



**The Royal College of
Emergency Medicine**

Appeals Procedure for MRCEM and FRCEM Examinations

Published 21 April 2016

Appeals Procedure for MRCEM and FRCEM Examinations

1.0 Introduction

A candidate who has attempted examinations of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine may, in the circumstances outlined below, have the right of appeal against the examination outcome. Any examination candidate who makes a complaint or appeal in good faith will not be disadvantaged in current or future examinations. Candidates should feel able to lodge an appeal secure in the knowledge that it will be fairly investigated.

The sole grounds for appeal are:

- a. There is evidence of a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the examination (including administrative error) that has led to an adverse effect on the candidate's performance.
- b. There were exceptional circumstances that adversely affected the candidate's examination performance.

Appeals will not be granted on the grounds that a candidate:

- c. Was not aware of or did not understand the examination regulations
- d. Considers that his or her efforts were under-marked
- e. Seeks to question the academic or professional judgement of the examiners

1.1 Requested Appeal Outcomes

The outcome of an appeal which may be requested by a candidate are as follows:

- a. A full or partial refund of the examination fee.
- b. The examination attempt to be discounted from the candidate's examination history.
- c. Only in cases where the candidate has submitted an appeal on the grounds specified in regulation 1.0a, a procedural irregularity, **and** where the candidate is deemed to be a borderline fail (namely within one standard error of measurement from the final pass mark) that the examination result be amended from a fail to a pass.

1.2 Ill Health and Exceptional Circumstances

Candidates presenting for an examination are deemed fit and healthy to do so. Candidates who become unwell during the course of an examination should

notify the Senior Invigilator immediately and provide supporting medical documentation to the Examinations Manager within ten working days.

Candidates unable to attend an examination as a result of exceptional circumstances are advised to notify the Examinations Manager prior to the examination date. If this is not possible, candidates must notify the Examinations Manager within three working days of the examination date. Failure to do so may adversely affect the outcome of any subsequent appeal.

1.3 Candidates considering an application to re-sit the examination

It is a matter for the candidate to determine whether to re-take an examination prior to the exhaustion of the appeal process. Candidates are advised to follow the normal application procedure should they wish to re-sit an examination. The College cannot guarantee the outcome of the appeals process will be known prior to the date of the next examination.

If, having submitted an appeal, a candidate chooses to re-sit and then passes the examination before the appeal has been determined, the appeal will automatically be considered terminated.

2.0 The Preliminary Procedure

A candidate wishing to submit an appeal must do so, in writing, within 20 working days of the publication of their results on the College website. The written submission must include full details of the grounds for appeal and all supporting documentation the candidate wishes to be considered, together with the requested outcome as listed in regulation 1.1 above.

A fee of £250 must be submitted (in the form of a cheque made payable to the Royal College of Emergency Medicine or by an electronic bank transfer) with the candidate's written submission. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is successful.

The Examinations Manager or their nominated Deputy will, on receipt of an appeal, acknowledge receipt and collate all necessary documentary evidence. The Examinations Manager will present all details of the anonymised appeal to the College Dean (or nominated deputy if the Dean is directly involved in the appeal) who will initially consider the appeal. If the College Dean considers that the appeal falls outside of the permitted grounds, the appeal will be rejected and the candidate will be notified by the Examinations Manager. This will be the end of the appeals process, irrespective of whether there are further circumstances or evidence cited by the candidate.

3.0 Consideration by the Appeals Panel

If the College Dean agrees that there is a prima facie case for appeal he/she will convene an Appeals Panel within eight weeks of the written representation being received, or as soon as practical thereafter. The Appeals Panel will consist of:

- The College Dean, who will act as the Chair of the Appeals Panel
- A College Office Bearer (namely a College Officer or Lead Examiner)
- A member of the Panel of Examiners
- A member of the Lay Advisory Group

The Examinations Manager, or nominated deputy, will act as Secretary to the Appeals Panel and will attend the panel as an observer.

The Panel will consider the appeal in accordance with the written documentation available and will afford the candidate the opportunity of attending the hearing, in person or, if impractical, by videoconferencing. The Examinations Manager will agree the date of the hearing with the candidate.

No member of the Appeals Panel will have been involved in examining the candidate in the examination under appeal or have any other current or previous connection to the candidate. In such or other exceptional circumstances, if the College Dean has any prior knowledge of the candidate or the examination in question, they may nominate a deputy to replace him/her on the Appeals Panel.

The candidate will be entitled to be accompanied by one person, whom the candidate shall identify in advance, providing ten working days' notice. The friend may advise and counsel the candidate but will not be permitted to address the panel or take any part in proceedings.

The Appeal Panel may request of the candidate corroborative evidence not already supplied, such as previous examination performance or supporting evidence from trainers. The Panel may also seek evidence from any other person concerned with the examination under appeal and may invite any person to give evidence to the hearing. Members of the panel and the candidate may question any person before it.

4.0 Outcome of the Appeals Panel

If the appeal is rejected, the Examinations Manager will notify the candidate of the outcome and the reasons for the Panel's decision within ten working days. This will be an end of the appeals process irrespective of whether there are subsequent circumstances cited by the candidate.

If the Panel upholds an appeal for a change in the examination result under regulation 1.1c the case will be referred, with a report and recommendation from the Chairman of the Appeals Panel, for a final decision to the President, or in his/her absence a Vice President. In order to make this recommendation, the Panel must be satisfied that, had the candidate been able to complete the examination in the normal way, he/she would have passed.

The candidate will be informed of the outcome of a referral to the President within ten working days. There is no further right of appeal.

Any question regarding the conduct of the appeal shall be determined fully and finally by the Chairman of the Appeals Panel, who may take whatever steps he/she considers necessary to ensure that the appeal is handled efficiently and fairly.

5.0 Referral to the President

The authority to change an examination result lies with the President. Where the Appeals Panel recommends that a candidate's result is amended under regulation 1.1c, the President will consider the anonymised recommendation from the Appeals Panel.

The decision of the President shall be final and communicated to the candidate by the Examinations Manager. This will be an end of the appeals process irrespective of whether there are subsequent circumstances cited b