

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Medical Training Initiative (MTI) Scheme

Candidate selection interviews

Reasonable Adjustment Policy

The RCOG will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of this policy and the reasonable adjustment process. Feedback from candidates, interview panel members and observers and support 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 interviews for all MTI application candidates selected for interview. This document sets out the process and policies we follow to facilitate reasonable adjustments to our standard MTI selection interview 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 interview situation. It is not designed to give any type of advantage to candidates in the receiving of additional accommodations. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of the interview 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 interview 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 parent breast-feeding an infant to have access to suitable feeding facilities during the interview.

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 and those shortlisted for MTI interviews who are pregnant must contact the MTI Office 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 interview adjustment is requested

In such circumstances, should such a candidate be unable to sit for the interview, please contact the RCOG MTI Office with the email subject: RCOG MTI Selection Interview withdrawal [your College number]

i) please outline your request (withdrawal)

ii) provide appropriate documentary supporting evidence, such as medical certificates or letter from GP/doctor/Consultant/qualified healthcare practitioner

Withdrawal will be permitted and the candidate MTI application fee will be refunded. We strongly advise candidates only undertake an interview if they are fit and well to 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 format of the online interviews, facilities available in the country where interview is taking place, unforeseen events and available resources.

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

6. Requesting a reasonable adjustment

To request an adjustment for MTI selection interview please email MTI@rcog.org.uk. Please specify in your email exactly what adjustments you require. Your email must include your full name, college number and have supporting evidence attached.

We strongly recommend you submit your request at the time of submitting your completed MTI Application form. Candidates can submit a request subsequently, but this must be received by the RCOG no later than 4 weeks before the date of the MTI selection interview to guarantee that we are able to organise these.

You must make a new request with each MTI application. Candidates will not be granted adjustments based on approved requests from previous MTI applications. This information will not be held on file.

The MTI inbox is managed by the MTI Coordinator, who will consider the request, inform the requestor of the outcome and, if agreed, work with appropriate RCOG staff members and interview panel members 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 independent authority, such as; the candidate's doctor, their tutor or supervising consultant.

If a candidate is seeking reasonable adjustments for an SpLD, they must provide a report from an approved independent assessor, such as a specialist or educational psychologist.

This assessment needs to have been obtained after the age of 16. The report must include recommendations in regard to interview 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.
- Interview material in large fonts or a specific colour
- Reading out of questions presented on screen to candidates

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 RCOG MTI Committee. If the interview 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 MTI committee, the Director of Education, and the MTI Officer. The MTI Coordinator 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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