



# Faculty of Public Health

Of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

Working to improve the public's health

## **FPH EXAMINATIONS POLICY FOR CANDIDATES REQUIRING ADJUSTMENTS**

The Faculty of Public Health aims to make every effort to accommodate the needs of candidates with permanent or temporary disabilities or needs, to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability, knowledge and expertise, without being disadvantaged.

### **Applications for Exceptional Arrangements for taking the Examinations**

Candidates should not be disadvantaged in the examination process in a way that they would not be in their normal working lives. As part of the Equal Opportunities Policy of the Faculty of Public Health, special arrangements for examinations will be made to enable the candidate to demonstrate his/her knowledge and understanding of the subject notwithstanding his/her disability. A flexible policy of exceptional arrangements will be adhered to in order to ensure that no candidate is disadvantaged because of his/her specific difficulties.

The Assistant Academic Registrar may, at their discretion, sanction exceptional arrangements for the conduct of the examination for candidates with special requirements or circumstances. The Assistant Academic Registrar is responsible for assessing the recommendations of performance assessment and recommending adjustments to the Faculty examinations. This is to ensure competency and continuity for each candidate and between candidates with similar disabilities.

Candidates who have any exceptional circumstances which may affect their physical ability to take the examinations, or which may call for extra measures on the part of the Faculty, must state this on their application form. Examples include:

- Long-term illness (at risk during sitting) e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, heart problems
- Physical impairment (affecting posture or ability to read/write) e.g. arthritis, dyslexia, visual impairment, spinal injury
- Special conditions e.g. deafness, pregnancy, wheelchair bound

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act, the Faculty of Public Health will make reasonable adjustments to minimise any potential disadvantage for candidates with long term illness or disability while maintaining the integrity of the examination and fairness to all candidates. The Faculty of Public Health is happy to discuss the requirements of candidates and will be as flexible as possible with arrangements. However, it should be noted that planning for the examination can take some time and it may not always be possible to accommodate special requirements at short notice. Therefore, it is essential that candidates needing exceptional arrangements notify the Faculty well in advance of the sitting so that the necessary adjustments can be appropriately planned, with discussion where appropriate with the candidate's trainer, Chair of Examiners, Programme Director and the Assistant Academic Registrar.

To qualify for consideration the following regulations must be met:

- Notification of exceptional arrangements, accompanied by the appropriate documentation, must be received by the Faculty as early as possible, and ideally with completed applications. If notification is not received by the closing date for applications, the Faculty may not be in a position to make the necessary adjustments.

- The candidate should supply:
  1. All written assessments relating to the situation and the last dated within 3 years, from medical consultants, general practitioners, occupational physicians and other relevant professionals. This must include a statement confirming that the candidate's difficulties warrant special examination arrangements. The Faculty reserves the right to request an additional independent assessment. Due to the style of the Part B/OSPHE being substantially different from the Part A exam, a new report will be required for the Part B/OSPHE regardless of how much time had elapsed since the last Part A report. Candidates will be required to sign a form declaring that full disclosure of information has been provided.
  2. A letter of support from their Training Programme Director or Faculty Advisor, to state that special arrangements are needed and to give an outline of what kind of arrangements would be helpful to the candidate. Candidates who are not in a UK training scheme should have the support of their current employer.

Such an application will be considered by the Assistant Academic Registrar. If a candidate is not able to supply the above documents before the application deadline, they may proceed to take the examination, but without special arrangements.

Once a decision has been made by the Assistant Academic Registrar, the Education Office will then confirm the decision in writing. Candidates are required to agree in writing to the adjustments and to inform the Faculty of any changes in their circumstances between the agreement and the actual examination.

Candidates have the right to appeal against the process by which the original decision was made. This can be done in writing to the Education Office for the attention of the Academic Registrar within **TWO** weeks of the date of the notification of the provision awarded. The Academic Registrar will not be involved in the initial decision by the Assistant Academic Registrar, and will make an independent adjudication. A response will be given within 10 working days.

Any candidate is welcome to bring a back support in the form of a roll or pillow to be used in connection with standard seating arrangements.

### **Dyslexic candidates sitting the Part A Examination**

Along with extra time and other adjustments that may be sanctioned by the Faculty, dyslexic candidates sitting the Part A Examination will be provided with a coloured sticker they can attach to their examination scripts. This is in order to ensure that during anonymous marking a dyslexic candidate is not penalised for typical dyslexic spelling and syntax errors. The sticker system is simply to bring to the attention of the marker that it is a dyslexic script and that there may be errors in written expression. Dyslexic candidates will not be penalised unduly for errors that have nothing to do with the understanding of the subject. Dyslexic candidates are under no obligation to use the sticker system and some may choose not to.

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