

FELLOWSHIP OF THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY (FASM)

ROAD MAP

FASM candidates must be a MASM and must have at least 10 years' experience in the field of microbiology. The award of FASM is subject to a transparent and consistent examination process that is overseen by the National Examinations & Qualifications Board. This process is divided into three parts as follows.

Candidate submits application form and supporting documentation in electronic form to the National Examinations & Qualifications Board (NEQB)

NEQB meets to discuss the application and decides whether the candidate is exempt from Part I &/or Part II of the examination process.

PART I

Requirements: General examination in microbiology, comprising both written and practical tests.

Exemptions: Usually granted to candidates with higher degrees in microbiology (MSc, MD, PhD), including coursework higher degrees.

PART II

Requirements: Formal supervised examination comprising three essay style questions. Examines expertise in a specialist area of microbiology (e.g. medical virology) and assumes an understanding in at least one related area of microbiology (e.g. serology). Also examines expertise in the management of a microbiology laboratory.

Exemptions: Usually granted to candidates holding research higher degrees in microbiology. Their higher degree must comprise more than 18 months full time study with a research component of more than 67% of the total marks. Usually granted for MSc (by research), MD, or PhD.

PART III

Requirements: Part III demonstrates that an individual has a depth of understanding in a specialised area of microbiology. There are two pathways by which the Part III requirements may be satisfied.

Option 1: A scholarly dissertation.

The dissertation may be either:

(1) an in-depth review of the literature in the candidate's selected topic area, without any experimental/research component. The review could be an edited introduction to the candidate's PhD thesis. The standard of such a review should be such that it would be acceptable for publication in a high-impact, peer-reviewed journal. A typical FASM dissertation comprises 30 to 50 typed pages with 50 to 150 references.

(2) A collection of 5 to 10 of the candidate's own papers published in high impact refereed scientific journals, focusing on specific aspects or a specific area. Such works should be prefaced by an in-depth introduction of 5 to 10 pages and conclude with a critical scientific discussion of the papers (5 to 10 pages). Overall, the submission needs to demonstrate the candidate's key contributions to the area selected.

(3) A major review published within the past three years, for which the candidate is the first author or has made greater than 50% contribution, as evident from a completed "Statement of Co-Authorship of FASM Part III Dissertations" form (included with "The FASM Examination" document).

The dissertation will be examined by experts in the discipline, who will make recommendations to the NEQB.

Option 2: An alternative Part III pathway for the following applicants.

(a) Senior microbiologists who have published 50 or more papers in the broad field of microbiology and/or who have been awarded senior NHMRC or ARC fellowships, or their equivalent, to conduct research in the broad field of microbiology.

(b) Senior microbiologists who have demonstrated academic excellence in the teaching of microbiology; for example, by being promoted to Associate Professor as a teaching-focussed or teaching-only academic.

(c) Senior professional microbiologists who can demonstrate that they are responsible for managing a major microbiology laboratory.

Such applicants will simply submit their curriculum vitae, which must include a list of peer-reviewed publications (numbered and listing all authors) and other relevant information, for subsequent NEQB approval of the award of FASM.