

Policy – Regulatory examinations

March 2025

Request for special consideration for objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) Policy

Purpose

This document sets out the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia's (the Board) policy for assessing requests for special consideration from candidates undertaking the Board's regulatory examinations.

The policy applies to candidates for all divisions requesting special consideration for the OSCE.

Special consideration

Special consideration may be provided for a candidate in response to an adverse event(s) that prevented a candidate from attending or completing their scheduled OSCE.

In no circumstances will special consideration lead to an adjustment of the examination results.

Special consideration may be considered where a candidate is unable to attend or complete their scheduled OSCE due to exceptional circumstances beyond their control. Only those candidates who can demonstrate that they have reasons beyond their control are eligible for special consideration.

In case of a natural disaster, for example, an earthquake, flood, or bushfires occurs, or the World Health Organization declares a pandemic, candidates scheduled to sit OSCE in affected areas may reschedule their OSCE without penalty (even if the examination venue is open for business). This is providing that the natural disaster or pandemic is verified by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra).

Possible reasons include:

- acute illness or injury (such as hospital admission, onset of serious illness)
- loss or bereavement (such as death of close family member)
- hardship or trauma (such as being a victim of crime, severe disruption to domestic life)
- unforeseen call-up for service (such as military service, court appearance, jury service, emergency service)
- work commitments (a letter from the candidate's employer on company/organisation letterhead must accompany the application)
- circumstances beyond their control (evidence of these circumstances must accompany the application)
- religious convictions (a letter from a religious leader must accompany the application), or
- natural disaster, bomb threat or similar such event requiring evacuation of the exam centre.

Candidates must submit a request for special consideration in writing, before or within five working days following the scheduled OSCE. Relevant documented evidence of the exceptional circumstances beyond their control must be included in the request, for example:

- medical certificate (must explicitly state that the candidate was not fit to participate in the examination and specify date)
- death certificate
- police report
- statutory declaration, or
- evidence of requirement to attend jury service, court appearance, military service, emergency service.

The supporting documents must include sufficient detail to help Ahpra make its decision. Insufficient details may include a nonspecific medical certificate or insufficient explanation of the reasons why the candidate was not able to sit their examination. Insufficient information may lead to Ahpra denying the applicant's request for special consideration.

Ahpra's assessment of the request

Ahpra will consider requests for special consideration from candidates of the Board OSCE.

Evidence supporting the candidate's reason for not attending the scheduled OSCE, such as a medical certificate or proof of compassionate circumstances, must be provided to Ahpra within five working days of the scheduled OSCE.

Medical and compassionate circumstances are approved at the discretion of Ahpra and if approved, the candidate will receive a full credit of the examination fee less an administrative fee.

If a candidate does not notify Ahpra that they are unable to attend their scheduled OSCE, or if a candidate does not complete the OSCE on the day, they will be considered to have failed that examination, unless special consideration is requested and granted in accordance with this procedure.

Ahpra will assess requests for special consideration and determine the outcome within 20 working days of receiving the request.

If approved, the special consideration may consist of:

- considering the scheduled OSCE result as null and void (i.e. the result is no longer on record as a fail result), or
- other special consideration, e.g. rescheduling the examination.

If the request is denied, the candidate's result will remain on record as a fail.

If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome of Ahpra's assessment, the candidate may apply for a review. For further information please refer to the *Procedural review policy*.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

This policy will be reviewed from time to time as required. This will generally be at least every three years.

Definitions and abbreviations

Candidate refers to those who have been approved to sit the CMBA regulatory examinations.

Regulatory examinations may be used by the Board to:

- i. assess an overseas-qualified Chinese herbal medicine practitioner's or acupuncturist's suitability to qualify for registration in Australia, in circumstances where they are assessed as holding a qualification that is relevant but not substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to

- an Australian Board-approved qualification,
- ii. assess a practitioner's competence to practice, in circumstances where they don't meet recency of practice or performance concerns have arisen.

Associated documents

Regulatory examinations candidate handbook – Objective structured clinical examination

Effective date

March 2025