

## **FIT TO SIT/EXTENSION OF TIME POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

This note sets out the APEAS policy on Fit to Sit and the granting of any extension of time to a candidate to submit their documentary submission. The policy was approved by the APEAS Board at a meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

In developing this policy APEAS has used as its guiding principle the need for clarity, fairness and transparency in the granting of any extension of time.

This policy document supersedes the previous policies concerning the granting of an extension of time for a candidate to submit their documentary submission.

### **2. Fit to Sit Policy**

APEAS operates a Fit to Sit Policy which simply stated means that if a candidate produces and submits their documentary submission they are declaring that they are fit and well enough to do so.

It should be noted that a candidate who attends for oral examination is also declaring himself/herself fit and well enough to do so.

In section 5 the policy will be reviewed in the context of granting any extension of time to candidates to submit their documentary submissions.

### **3. Consequence of the Fit to Sit Policy**

An important consequence of the Fit to Sit Policy is that a candidate who fails to declare to APEAS any medical condition, physical disability or specific learning difficulty prior to submitting his/her documentary submission cannot appeal against the result of his/her Part 3 Examination following the date for submission of the documentary submission.

### **4. Confidentiality**

It is important to stress that all personal and medical information provided by a candidate to APEAS will be kept in the strictest confidence.

### **5. Extension of Time Policy**

The policy on the extension of time for the submission of candidate documents is as follows:

#### **Evaluation of Experience, Record of Experience/Certificate of Professional Experience and Experience Based Analysis Report**

APEAS publishes the final date and time for the submission of candidate documentary submissions a number of months prior to this date. Therefore, a candidate will **not** be granted any extension of time to submit an Evaluation of Experience, Record of Experience/Certificate of Professional Experience and Experience Based Analysis report beyond the deadline date and time prescribed by APEAS.

#### **Practice Paper**

A candidate is normally expected to submit his/her answers to the Practice Paper by the deadline date and time specified by APEAS.

In exceptional circumstances the APEAS Chief Executive Officer has discretion to award up to a maximum of 24 hours of additional time for a candidate to answer the Practice Paper questions. It is not possible to be entirely specific about what constitutes exceptional circumstances. However, such circumstances may include the following:

- A candidate falling ill just prior to the start of the Practice Paper (this may include both physical or mental health problems)
- A candidate falling ill during the course of sitting the Practice Paper. The illness is deemed to be of such severity that it prevents the candidate from continuing with the examination.

- Sudden extreme personal circumstances such as serious illness or the death of an immediate family member, guardian or close friend which might include attendance at a funeral and associated rites or being the victim of serious crime
- Extraordinary travel difficulties such as inclement weather conditions which prevent the candidate from sitting the Practice Paper in his/her office

Circumstances which will not be regarded as exceptional are as follows:

- Poor personal planning to sit the Practice Paper (e.g. personal computer crashing, lack of Internet connection, loss of information on computer hard drive or other memory device, lack of access to key documents etc.)
- Minor ailments such as colds, headaches, hangovers etc.
- Long term medical conditions or specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia)
- Difficulties being caused by English not being the candidate's first language. The candidate should have sought advice from their PSA prior to sitting the Practice Paper on their readiness to sit the paper.
- Circumstances which are within the candidate's control (for example, family wedding, holiday, getting a cheaper flights etc.)
- Circumstances where independent supporting evidence cannot be provided
- Lack of awareness or understanding of the APEAS Examination Regulations, policies and procedures

It must be emphasised that APEAS cannot advise on what constitutes an illness which prevents the candidate from sitting or completing the Practice Paper examination. Candidates are expected to act in a professional manner when dealing with sudden illness seeking the advice of their mentor and a medical professional promptly.

Candidates with an existing medical condition should see Section 7.1 in this note.

In order to request an extension of time the candidate or his/her mentor may contact APEAS by phone. Any such verbal request must be followed up by a written request from the mentor stating clearly the reason(s) for the request for an extension of time. Independent supporting evidence (e.g. a medical certificate) must, ideally, be sent with the written request but in any case as soon as possible after the request has been submitted.

