



# RACP

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## 2025 Divisional Clinical Examinations (DCE) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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It is strongly recommended that all candidates familiarise themselves with the 2025 Divisional Clinical Examination (DCE) information on the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#).

The DCE is a standardised practical assessment of clinical acumen and interpersonal skills that RACP trainees must pass to complete their Basic Training. The exam is conducted at RACP-accredited training settings throughout Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. During the exam, trainees complete two Long Cases and four Short Cases with different patients, each assessed by two experienced examiners.

For all DCE dates, please refer to the individual Adult Medicine and Paediatrics & Child Health pages on the [RACP website](#).

### Eligibility and Registration

#### **Q: What are the eligibility criteria for attempting the DCE?**

**A:** To be eligible to sit the exam, you must:

- have passed the [Divisional Written Examination](#)
- be registered with the RACP (for training or interruption) by Friday 28 February in the same year
- have 24 months full-time equivalent (FTE) of certified Basic Training (Physician Readiness for Expert Practice (PREP) Basic Training program) before the beginning of the clinical year in which the exam is held have completed all necessary training requirements as specified in the [Adult Medicine Basic Training Handbook](#)
- haven't exceeded the [exam attempt limits](#) and comply with all other requirements in the [Progression Through Training Policy](#)
- comply with the relevant Divisional Clinical Examination application closing date
- have no outstanding RACP training fees. See [RACP Fees Terms and Conditions](#)

#### **Q: How many attempts do I have for the DCE?**

**A:** The [Progression through Training Policy](#) specifies limits on the total training time allowed to complete training. The allowed number of examination attempts depends on when you commenced Basic Training. The attempt limits can be found under the Apply tab of the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#).

For more details, please see the relevant [Basic Training Handbook](#) and the [Progression through Training Policy information](#) (Item 4).

**Q: What if I have outstanding fees?**

**A:** You cannot register for the exam if you have outstanding training fees. All fees must be paid in full prior to registration. For more details, please see the [RACP Fees Terms and Conditions](#). Please contact us to arrange payment or discuss your account.

**Q: What happens if I choose to withdraw from the exam?**

**A:** Withdrawing from an exam does not count as an exam attempt. You may be eligible for a refund based on the timing of your withdrawal; specific refund details are outlined in the [RACP Fees Terms and Conditions](#). Should you choose to withdraw, you can re-apply for the next exam sitting, provided you meet the eligibility criteria. Please note that application fees are not transferable between sittings. If seeking a refund on medical or compassionate grounds, please submit an application under the [Special Consideration for Assessment Policy](#). To initiate a withdrawal, email [DCE@racp.edu.au](mailto:DCE@racp.edu.au) in Australia or [Examinations@racp.org.au](mailto:Examinations@racp.org.au) in Aotearoa New Zealand.

If you attend the exam site and decide to withdraw once the exam has commenced this will count as an attempt. Please contact us about the next steps.

**Q: I believe I am eligible for the Clinical Examination, but I have not received an invitation to apply. What should I do?**

**A:** Invitations are sent to the email address registered with the RACP. Please check all email folders, including junk and promotions, and ensure your contact details are current in MyRACP. If you have not received an invitation by 15 March in the year you intend to sit, please contact [BasicTraining@racp.edu.au](mailto:BasicTraining@racp.edu.au) or [Basic.Training@racp.org.nz](mailto:Basic.Training@racp.org.nz) to verify your eligibility.

**Q: Why is the online application not visible in MyRACP?**

**A:** The online application is only accessible to eligible applicants from the date the applications open. If you believe you are eligible but cannot access the application, please contact [BasicTraining@racp.edu.au](mailto:BasicTraining@racp.edu.au) or [Basic.Training@racp.org.nz](mailto:Basic.Training@racp.org.nz) for assistance.

**Q: What should I do if I experience technical difficulties with the online application?**

**A:** Contact the team if you encounter submission issues or do not receive confirmation promptly. Check if your workplace's firewall or the device compatibility could be causing issues. We recommend using a desktop or laptop computer from home for submissions. If successful, a confirmation screen will appear, and a fee receipt will be available in MyRACP. Confirmation emails are typically sent within 30 minutes. Please check all email folders including junk and promotions.

**Q: I missed the application deadline. Can I still apply for the DCE?**

**A:** No, late applications are not accepted under any circumstances.

## Before Examination Day

**Q: When will I receive details of my allocated exam location?**

**A:** You will receive an examination allocation email at least six weeks before the first exam date for your Division as published on the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#). For example, if the published exam period is Friday 6 June to Sunday 29 June, you will receive your allocation letter on or before Thursday, 24 April. If you do not receive this email on the appropriate date, please contact us to request a resend.

