

Essay
1. Discuss abnormal gland cells in cervical specimens in terms of reporting, morphology, terminology, management and outcomes.

2. Discuss the technique, applications and cytological evaluation of EUS-guided FNA.

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Application Form

Applications for enrolment will be accepted between October and January. If accepted, your candidature will be confirmed by the end of February. Any enquiries should be directed to the ASC office.

First name
Surname
Laboratory
Postal Address
Email address
Phone no. (work)
Year training commenced
Year awarded CT(ASC)
Years of fulltime diagnostic experience
Do you wish to claim an exemption for a case(s)?* Yes/No
Do you wish to claim an exemption for the dissertation?** Yes/No
Mentor name and position***

Mentor's signature……..

Candidate's signature…….

Checklist

- o Photocopy of CT(ASC) certificate included
- o Certificate of participation in ASC CEC included
- o Mentor nominated
- o Cheque for Part 1 fee included (made out to Australian Society of Cytology Inc).
- o Application form for exemption from Part 2, dissertation, if being requested.
- o

* Please include a photocopy of the published case report (note you must be the first author and the article must be in a peer reviewed journal).
**Complete the form below
*** Please include a brief CV for your nominated mentor.

Casebook Declaration

I certify that the cases included in this casebook were reported in my laboratory in the last five years and have not previously been published or presented by any author.

Candidate…….Date

Mentor……..Date

Dissertation Declaration

I the candidate certify that the dissertation has not been previously submitted for publication or as part of a higher degree.

Candidate…….Date

As mentor I certify that I have reviewed a draft of this manuscript and provided guidance to the candidate regarding its content.

Mentor…….Date

Application for Exemption from Dissertation (Part 2)
Details of previously examined dissertation relevant to Cytopathology.
Please include a photocopy of the award, certified by your mentor as a true copy.

Course	
Institution	
Date awarded	
Topic of dissertation/review	
Brief précis	
Approximate word count	
No. of References	