

Fellowship by Published Works – Guidance for Applicants 2026

Overview

For the majority of doctors, clinical scientists, veterinary surgeons and dentists working in pathology, the appropriate route to Fellowship of the College is by sitting the FRCPath examinations. The College recognises, however, that a number of people working in pathological specialties have chosen to pursue careers with an emphasis on research and other academic activities, thus making it difficult to meet the requirements of the examinations. The route to Fellowship by Published Works is designed to recognise the contribution such individuals make to the development of the specialty.

In assessing applications, we are looking for high quality contributions to the field, as outlined in the eligibility section below. The main indicators of academic achievement continue to be grants awarded and publication of original work in high quality journals following peer review.

We give an indicative minimum number of publications, but applicants should be aware that these are minimum requirements that do not necessarily guarantee success. We also recognise other markers of peer recognition such as invited lectures, journal/grant reviewing, educational contributions through PhD supervision, and leadership in the field.

To enable the assessors to judge each application fairly, it is a requirement that publications are laid out according to the guidance below, or they may be returned unassessed. Additionally, the CV should give adequate details of relevant achievements.



1 Eligibility

1.1 Fellowship by Published Works is open to medical or non-medical applicants who:

- Have a minimum of five years working in a service or academic area of pathology if medically qualified or eight years if non-medical
- Submit at least 30 peer-reviewed publications. These may include review articles, but at least two thirds should be original research
- Are first or senior author on a minimum of 10 original research papers
- Demonstrate a developing and sustained contribution to at least one clearly defined theme
- Make continued substantial high-quality contributions to research and practice within the discipline

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. toxicology), reports that need to be kept confidential can be included in a Published Works application, but the full reports do not need to be submitted. Assessors must agree to a binding secrecy agreement and any other agreements required by the applicant's employer. The expected standard remains the same.

The applicant should comment on their contribution for each confidential report (e.g. involvement in study design, execution and report writing).

Sponsors must critically discuss the scientific merit of at least ten of the confidential reports submitted in 300-500 words, as if considering them for publication in a journal, and should highlight the applicant's contribution. Sponsors should also clarify when the applicant was in a supervisory role for a contract laboratory. If the sponsor does not work with the applicant, then it may be worth asking someone who does to act as a co-sponsor.



The applicant should also comment on their contribution. Reports can be included with the application or made available at a later date.

Assessors must agree to maintain confidentiality regarding any information provided to them about the reports. The expected standard remains the same.

1.2 Fellowship by Published Works is appropriate for pathologists who:

- Want to apply to the Specialist Register via an academic and research route
- Specialise in a discrete diagnostic area combined with academic activity
- Are primarily involved in clinical work but who nonetheless have made a significant academic contribution to pathology through original research

1.3 Fellowship by Published Works does not contribute towards a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT). Advisory Appointment Committees (AACs) are responsible for checking that job applicants have the necessary training and qualifications. FRCPath (res) is not equivalent to passing the FRCPath examination.

2 Preliminary Review

2.1 Before making a formal application for Fellowship by Published Works, potential applicants **must** send a list of their publications and a copy of their CV to exams@rcpath.org so that the Research Committee can advise whether they should consider applying. Please **do not** submit a cover letter. We advise candidates that **their CV should include all academic activities and/or broader contributions to the field.**



2.2 In order to allow applicants, the opportunity for an informal review in a timely manner and streamline our processes, **the College will only receive requests for preliminary reviews during the following periods:**

- 1 December – 31 March
- 1 July – 31 August

Applicants are advised that preliminary review requests will be considered by the panel after the closing deadline for each of the above periods.

2.3 If your publication list is incomplete or not formatted correctly then it may not be considered. **Publication lists must indicate a significant contribution to the field.** Publication lists need to be formatted as follows:

- Using the specialty list in the Appendix, state which specialty your work falls under (refer to the **Appendix** at the end of the guidelines)
- Highlight/bold your own name in each publication's list of authors
- Include the current ISI Web of Science five-year impact factor rating (where available) with highest factors listed first by theme (see below)
- Include whether the journal is listed in PubMed
- Group publications **by scientific theme**. Within each theme, list publications by the following categories:

- i. Books – in print
- ii. Books – in press
- iii. Chapters – in print
- iv. Chapters – in press
- v. Refereed Journals – in print: original articles/letters
- vi. Refereed Journals – in print: reviews
- vii. Refereed Journals – in press: original articles/letters
- viii. Refereed Journals – in press: reviews

2.4 Please do not submit:



- A collection of unrelated papers
- Case reports, posters, abstracts, methodology notes or meeting proceedings

2.5 We aim to provide an outcome to candidates ahead of the following application period. There are four possible outcomes of a preliminary review:

- Invited to apply by the fast track route. This is recommended when a publication list clearly fulfils the criteria.
- Invited to apply by the assessment route. This is advised for lists that seemingly meet the criteria, but further scrutiny of the publications is needed.
- Advised to resubmit a preliminary application when there is greater evidence of a substantial contribution to the field.
- Advised not to apply.

If advised to apply, applicants are advised to wait until the **following** application period to submit.

3 Application following a preliminary review

3.1 Formal applications can take 6-12 months for completion. In order to allow consideration of applications in a timely manner and streamline our processes, **the College will only receive applications during the following periods:**

- 1 December – 31 March
- 1 July – 31 August

3.2 The 2026 fee for Fellowship by Published Works is £2326. An invoice will be issued upon receipt of application, and payment can be made via bank transfer.



- 3.3 If advised to apply following a preliminary review – either by fast track or assessment – please complete the relevant application form and return to exams@rcpath.org. Application forms can be found on the College website: [Fellows by Published Works](#)
- 3.4 If advised to apply by the **fast-track** route, please submit a completed fast track application form and an updated publications list. Candidates are no longer required to submit a paper-by-paper analysis of their publications when submitting a Fast Track application.
- 3.5 If advised to apply by **assessment**, please submit a completed assessment application form, an updated publications list and copies of your publications. Electronic versions of publications must be submitted (no journal links, please) either by e-mail or as a file share, e.g. via Dropbox.
- 3.6 Two sponsor statements must accompany an application, commenting on the applicant's overall standard of work; major or most innovative contributions to the discipline; and their contribution to multi-authored papers. One sponsor can be local and the other from the applicant's specialty in a different location who can describe the candidate's overall contribution to the field. **At least one of the referees should be a Fellow of The College.**
- 3.7 If an application is successful, Fellowship will be awarded following ratification by the College Council. Fees will not be refunded if an application is rejected.



Appendix (Specialties)

- a) Clinical Biochemistry
- b) Forensic Pathology
- c) Genetics (Combined, Clinical Cytogenetics or Molecular Genetics)
- d) Haematology
- e) Histocompatibility & Immunogenetics
- f) Histopathology
- g) Immunology
- h) Infection
- i) Medical Microbiology
- j) Molecular Pathology
- k) Neuropathology
- l) Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- m) Paediatric Pathology
- n) Reproductive Science
- o) Toxicology
- p) Transfusion Science
- q) Veterinary Pathology (all sub-specialties)
- r) Virology