

Associateship of Clinical Allergy (ACA)

Information for prospective applicants

Associateship description

The Associateship of Clinical Allergy (ACA) course was first offered 2025 and is now accepting applications for the second intake of trainees. The ACA is administered by the National Allergy Council and is supported by ASCIA.

The Associateship consists of 2 components:

1. Completion of the Associateship of Clinical Allergy (ACA) course over 2 years, part-time.
2. Ongoing membership and participation in a community of practice (CoP) for ongoing mentoring, support, and CPD for alumni.

The course and CoP have been designed to offer practical case-based learning structured around the principles of adult learning that will best prepare participants for clinical practice.

Clinical supervision is a key feature of the Associateship. Each participant will be assigned 2 clinical supervisors, at least one being an ASCIA listed clinical immunology/allergy specialist and tailored to the participant's scope of practice and practice location where possible. Supervision will include clinical case observation in both the participant's and supervisor's practice.

Assessment will be mostly formative, in-practice and based on 'assessment for learning' principles.

The core teaching faculty consists of Clinical immunology/allergy specialists, Allergy GPs and Allergy paediatricians who are full or associate members of ASCIA. The clinical supervisors are experienced practising clinicians in allergy medicine.

Entry criteria and purpose

The ACA is a 2-year, part-time course for GPs and Paediatricians who:

- Are at least 3 years post-Fellowship
- Work in a regional, rural, or remote area, Distribution Priority Area (DPA) or Area of Need (AON)*, and
- Have an interest in practicing allergy medicine and have the capacity to deliver a clinical allergy service within their community.

*Regional, rural and remote areas are those with a Modified Monash Model category of MM2 (Regional centres) to MM7 (Very remote communities). AON/DPA is a geographical location where the medical needs of its population are going unmet due to workforce shortage.

The purpose of this course is to upskill existing experienced GPs and pediatricians to deliver evidence-based allergy medical care, within a defined scope of practice, to increase access to allergy care in underserved communities.

Course structure

The course consists of 4 Semester based modules completed over 2 years part-time.

The course will be delivered in a hybrid in-person workshop, case-based webinars, in practice teaching and online formats.

Each module will involve:

- A 2-day in-person workshop held on a Friday and Saturday at the start of each Semester.

- 10 weeks of online interactive case-based webinars (1 evening per week of 90 minutes duration)
- Online learning (theory and reflective activities)
- Supervision including clinical attachments
- Assessment and evaluation
- Ongoing community of practice support through multiple discussion platforms with peers, supervisors and faculty

Course Learning objectives

Module 1: Anaphylaxis and hypersensitivity reactions

- Diagnose and manage anaphylaxis (including differential diagnoses and mimics).
- Diagnose, manage, and prevent adverse reactions to stinging or biting insects.
- Diagnose, manage, and prevent adverse reactions to drugs, vaccines, occupational and environmental allergens.
- Psychosocial aspects of life-threatening allergy.
- Psychosocial and economic impact of diagnostic error.

Module 2: Food allergy and other adverse reactions to food

- Spectrum of food reactions from IgE-mediated allergy to non-IgE-mediated reactions.
- Investigation for food allergens (concepts around diagnostic versus screening tests).
- Nuances around specific food allergies.
- Risk assessment.
- Managing food allergen avoidance, liaising with dietitians.
- Anaphylaxis Action Plans and practical food allergy management including food ladders and other dietary advancement therapies.
- Food intolerance clinical history and management.
- Weaning and food allergy prevention.
- Educating patients and non-specialist peers about common myths and misunderstandings.
- Social and psychological impact of food allergy on the patient and carers (including community-based advocacy).
- Patient education (food labels, eating outside the home, when to refer for education).

Module 3: Aeroallergy

- Spectrum of rhinitis and asthma (concepts including phenotype and endotype).
- Investigation for aeroallergens (including allergen distribution/prevalence).
- Allergic conjunctivitis and ocular allergy.
- Understanding and optimising medical therapy.
- Selecting and managing specific immunotherapy.
- Educating patients and non-specialist peers about common myths and misunderstandings.
- Complex cases, co-morbidities and multidisciplinary care.

Module 4: Allergy and the skin

- Urticaria and angioedema (differential diagnoses in chronic versus acute and medical management).
- Eczema – diagnosis, complications, medical, and non-medical management.
- Allergic and irritant contact dermatitis.
- Cutaneous drug reactions, differential diagnoses and management.
- Mast cell disorders.
- Complex presentations and mimics.

The ACA course covers 24 competencies/learning outcome statements that can be translated to 16 [Entrustable Professional Activities](#) (EPAs). EPAs describe essential work undertaken by rural and regional

GPs and paediatricians with advanced knowledge and skills in allergy medicine. They are categorised using the same domains used in the RACGP Curriculum and cover clinical experience, knowledge, population health, organisational aspects, and professionalism in the practice of allergy medicine in the primary care setting and adapted to the rural and regional environment.

