

Reasonable Adjustments for an Examination Assessment

1 Purpose and context

- 1.1 RACS recognises the individual's needs when presenting for examinations. Where necessary RACS will provide reasonable adjustments to enable access and participation on the same basis as other candidates.
- 1.2 Central to preparation for practice and ensuring a person is assessed as both competent and confident in their ability to treat patients safely, it is important to note inherent requirements of the training program must be able to be carried out.
- 1.3 Reasonable adjustments may be required for any number of health or personal circumstances which may include:
 - a) recovering from injury or long-term illness
 - b) managing a chronic medical condition
 - c) temporary or permanent disability
 - d) requests for lactation breaks or facilities
- 1.4 Candidates who are affected by short-term illnesses or serious misadventure before or during the formal examination period should refer to the Special Consideration policy.
- 1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following regulations, policies and documents:
 - a) Conduct of the Generic Surgical Sciences Examination (GSSE)
 - b) Conduct of the Clinical Examination (CE)
 - c) Conduct of the Specialty Specific Surgical Sciences Examinations (SSE)
 - d) Fellowship Examination (FEX)
 - e) Special consideration for an Examination
 - f) Provision of facilities and support for parents or infants attending RACS activities
 - g) Guidelines for Examination Candidates

2 Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this regulation:

- 2.1 **Reasonable adjustments** - administrative, environmental or procedural alterations made for an individual with a disability, mental health or medical condition which are designed to minimise the disadvantage experienced. Reasonable adjustments are not designed to provide the person with a competitive advantage.
- 2.2 **Inherent requirements** - the fundamental components of a training program essential for demonstrating the capabilities, knowledge and skills to achieve the core learning outcomes of the training program.
- 2.3 **Candidate** – means a person who is enrolled in a RACS Examination i.e. post-graduate doctors, surgical trainees and specialist international medical graduates (SIMG).

3 Principles

- 3.1 RACS is committed to ensuring the integration of the principles of equal access, participation and opportunity for people with a disability, mental or medical condition in regulations, policies, procedures, decisions and operations.
- 3.2 RACS seeks to apply the principle or reasonable adjustment to remove barriers to participation, providing appropriate and supportive environments or resources and other reasonable adjustments whenever possible.

- 3.3 RACS will ensure the integrity of examinations are maintained at the highest standards while providing appropriate and reasonable adjustments whenever possible.
- 3.4 RACS will protect the confidentiality of information provided. Specific information relating conditions requiring reasonable adjustment are only conveyed when the nature of the disability, mental or medical condition is relevant and only with the written consent of the person requesting the adjustment.

4 Submitting a request

- 4.1 An application for reasonable adjustment must be submitted at the time of registering for an examination, or no later than 60 days before the scheduled examination, qualifying the need for individual accommodations.
- 4.2 The application is dependent on providing documentation to substantiate a disability, mental health or medical condition. Where appropriate or if requested, documentation should be provided from a qualified medical professional or authorised practitioner.
- 4.3 The need for evidence is dependent on the particular request. Supporting documentation may include:
 - a) an original diagnosis and evidence of ongoing treatment/assessment for permanent disability or chronic medical conditions
 - b) a current medical certificate, for temporary disability, injury or long-term illness
 - c) other evidence to justify the need for a reasonable adjustment.
- 4.4 The application must outline and recommend the adjustments required to meet the need.
- 4.5 Requests are not automatically granted. Negotiation of reasonable adjustments will occur through consultation with the individual.
- 4.6 Failure to declare specific requirements at the earliest opportunity may lead to a delay or inability to provide and implement alternative requirements.
- 4.7 A candidate who seeks to gain an unfair advantage by submitting an application that is not genuine is subject to appropriate disciplinary action whether or not the application is subsequently withdrawn.

5 Determination and provision of reasonable adjustments

- 5.1 The standard rules and policy on examination assessment are still applied. The examination is only varied where an individual can demonstrate with appropriate documentation that they are disadvantaged as a result of a disability, mental health or medical condition.
- 5.2 Reasonable adjustments may include:
 - a) customising resources and/or examination activities, e.g. additional time, rest breaks, extra space;
 - b) modifying the presentation medium, i.e. paper or digital.
- 5.3 Adjustments shall be made on an individual basis. In assessing whether a particular adjustment is reasonable, all relevant circumstances will be taken into account, including:
 - a) the disability, medical or mental health condition and barriers, needs or challenges that may affect the candidate;
 - b) the impact of the disability, medical or mental health condition as described by the individual;
 - c) whether the adjustment creates an undue advantage for the candidate, or an undue disadvantage for another person;
 - d) whether the effect of the proposed adjustment creates an undue disadvantage on anyone else including examiners, RACS staff or any other stakeholder;
 - e) whether the adjustment will impact the examination standards or inherent requirements of the training program;
 - f) costs associated with making the adjustment.

- 5.4 RACS is not obligated to make any adjustment that may impose an unjustifiable hardship on the college.
- 5.5 Reasonable adjustments are not intended to bridge the gap between aspirations and the capacity to successfully complete training.
- 5.6 Reasonable adjustments will not be made if they result in an unfair advantage.

6 Delegations to make reasonable adjustments

- 6.1 Assessment and consultation on provision for requirements: Examinations Management.
- 6.2 Confirmation of reasonable adjustments: Chair of the appropriate Examination Committee or Senior Examiner of the Specialty Court.
- 6.3 Advice and implementation of confirmed adjustments: Examinations Management

Status	Published
Version	1
Changes	Replaces the <i>“Reasonable Adjustments for Disability”</i> policy
Date approved	31/08/2020
Effective date	02/09/2020
Approving authority	Education Board
Portfolio	Education
Document owner	Examinations Manager
Enquiries	Examinations Via email: examinations@surgeons.org