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## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR THE ORAL EXAMINATIONS POLICY**

Special Consideration for the Oral Examinations requiring consideration for illness, accident, disability or compassionate grounds.

### **1. POLICY AND PROCESS**

- 1.1** Candidates should not be disadvantaged unnecessarily as a result of events or circumstances outside their control. Nevertheless, in seeking to redress any disadvantage, no action should be taken that could be construed as giving the affected candidate an unfair advantage in relation to other candidates.
- 1.2** Where an issue arises which may not be covered in the Regulation for Conduct of Exams or in the Guidelines for Examinations or other policies related to examination process, the instructions and advice provided in this Policy should be sought by candidates seeking special consideration and directed to the Censor in Chief. The Censor in Chief will set up a consultation review panel, comprising of members of the Board of Censors, to advise on the application for special consideration and the decision making. The matter may also be referred to the Board of Censors and/or the Education and Training Committee or an independent body for a review or expert advice.

On the basis of information provided, the following will be included for consideration:

- The severity of the circumstances and factors involved
- The likely impact on the Candidate and his/her performance during the Exam
- History of previous applications for special considerations

Applications for special consideration must be submitted prior to the post-exam feedback sessions scheduled by the College to provide Candidates with feedback on their exam performance.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the acknowledgement of receipt of the application within 7 working days of receipt of applications and advised on the outcome /determination of decision within 14 days of receipt of applications.

Special consideration granted to a Candidate is not on-going and applies to the RACMA Pre-Fellowship Oral Exam.

A report on applications for Special Consideration will be provided by the Board of Censors via the Censor in Chief to the Education and Training Committee.

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## 2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Policy outlines criteria and mechanisms by which RACMA Candidates undertaking the RACMA Pre-Fellowship Oral Examinations may apply to the College for special consideration of circumstances beyond their control or on the basis of disability or illness. These may be considered if it is deemed that such circumstance or condition may adversely impact Candidate's attendance and performance at the RACMA exams. These conditions may include: medical, compassionate and disability.

This Policy will apply to Candidates who are formally scheduled and have registered to sit the Pre-Fellowship Exam. The College is unable to determine in advance all circumstances that might lead to the granting of special consideration. Each case will be considered on its merits in accordance with the Policy.

The application for special consideration based on the below-mentioned criteria will be considered and granted only if Candidates are providing genuine reasons and can demonstrate evidence for their claim/request for special consideration.

## 3. CRITERIA FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

### 3.1 Acute Illness/Incident Occurring at the Time of the Examination and Bereavement

**3.1.1** Sudden illness or bereavement which precludes a Candidate from attending all or part of an examination. This may also include illness arising during the examination (while taking part in the examination or reading preparation time for the examination). Recent bereavement of a close relative may also allow special consideration. In the event of non-attendance of all or part of an examination due to these reasons, the College will hold over the examination registration fee for the Candidate.

**3.1.2** An application for special consideration must be made to the College via the Censor in Chief by the candidate within TWO weeks of the event that is signed off by Candidate's Preceptor/Executive Coach. The application should be supported by a medical certificate to be provided by a medical practitioner who physically attended the candidate for his or her illness/condition.

**3.1.3** In the event that the College staff or a Censor is advised by the Candidate that he/she is ill or has suffered a recent bereavement, they should:

- Immediately alert the Censor in Chief to their concerns or notify the Censor in Chief in writing of this occurrence.
- Ensure the candidate is aware of their options in line with the College Policies available to the Candidate.
- The Censor in Chief is to advise the Candidate of the Policy's requirements and that if the Candidate wishes to defer the exam and sit the exam in the nearest future will need to apply for Special Consideration in accordance with the Policy.

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**3.1.4** Further action/outcome is at the discretion of and determination by the Censor in Chief – this may include consultation with the Board of Censors during the Exam Moderation process, and/or may be referred to the Chair of the Education and Training Committee and/or the Chief Executive

**3.1.5** The College will have an application form available for Candidates to apply for Special Consideration. Applications for special consideration on compassionate grounds must also be accompanied by relevant supportive evidence/documentation. Such documentation may include:

- A bereavement notice or statutory declaration stating the relationship to the deceased, where applicable
- A notice from treating practitioner where illness/death of a close relative is involved
- A Copy of a Police report in the event of an accident

### **3.2 Chronic Illness or Disability**

Candidates with a chronic illness or disability may be granted concession with respect to any part of an examination. If a candidate believes that extraordinary consideration should be given to particular circumstances, an application may be made for special consideration to be granted a concession. Such application must be accompanied by medical evidence/report from a medical practitioner/specialist.

