 Membership of the Royal College of General Practitioners (MRCGP)

Equality and Diversity Policy

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) is committed to equality of opportunity and to promoting diversity in all its practices, including assessments for MRCGP.

In providing assessments for the MRCGP, which is a public function of the RCGP, the College seeks to fulfil the equality duties set out in the Equality Act (2010), which provide for equality of opportunity between people with the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In its Membership assessments the RCGP therefore has due regard for the need to:

• eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
• advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
• foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes the duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities in all the RCGP’s functions.

In addition to the above legislation, in Good Medical Practice, the General Medical Council (GMC) makes it clear that doctors are expected to keep up to date with, and adhere to, the laws and codes of practice which are relevant to their work. This includes the requirements of equality and human rights law.

Good Medical Practice also states that doctors must not unfairly discriminate against patients or colleagues by allowing their personal views to affect their professional relationships or the treatment they provide or arrange.

This includes views about a patient’s or colleague’s lifestyle, culture or their social or economic status, as well as the characteristics protected by legislation. The same principles apply to examiners when conducting the MRCGP.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the RCGP’s Equality and Diversity Statement


Training

The RCGP ensures that examiners, administrative staff and others involved in MRCGP assessments, including role-players for the CSA, receive appropriate training in equality and diversity and comply with this policy. Examiners receive regular training in all aspects of equality and diversity, at the Examiners’ Annual Conference, which includes full coverage of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, both with regard to how to consider and mark cases that include aspects of diversity, as well as in their attitudes and professional marking duties towards candidates from diverse and varied backgrounds.
Monitoring

- The RCGP’s quality assurance mechanisms include checks to make sure that no unlawful discrimination takes place (either direct or indirect discrimination).
- This policy is monitored to ensure that it is up to date and compliant with current legislation.

Documentation and assessment material

The RCGP takes care to ensure that all documents for the MRCGP assessments are prepared in clear unambiguous language. Documents are available in large print or other alternative formats if needed. Assessment material is prepared in accordance with this equality and diversity policy, such that it discriminates between candidates only in terms of the abilities, knowledge and skills that are the subject of the assessment.

Candidate data

Data on candidates’ background is collected at registration with the RCGP and when they submit applications for examinations. By supplying this information candidates give their consent to its use for the following purposes:

- to allow RCGP to consider reasonable adjustments for declared disabilities that may affect candidates’ performance in an assessment
- to allow quality control of the assessment
- to monitor the operation of the RCGP’s equality and diversity policy
- personal data is also passed to the GMC for quality assurance purposes and to facilitate the awarding of Certificates of Completion of Training (CCTs)
- A summary of the data collected is used in conjunction with examination data in MRCGP Annual Reports.

Data will not be used in ways that might discriminate against candidates, but will be used to analyse assessment results in terms of candidate diversity. Anonymised data may be used to publish information about the assessment process.

Disability information will be treated as confidential and used only in planning and implementing reasonable adjustments, and in the reports described above.

Access to assessment centres

The RCGP undertakes, where possible, to use assessment centres that can accommodate candidates with disabilities, though it is not possible in each instance to guarantee that this will be the nearest centre available.

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments may be made for candidates who declare and provide evidence for disabilities in advance of taking an assessment. The RCGP makes every effort to ensure that adjustments are appropriate, proportionate and consistent, and such that they do not result in unfair advantage. The RCGP may seek
information about special arrangements previously made for candidates in training or other assessments.

Reasonable adjustments will also be made as far as possible for candidates who attend for an assessment with a disability which was not known at the time of application for the assessment. However, it may not always be possible to make appropriate arrangements in such cases without prior notice.

Reasonable adjustments may include provision for extra time, a separate area or room, or other such adjustments. In deciding what adjustment is reasonable, the RCGP will take account of a candidate’s personal circumstances and any professional advice given in the corroborative evidence of the disability that has been supplied, consulting the MRCGP Disability Advisor as necessary.

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