

ACAM Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy

**POLICY NUMBER/
REFERENCE:** 17-250723

POLICY TITLE: ACAM Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy

POLICY STATEMENT:

ACAM CPD Home membership is available to non-exempt medical practitioners in Australia at www.acam.org.au. It is not limited to members and fellows of ACAM but is open to those whose academic and clinical practice are aligned with the Australasian College of Aesthetic Medicine.

Background

CPD Home is committed to supporting its subscribers to meet their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements under the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) *Registration Standard: Continuing Professional Development* (the Standard). However, CPD Home recognises that there may be times where due to exceptional circumstances an unreasonable burden would be placed on a subscriber in fully meeting their CPD requirements. CPD Home affords subscribers, members and fellows in this position the opportunity for special consideration for an exemption from or variation of their ACAM CPD requirements.

Determinations of this nature will, in line with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, be made by the Association Manager following receipt of an *Application for Special Consideration of Exceptional Circumstance* via notifications@acam.org.au.

DEFINITIONS:

Purpose

To outline the circumstances which may justify special consideration for an exemption from or variation to their ACAM CPD requirements.

Objective

To demonstrate our support for subscribers experiencing exceptional circumstances and to provide guidance to subscribers in applying for special consideration.

Scope

This policy applies to all subscribers, members and fellows of ACAM CPD Home.



PROCEDURES:

General Principles

Subscribers, members and fellows of the ACAM CPD Program are expected to meet the CPD requirements as per the MBA's *Registration Standard: Continuing Professional Development* within the CPD Year. Subscribers, members and fellows who are experiencing exceptional circumstances as described below, which will prevent them from meeting their CPD requirements for the CPD Year may apply for special consideration for an exemption from, variation to, or deferral of their CPD requirements. Where a variation or deferral of their CPD Requirements is granted, the Subscriber is expected to meet the terms of the variation or deferral.

Subscribers, members and fellows without an exemption who do not meet their CPD requirements as per the MBA's *Registration Standard: Continuing Professional Development* or the terms of variation or deferral granted will not be awarded a CPD Statement of Completion.

Qualifying exceptional circumstances resulting in the continuous absence from practice, of at least six months and up to and including 12-months are as follows.

1. Professional, personal or family reasons, being:
 - parental leave;
 - prolonged carers leave;
 - prolonged serious illness, including serious injury;
 - sabbatical; and
 - extended leave to attend to cultural responsibilities;
2. Severe and debilitating stress resulting from extreme hardship or trauma (e.g. victim of violent crime);
3. Sudden and extended disruption due to an unforeseen event or hardship (e.g. devastating natural disaster, flooding, bushfires etc.);
4. In the event a subscriber, member or fellow identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, and they require exemption to attend to cultural responsibilities.

The following circumstances are examples of non-exceptional circumstances:

- bereavement, unless the cause of an exceptional circumstance as defined above;
- demands of employment;
- minor illness or medical conditions;
- short-term incapacitations from an illness or injury;
- pre-existing illness or medical condition which is not regarded as acute and substantive;
- taking on optional commitments of a work or personal nature;



- difficulties adjusting to the self-discipline needed to plan, undertake, record and track ACAM CPD activities;
- stress or anxiety normally associated with meeting ACAM CPD requirements; and
- lack of knowledge of the:
 - services and supports offered by ACAM CPD Home to subscribers, members and fellows; and/or
 - minimum CPD requirements as per the MBA's *Registration Standard: Continuing Professional Development*.

Below are examples of supporting documentation that subscriber's must include with their application. Depending on the exceptional circumstance, multiple documents may be required as part of the application:

- travel itinerary;
- letter from employer related to extended period of leave;
- medical certificate/s with the dates clearly marked when the subscriber was unfit to work or to undertake CPD activities;
- letter of support from an independent (i.e. not related to the applicant) medical practitioner, psychologist or lawyer attesting to the practitioner's judgment, based on the subscriber's circumstances and on information provided, that the subscriber would not have had the capacity to practice or undertake required CPD activities for at least 6 months or more:
- A letter of support should be provided only when the subscriber was unable to obtain medical advice on the date(s) they were affected by exceptional circumstances;
- death notice or certificate;
- police report;
- insurance reports;
- the subscriber's victim of crime statement; and
- statutory declaration from the subscriber or other relevant party attesting to impact of the exceptional circumstance on the subscriber's ability or capacity to undertake required CPD activities.

Exemptions, Variations or Deferrals

- Exemptions, variations, or deferrals to the annual CPD Program, on the grounds cited in this policy, may be approved by ACAM Association Manager upon written application by the subscriber. For example, if you are on extended leave and not practising medicine, an exemption may be granted following submission of an Application for Special Consideration of Exceptional Circumstance form available from the CPD Home website.
- Exemptions, variations or deferrals will apply for the CPD Year for which special consideration of exceptional circumstance was sought.
- Exemptions will not be granted for consecutive CPD Years. Where a practitioner will be absent from



- practice for longer than 12-months they should contact the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) to amend their practising status.
- Deferral of CPD requirements is an extension of time to complete the CPD requirements of that CPD Year. Subscribers can request up to three months from the end of the CPD Year. Applications for deferral will need to be received no later than 30 November of that CPD Year to allow for appropriate processing and consideration of the request.
- All applications will be reviewed confidentially, without prejudice, and on their merits on a case-by-case basis by the CPD Home senior leadership team (SLT). Following the review, a recommendation will be provided to the Association Manager for consideration. Where additional advice is sought by the SLT, the CPD Advisory Panel may be called upon for input before a recommendation is reached.
- Review of applications may take up to four weeks but no longer than six weeks. Applicants will be notified as soon as practicable of the review completion and determination and, if applicable, any exemption or variation granted.
- A register of subscribers who have applied for special consideration of exceptional circumstance including the review recommendation and outcome will be kept by CPD Home Support Officer.
- Subscribers who have been granted an exemption for meeting their CPD requirements will be excluded from quarterly audit runs.
- Subscribers granted a variation or deferral of CPD requirements will continue to be monitored via quarterly audit runs and subject to the yearly compliance audit of at least 5% of participating subscribers. However, they will be excluded from automated notifications and instead will be followed-up by the CPD Home Support Officer as appropriate to the conditions of their variation or deferral.

