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Assessment - Policy

Area of College	Education, Learning & Assessment
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References/Legislation	
Associated RACP Documents	• Standards for RACP Assessment Programs • Academic Integrity in Training Policy and Process • Special Consideration for Assessment Policy • Progression through Training Policy • Training Support Policy and Process • Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process By-Law • Risk Management Policy • Information Security Policy • Retention and Disposal Schedule • Māori Data Governance Policy • Indigenous Data Collection Statement • Data Governance Policy
Applicability	RACP Training Programs

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1. INTRODUCTION

A range of assessments are integrated into the training programs offered by the RACP's Divisions, Faculties and Chapters to assess competence. These assessments are planned, implemented, evaluated and governed by the relevant education bodies of the College.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the principles that govern assessment processes across RACP training programs, consistent with the standards of the Australian Medical Council (AMC) and Te Kaunihera Rata o Aotearoa | the Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ).

3. SCOPE

This policy sets out the principles that define how assessment of trainee competence is planned, implemented, evaluated and governed at the RACP. This includes workplace-based assessments, examinations and other assessment activities that contribute to the learning function of assessment, progression and certification decisions within RACP training programs.

Assessment of Overseas Trained Physicians (OTPs) is not in the scope of this policy and is instead covered by the RACP Policy on Assessment of Overseas Trained Physicians and Paediatricians.

4. POLICY CONTENT

4.1. Principles of assessment

4.1.1. Clear educational value and purpose

To ensure that assessments align with the intended learning outcomes and educational activities of each training program. Assessment activities are aligned with relevant aspects of the Professional Practice Framework, curriculum standards and Learning, Teaching and Assessment program for each training program.

4.1.2. Programmatic assessment and blueprinting

A program of assessment maximises learning throughout the training program and provides evidence for high-stakes decisions about competence. Assessment programs involve repeat observations and assessments in varying contexts by multiple assessors.

Programs of assessment are aligned and blueprinted against curriculum standards, teaching and learning activities. Each individual assessment is blueprinted against the curriculum standards to ensure appropriate coverage of the relevant standards and is delivered in a format appropriate to the standard being assessed.

Decisions about progression and competence are based on overall performance against published standards and criteria, informed by multiple sources of assessment evidence across the program. Assessment processes are designed to support comparability and equitable application of standards across cohorts, locations and examination sittings.

4.1.3. Fair and transparent processes and decision making

Assessment standards and processes are equitable and defensible. Information about assessment standards, candidate requirements and decision-making processes is published where appropriate, while maintaining confidentiality, privacy and the integrity and security of assessment materials.

Program-level assessment standards, progression criteria and blueprints are made publicly available to support transparency, while secure assessment materials and confidential deliberations remain protected. Assessment processes are designed to be culturally safe and incorporate measures to identify and mitigate bias, racism and discrimination, including systemic bias, and promote consistency, equity and fairness in decision-making.

4.1.4. **Sustainability**

The resources required to develop, implement and maintain assessments are sustainable over time.

4.1.5. **Quality feedback**

Trainees are provided with constructive, respectful and culturally safe feedback following assessments to help them understand their performance, support their development and improve their practice Trainees have an opportunity to provide feedback on their assessment experiences.

To protect assessment integrity and confidentiality, individual candidate feedback does not include the release of secure examination questions, detailed marking rubrics, individual examiner marks, examiner notes or moderation deliberations.

4.1.6. **Appropriate support**

Clear communication and other appropriate resources are provided to trainees, assessors, examiners, participants involved in assessment delivery and relevant RACP staff.

Assessors and examiners are supported through mandatory training and quality assurance activities designed to promote consistent, fair and culturally safe assessment practices. This includes participation in facilitated cultural safety and racial bias training, calibration activities, and ongoing quality assurance processes that support assessors and examiners in identifying and mitigating bias, racism, and discrimination, including systemic bias, in assessment decision-making. Within examinations, communication between candidates, assessors, examiners and relevant staff follows established protocols that support fairness, consistency and assessment integrity.

The College recognises that assessment processes and outcomes, particularly in high-stakes contexts, may impact candidate wellbeing. Appropriate support services, resources and guidance are made available before, during and after assessment activities where appropriate. Assessment environments are designed to be inclusive, culturally safe and responsive to the diverse needs of candidates, supporting equitable participation and a positive assessment experience.

4.1.7. **Evidence-informed and practice-based**

Assessment approaches, design and delivery are informed by current evidence, best practice and relevant stakeholder perspectives, and are subject to a process of continuous quality improvement. The design, implementation and evaluation of assessments are informed by principles of validity, reliability and fairness. Assessment design and review processes include consultation with relevant stakeholders and, where appropriate, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Māori expertise to ensure assessments are responsive to cultural, clinical and local contexts. Assessment data and outcomes are routinely reviewed to identify patterns, monitor performance, detect potential inequities, bias, racism or discrimination,

including systemic bias, and inform continuous quality improvement and decision-making at programme and College levels.