**Q: Will I need to travel to sit the exam?**

**A:** Yes, you will be allocated an exam location in a different state from where you work or have previously worked. If you have medical conditions, pregnancy-related travel restrictions, or other exceptional circumstances, submit a pre-exam special consideration at the time of application by sending an email to [DCE@racp.edu.au](mailto:DCE@racp.edu.au) in Australia or [Examinations@racp.org.au](mailto:Examinations@racp.org.au) in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**Q: How can I request a specific exam location or timing?**

**A:** Submit a pre-exam special consideration request via email at the time of application. The RACP attempts to accommodate requests where possible, but specific venue requests are not guaranteed.

**Q: Can I visit the exam venue I am allocated before my exam day?**

**A:** No, visiting or contacting the exam site beforehand is prohibited as it may be considered an attempt to gain an unfair advantage, potentially resulting in disqualification or impacting your training progression. For venue information, refer to the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#).

**Q: What should I do if I am unwell before or on the day of the exam?**

**A:** Assess whether you are capable of performing to the required standard. If you are too ill or unprepared, it is advisable not to commence the exam as the attempt will count, and special consideration cannot be requested afterwards. For more details, visit the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#).

**Q: How are Special Considerations handled for the DCE?**

**A:** Special Considerations must be submitted according to the timelines and guidelines outlined in the [Special Consideration for Assessment Policy](#). This includes pre-exam, during exams, and within five business days post-exam. Late submissions, issues due to inadequate preparation, or non-technical concerns post-exam are not considered. Refer to the RACP website for detailed policy information.

## Examination Day

**Q: What should I bring to the exam?**

**A:** You must bring the specified equipment and stationery as outlined on the 'Exam day' tab on the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#). Ensure you do not bring prohibited items into the exam.

**Q: What form of identification is required?**

**A:** Candidates must present a valid form of identification that displays their full name (as registered with the RACP), a photograph, and a signature. Acceptable IDs include a driver's license or passport. You will need to present this identification and sign an attendance record upon arrival at the exam venue. This may also be required at the commencement of the afternoon session.

**Q: What should I do if my identification details do not match my RACP records?**

**A:** Update your personal details in MyRACP to match your formal identification. For assistance, contact Member Services at [membersupport@racp.edu.au](mailto:membersupport@racp.edu.au) or call 1300 MY RACP (1300 69 7227 in Australia); or 0508 697 227 (+64 4 472 6713 in Aotearoa New Zealand). If discrepancies persist on exam day, bring supporting documentation, such as a change of name or marriage certificate. You will be allowed to sit the exam, but the RACP will review the issue afterwards.

**Q: How will I know where to go on exam day?**

**A:** Your candidate allocation email will include specific instructions about your venue and reporting location. The hospital exam site may also have signage displaying directions.

**Q: Will there be a lunch break?**

**A:** Yes, there is a lunch break between the morning and afternoon sessions. A light lunch may be provided at some settings, but it is recommended that you arrange lunch at a close and convenient location.

**Q: Can I bring food, drinks, or medication to the exam?**

**A:** You are permitted to bring the following items:

- Water in a transparent, unlabelled bottle.
- Non-pungent food in a small, clear container. Please ensure the food isn't crunchy and that the container or packaging does not produce noise, as this may disturb other candidates. Consume food only during designated breaks between exam cases.
- Personal medications (for example, over-the-counter pain relievers such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen, anti-nausea drugs, insulin, and glucose monitors) must be kept in a zip-locked bag. This bag should be clearly labelled with your name and candidate number (matching your exam allocation letter) and must remain in your possession at all times.
- If you require refrigeration for personal medication or other medical reasons, please contact the team as soon as possible.

**Q: What should I wear to the examination?**

**A:** Wear professional and comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely. For all other dress code requirements, please refer to the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#) for more details.

**Q: What should candidates know about patient participation in the DCE?**

**A:** Patients who participate in the DCE do so voluntarily and may experience fatigue or stress during their involvement. Candidates are expected to demonstrate empathy and professionalism, recognising that the diversity of patients reflects real clinical settings.

Marking directly on patients or using post-it notes (e.g. for Schober's Test) is not permitted. If you require assistance, please speak with an examiner. All patient interactions are standardised as part of the DCE process and are not classified as technical or procedural incidents under the [Special Consideration for Assessment Policy](#).

