

Quality Assurance Program Glossary

Administrative Reconsideration – process whereby the College (staff, consultant, Quality Assurance Committee) reviews a registrant’s case if the registrant feels that they did not meet the standard on the RCA due to being denied a deferral, being denied specific accommodation, or a reported incident not being considered when determining their RCA result

APP/Assessment of Professional Performance – a more direct assessment of the physical therapist’s practice for those who do not meet standard on the retake of the RCA conducted by an assessor who is a registrant trained and appointed by the College

Assessor – individual that assesses a registrant during the APP component and provides information from the assessment to the Quality Assurance Committee

Blueprinting – the act of linking each question on the RCA to a specific essential competency or regulatory topic; this is done by the Item Writers

Booking/Booking Application – process/online tool by which registrants book their date/time for sitting the RCA, choose their context, and identify their proctor by entering their proctor’s identification number (PIN)

Competence – refers to the skill level of a registrant, which meets or exceeds minimal and ongoing performance expectations; competent practice depends on 3 elements: context of practice, capacity of practitioner (e.g. intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological, etc.), and competencies demonstrated by the practitioner

Completion of RCA – when a registrant writes enough of the RCA for the exam to be reliably analyzed

Continuing Competence – the ongoing ability of a practitioner to demonstrate competent practice in such areas as safety, effectiveness, and ethics

Cut Score – on the RCA, it is the numerical point that differentiates between those who meet standard and those who do not meet standard; each practice context’s cut score is determined using psychometric methods. Sometimes referred to as the pass score

Cycle – denotes the 6-year period in which a registrant must complete the RCA once

Deferral – a request from a registrant to be excused from completing the RCA

Essential Competency Profile – national document that describes and categorizes essential competencies required by Canadian physical therapists

Exemption – refers to those exempt from a given RCA sitting, including inactive registrants and registrants successful in the Physiotherapy Competence Examination (PCE) in the past 2 years

Incident – can be broadly defined as anything that affects a registrant’s ability to complete the RCA in a fair manner, or events that threaten fair and valid interpretations of exam scores

Item Writers – registrants, appointed by the Board, who volunteer to write cases/questions (‘items’) for the RCA; item writers work in teams according to practice context

Key Features – testing format that focuses on unique clinical challenges or specific critical decision points

Key Validation – process by which the performance of cases/questions is reviewed and analyzed after an exam administration and before the final scores are issued – if the cases/questions do not perform well, they may be removed from the exam

Learning Plan – goal-oriented plan to guide registrants in addressing deficiencies in professional practice

Make up – RCA session occurring approximately two weeks after the original session that provides registrants the opportunity to write the exam if they had an incident during the original session

Practice Context – clinical focus of the RCA that considers age of clients and diagnoses/conditions. Registrants choose one of the following four clinical focus options: adult and older adult musculoskeletal, adult and older adult cardiorespiratory, adult and older adult neuromuscular, and child and youth.

Proctor – an individual that monitors up to ten registrants during the RCA

Proctor Enrollment – process by which a proctor enters their name and phone number via the online booking application in order to receive a proctor identification number (PIN) which they give to a registrant or registrants for booking

Proctor Identification Number (PIN) – string of letters and numbers generated when proctors enroll via the online booking application

Proctor Key – four-digit code given to a proctor that will start the RCA; unique to a specific registrant and session

QAP/Quality Assurance Program – consists of four components: Annual Self-Report (ASR), Registrant Competence Assessment (RCA), Assessment of Professional Performance (APP), and Registrant Practice Support (RPS)

QAP Blueprint – document produced initially in 2008 and revised in 2011 that identifies which specific competencies can be included in the ASR and the RCA

RCA/Registrant Competence Assessment – online exam that uses a key features approach to assess registrants' decision-making skills specific to clinical and regulatory issues addressed in day-to-day practice

Reliability – extent to which the RCA produces comparable results under consistent conditions

Rescoring – if a registrant feels they were incorrectly identified as not meeting the standard on the RCA, the registrant can request that their exam be reviewed for errors in scoring

Retake – RCA session scheduled 6 months following the original RCA session; for those registrants that did not meet the standard on the RCA in the original session or who were granted a deferral from the original session

RPS/Registrant Practice Support – remediation component of the QA program; supports registrants to address deficiencies in professional practice; individually tailored, confidential process that involves the development and implementation of a learning plan

Session – a specific date/time when a registrant writes the RCA

Session Key – confidential code registrants receive upon booking session; key is used to log into the RCA

Sitting – a six-year cycle comprises two sittings of the RCA, at year 1 and year 4; one sitting includes multiple sessions

Specific Accommodation – an adaptation of the conditions under which the RCA is written due to a permanent or temporary physical or cognitive impairment, or other specific need affecting a registrant's ability to complete the RCA

Summative Assessment – evaluation method that will result in a summary decision being made; as opposed to a formative assessment, which provides information for learning purposes

Validity – extent to which the RCA measures what it is intended to measure