Roles and Responsibilities

Subscribers, members and fellows experiencing exceptional circumstances.

Subscribers, members and fellows who are experiencing exceptional circumstances that will prevent them from meeting their ACAM CPD requirements for the CPD Year should:

- familiarise themselves with this policy; and
- make an Application for Special Consideration of Exceptional Circumstance.
- The subscriber, if making an Application for Special Consideration of Exceptional Circumstance must include with the application relevant supporting documentation. Examples of supporting documentation are provided above.
- Any subscriber, member or fellow considering applying for an exemption from all or part of the requirements of the ACAM CPD Program should ensure they are familiar with any recency of practice requirements under the MBA's *Registration Standard: Recency of practice*.



ACAM CPD Home Support Officer

The ACAM CPD Home Support Officer will:

- add the details of all applicants to the register;
- prepare each application for review by the SLT, including de-identifying the applicant (i.e., replace name with Applicant # (sequential number for each Applicant being reviewed at the time));
- manage register updates including the SLT recommendation, Association Manager review decision, and
- communications sent to the applicant;
- following the review decision, draft the advice of determination and the reasoning behind it to the applicant from the Association Manager in preparation for sign-off;
- issue all communications to the applicant indicating that their application is in review, and the advice of determination;
- exclude subscribers who have been granted an exemption from meeting their CPD requirements from quarterly audit runs;
- include subscribers granted a variation or deferral of CPD requirements in quarterly audit runs to monitor their progress;
- include subscribers granted a variation or deferral of CPD requirements as participating subscribers for the purpose of the yearly compliance audit;
- exclude subscribers granted a variation or deferral of CPD requirements from automated notifications; and
- follow-up subscribers granted a variation or deferral of CPD requirements as appropriate to the conditions of their variation or deferral.

ACAM CPD Home Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT will:

- review each application;
- invite the ACAM CPD Advisory Panel to provide advice, if required; and
- provide a recommendation to the ACAM Association Manager for consideration within three weeks of receipt of the application.

Association Management ACAM

The Association Manager will:

- consider the recommendation of the SLT
- make a determination as to whether an exemption, variation or deferral will be granted
- inform the CPD Home Support Officer of the outcome
- sign the advice to the applicant of any determination and the reasoning behind it. In



- notifying the applicant, the Association Manager will advise of our Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy, should the applicant not be satisfied with the determination
- annually review the nature of exceptional circumstances identified from applications for
- special consideration, and the volume of applications to inform any ACAM CPD Home policy revisions.

Action

The Association Manager ACAM may determine that:

- no exemption, variation or deferral of ACAM CPD requirements for the CPD Year be granted;
- an exemption from meeting ACAM CPD requirements for the CPD Year be granted;
- a variation to the ACAM CPD requirements for the CPD Year be granted as follows:
- proportionally reduce the minimum hours for each CPD domain by the period
- where the subscriber did not practice medicine – for example:
- reduce minimum hours for each CPD domain by 50% if the subscriber is absent from practice for six months;
- reduce minimum hours for each CPD domain by 75% if the subscriber is absent from practice for nine months.
- a deferral be granted where no exemption or variation is granted.

Compliance

- Subscribers who are granted a variation or deferral will be expected to meet their ACAM CPD requirements as per the terms of their variation or deferral.
- Subscribers who meet their ACAM CPD requirements as per the terms of their variation or deferral will be awarded a ACAM CPD Statement of Completion.
- Subscribers who fail to meet their CPD requirements as per the terms of their variation or deferral will not be awarded a ACAM CPD Statement of Completion.

AMENDMENTS/REVIEW:

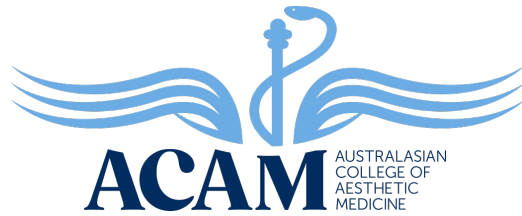
‘Review or Amended by the Management Committee (23 July 2023)’

‘Endorsed by Management Committee (31 July 2023)’

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

The following documents are related to this policy.

1. Medical Board of Australia (MBA) *Registration Standard: Continuing Professional Development* (the Standard)
2. MBA’s *Registration Standard: Recency of practice*
3. Application for Special Consideration of Exceptional Circumstance
4. ACAM CPD Home Reconsideration, Review and Appeals Policy
5. Application for Special Consideration of Exceptional Circumstance form
6. Glossary of Terminology



REFERENCES:

MBA [Member Registration Standards](#)

MBA [Continual Professional Development](#)

File: ACAM Policy and Procedural Manual/Policy Manual Complete/Updated Policies/ACAM Exceptional Circumstances Policy 17-250723

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