Such application should set out the details of the chronic illness or disability and the remedial action or concession that is sought, including any special accommodations that need to be provided to the Candidate with such condition to enable an equitable and reasonable presentation at the examinations. The application for Special Consideration based on disability or chronic illness should be submitted with the application to sit the examination and not less than four weeks prior to the examination. The determination of the granting of any concession or remedial action will be at the discretion of the Censor in Chief in consultation with the Board of Censors or the selected advisory Panel, and/or with College staff in charge of the examination process.

### **3.3. Religious Considerations (such as religious observance preventing the sitting of an examination during the exam set timelines)**

In some cases, a candidate may be unable to sit the examination because the nominated examination date(s) conflicts with his/her legitimate religious observance, beliefs/religious commitments which prohibit participation in the exams. In such an instance the candidate should contact the College as soon as they are aware that there is a conflict with the examination date and explain the potential conflict with the candidate's religious belief.

The College may seek advice from a person of authority in the particular religion, from the Jurisdictional Committee and/or Supervisor/Preceptor to clarify information to assist with the determination for the application.

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Such application is to be made to the College for consideration of special circumstances and must be signed off by Supervisor in the workplace and Preceptor. The application will be forwarded to the Censor in Chief and the Candidate will be advised (either by the Censor in Chief or the National Staff member in charge of the Examination process) what alternative arrangements can be made, within 14 working days of the receipt of application for special consideration.

#### **4. OUTCOMES**

If/Once the application for special consideration is reviewed and an outcome is determined, the College's possible outcomes for alternate arrangements to address special consideration application will be:

- 4.1** An extension of time may be granted to the Candidate in the event that special consideration application is submitted prior to the Pre-Fellowship Exam and is based on Chronic Illness or Disability criteria (3.2). This is to be communicated to the Censor in Chief or College staff administering the exams and is to be incorporated into the schedule for the Pre-Fellowship Exam.
- 4.2** Rescheduling of all or part of the examination may be offered to the Candidate. This is based on the application for special consideration where Candidate's attendance and/or performance of all or part of an examination was affected.
- 4.3** Offering a single exam (not dissimilar to a supplementary exam) to the Candidate whose application for special consideration is based on special circumstances (based on the above criteria) that may have caused 'fail or borderline' performance during the Pre-Fellowship Examinations.

#### **5. CIRCUMSTANCES NOT CONSTITUTING ADEQUATE GROUNDS FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

- Stress or anxiety associated with examinations or assessment
- Excessive work commitments
- Mistaken timing or declaration of not finding location for the exams
- Optional commitments of a personal nature

In scheduling the assessment activities and workshops, the College will attempt to consider important religious calendar dates, school holidays and other state/national public events.

Candidates should peruse the Training Calendar for the following year's training events and assessment activities, as planning/taking holidays, recreation trips will not be considered grounds for Special Consideration.

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## 6. PRIVACY

It may be necessary for RACMA to collect personal information from Candidates or about Candidate's health when application for Special Consideration is submitted to the College. In accordance with the Privacy Act 1998 (Cth) (Australia) and the privacy Act 1993 (NZ), and the RACMA Privacy Policy, the College will not disclose personal information about the Candidate except for the purpose authorised by this policy in consideration of special circumstances.

## 7. REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION

An appeals process is available to Candidates should they wish to apply for reconsideration, review and/or appeal of the decisions following their application for Special Consideration. These may be reconsidered, reviewed or appealed in accordance with the Policy for Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of Decisions of the College Committees and Officers.

The request for reconsideration, review or appeal must be made in writing to the National Education and Training Program Manager or Board of Censors Administrator within 7 working days of the decision/outcome on the application for Special Consideration, outlining the reasons for seeking further or alternate outcome. On undertaking an application for reconsideration or review, the College may request or seek additional information.

Where application for special consideration cannot be submitted because it may not meet the required criteria for special consideration, then Candidates may apply directly for reconsideration, review and appeal against the exam outcome/result within 30 working days of receipt of results. Such application should be based on the due process of the examination.

## 8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Policy for Special Consideration for the Examination of Candidates requiring consideration for illness, accident, disability or compassionate grounds (RCPA;RANZCR);
- RACMA Policy for Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of Decisions of the College Committees and Officers
- Regulation for the Conduct of Exams
- Regulation for Eligibility to sit the Exams
- Privacy Policy
- Terms of Reference for the Board of Censors

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