The APEAS Chief Executive Officer will advise the candidate by phone and by e-mail of the revised date and time for him/her to submit his/her documentary submission to APEAS using the online/Turnitin system. In addition, the Chief Executive Officer will advise the candidate of the date and time by which he/she must submit a copy of their full documentary submission on a flash drive/memory stick to APEAS.

With the candidate's permission, the APEAS Chief Executive Officer will advise the candidate's practice examiners that he/she was granted an extension of time to sit the Practice Paper and the reasons for granting the extension.

It must be emphasised that no request for an extension of time beyond 24 hours will be granted.

## 6. **Oral Examinations**

The APEAS Examination Regulations state that 'A candidate must attend for oral examination on the date and time and at the venue specified by APEAS.' A candidate who does not attend his/her oral examination on the date and time specified will be deemed to have failed the Part 3 Examination as they have not completed the examination process. APEAS will write to the candidate informing him/her of the components he/she will have to sit the next time he/she presents for the Part 3 Examination.

A candidate who experiences an exceptional circumstance following submission of his/her documentary submission but prior to the Oral Examinations should inform APEAS of such a circumstance as soon as possible and certainly prior to sitting his/her oral examination. With the candidate's permission, the APEAS Chief Executive Officer will inform the candidate's examiners of the details of the exceptional circumstance so that the examiners can take this into account when assessing the candidate's performance at oral examination. However, it must be emphasised that a candidate that attends for oral examination is declaring himself/herself fit and well enough to do so, and cannot, therefore, use the exceptional circumstance as the basis for an appeal following the oral examination.

## **7. Candidates with medical conditions or a specific learning difficulty**

### **7.1 A candidate with a medical condition/physical disability**

A candidate with a medical condition/physical disability may write to APEAS to request an extension of time. Such a request must be received by APEAS at least 2-weeks before the date for sitting the Practice Paper. The candidate must specify the nature of the medical condition/physical disability, how the medical condition/physical disability impairs his/her abilities to complete answering the Practice Paper in 48 hours and the length of additional time he/she is looking for to sit the Practice Paper. Any additional time cannot exceed 24 hours.

The candidate's request for an extension of time must be supported by evidence of his/her medical condition/physical disability in the form of a letter from an appropriate medical professional.

The Convenor of the Examination Committee, or in his/her absence the Senior Examiner of the Practice Examiners Committee, will consider the candidate's application and decide if there is a valid case for an extension of time and what additional length of time will be granted to the candidate to answer the Practice Paper questions. The APEAS Chief Executive Officer will report back to the candidate the decision of the Convenor. The decision of the Convenor will be final.

The candidate must submit their documentary submission using the APEAS online/Turnitin system by the date and time specified by the APEAS Chief Executive Officer. In addition, the candidate must submit a copy of their full documentary submission on a flash drive/memory stick by the date and time specified by the APEAS Chief Executive Officer.

### **7.2 A candidate with a specific learning difficulty**

A candidate with dyslexia or some other form of specific learning difficulty may identify this when completing their registration form or may request an extension of time, in writing, after registration. Such a request must be received by APEAS at least 2-weeks before the date for sitting the Practice Paper.

The candidate must provide APEAS with a written report from an appropriate medical professional (e.g. an educational psychologist) clearly indicating that the candidate has dyslexia or some other type of learning difficulty.

Having received the report the APEAS Chief Executive Officer will write to the candidate and his/her mentor indicating the arrangements for the candidate to sit the Practice Paper including the granting of a 24-hour extension of time to complete the answers to the Practice Paper.

The candidate must submit their documentary submission using the APEAS online/Turnitin system by the date and time specified by the APEAS Chief Executive Officer. In addition, the candidate must submit a copy of their full documentary submission on a flash drive/memory stick by the date and time specified by the APEAS Chief Executive Officer.

For more information on candidates with medical conditions/physical disabilities or a specific learning difficulty please see the Special Requirements section of the APEAS website.