



P023 - ACSEP Special Consideration (Training and Examination) Policy

Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the criteria and processes for applying for special consideration in relation to the sitting of an ACSEP examination or undertaking ACSEP training assessment activities. The purpose of this policy is to enable mitigation of unreasonable barriers to assessment activities caused by exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances are those not ordinarily encountered or anticipated that are beyond the control of an applicant or trainee.

It is ACSEP's mission to provide and promote excellence in training and continuing professional development and the P023 ACSEP Special Consideration (Training and Examination) Policy supports this mission by seeking to establish an appropriate approach to facilitating and managing fair examination and training assessment processes. It sets out how and when special consideration applications must be made, how they will be considered, and the possible outcomes for different types of circumstances, and assessments. The following are not covered by this policy:

- a) Failure to meet the required standard in an ACSEP assessment
- b) Late examination applications
- c) Exhausted examination attempts
- d) Exhausted time limits to complete training
- e) Late training applications

The P023 ACSEP Special Consideration (Training and Examination) Policy sits alongside the most updated ACSEP Training Manual, online training documents and other relevant ACSEP policies. It applies to ACSEP Membership and prospective trainees.

Introduction

Applications for special consideration will be considered on their merits in accordance with this policy. Where some form of special consideration is granted by ACSEP based on the existence of exceptional circumstances, it must be understood that this will not excuse the individual from meeting a requirement or standard for performance or qualifications which have been objectively set by the college. The policy does not apply once a result/outcome for an assessment has been determined and/or communicated to an individual. In such circumstances, refer instead to the policy document P019 ACSEP Review, Reconsideration and Appeals Policy.



Contents

Purpose and Scope.....	1
Introduction	1
POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCESS.....	2
1. Grounds for Special Consideration	2
2. Grounds for Special Consideration - Details	3
3. Ineligible Grounds for Special Consideration.....	4
4. Special Consideration for Alternative Arrangements for Examination / Assessment	5
5. Application Process and Timelines	5
6. Supporting documentation.....	6
7. Late Applications.....	7
8. Assessment of Applications for Special Consideration	7
9. Outcomes of an application	8
10. Complaints Process.....	9
11. Reporting.....	9
12. Records Management	9
13. Related Legislation and Documents	9
14. Feedback.....	10
15. Approval and Review Details.....	10

POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCESS

1. Grounds for Special Consideration

1.1. Circumstances which may require special consideration and/ or special arrangements are:

- a) permanent and longstanding impairment and temporary impairment on medical grounds
- b) non-medical or compassionate grounds
- c) serious disruption
- d) essential commitments (religious, cultural, societal or legal)
- e) technical problems during an examination

Any of these can be a one-off circumstance or ongoing and will be considered upon the merits of each situation. ACSEP also accepts that the list detailed may not be exhaustive and that other specific individual circumstances may give rise to grounds for consideration under this policy.



2. Grounds for Special Consideration - Details

- 2.1. Longstanding or Temporary Impairment medical grounds must comprise of a diagnosed illness or injury (physical and/or psychological).
- 2.2. Although openly taken on a case by case basis pregnancy perse is not considered solely medical grounds for special consideration and it is recommended that training and examination timeline planning around known pregnancy take place. An associated medical condition due to pregnancy is considered a medical grounds and other associated issues related to pregnancy can be considered for special consideration on a case by case basis.
- 2.3. Special Consideration on compassionate grounds include:
 - (a) The death of a close family member; or
 - (b) Serious illness or injury of a close family member
 - (c) The unexpected preterm birth or unexpected adoption of a child
 - (d) Severe stress resulting from extreme hardship or trauma (e.g. victim of crime)
- 2.4. It is a candidate's responsibility to determine his/her physical and/or mental fitness to participate in any ACSEP examination or assessment process.
 - (a) A candidate can and should withdraw from sitting the examination should a circumstance they face have the potential to impact adversely on their performance.
 - (b) Failure to withdraw when there was opportunity to do will be considered when reviewing all applications.
 - (c) If any trainee is experiencing difficulties help can be sought directly from the college via Clinical Training Supervisor, Zone Training Coordinator or National Office.
- 2.5. Technical or procedural issues encountered during an examination will be considered grounds for special consideration only if the circumstance is acknowledged at the time by the examiner. If a technical or procedural issue is encountered during an examination, the candidate must make the examiner aware immediately at time of issue.
- 2.6. The college acknowledges there is stress related to examinations and workplace commitments, stress which is in the expected range will not be considered under the P023 Special Consideration (Training and Examination) policy. Trainees who are experiencing significant difficulty and mental health issues related to training requirements should make an application under the temporary impairment, medical grounds category.



3. Ineligible Grounds for Special Consideration

The following examples would not normally be regarded by ACSEP as exceptional circumstances for the purposes of applying for special consideration.

