

Participation by Fellows in preparatory courses for assessment policy

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Contact Officer:	Executive Officer, Assessment
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1. Overview

1.1. This policy defines the obligations of Fellows in relation to participation in preparatory courses (commercial and non-commercial) or training sessions for centrally administered College assessments.

1.2. The policy is applicable to Fellows of Divisions, Faculties and Chapters in Australia, New Zealand and overseas who are members of education committees, assessment committees, sub-committees, working groups, examining panels (written and clinical), regional examiners, coopted examiners or observers of clinical assessments.

2. Background and Purpose

2.1. The College administers a range of written and clinical assessments as part of the training programs offered by the Divisions, Faculties and Chapters.

2.2. Fellows directly involved in these assessments as contributors or assessors/examiners have particular knowledge of the content material, conduct, standard setting, and/or assessment criteria for these assessments.

2.3. The purpose of this policy is to articulate clearly for Fellows the College's position on participation in preparatory courses/lectures for centrally administered summative written and clinical assessments by Fellows directly involved in those assessments.

2.4. The College recognises the value of preparatory activities (including practice/trial assessments) for trainees preparing for centrally administered assessments. The invaluable role played by Fellows in coordinating, contributing to and examining for these assessments is also acknowledged.

2.5. In order to protect the integrity of the RACP assessment process, the College has a duty to prevent situations arising where there is a perception of direct, indirect, pecuniary or non-pecuniary duality or conflict of interest for Fellows, and to ensure that candidates are not advantaged or disadvantaged by Fellows' involvement in preparatory or training activities aimed directly at the assessment.

3. Policy

3.1. Definition of a Fellow directly involved in centrally administered assessments

- 3.1.1.** For the purpose of this policy the College defines a Fellow directly involved in a centrally administered assessment (Division, Faculty, and Chapter) as someone with explicit knowledge of the content of the relevant assessment within that year. This includes contributors or assessors/examiners.

3.2. Participation in Commercial Preparatory Courses

- 3.2.1.** The College defines a commercial course as any of the following:

3.2.1.1. A course where Fellows gain financially or are paid for participating in a given course. This would also include refusing payment to participate when other participants are being paid.

3.2.1.2. A course where the participation by certain Fellows in the course is used as a means to promote/advertise the course.

3.2.1.3. A course that is not under the auspices of the College, for example where it is not run by a State Committee. This does not include local hospital examination preparation, such as hospital lecture series.

3.2.2. Fellows directly involved in a centrally administered assessment may not participate in commercial preparatory courses/lectures for that assessment as this is regarded as a conflict of interest. For example, a Fellow involved in the College's Clinical Examination may not participate in a commercial preparatory course for the Clinical Examination.

3.2.3. Any Fellow directly involved in a centrally administered assessment who is in doubt as to whether a course would be considered by the College to be commercial should seek the advice of staff within the relevant College office.

3.2.4. The College will not advertise the commercial preparatory courses outlined in item 3.2.1.

3.3. Participation in Non-Commercial Preparatory Courses or Training Activities

3.3.1. The College defines a non-commercial course or training activity as any activity not covered by item 3.2.1.

3.3.2. Fellows directly involved in a centrally administered assessment are required to consider carefully the implications of participating in any non-commercial preparatory course or training activity.

3.3.3. If approached to participate in a non-commercial course or training activity, Fellows directly involved in a centrally administered assessment are required to ensure the extent of their involvement and the nature of the course is fully defined prior to making any decision, and consider whether their knowledge of the content of the upcoming assessment could be perceived as being potentially advantageous or disadvantageous to trainees.

- 3.3.4.** If a Fellow directly involved in a centrally administered assessment does agree to participate in a non-commercial course or training activity it must be in their capacity as a specialist physician and not as a College examiner/member of an assessment committee.
- 3.3.5.** Fellows directly involved in a centrally administered assessment must be aware of confidentiality and copyright issues with regard to RACP assessment processes.
- 3.3.6.** Any Fellow directly involved in a centrally administered assessment who is in doubt as to whether their participation in a non-commercial preparatory course or training activity would constitute a conflict of interest or not comply with this policy should seek the advice of staff within the relevant College office.
- 3.3.7.** Fellows who are directly involved in a centrally administered assessment must make their participation in any non-commercial preparatory course or training activity known to the College committee(s) or groups to which they belong.

3.4. Failure to comply with this policy

- 3.4.1.** In the event of a breach of this policy the College may take action against the Fellow(s) involved. Such action may include but not be limited to removal from the relevant assessment committee/panel of examiners. In cases of breach of confidentiality and copyright relating to RACP assessment process the College may seek to recover any costs relating to the development of examination materials.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1.** No legal or compliance issues have been identified in relation to this policy.