**Q: Will I be provided with the patient's medication list?**

**A:** Medication lists will be taped to the desk in Long Case patient rooms, and you will also receive a personal copy for annotation. These lists are provided as a guide only, and all details should be confirmed directly with the patient or their carer/whānau.

**Q: Will Oxygen saturations be available during the DCE?**

**A:** Oxygen saturations will not be provided for any cases during the DCE. Candidates are expected to rely on basic observations they can measure themselves as part of their clinical assessment.

**Q: Can I wear a watch?**

**A:** Candidates are expected to manage their own time and may use analogue or digital watches. Timers are permitted but must remain silent, with alarms disabled. Smartwatches are not permitted under any circumstances.

Watches must not be worn while examining patients. Candidates may carry an analogue or digital watch to manage time or measure a patient's heart rate. You may like to consider using a nurse's fob watch.

Some locations enforce a 'bare below the elbows' policy to support hand hygiene. If this applies at your exam site, the Local Examination Organiser (LEO) will advise you on the day.

**Q: What is the timing protocol for Long Cases in the DCE?**

**A:** Candidates are expected to manage their own time throughout the exam. You should be present outside the Long Case rooms at the start of the session. Travel time from the Long Case writing area to the presentation room is included within the ten (10) minutes of planning time, so the full duration may not be available. A reduced planning time due to this transition is not grounds for special consideration.

**Q: What is the role of an Examination Assistant?**

**A:** In Australia, candidates are assigned an examination assistant to act as their guide on exam day. This role is usually fulfilled by a medical student or trainee who has not yet sat the DCE. They can:

- Assist with issues before or during the exam.
- Escort you to the relevant rooms.
- Knock on and open the door at the end of the patient interview.
- Escort you to the toilet or provide water if required.
- Sit in the room during Short Case presentations (if space permits).

Exam Assistants cannot:

- Assist you with time keeping in any way, including holding timers.
- Provide feedback on performance or share any patient details.
- Hand you any equipment.
- Assist patients during a gait examination. If required, examiners will assist the patient and ensure their safety.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the RACP on-site team fulfil this role and will guide you through the day. They will not enter patient or examination rooms with you.

**Q: Can Examination Assistants help with timekeeping during the DCE?**

**A:** Examination Assistants are not permitted to assist with timekeeping.

**Q: Can I use scales or questionnaires to assess cognitive function?**

**A:** These may be used to assess cognitive function (e.g. the Schonell Test or Mini-Mental State Examination), but Committees encourage you to carefully consider their use. Such tools can be time-consuming and may not contribute meaningfully to your overall assessment.

**Q: What should I do if I feel unwell or unsafe on examination day?**

**A:** If you feel unwell, do not attend the exam and contact the examination team in your country as soon as possible. If you feel unsafe during the exam, stop immediately and seek assistance from the examiners, Local Examination Organiser (LEO), RACP on-site team/CSO, examination assistants, or nurses. Stopping for safety reasons will not affect your assessment.

**Q: Can I withdraw?**

**A:** You may withdraw from the exam at any time prior to starting, including on the day. This will not be counted as an attempt. Withdrawal after the exam has started will be counted as an attempt unless exceptional circumstances are demonstrated.

**Q: Can I keep my exam notes after the examination?**

**A:** No. All patient notes must be handed over to the exam organisers for destruction. Retaining exam notes breaches the [Academic Integrity in Training Policy](#).

## Following the Examination

**Q: I encountered a technical or procedural issue during my exam. What should I do?**

**A:** Report any procedural issues immediately to the Local Examination Organiser (LEO), RACP Staff (in Aotearoa New Zealand) or the examiners during your presentation. You may request to speak with the Chief Examiner on-site during the day. If the issue significantly impacted your performance and could not be adequately addressed at the time, submit an [Application for Special Consideration](#) within five business days of your exam. The Clinical Examination Results Committee will review all applications at the result meeting. While marks or outcomes cannot be adjusted, alternate outcomes or a supplementary examination may be granted in exceptional cases. Refer to the [Special Consideration for Assessment Policy](#) for full details.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Application for Special Consideration, you may request a Reconsideration or Review within 28 days under the [Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Process By-law](#).

**Q: Can I request a supplementary examination?**

**A:** A supplementary examination may be considered if a significant technical or procedural issue affected your performance and must be requested via an [Application for Special Consideration](#) before results are released. These requests are considered carefully by the relevant Clinical Examination Results Committee. They are not offered for illness on the exam day or preparation difficulties. For submission deadlines and more details, refer to the [DCE pages on the RACP website](#).

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