

CMBA Regulatory Examinations Policy

August 2021

Requests for special consideration for multiple-choice question examination candidates

Purpose

This document sets out the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia's (CMBA's) policy for assessing requests for special consideration for candidates sitting the CMBA regulatory examinations for overseas-qualified Chinese herbal medicine practitioners and acupuncturists (candidates).

Scope

The CMBA regulatory examinations includes a multiple-choice question (MCQ) examination and an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).

The CMBA's policy in this document on requests for special consideration applies to the MCQ examinations for all divisions.

Policy

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 examination.

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

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

In case of a natural disaster, for example, an earthquake, flood, or blizzard occurs, or the World Health Organisation declares a pandemic, candidates scheduled to sit the MCQ examination in affected areas may reschedule their MCQ examination without penalty (even if the examination centre is open for business). This is providing that the natural disaster or pandemic is verified by Ahpra.

Possible reasons include:

- acute illness (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, family violence, or severe disruption to domestic life)
- unforeseen call-up for service (such as military service, court appearance, Jury service, emergency service)
- work commitments and circumstances beyond their control (a letter on company/organisation letterhead from an employer confirming this must be provided)
- religious convictions (a letter from a religious leader must accompany the application)
- natural disaster, bomb threat or similar such event necessitating the evacuation of the candidate's home and/or the exam centre

Candidates must submit a request for special consideration in writing, prior to or within five business days following the scheduled examination session. Relevant documentary 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 undertake the examination and specify date)
- death certificate
- police report
- statutory declaration
- evidence of requirement to attend jury service, court appearance, military service, emergency service.

The supporting documentation 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 for MCQ examination.

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

If a candidate does not notify Ahpra that they are unable to attend their scheduled examination, or if a candidate does not complete the examination 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 business days of receiving the request.

If approved, the special consideration may consist of:

- considering the scheduled examination result as null and void (i.e. the result is no longer on record as a fail result)
- 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 of the request for special consideration, the candidate may apply for a review by the CMBA Examinations Committee. The candidate must pay the relevant fee at the time of requesting the review.

CMBA Examinations Committee review

The CMBA Examinations Committee review will assess the request and supporting documentation, including any request for a review of Ahpra's assessment of the request for special consideration.

Candidates must apply for a review by the CMBA Examinations Committee within five calendar days of being notified of the outcome of the Ahpra's assessment of the request for special consideration. The candidate must pay the relevant fee at the time of requesting the review.

There are two reasons for seeking a review by the CMBA Examinations Committee:

- The candidate believes that the manner in which the *Requests for special consideration for MCQ examination candidates* policy has been followed was procedurally unfair.
- The candidate believes that the outcome of Ahpra's assessment of the request for special consideration is unfair or unreasonable on the basis of the available evidence.

All records relating to the review of the candidate's request for special consideration will be made available to the CMBA Examinations Committee, including information supplied by the candidate. The candidate has the right to appear before the CMBA Examinations Committee.

The CMBA Examinations Committee review findings may be:

- The original outcome of Ahpra’s assessment of the request for special consideration is upheld.
The original outcome of Ahpra’s assessment of the request for special consideration is not upheld
Where the original outcome of Ahpra’s assessment of the request for special consideration is not upheld, the CMBA Examinations Committee will determine a new outcome and will advise that review fee may be refunded in full or in part.

The CMBA Examinations Committee will advise Ahpra of the outcome of their review.

Ahpra will notify the candidate in writing as soon as practicable following the CMBA Examinations Committee review decision and provide reasons for that decision.

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

CMBA regulatory examinations are used by the CMBA to assess overseas-qualified Chinese herbal medicine practitioners and acupuncturists who apply to register in Australia and who are assessed as holding a qualification that is relevant but not substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to an Australian approved qualification (and who meet the mandatory registration standards).

Associated documents

CMBA regulatory examinations candidate handbook – multiple-choice question examination

Effective date

August 2021