

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN ASSESSMENT

Purpose

The New Zealand College of Sexual and Reproductive Health (NZCSRH) recognises that at times a trainee may not be able to meet the expectations outlined in the NZCSRH Regulations. This policy outlines the approach by NZCSRH to requests for special consideration in assessment during a trainee's NZCSRH Fellowship Training.

The NZCSRH Special Considerations Policy applies to assessment under exceptional circumstances, or to assessment with ongoing conditions. Trainees experiencing exceptional circumstances, or who have an ongoing condition that may impact an assessment, may apply for special consideration subject to this policy.

This policy ensures that trainees requiring special consideration are supported through fair and transparent processes that uphold the integrity of assessment and align with expected NZCSRH Fellowship Training Programme standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all trainees enrolled in the NZCSRH Fellowship Training Programme, and covers all key assessments, including, but not limited to:

- Summative Assessment Reports (six-monthly)
- Formative Appraisal Reports (three-monthly)
- Clinical Training Summaries
- Mini-CEX reports
- 360-degree feedback
- DOPs assessments

Definitions

Exceptional Circumstances: Temporary, unforeseen circumstances that significantly impact a trainee's ability to participate in, or perform in, assessments.

Ongoing Condition or Impairment: Any physical, mental, cognitive, or sensory condition that is long-term, recurrent, or expected to persist for an extended period and may impact a trainee's ability to fully participate in training or assessment activities without appropriate support or adjustments.

Reasonable Adjustments: Modifications to assessment conditions for trainees with documented long-term conditions or impairments.



Details

The following principles will be used in dealing with trainee appeals:

- **Responsiveness:** The appeal will be dealt with professionally, sensitively, and as quickly as is practicable.
- **Confidentiality:** Details regarding the issue or incident will not be distributed beyond those affected and/or part of the decision-taking body. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that details are not revealed.
- **Right of Response:** Any trainee and supervisor involved in an appeal will be notified and provided with an opportunity to respond.
- **Fairness:** Trainees and supervisors involved in an appeal will have a right to a fair hearing.
- **Impartiality:** All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure decisions are based on objective evidence.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for managing special consideration requests is shared across several roles within the NZCSRH Fellowship Training Programme.

- Trainees are expected to disclose relevant circumstances in a timely manner and provide appropriate documentation to support their application.
- Supervisors play a key role in supporting trainees through the process and contributing relevant input to the assessment of the situation.
- The NZCSRH Administrator and Training Liaison serve as the initial point of contact and facilitate communication between the trainee and the Education Advisory Committee (EAC).
- The EAC is responsible for reviewing applications, making decisions based on the evidence provided, and ensuring that outcomes are appropriately documented.

Eligibility Criteria

Exceptional Circumstances:

Special consideration may be granted for the following temporary, unforeseen circumstances that significantly impact a trainee's ability to participate in or perform in assessments:

- **Health-related**
 - Acute physical illness or injury (e.g., surgery, hospitalisation)
 - Mental health crises
 - Infectious diseases requiring isolation (e.g., COVID-19)
 - Adverse reactions to medication or treatment
 - Sudden deterioration of a chronic condition
- **Family and personal circumstances**
 - Bereavement (immediate or close family member, significant others)
 - Family emergencies (e.g., serious illness of a dependent)
 - Caring responsibilities (e.g., unexpected childcare breakdown)
 - Domestic violence or personal safety concerns
 - Relationship breakdown with significant emotional impact



- Environmental and logistical
 - Natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes, floods)
 - Major transport disruptions (e.g., cancelled flights, road closures)
 - Loss of accommodation due to emergency (e.g., fire, eviction)
 - Technological failures during remote assessments (e.g., internet outage)
- Administrative or institutional issues
 - Errors in scheduling or communication of assessments
 - Delays in receiving required documentation or feedback
 - Misalignment between clinical placement and assessment timing
- Other circumstances that may be considered
 - Religious or cultural observances (if they conflict with assessment timing)
 - Legal obligations (e.g., jury duty, court appearances)
 - Participation in significant professional development (e.g., presenting at a major conference)

Ongoing Conditions

Special consideration may be granted in the form of reasonable adjustments for ongoing conditions or impairments that may significantly impact a trainee's ability to participate in or perform in assessments. Ongoing conditions that may require reasonable adjustments may include:

- Physical and mobility impairments
 - Musculoskeletal injuries (e.g., fractures, chronic pain)
 - Arthritis or joint conditions
 - Neurological conditions (e.g., multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy)
 - Post-surgical recovery
- Sensory impairments
 - Visual impairments (e.g., low vision, colour blindness)
 - Hearing impairments (e.g., partial or full deafness)
- Neurodivergent conditions
 - ADHD
 - Autism Spectrum Conditions
 - Dyslexia/Dyspraxia/Dyscalculia
- Mental health conditions
 - Depression
 - Anxiety disorders
 - PTSD
 - Bipolar disorder
- Pregnancy and postpartum
 - Pregnancy-related issues (e.g. fatigue, nausea, or mobility limitations)
 - Postpartum recovery and breastfeeding needs
- Chronic medical conditions
 - Diabetes



- Epilepsy
 - Autoimmune disorders
 - Cardiovascular conditions
 - Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Other considerations
 - Speech or language impairments
 - Medication side effects
 - Temporary impairments (e.g., concussion, recovery from illness)
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- Other considerations will be considered on a case-by-case basis

Application Process

For special consideration due to exceptional circumstances, trainees must contact the Training Liaison as soon as feasible, preferably within five (5) working days of the affected assessment to request special consideration.

For special consideration due to ongoing conditions, trainees must apply to the Training Director prior to the assessment. It is recommended that trainees who have ongoing conditions notify the Training Director at the beginning of their training programme.

Supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, statutory declaration) must be included.

Applications are treated confidentially and assessed by the EAC.

Decision-Making

The EAC will review applications based on evidence and impact on assessment.

The EAC will decide on appropriate actions, which may include:

- Deferral or rescheduling of assessments
- Alternative assessment formats
- Extensions for documentation submission
- No change (if criteria not met)

A formal record of any discussions and findings shall be taken and attached to the trainee's file. The trainee will be kept informed of the progress of the application.

Assessment Adjustments

Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments to assessments may be made, such as:

- Extended time for written components
- Modified clinical scenarios
- Additional supervision or feedback
- Adjusted deadlines for portfolio submissions



Disputes

Trainees may appeal the EAC decision regarding special consideration and request a reconsideration of decision with referral to the NZCSRH Appeals Policy.

In the first instance, the EAC shall hear appeals that request reconsideration of decisions regarding special consideration.

Should the trainee wish to appeal the EAC's reconsidered decision, the matter will be referred to the NZSRHECT Board in accordance with the NZCSRH Complaints Policy.

Policy Owner	EAC
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