

Division:	Fellowship Engagement	Ref. No.	POL-3160
Department:	Global Health Scholarships		
Title:	Weary Dunlop Boon Pong Exchange Fellowship		

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy governs the Weary Dunlop Boon Pong (WDBP) Exchange Fellowship. It covers the objectives and values, the application and selection criteria as well as the duration, value, frequency and conditions of the Fellowship.

2. KEYWORDS

International Scholarships, Weary Dunlop Boon Pong, International Development Program, Capacity Building

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Background

The establishment of the Weary Dunlop Boon Pong (WDBP) Exchange Fellowship was a collaborative effort between the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and the Royal College of Surgeons of Thailand (RCST). This scheme started from the initiative of returned prisoners-of-war in Western Australia. Forty years after their return from prison camps in and around the Thai-Burma railway, they wished to create a memorial for those of their colleagues who did not return. An exchange scheme for surgical training was decided upon. As money became available, young Thai surgeons were brought to Australia for further experience in surgical fields in which they had a special interest. The Fellowships are intended to provide valuable training experiences and increase the cordiality of Thai- Australian relationships. The first surgeons were appointed in 1987.

3.2. Goals and Objectives

The Fellowship provides opportunities for Thai surgeons to undertake clinical attachments in Australian hospitals, in their nominated field of interest. The goal is to develop the expertise and improve the capacity of Thai specialists to provide specialist surgery in Thailand.

The specific objectives of the Fellowship are to provide opportunities for promising, young Thai surgeons to:

- obtain further exposure in general or specialist surgery
- gain experience in clinical research and the applications of modern surgical technology
- develop management skills in a multi-disciplinary environment.

The program also aims to establish, increase and nurture the linkages and interactions between Australian and Thai health personnel to promote relationship building and regional collaboration at the levels of leadership, health structure, administration, surgical practice and research.

3.3. Principles and Values

RACS recognises that there is a shortage of trained and skilled local specialists in many developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. This shortage severely reduces the country's capacity to deliver surgical care to their populations. The overarching goal of the International Scholarship Program is to improve the health outcomes for disadvantaged communities in the region, by providing appropriate training opportunities to promising individuals who will contribute to the development of the long-term surgical and medical capacity in their country.

Recipients of the Fellowship must demonstrate a sense of responsibility to the local needs in relation to the health system, in Thailand. The intention is that the recipients will share their new skills, knowledge and expertise with their colleagues upon return to Thailand, thereby increasing the local capacity to deliver improved surgical and medical care to the local community.

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3.4. Administering Committee

The RACS Global Health team, in conjunction with RCST, administers the Fellowship program. The Global Health team reports to the Global Health Scholarship Panel and the International Engagement Committee, which reports to the Council.

3.5. Application Criteria

Applications for the Fellowship are open to young Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of Thailand who are looking to undertake training in Australia.

3.6. Selection Criteria

The Royal College of Surgeons of Thailand undertakes the annual selection process in Thailand and provides the names and contact details of the successful candidates to the Australasian WDBP Convenor.

3.7. Value of the Fellowship

The Fellowship consists of a stipend to support living expenses for the Thai surgeon while in Australia. The Fellowship will also cover reasonable costs incurred by the scholar including visa and medical registration application fees and health insurance, over and above the stipend. Prospective applicants should refer to RACS' website at www.surgeons.org for information on the current value of the Fellowship.

The Fellowship does not cover any costs associated with the Scholar's family members. Scholars are welcome to be accompanied by immediate family members at their own cost.

For a total annual intake of up to six scholars, RACS and RCST agree to cover all costs and manage administration in a 2:1 ratio; that is, for every two scholars RACS manages, RCST will manage one. RCST will provide the allocated scholar list. All scholars will be processed equally and afforded no special circumstances or expediated any quicker than their peers.

Each college will financially support their scholar according to point 3.7.1 Table 1: WDBP scholarship financial coverage by college. RACS will not cover any additional costs accrued from RCST's scholars. Any fees incurred by RACS during the scholarship placement process for RCST scholars, such visa application or travel expenses, will be reimbursed by RCST.

3.7.1 Table 1: WDBP scholarship financial coverage by college

RACS	RCST
Administrative and financial responsibilities relating to the following tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipend for 4 months • One roundtrip flight ticket including stopover hotel stays • Visa application costs • Visitor insurance coverage • Conference fees (case by case requiring pre-approval) 	Administrative and financial responsibilities relating to the following tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipend for 4 months • One roundtrip flight ticket including stopover hotel stays • Visa application costs

3.8. Funding Source

The Fellowships are funded from the WDBP corpus and will continue to be funded as the corpus allows.

3.9. Duration of the Fellowship

A Fellowship is normally four months in duration and is observational only. If the Thai surgeon requires a short extension, this may be negotiated with the supervisor and host institution,

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although the value of the stipend will remain unchanged.

3.10. Frequency of the Fellowship

Up to six Fellowships are awarded annually (with two of the Fellowships fully funded by the RCST), subject to the income available from the WDBP fund for the Fellowship in any given year being sufficient.

3.11. Conditions of the Fellowship

Thai surgeons nominate their field of interest and the Weary Dunlop Boon-pong Convenor in Australia seeks to place them in suitable training positions. The training is based in hospitals which can offer the experience desired by the Thai Fellow. The supervisor for each Thai surgeon is the head of the surgical department concerned. The Thai surgeons are supernumerary to Australian and New Zealand trainees.

Unless the Thai surgeon meets the English language requirements of the Medical Board of Australia and obtains full medical registration to practice in Australia, their clinical exposure will be limited to an observational capacity. They take no primary responsibility for patients.

Fellows have access to hospital libraries and are encouraged to be full participants in the hospital's normal activities.

3.12. Reporting

Scholars and their supervisors are required to provide a comprehensive report to the International Committee upon completion of their training. The completion report by the scholar must be comprehensive and not less than 1000 words. For guidance, an example of a final report may be provided to the Fellow.

3.13. Evaluation

The Fellowship Program is monitored by an Evaluation Committee, whose role is to assess the benefits resulting from the Fellowships awarded.

3.14. Certificates

Subject to satisfactory reports being supplied by the scholar and the supervisor(s), RACS will present to the Fellow a formal certificate of completion of the Fellowship.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

International Scholarships Program Terms of Reference
 Scholarships Evaluation and Monitoring Committee Terms of Reference
 WDBP Exchange Fellowship Procedure
 International Committee Terms of Reference
 WDBP Program Evaluation Form
 WDBP Thailand Travelling Fellowship Policy

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