

# Additional Support Requests Policy and Procedure

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## 1. Purpose and Scope

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG/College) acknowledges that an individual engaging with RANZCOG may require additional support when undertaking a RANZCOG assessment. The affected person must make an application under this Policy for appropriate relief or remedies.

The Policy applies to individuals with a current or pre-existing medical condition or situation that they are aware of well in advance of an assessment.

For the purpose of this policy, an assessment is any process of documenting clinical and non-clinical knowledge and skills in measurable terms. The assessments include but are not limited to the following:

- Selection applications and interviews for all RANZCOG programs
- Applications and Interviews for all Specialist International Medical Graduate pathways
- All examinations that are part of RANZCOG training program(s)
- All other requirements as deemed necessary by the College for obtaining RANZCOG qualifications.

### Additional Support

RANZCOG aims to support applicants by ensuring its assessments are inclusive and accessible. This is achieved by undertaking reasonable modifications to an assessment where requested by an applicant. RANZCOG defines a reasonable adjustment as assistance, provision of amenities or modification to the delivery of an assessment to reduce barriers in completing its assessments.

This policy does not cover individuals who require exceptions made to their regulated assessment requirements. Those processes are managed in the *Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure*.

#### 1.1. Policy

RANZCOG recognises that support may affect an individual's ability to access or perform as expected during an assessment or meet requirements as directed by a RANZCOG Regulation or Policy.

This Policy allows applicants to apply for additional support for an assessment.

Persons engaging with this policy must be the main contact person. RANZCOG will not correspond with anyone other than the applicant. In the case where an applicant becomes incapacitated, RANZCOG will engage with a nominated representative on their behalf.

## 2. Additional Support Requests

### 2.1. Application Process

Additional support requests should be made when applying for the relevant assessment where possible. No fees will be charged for such requests.

Applications must be addressed to the overseeing body responsible for the assessment and submitted via email. Overseeing body may include Committee, Working Group, Executive Director, or Head of the relevant unit.

A request should detail the applicant's reasons for requiring support and modifications or assistance needed for an applicant when undertaking an assessment (see *Appendix 1*). Requests should be accompanied by relevant supporting documentation. This may include letters from a treating practitioner.

Applicants must read relevant Regulations and/or Policies to understand the parameters of their assessment when applying.

### 2.2. Consideration of Applications

Applications will be reviewed by the relevant department and sent to the overseeing body responsible for the assessment where necessary. They will determine the outcome of the request.

The body will be assessing the content of the request against the below criteria:

- The timeframe between the application and the assessment.
- The request is considered reasonable and justified against the individuals, and the modification can be accommodated.
- The extent to which the request impacts RANZCOG's obligation to the wider community, public interest, and patient safety.
- If the request severely conflicts with existing Regulations and Policies.
- If the request is considered fair and reasonable and does not disadvantage others undertaking the same RANZCOG programs or processes.

RANZCOG reserves the right to deny an application requesting additional support where relevant supporting documents are not provided or if RANZCOG believes the application is disingenuous.

### 2.3. Outcomes

Once an application has been reviewed and an outcome is determined, RANZCOG will aim to provide a response within a reasonable timeframe. However, timeframes cannot be guaranteed and can vary due to the complexity of the request, the need to obtain additional documentation, and/or the level of authority required to review the application.

Applicants are notified in writing via their email address of the outcome of their application. Where outcomes are not considered favourable, applicants will be provided with justification for the decision by the overseeing Body.

The potential outcomes for requests concerning a RANZCOG assessment are detailed in *Appendix 2*.

### 3. Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of College decisions

As with all College decisions, applicants have the right to seek reconsideration, review and/or appeal of a decision pursuant to the *RANZCOG Reconsideration, Review and Appeals of Decisions Policy* as applicable. These processes are handled confidentially and are conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Additionally, they serve to provide a mechanism by which any individual who is dissatisfied with a College decision can seek redress without fear of reprisal. These policies may be accessed via the College website at *Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of Decisions*.

### 4. Wellbeing Support

We recognise that Applicants under this Policy may need extra support and advise the following support available to them:

#### Internal support

RANZCOG Training Support Unit is a confidential service for trainees and SIMGs to discuss any concerns related to their wellbeing on +61 (08) 6102 2096 or by email at [traineeliason@ranzcog.edu.au](mailto:traineeliason@ranzcog.edu.au).

#### External counselling or assistance

There are a range of organisations external to the College who can assist, including Employer Assistance Programs (EAPs); Practitioner Advisory Services; Australian Medical Association support bodies; New Zealand Doctors Health Advisory Services; and organisations such as Beyond Blue and Lifeline.

Converge International, specialists in psychology and wellbeing, is a service available for College Fellows, FRANZCOG trainees, SIMGs, Associate (Procedural and Advanced Procedural) trainees and staff.

All sessions are entirely confidential, and the first four sessions (in any 12-month period) are fully subsidised by the College. To contact Converge, call 1300 687 327 (Australia), 0800 666 367 (New Zealand) or from other countries on +61 3 8620 5300. To book a session online visit the Converge website.

Other external resources:

- Beyond Blue
- Lifeline
- Lifeline Aotearoa
- [DRS4DRS](#) (For Associate Procedural Members in Australia)
- [Doctors Health Advisory Services \(DHAS\)](#) (For Associate Procedural Members in Australia or New Zealand). Additional information and contact details for organisations mentioned above is available in the Member Support and Wellbeing Hub on the College [website](#).

### 5. Related RANZCOG documents

- RANZCOG Constitution
- RANZCOG Regulations
- RANZCOG Code of Conduct
- RANZCOG Organisational Values
- Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure
- Reconsideration, Review and Appeal of Decisions Policy
- Privacy Policy

## 6. Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Additional Support Examples

Additional Support: areas regarded as adequate grounds for requesting additional support.		Examples of support provided
MEDICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A serious illness or injury (physical or psychological) that requires additional assistance during an assessment.</li> <li>Disability impacting the applicant’s ability to perform during an assessment (physical or psychological).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disability access to a location</li> <li>A nominated staff member to assist the person on the day</li> <li>Penalty free rescheduling of assessment to new scheduled date.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pregnancy, a recent birth, or adoption-related assistance, including safe spaces for feeding and expressing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to a feeding/ expressing room</li> </ul>
CATASTROPHIC / POLITICAL / ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An event that prevents an applicant from accessing an assessment safely or does not allow the applicant the same opportunities as other persons undertaking a similar assessment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accommodate a new safe location to hold the assessment</li> <li>Penalty free rescheduling of assessment to next scheduled date.</li> </ul>
RELIGIOUS GROUNDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A College assessment significantly impacts the person’s ability to practise their religion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A prayer room</li> </ul>

### Appendix 2 – Additional Support Requests Outcomes

Nature of Assessment	Potential Outcomes
All assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable modifications to the delivery of the assessment are made that allow the applicant to undertake the assessment safely and comfortably.</li> <li>In cases where insufficient time is given to RANZCOG to consider/make reasonable modifications to the assessment, the applicant may have to wait until the next available assessment date.</li> <li>Other considerations, as deemed appropriate by the overseeing body may be granted.</li> <li>Declined, where a request is not granted, RANZCOG can suggest alternatives that may support the applicant.</li> <li>Declined, where there are no reasonable alternative options or time constraints prevent the adjustment from occurring.</li> </ul>

Version	Date of Version	Pages revised / Brief Explanation of Revision
v1	April 2023	Creation
V2	January 2024	Policy revised to reflect change in nomenclature.

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