

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

A clear distinction is drawn between:

- Appeals (this is pertaining to a single diet of the examination when the outcome is disputed)
- Complaints (relating to adverse incidents in an examination contrary to regulations or standards)
- Requests for consideration of Mitigating Circumstances beyond a candidate's control (serious, unforeseen and unpredictable that significantly affects a candidate's performance)
- Requests for Reasonable Adjustments

The appellant's marks/result will not be altered.

The JCIE has a separate mechanism for each of these. Material alterations to any of the above Policies will trigger an equality and diversity impact assessment. Collated reports indicating number, theme, outcome and E&D impact are discussed as a standing item at the meetings of the JCIE.

Reasonable Adjustments to Examinations

The Equality Act 2010* requires an awarding body to make Reasonable Adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled.

* Separate legislation is in place in Northern Ireland. However, the definitions and procedures in this document relating to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments will apply.

If any candidate is unable, in line with the Equality Act 2010, to be assessed by the methods set out in the JCIE Regulations, then the JCIE may make Reasonable Adjustments to the examination.

The nature of these Adjustments will vary in terms of the nature and extent of the candidate's difficulty or disability, and the individual requirements of the examination, but will be to the purpose that no candidate is disadvantaged by virtue of their disability or other special need. Reasonable Adjustments should not compromise competency standards required for all. Surgery is a craft specialty and will place some restrictions on types of disabilities that can be 'reasonably' accommodated.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on several factors which will include, but are not limited to:

- the needs of the disabled candidate
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment
- the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates

An Adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, unreasonable timeframes or affects the security of the examination. In considering requests for Reasonable Adjustments, the JCIE has a responsibility to ensure that the integrity of the examination is preserved.

Any candidate who requires Reasonable Adjustments must declare this at the time of application and will be asked to submit full written details of any Reasonable Adjustments they wish to request. Candidates whose need for special arrangements only occurs after the submission of their application must contact the JCIE as soon as practicable but within 30 working days in advance of any examination to ensure permitted arrangements can be put in place.

Requests for Reasonable Adjustments can only be made prospectively. Failing candidates will receive feedback which will stress that they must present themselves fit and prepared and will be asked to consider, alongside their Principal Referee (Programme Director/Head of Department), whether they may have any condition requiring Reasonable Adjustments, and if so to seek evidence to support this **before** any subsequent attempt at the examination. In the event of a late diagnosis of a disability supported by an appropriate specialist assessment recommending reasonable adjustments, failed previous examination attempts without the benefit of reasonable adjustments will be nullified. Applications must be made in writing to enquiries@jcie.org.uk.

Consideration of Arrangements

1. The provision of a paper version of the test

The Section 1 test is designed for computer delivery and marking. Surgeons are required to use computer based medical records on a daily basis and so a candidate who suggested that they would require a paper version would need to be able to demonstrate what adjustments are made for them in the workplace to accommodate this.

2. The provision of extra time

Physical disability/ Sensory impairment/ Medical condition

The candidate is required to submit evidence of their normal way of working and that the candidate has persistent and significant difficulties which substantially impact learning and/or in the workplace, confirmed by a formal diagnosis from a registered specialist such as a Hospital Consultant, and workplace adjustments report by candidate's hospital Occupational Health department.

Learning difficulties[†]

The candidate is required to submit a report from an Educational/Chartered Psychologist or Specialist Assessor which makes a recommendation for extra time. The JCIE will accept reports from the following:

An Educational/Chartered Psychologist registered with the Health & Care Professions Council in the UK (hcpc-uk.org)

An Educational/Chartered Psychologist registered with The Psychological Society of Ireland (psychologicalsociety.ie)

A Specialist Assessor who holds a SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) with an updated CPD, registered with the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (sasc.org.uk)

If a diagnosis of dyslexia has been made with a recommendation for standard extra time of 25%, then 25% extra time will be added for any reading component in the examination. If the recommendation *exceeds* a request for 25% extra time, then all of the raw data and test scores must be submitted in addition to the final report for review by an independent Educational Psychologist.

To qualify for 50% extra time, the test scores must be very substantially below average. This is a rare and exceptional arrangement. An assessment report in the case of dyslexia, should have been completed at the age of 16 years or over.

† If the candidate's first language is not English, underlying difficulties in the first language must be demonstrated. The candidate's difficulties must not be due to their limited acquisition of the English language. The candidate must have adequate proficiency in English to communicate with patients, healthcare professionals and the wider community at a standard expected of a Day One Consultant in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Re-sit candidates

If a diagnostic assessment report supporting reasonable adjustment for 25% extra time has been granted for the JCIE examinations within the previous 24 months, a new application for 26 - 50% extra time is not acceptable, except under exceptional circumstances and supported by further diagnostic assessment report from a second independent registered Educational Psychologist or active Specialist Assessor with updated CPD and Assessment Practising Certificate.

3. The use of a coloured overlay

Candidates who require to use a coloured overlay are required to declare this giving 30 working days' notice in advance of any examination to ensure permitted arrangements can be put in place.

4. The use of text to speech software

JCIE is unable to offer this as a Reasonable Adjustment due to the complexity of different types of questions, medical terminology and test security considerations.

This is not an exclusive list but indicative of most common Adjustments made for the JCIE examinations.

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

Waitlist

It should be noted that extra time places in Section 2 may be restricted and entry will be granted strictly in order of date of receipt of current application for Section 1. Please be assured that every effort is made to accommodate all extra time candidates into their preferred option for Section 2 but this cannot be guaranteed and an alternative date may have to be given. Candidates granted extra time are managed on a separate extra time waitlist to ensure that reasonable adjustments are applied and to maintain smooth running and integrity of the examination process.

Confidentiality

All information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the JCIE.