

GUIDELINE ON PHYSICAL DISABILITY WHICH MAY AFFECT PERFORMANCE DURING EXAMINATIONS.

1. Introduction

In accordance with 'Tomorrows' Doctors' [1] students, upon graduation, will be able to carry out clinical skills that include performing a full physical examination and all the practical procedures listed in Appendix 1 of 'Tomorrows Doctors'.

'There must be no compensatory mechanism which would allow students to graduate without having demonstrated competence in all the outcomes' (Tomorrow's Doctors 2009, p.59)

An Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is an important assessment for the student to demonstrate competence in clinical skills required to successfully graduate on the MB/BS course.

Although reasonable adjustments cannot be made to the competence standards themselves, reasonable adjustments should be made to enable a disabled person to met a competence standard' (Tomorrow's Doctors 2009, p.49)

2. Purpose of policy

Students undertaking medical education may have a permanent or temporary disability that affects their performance during an OSCE or during written exams. This policy sets out the assessment process so that the student can make an informed decision as to whether they are physically and mentally fit for their assessment period or whether they should delay their assessment until such a time that they feel is more conducive in them successfully undertaking the exam or in the case of permanent disability until reasonable adjustments can be put in place.

3. The Policy

A student undertaking an OSCE station that requires a physical demonstration of a clinical skill will only be awarded marks if they competently demonstrate the required skill. Some students' may require reasonable adjustments to enable them to demonstrate the skill – for example use of an amplified stethoscope when measuring blood pressure. These are generally anticipatory and transferable to use following graduation. They are agreed in advance via the disability officer.

Where no reasonable adjustments can be made to compensate for a disability, either permanent or temporary, then the marking at that station will correspondingly reflect either the inability or the absence of ability to perform the skill. A verbal 'viva' such as "During deflation of the cuff I would note the level of mmHg when I first hear the pulse..." is not an acceptable adjustment to demonstrating competence of a clinical procedure.

It is recognised that, during the five year MB/BS training, students may be in a situation whereby they are not at their usual physical or mental level during assessment period, for instance suffering a wrist injury. In such a situation students need to carefully consider the impact of undertaking an

OSCE including the impact on the cumulative marking of OSCE throughout the year. They are strongly advised to seek advice from the disability officer and /or the clinical skills team to help them to make this decision. Delay undertaking an OSCE (delayed first sit) should be considered if the student feels that they may not be successful.

Undertaking an OSCE in these circumstances will always be counted and students must not undertake the OSCE with the expectation of submitting extenuating circumstances retrospectively if their performance does not meet standards.

4. Organisation of reasonable adjustments

The Disability Liaison Officer for the School of Medicine should liaise between students and the organisers of OSCE in an appropriate time frame for the reasonable adjustment to be put in place.

Administrators within the School of Medicine and CSRA should involve the disability liaison officer in circumstances where they become aware of a student who has a temporary disability that may affect their performance during an OSCE so that these arrangements can be put in place.

Students should also be aware and familiar with the school's guideline:

“Guideline for managing psychological or physical symptoms occurring just before or during an OSCE within the MB/BS programme” [2]

Guideline written by
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Reviewed by the MB/BS Assessment committee

References

- (1) General Medical Council (2009) Tomorrows' Doctors 2009: general Medical Council.
- (2) Guideline for managing psychological or physical symptoms occurring just before or during an OSCE within the MB/BS programme.
MB/BS ASSESSMENT INFORMATION (ALL YEARS) > OSCES