The impact of assessment design and outcomes on trainee progression, learner experience and equitable participation is considered in the development, implementation and review of assessment programmes.

4.1.8. **Responsiveness to challenging external factors**

Assessment processes are adapted in response to challenging circumstances, while ensuring that the robustness of assessment is maintained.

Any adaptations are proportionate, clearly communicated and designed to maintain equivalence of assessment standards as far as reasonably practicable. Contingency arrangements may be implemented to support the delivery of assessments in the event of system, environmental or operational disruptions.

4.1.9. **Standardisation and acceptable variability in performance-based assessment**

Performance-based assessments, including structured clinical and oral examinations, are designed to be standardised and equivalent. While every reasonable effort is made to ensure consistency in delivery, minor and unavoidable variations may occur due to the nature of human interaction. These are addressed through examiner training that includes cultural safety and bias awareness, together with calibration and quality assurance processes, to ensure candidates are assessed against equivalent standards. Where variation may materially affect fairness or assessment outcomes, it is managed through relevant College processes.

4.1.10 **Assessment integrity, confidentiality and intellectual property**

Assessment integrity and College intellectual property are protected through appropriate controls, including secure handling of examination materials and protection of confidential assessment content. Assessment data is managed in accordance with RACP data governance, privacy and recordkeeping requirements, with appropriate controls applied across the collection, storage, access, use, reporting, retention and disposal of assessment data.

Data relating to Māori is managed in accordance with the College's Māori Data Governance Framework and associated governance requirements.

Data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is managed in accordance with relevant Indigenous data governance principles, recognising their rights and interests in the governance, use and reporting of data relating to them.

Appropriate controls are applied to minimise the risk of identification or re-identification, particularly where small cohorts or disaggregated data may reveal information about individuals or groups.

Assessment incidents and breaches are managed in accordance with established procedures to protect the integrity of assessment processes and maintain confidence in assessment outcomes.

4.2. Requirements for assessments and assessment programs

4.2.1 Committees responsible for assessments and programs of assessment are required to demonstrate progress towards the Standards for RACP Assessment Programs throughout the process of assessment planning, implementation and evaluation.

4.2.2 Committees overseeing assessment programs are required to ensure that assessment reports and relevant data are prepared, reported through established

governance pathways, and considered to support governance oversight, quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Assessment-related risks are identified, monitored and managed through established College risk management processes, including situation management planning where appropriate.

4.2.3 Committees ensure that key assessment decisions, changes to assessment design or delivery, and evaluation findings are documented in accordance with RACP recordkeeping and privacy requirements.

4.2.4 High-stakes assessment outcomes are subject to appropriate quality assurance and governance processes prior to confirmation of results.

4.2.5 Assessment programs may be supported by approved business rules, procedures and standard operating documents, which operate consistently with this policy and the Standards for RACP Assessment Programs. These documents include processes for reasonable adjustments and special consideration, supporting fair access to assessment while ensuring standards are applied consistently.

5. RECONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPEALS

Reconsideration, review and appeals for applicable decisions are conducted in accordance with the RACP Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process By-Law.

6. REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required due to legislative, regulatory, accreditation or operational changes.

Amendments to this policy must be approved in accordance with the RACP policy governance framework.

Staff and members of the College may provide feedback about this document by emailing RACPPolicy@racp.edu.au.

7. DEFINITIONS

Term	Means
Board	The Board of Directors of the College.
College	The Royal Australasian College of Physicians, ACN 000 039 047, an incorporated body limited by guarantee.
Fellow, Trainee, and Member	Have the same meaning as in the College Constitution.
Assessment	Any method used to evaluate a trainee's knowledge, skills, behaviours or professional practice against curriculum standards.
Assessment program	A structured combination of assessments used to inform decisions about trainee progression and competence.
Examiner	A person approved by the College to assess candidate performance in an examination or assessment activity.
Candidate	A trainee or other individual undertaking an assessment conducted by the College.

8. HISTORY

Revision	Effective Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	01.06.2016	New policy
2.0	22.04.2022	Full revision by CAC
2.1	19.10.2022	Addition of principle by CAC to address external factors such as Covid-19
2.2	02.12.2022	Administrative update and transfer of policy to new policy template
2.3	01.01.2027	Updated to ensure the policy remains current, clear and fit for purpose, with clarified scope and strengthened assessment principles and governance requirements aligned with the Standards for RACP Assessment Programs.