[note this list is not exhaustive and symbol * refers to examinations only]

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Stress which would ordinarily be associated with preparation for or performance in examinations or other forms of assessment | b) Stress related to the result of travel arrangements made by the individual submitting the application* |
| c) Knowingly attempting an assessment with inadequate preparation, in the absence of factors that may be considered exceptional by their nature | d) Stress such as resulting from relationship difficulties minor illness or undiagnosed medical condition affecting the individual |
| e) Pre-existing illness or medical condition affecting the immediate family member, partner or close relative which is not regarded as acute and substantive | f) Excessive work commitments, including specific rostering arrangements leading up to examinations* |
| g) Work-related stress such as may be met during normal medical practice | h) The inability of the individual to organize their time effectively to meet administrative requirements/deadlines |
| i) Ignorance of relevant published regulations and/or policies | j) Forgetting a deadline/submission date for a work-based assessment |
| k) Computer-related or other similar personal technology failure leading up to examination or assessment due date | l) Loss or theft of books or notes or similar materials* |
| m) Decisions to undertake optional commitments of a personal nature | n) Circumstances where alternative arrangements were available |
| o) Demands of community sport, clubs, social or extra-curricular activity | p) Recreational travel or planned events such as weddings |



4. Special Consideration for Alternative Arrangements for Examination / Assessment

- 4.1. Within the scope of this policy it may also be possible for a person to undertake training, assessment and examination under alternative or special conditions because of:
- (a) Permanent or chronic impairment or disability
 - (b) Religious observance requirements which do not permit participation in an assessment at a time or day
 - (c) Special consideration for alternative arrangements due to impact on relevant and important cultural practices including contemporary Aboriginal and Maori cultural practices. These can vary from community to community and should be considered on a case by case basis.
- 4.2. To be eligible for training/assessment to be undertaken under alternative arrangements, the individual must submit a written request to ACSEP in writing at least three (3) months before the due date of training/assessment or the date on which it is scheduled to be conducted. Such requests must clearly state/outline the type and date of the assessment for which alternative arrangements are sought.
- 4.3. In respect of impairment or disability grounds a detailed medical certificate or supporting documentation describing:
- (a) The nature of the impairment or disability
 - (b) The period the individual has suffered the impairment or disability
 - (c) The nature and frequency of treatment the individual requires for the condition causing the impairment or disability
 - (d) The nature and type of alternative arrangements required which are relevant to the individual's impairment or disability
- 4.4. In respect of religious and cultural observance grounds, the applicant must provide a declaration signifying that they have sought, but have not been able to obtain, dispensation from their religious organisation or community Elder to participate in the assessment on the day or at the time in question. ACSEP may also seek advice from an authority in the religion/cultural if appropriate prior to deciding in relation to an application made on the grounds of religious or cultural observance.

5. Application Process and Timelines

- 5.1. An application for special consideration must be submitted via ACSEP National Office and if in relation to examinations addressed to the Censor in Chief of the Board of Censors.
- 5.2. An application for special consideration cannot be made on behalf of any other candidate.



- 5.3. An application for special consideration in relation to an examination must be received within 72 hours (3 days including weekend) of completing the examination or a component of the examination.
- 5.4. The exception to this is the **ACSEP Clinical Exam** where an application must be received immediately following this examination. To delay this any further would impact on the release of candidate results which are generally released within 24 hours of the examination.
- 5.5. An application for special consideration which relates to an incident or technical issue that occurred during an examination the applicant must provide details of the incident. The incident must also have been brought to the attention of the invigilator, College Examiners and staff members present at the examination venue at the time it occurred.
- 5.6. An application for alternative arrangements for undertaking training/assessment must be received in writing at least three (3) months before the due date of training/assessment or the date on which it is scheduled to be conducted. (See 4.2)
- 5.7. A cost estimate (in relation to 5.6) will be provided as appropriate.
- 5.8. Applications will be de-identified and treated confidentially. Details of the circumstances relating to the application will only be reviewed by relevant ACSEP staff and Committee Members to enable a decision to be made in relation to the application.

6. Supporting documentation

- 6.1. Relevant supporting documentation must be submitted with all applications for special consideration and it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all required documentation to support the application as detailed in this policy. Evidence required will depend on the category of exceptional circumstance.
- 6.2. An application for special consideration on medical grounds must be accompanied by a current medical report or certificate. This certificate should be from a registered medical practitioner in Australia or New Zealand who is the candidate's treating practitioner and not a relative of the candidate. The medical certificate in respect to applicant's grounds for special consideration must contain details for each of the following points:
 - (a) the nature and severity of the medical condition
 - (b) The medical practitioner's opinion on the effect of the condition on the ability of the individual to participate in the examination/assessment
 - (c) To be considered as valid, the date which the medical practitioner examined the individual must have been prior to and within 1 week or on the date of the examination/assessment but no later



- 6.3. An application for special consideration on compassionate grounds must include, as relevant:
- (a) Any bereavement notices (or)
 - (b) A statutory declaration (or)
 - (c) A copy of a Police incident report (or)
 - (d) A current medical certificate or report from the treating practitioner where illness of a partner, child or member of the candidate's immediate family, including the name of the person and nature and severity of the illness
- 6.4. Applications on the grounds of religious observance must include a statement from a religious leader of the organisation advising that a dispensation from the religious observance in question has not been allowed.
- 6.5. Applicants in all circumstances may be required to provide further information or documentation, as requested by ACSEP.

