



Royal Australasian College
of Dental Surgeons
Let knowledge conquer disease

Examination Observer Policy

January 2021

Document Information

Nature of Document:	Policy Document
Document Number:	
Version:	3.0
Policy Area:	Education
Contact Officer:	Director of Education
Authorised:	Board of Studies
Approved:	Education Policy Board
Date Effective:	02/02/2021
Date of Next Review:	02/02/2026
Policy Status:	Approved

1. Purpose and scope

To provide guidelines for the selection, role, purpose and conduct of College examination observers.

2. Background

The College conducts a number of examinations at Membership and Fellowship level. Observers appointed by the College are usually present to ensure due process is followed. This policy relates to the observation of candidates in *viva voce* examinations for Membership and Fellowship in General Dental Practice and Specialist Dental Practice.

3. Policy Statement

1. An Observer:

1.1. Shall be one of the following:

- a) Member or Fellow of the RACDS
- b) Member or Fellow of another College
- c) Individuals who are undertaking examiner development training
- d) An individual acting in a formal capacity as a support person for a candidate (subject to approval by the Registrar)
- e) A staff member of the RACDS

1.2. Will have no direct role in assessment but can be present for the following reasons:

- a) Learning/training
- b) Evaluation of examination process
- c) Examiner calibration

2. Observer Appointment

Member/Fellow observers may attend examinations only after meeting the criteria as set out in this policy and on approval by the relevant Registrar.

Observers will be invited via formal written communication from the College after consultation with the Registrar. Relevant Boards of Studies and/or Examinations Committees may be consulted if required.

3. Observers Policy Statements

- 3.1. The *GDP Primary and Final Examinations – Examiner Selection and Appointment Policy* stipulates the number of observers required for the Primary and Final Examinations respectively. For Specialist Dental Practice and Membership in General Dental Practice, an observer will attend each *viva voce* regardless of the number of examiners present.
- 3.2. In addition to the appointed observer, a Registrar, an Assistant Registrar or the Director of Education may attend any segment of the examination as an observer.
- 3.3. Where possible, there shall be only one observer to any candidate at the one time. There may be occasions where multiple observers are necessary, however the candidate will be consulted in this instance
- 3.4. Candidates will be advised of the presence of an observer/s prior to the examination and should at this time indicate his/her consent to the process.
- 3.5. A timetable will be distributed to observers prior to the examination and at this time observers must declare any potential conflicts of interest.
- 3.6. The content of any examination component must be kept absolutely confidential.

- 3.7. Mobile telephones must be switched off if brought into the examination room and must not be used at any time during an examination.
- 3.8. Each observer will make their presence known to the Director of Education, Chief Examiner or RACDS staff member before attending any section of the examination.
- 3.9. If the observer meets the candidate in a waiting area prior to the exam, it is courteous to extend advice on role as observer “I am Gary and I will be your observer today”.
- 3.10. Observers must be dressed in appropriate professional attire.
- 3.11. Observers must not enter or leave during the conduct of an individual examination.
- 3.12. Observers are to remain well away from the examination table and the candidate and to sit in a position as advised by the examiner.
- 3.13. Silence must be strictly observed. Observers must maintain neutral face expressions and body language at all times.
- 3.14. Observers may be asked to participate in assessment of the examination process and be required to fill in specific evaluation forms during examinations.
- 3.15. Observers will have the opportunity to discuss their experience with the Director of Education, Registrar or Chief Examiner before departure and may be asked to provide feedback.