Recorded Consultation
Assessment - Information for Disability Assessors
The Recorded Consultation Assessment (RCA) has been developed as an interim assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic while the government’s lockdown and social distancing measures are in place. These preclude the normal running of the Clinical Skills Assessment at RCGP 30 Euston Square for the foreseeable future. The vast majority of GP/GP trainee consultations at present are either telephone or remote video consultations, and the aim of the RCA is to assess these types of consultations and any face to face consultations still taking place (likely to be undertaken with necessary PPE precautions).

Each candidate will submit 13 recorded consultations, which will comprise a variety of clinical encounters that have been selected using guidance produced by the College. The duration of each consultation may be more than 10 minutes but only the first 10 minutes will be assessed. This reflects the fact that the standard consultation time allocated for qualified NHS GPs is 10 minutes. These consultations will have been undertaken by the candidate, either within their own GP practices or from home (if isolating or shielding). Although the RCA is a new assessment, candidates will be very familiar with recording and storing consultations as part of their formative assessments. The cases submitted by candidates will be their own choice of either audio, video or face to face or any combination of the above. The recordings will be uploaded by the candidates on to a secure IT platform. Assessments will be carried out remotely by experienced RCGP examiners and results along with appropriate feedback will be given to candidates through their e-portfolio. It is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain patient consent following appropriate local GDPR and secure data storage guidance.

Candidates will choose recorded consultations which will have been carried out within their current working environment, and hence it would be expected that any reasonable adjustments required to enable their day to day work (such as special seating, aids, IT equipment and software etc.) would already be in place. Candidates will have adequate time to select their most preferred 13 consultations. Basic details of each submitted consultation will be entered in an easy to use electronic workbook. There is no expectation to read any additional paperwork while recording the consultations apart from what the candidate would otherwise do to carry out a safe consultation in their day to day practice. The RCA acknowledges that physical examinations being carried out in general practice at present are limited due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Candidates with a disability who usually need an adjustment to the conventional examination technique, additional equipment or an assistant in their day to day practice should continue with their normal practice and the RCA marking scheme will accommodate these variations.
In light of the recent COVID-19 social distancing measures, disability assessors may have to carry out new assessments using remote technology instead of a face to face meeting. The SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) has introduced minimum standards to be followed by disability assessors who will be conducting such remote assessments. It is acknowledged that remote assessments of disability will often use a limited range of tools and as such the recommendations from these assessments will need to be treated with caution. Such remote assessments may not provide an accurate diagnosis of a SpLD. As a consequence, any recommendations for reasonable adjustments made within the assessment report may have to be treated as preliminary until a full assessment can be carried out at a subsequent stage. Details of this guidance can be found here.

The SASC make clear in their guidance that assessments that can wait should wait, but we understand this might not be possible for all candidates and the College will therefore assess recommendations made using remote assessments with caution and on a case by case basis.

The College will at present accept preliminary findings and recommendations made from such assessments but only for exam sittings until the 30th September 2020. For exam sittings after the 30th September 2020, and once full face to face assessments will commence, candidates will be required to submit an updated full assessment report along with a new Request for Reasonable Adjustment Form. The College will review this guidance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and may change its recommendations in line with the government’s latest social distancing guidance.

It is the responsibility of the RCGP to make reasonable adjustments to any aspect of the delivery of the RCA that places the candidate at a disadvantage compared to a non-disabled candidate, provided this does not affect the competence standard/s being assessed. Where a reasonable adjustment is required to enable the candidate to perform a consultation in the workplace, it is not the responsibility of the RCGP to make such an adjustment. Candidates should liaise with the GP training practice or their employer regarding such adjustments.

Since the RCA is a new assessment, we are unable to provide any specific examples of reasonable adjustments granted to date. However, the College will monitor and audit any requests made by candidates and subsequent decisions or appeals in order to comply with our responsibilities as a qualification body (as per the Equality Act 2010).