7. Late Applications

- 7.1. Late applications made outside the required timeframe, or late associated documentation may still be submitted, but may only be accepted if the CEO/Board of Censors/approved delegate is satisfied that it was not possible for the application to have been made by the required date.
- 7.2. Late applications must include an outline of the reason(s) why the application was not submitted by the required date, as well as all other documentation and information stipulated in this policy, any other relevant regulations/policies.

8. Assessment of Applications for Special Consideration

- 8.1. Depending on the examination/assessment and the type of special consideration being applied for, an application submitted for special consideration will be assessed by the Board of Censors or relevant college committee.
- 8.2. As far as is possible, applications for special consideration will be regarded in the strictest confidence and ACSEP will strive to maintain the anonymity of individuals who apply. Where necessary, the Chair of the committee considering the application may inform other members of that body of details of the circumstances relating to the application to enable a decision to be made in relation to the application.



8.3. In deciding for or against special consideration, factors such as the following will be considered:

- (a) The extent to which the circumstances cited in the application are exceptional in that they could reasonably be preventing the individual from meeting the requirement(s) in question, or as having adversely impacted on their performance in the assessment
- (b) The extent to which the circumstances cited are considered to have been foreseeable and/or avoidable by the individual
- (c) The degree to which the exceptional circumstances claimed in the application are supported by the documentation provided
- (d) Previous College decisions in relation to other applications citing similar grounds.

8.4. For ACSEP examination special consideration the Board of Censors may also take into consideration:

- (a) Past performance of the applicant
- (b) Performance in other sections of the examination (where relevant) of the applicant
- (c) Proximity of the results to the examination cut score (pass mark) of the applicant

9. Outcomes of an application

9.1. The outcome of an application will be that special consideration is granted, or that special consideration is not granted.

9.2. An applicant will be notified in writing of the outcome of his/her application.

9.3. Where special consideration is granted, the trainee will not be excused from meeting a requirement, a prerequisite, a standard for performance or qualification any of which have been objectively set by ACSEP.

9.4. Where an examination comprises more than one component, failure to complete all examination components will preclude the candidate's ability to pass, regardless of the outcome of an application for special consideration.

9.5. The outcome for a technical or procedural issue encountered during an examination will be resolution during examination/assessment where possible and rescheduling of examination if circumstances dictate.



- 9.6. If the applicant is not satisfied with an outcome for Special Consideration, they may wish to pursue the College Appeals Process. For more detail please see P019 ACSEP Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy.

10. Complaints Process

- 10.1. It is ACSEP policy that any adverse feedback (written or verbal) from membership or external personnel about college policy or procedures will be investigated thoroughly as per the most current version of the P002 ACSEP Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- 10.2. ACSEP will take appropriate action against any persons behaving in a way that falls within the range of unacceptable behaviour as outlined within the College's various policies on Code of Ethics and Professional Behaviour, Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination, Cultural Diversity and Ethics. This may include disciplinary action under the ACSEP rules and constitution.
- 10.3. All parties involved will be notified either in writing or verbally of the outcome from the ACSEP National Office and for severe breaches, incidents may be referred to ACSEP Legal Counsel and Fair Work Australia.

11. Reporting

No additional reporting outside of this policy is required. The College shall publish annually a report on the activities of the Board of Censors Committee and other relevant ACSEP committees including the number of special consideration applications lodged and the results of such applications.

12. Records Management

Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in a recognised ACSEP record keeping system. Records in relation to registrar placements will be managed and maintained at ACSEP in accordance to the P004 ACSEP Privacy Policy and the P012 ACSEP Records Management Policy and associated procedures.

13. Related Legislation and Documents

ASCEP Training Manual <https://www.acsep.org.au/members/resources/trainingmanual>
P002 ACSEP Grievance Policy and Procedure
P004 ACSEP Privacy Policy
P011 ACSEP Deferral, Leave and Withdrawal from Training Policy



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SPORT AND EXERCISE PHYSICIANS

P012 ACSEP Records Management Policy

P015 ACSEP Code of Ethics and Professional Behaviour Policy

P019 Review, Reconsideration and Appeals Policy

14. Feedback

ACSEP staff or membership may provide feedback about this document by emailing ACSEP Programs, Policy and Systems Administrator via nationaloffice@acsep.org.au

15. Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	ACSEP CEO and ACSEP Board of Directors (Executive)
Advisor or Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	ACSEP CEO, Board of Censors, relevant committee
Policy Administrator	ACSEP Programs and Systems Administrator
Next Review Date	1/7/2019

Approval and Amendment History	V2 - 01/07/2018 Redrafted by Programs and Systems Administrator Reviewed by ACSEP CEO & Operations Manager Ratified by Board Executive V1 - 05/04/2018 Developed and drafted by ACSEP CEO
Original Approval Authority	ACSEP CEO
Effective Date	05/04/2018
Amendment Authority and Date	N/A
Notes:	