



Reasonable Adjustment Policy



**Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
Examinations
Reasonable Adjustment Policy**

This policy incorporates the guidelines set out in the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) document ‘Managing access arrangements for candidates requesting adjustments in high stakes assessment’ (May 2018).

The RCOG will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of this policy and the reasonable adjustment process. Feedback from candidates, examiners and examination staff, alongside guidance and recommendations from the Academy of Royal Medical Colleges (AoMRC), will be considered to identify areas for improvement and to ensure the policy remains up-to-date and aligned with best practices.

1. Supporting reasonable adjustments

The RCOG is committed to ensuring equal access to our examinations for all candidates. This document sets out the process and policies we follow to facilitate reasonable adjustments to our standard examination procedures and arrangements to support candidates with special circumstances.

‘Reasonable adjustment’ is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places a candidate at a substantial disadvantage in an examination situation. It is not designed to give any type of advantage to candidates in the receiving of additional examination accommodations. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of the examination and does not apply to the application of a competence standard.

2. Support for candidates with a disability

Consideration of requests for reasonable adjustments will be based on the definitions within the Equality Act (2010), and will apply to any candidate who “...has a physical or mental impairment” that “has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

For example, a request may relate to the need for additional examination time due to a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) such as dyslexia, or rest breaks for candidates with a condition that requires the individual to mobilise to relieve discomfort or pain, such as hypermobility.

3. Support for candidates with special requirements

It is recognised that some candidates may have a special requirement not related to disability. For example, provision may be needed for a mother breast-feeding an infant to have access to suitable feeding facilities during the examination.

Such requests fall into the scope of this policy and requests will be considered on an individual basis and decisions may vary according to the exact nature of the requestor’s needs.

4. Pregnant candidates

Prospective candidates who are pregnant must contact the exams department as soon as possible if:

- they have any pregnancy-related problems or illness; or
- their condition gives them sufficient discomfort for them to consider that it will have a detrimental effect upon their performance.
- a special arrangement in respect to reasonable exam adjustment is requested

In such circumstances, should such a candidate be unable to sit for the examination, withdrawal will be permitted and the examination fee will be refunded (please refer to our Exceptional Circumstances Policy). We strongly advise candidates to only sit the exam if they are fit and well do so.

In some circumstances, the College may be able to make an adjustment to account for pregnancy related conditions. Such requests fall in scope of this policy and requests will be considered on an individual basis and decisions may vary according to the exact nature of the requestor's needs

5. Limitations

While the RCOG actively supports the implementation of reasonable adjustments for eligible candidates, this may not always be possible. There may be limitations due to the facilities available at the venues used, unforeseen events and available resources.

We will only consider requests made within the process and procedure set out in this document.

6. Requesting a reasonable adjustment

To request an adjustment to a standard examination process or policy, please email ExamConfidentialEnquiries@RCOG.ORG.UK along with your supporting evidence, full name and college number. Please be specific about what adjustments you require.

We strongly recommend you submit your request **one month** before the [booking opening date](#) for the exam you are applying for but can be made up to and including the [published closing date](#). Requests submitted after the published closing date will normally not be considered. *Please note that the earlier you make your request, the more likely that your adjustments can be accommodated.*

You must make a new request with each examination application. Candidates will not be granted adjustments based on approved requests from previous examination applications.

The Exam Confidential Enquiries inbox is managed by a restricted number of senior RCOG staff, who will consider the request, inform the requestor of the outcome and, if agreed, work with appropriate RCOG staff members and examiners to enable the adjustment.

The RCOG will acknowledge receipt of any request for reasonable adjustment within two working days. Normally, we will confirm whether the request can be supported within ten working days of the request being submitted. However, in some instances there may be a

need for the RCOG to request further information, or additional time may be required to ensure the adjustment can be enabled. In such instances, the RCOG will contact the candidate to discuss.

7. Supporting evidence

Candidates must supply supporting evidence of their disability from an appropriate authority, such as; the candidate's GP, their college tutor or supervising consultant.

If a candidate is seeking reasonable adjustments for an SpLD, they must provide a report from an approved assessor. Approved assessors include:

- Specialist teachers who hold a practicing certificate, such as Dyslexia Action, BDA or PATOSS. Candidates can check if an assessor holds the appropriate qualifications on the [SASC \(SpLD Assessment Standards Committee\) website](#)
- A practicing chartered or educational psychologist who is registered with the Healthcare Professionals Council. A candidate can check if an assessor is registered on the [HCPC website](#)

This assessment needs to have been obtained after the age of 16. The report must include recommendations in regard to exam adjustments.

8. Consideration of reasonable adjustments

We will consider any requests for reasonable adjustments on an individual basis and decisions may vary according to the exact nature of the requestor's everyday needs. The College recognises that it is not possible or appropriate to attempt to define a pre-determined set of reasonable adjustments and therefore any decisions will need to be made on a case-by-case basis. Whilst it cannot be assumed that candidates with the same type of disability will all benefit from the same adjustments, where a precedent has already been set, previously awarded adjustments will be used as a starting point for consideration and discussion. Examples of previously approved adjustments, though not an exhaustive list, include:

- Extra time for candidates with SpLD
- Rest breaks for candidates with certain medical conditions or to allow medication to be taken.
- Exam material in large fonts or a specific colour
- A paper-based exam for our written exam provision (MRCOG Part 1 & 2 and DRCOG). Computer-based testing via Pearson VUE test centres is our standard delivery format. A paper-based format is available as an adjustment if required. However, the supporting evidence provided must specify the need for a paper-based exam - please refer to section 7 (Supporting Evidence)

Where the College has no precedent for an adjustment for a particular disability or special need or where the adjustment requested is more significant than any previous adjustment permitted, then the case may be referred to the Examinations & Assessment Committee. If the examination date is before the next meeting of the committee then the request will be forwarded for their consideration by confidential email, to the Vice President of Education,



the Chair of the Examinations & Assessment committee, the Director of Examinations and Assessment, and the Chair/Deputy Chair of the relevant examination. The Head of Examinations will coordinate and compile the response and keep the candidate advised throughout the process.

In all cases the College reserves the right to take independent advice to ensure that any proposed adjustments are appropriate and in accordance with any applicable legislation.

9. Confidentiality

The RCOG will manage all requests in the strictest of confidence and the information provided within the request will only be used for the purpose of assessing the request. Information about any characteristics within the Equality Act (2010) is deemed sensitive personal data and therefore the RCOG is required by law to process the information fairly and lawfully. The RCOG will keep all correspondence and documentation received in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations, ensuring secure records management.

The RCOG will make information available only to those who need to know it in order to process a request or to enable the requested adjustment, based on the requirements of the Equality Act (2010).

10. Data retention

The RCOG will retain an active file of logged data pertaining to notifications of requests, consisting of candidates' names as well as a broad classification system of the requests in question, for 12 months, after which the data will be destroyed.

11. References

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