The course aims to develop high level expertise in clinical reasoning, managing uncertainty and aspects of metacognition including critical thinking and self-reflection in clinical practice. It fosters collegiality, leadership, and scholarly thinking.

Duration and schedule

Applications to participate in the course are open from Thursday 20 August to Sunday 6 September 2026.

The ACA course will commence in Semester 1 2027.

- Module 1 will be delivered from Monday 15 February – Friday 11 June 2027.
- The 2 day in-person workshop for Module 1 will be held in Sydney on Friday 19 February and Saturday 20 February 2027.
- Module 2 will be delivered from Monday 19 July – Friday 12 November 2027.
- Dates for the 2 day in-person workshop for Module 2 are TBC.

Time requirements and expectations

Before commencing the course, participants are expected to have sufficient basic allergy knowledge by completing all 7 ASCIA e-training for health professionals courses related to allergy (if they have not already been completed within the past 12 months). Time requirement to complete the 7 e-training courses is approximately 10 hours.

For each module, participants should expect to spend a minimum of:

- 2 days attending the in-person workshop at the start of each module, allowing for travel time to Sydney.
- 2 hours per week reviewing online resources on the learning platform (such as pre-reading, quizzes, key articles, videos, and podcasts) in preparation for the webinar series topic.
- 1.5 hours presenting and participating in the weekly online interactive and case-based learning webinars.
- 2 hours per week recording cases and clinic letters in a written logbook for assessment.
- Observing (in person or virtually) allergy clinics conducted by your supervisors, and your supervisors observing your clinics.

Overall, participants are expected to dedicate a minimum of 6-8 hours per week to successfully complete the course.

Participants are also expected to attend the ASCIA Allergy Update for Medical Practitioners Day of the Annual ASCIA Conference (providing a virtual option is available). The 2027 ASCIA Conference will be held 7-10 September in Canberra.

Cost

The course costs are shown in the table below.

Modules	Dates	Full Fee
Unit 1	Semester 1 2027	\$7,500 AUD
Unit 2	Semester 2 2027	\$7,500 AUD
Unit 3	Semester 1 2028	\$7,500 AUD
Unit 4	Semester 2 2028	\$7,500v AUD
Total course	2 years part-time	\$30,000 AUD

Once accepted to the course, trainees will need to make prompt payment before each unit commences. Unit 1 must be paid on enrollment. In addition, trainees will be responsible for the cost of their own travel and accommodation to attend the in-person workshops in Sydney.

The current ASCIA Associate (Medical Practitioner) membership fee is \$260 per year.

Course completion and benefits

Progression from one module to the next requires successful completion of the previous module. Satisfactory completion of all four modules within two years will enable participants to receive a formal award – an Associateship in Clinical Allergy (ACA) and ongoing membership of the CoP. The CoP continues to connect trainees with experienced allergy clinicians and the fellow alumni as well as providing ongoing access to the 'living resources' of the ACA course content.

The ACA Course award can be displayed in your practice, the letters ACA can be used as post nominals, and the course can be used in your defense of scope of practice by credentialing bodies such as public hospitals. Graduates can apply to be listed on the National Allergy Council's Allergy Care Finder Australia website to have public listing information available to prospective patients and referrers.

Please note that this course provides practical training in allergy medicine but is not a higher education award in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Post selection preparation

If selected, before enrolment each participant must:

- have completed all 7 online ASCIA e-training courses related to allergy within the past 12 months and be able to provide a certificate of completion for each course. These are free of charge and available from <https://traininghp.ascia.org.au/>.
- be an ASCIA Associate (Medical Practitioner) Member or willing to apply for such membership with sponsorship from a Full ASCIA member (ideally their clinical immunology/allergy supervisor). The membership fee is \$260 per year.
- meet computer technical requirements to enable them to effectively participate in webinars, online discussions and the interactive learning management system (Canvas). Participants will be required to have their camera switched on during the weekly interactive webinars. They will also need to have the ability to share the screen when it is their turn to present a case.

Participants will be assessed through:

- Successful completion of the 2-day in person intensive workshops.
- 90% attendance at 10 virtual case-based sessions per module (of 90 minute duration), with each participant required to present a minimum of one case to the group and lead the subsequent discussion.
- Post-clinic discussion on cases that have been observed by supervisors, including assessment of accompanying letters to the referring doctor and patient. Some of these cases may be assessed by mini CEX or Random Case Analysis or presented as a long case.
- 50 MCQs per module and successful progression over the whole course
- Submission of a portfolio briefly documenting 100 allergy cases (25 cases per module), including those under supervision. This may be adjusted depending on the participant's clinical allergy patient load.
- Supervisor reports

Contact for course enquiries

Please direct any queries to Erin Gilmore, Senior Project Officer, National Allergy Council via email erin@nationalallergy.org.au, who will be able to connect you with the course coordinators.