



# **FFICM Examination**

**REGULATIONS AND APPEALS**  
**March 2022**

# INTRODUCTION

The Regulations which follow govern the content and conduct of the examinations leading to the award of the Fellowship of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine. They specify:

- eligibility requirements;
- application procedures;
- limitations on the number of attempts;
- the requirement for guidance in the event of failure;
- procedures for making re-calculation, representations and appeal requests;
- reasonable adjustments for disability and special arrangements for pregnancy and temporary medical conditions;
- the Faculty examination statement regarding Equality and Diversity and Equality Analysis;
- the policies for mobile phones and smart watches, complaints, misconduct, disability and candidate feedback.

The regulations have been approved by the Board of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine.

Edition Date: March 2022

Replacing Edition Date: September 2021

List of amendments/revisions June 2017 – March 2022:	
Date	Amendments made
March 2022	Regulation 7.5 amended to update withdrawal policy
September 2021	Regulation 6.1.2 amended to make the tenure of core primary exam from 7 to 10 years and an update has been made to the RCEM exam
October 2020	Regulation 6.2.2 amended to exclude any periods of maternity/paternity/adoption leave. For candidates who work or train on a less than full time basis, the time shall be calculated on a whole-time-equivalent basis
October 2019	Regulation 6.1.4.5 amended to mandate that an MTI doctor must be registered with the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine
January 2019	Appendix 1: MCQ structure amended to read 50 MTF and 50 SBA. Appendix 2: MCQ marks available amended to meet new structure
October 2018	Regulation 6 Eligibility Final amended to add full list of RCEM exams at subparagraph 6.1.2 New eligibility categories Member and Associate Member added to subparagraph 6.1.3. New subparagraphs: 12.8 Applications for FFICM exams will not be accepted whilst a matter under Review remains unresolved. 13.7 Applications for FFICM exams will not be accepted whilst a matter under Appeal remains unresolved. 16.5 Equality Analysis added
November 2017	Regulation 6.1.4.5 amended to allow a further year for exam completion for Doctors sponsored under MTI Regulation 6.1.4 added to include eligibility criterion for former UK ICM trainees. Regulation 7.5: 14 day rule for admin charges applied. Appendix 4: Normal exam judgements for dyslexic candidates removed. Appendix 4: New policy: Disability and Reasonable Adjustments Policy added. Appendix 9: Amended to include 'Smart Watches throughout policy. Appendix 11: Disability Policy removed Appendix 11 reads: AET Feedback Form (moved from Appendix 12): Appendix 12 reads: Candidate Feedback policy (moved from Appendix 13).
June 2017	Paragraph 6.1.6: Have passed the following examinations ..... Within 10 years before the published start date of the sitting applied for. And .....

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# REGULATIONS

## 1 DEFINITIONS

### TRAINING

- 1.1 For the purpose of these regulations a trainee is someone who has received 'approved training' in the UK.
- 1.2 For the purpose of these regulations 'approved training' means training
- 1.2.1 which is part of a UK GMC approved programme of training in Intensive Care Medicine (either as part of a Single, Joint or Dual programme).
  - 1.2.2 which has been approved by the respective Royal College or Faculty.
  - 1.2.3 which is appropriate to the part of the examination for which the candidate is applying.

### GENERAL

- 1.3 The words and phrases in the left-hand column below shall have the meanings assigned to them in the right-hand column:

<b>Appeal</b>	Has the meaning assigned to it in Regulation 13.1 of these Regulations.
<b>Board</b>	The Board of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine.
<b>College</b>	The Royal College of Anaesthetists.
<b>Director</b>	The Training and Examinations Director of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.
<b>Examiners</b>	The Court of Examiners for the part of the examination to which a representation or appeal relates, or the Chair of that Court or any member of that Court designated by the Chair.
<b>Faculty/FICM</b>	The Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine.
<b>Panel</b>	An appeal panel set up in accordance with Regulation 13.2.
<b>Representation</b>	Has the meaning assigned to it in Regulation 11.2 of these Regulations.
<b>Review</b>	Has the meaning attached to it in Regulation 12.2 of these Regulations.
<b>Review Clerk</b>	A member of the Faculty staff with responsibility for administering examination appeals.

## 2 COMMENCEMENT AND REVOCATION

- 2.1 These regulations shall come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 and will apply to examinations commencing on or after that date.
- 2.2 These regulations are agreed by the Board of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and supersede any previous regulations which are hereby revoked.

## 3 EXAMINATIONS

- 3.1 **Sittings.** The examination for the Fellowship of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FFICM) will normally take place twice in each calendar year. The Board may at any time decide, subject to adequate notice, to alter the number of sittings of the examination. Examinations will normally be held at Churchill House, 35 Red Lion Square, London.
- 3.2 **Subject matter.** The subject matter of the examination is specified in the relevant parts of *The CCT in Intensive Care Medicine*.
- 3.3 **Examination structure, marking systems and prizes.** The structure of the examination, together with details of the marking systems used and the prizes which may be awarded are described in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this document.
- 3.4 **Format.** The Fellowship of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FFICM) examination will initially consist of a Final part only, with Primary examinations from partner specialties acting as the FFICM Primary.
- 3.4.1 The FFICM Final Examination is divided into three sections taken on two separate days:
- a Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination;
  - a Structured Oral Examination (SOE) and;
  - an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).
- 3.4.2 Candidates must pass the MCQ before they can apply to sit the OSCE and SOE.
- 3.4.3 At the first attempt the OSCE and SOE sections must be taken together. If one section is failed only that section must be retaken, subject to Regulation 3.5. If both sections are failed then they must be re-taken together.
- 3.5 Component validity:
- 3.5.1 A pass in the MCQ component will be valid for three years, after which time if the whole examinations has not been passed, the MCQ must be re-taken.
- 3.5.2 A pass in the OSCE or SOE will be valid for two years, after which time if the whole examination has not been passed, the relevant section(s) must be re-taken.
- 3.6 **Number of attempts.** Candidates will be allowed six attempts at each section, subject to eligibility.
- 3.7 **Application.** Applicants must pass the MCQ examination before they can apply for the OSCE/SOE components. The Calendar allows Applicants who are successful at the MCQ to apply for the OSCE/SOE at the same sitting (autumn or spring). Applicants must apply for the OSCE/SOE together, unless an Applicant passes one component and fails the other. Then only the failed component need be applied for at the next sitting.

3.8 **Additional Educational Training.** In addition to remaining eligible under Regulations 6, at the sixth attempt at any component in the FFICM Final examination, a candidate must provide evidence of additional educational experience/training as follows:

3.8.1 Prior to application for further attempts after the fifth attempt a candidate must:

Discuss their final attempt and suitability for Intensive Care Medicine with their Faculty Tutor or Regional Advisor as applicable. Their Faculty Tutor/Regional Advisor must support a further attempt in writing through the submission of the 'Additional Educational Training form; AET Form 1' at Appendix 12.

The form must be submitted to the Director of Training and Examinations at the Faculty address, at least three months in advance of the date of the next intended sitting.

3.8.2 A candidate must attend a further guidance interview before sitting at the final attempt of the OSCE and/or SOE.

3.8.3 Re-application at the sixth attempt can only be made after a period of additional training which has been discuss and agreed by the Faculty Tutor or Regional Advisor following consultation with the in-house anaesthetic/intensive care medicine training team. A full training programme is mandatory and is set out on the form as follows:

- I. Attendance/planned attendance at an FFICM Preparation Course held at the Faculty or a similar event held locally.
- II. Details of examination practice for the relevant component.
- III. Details of further clinical exposure and training as discussed with the Faculty Tutor or Regional Advisor which is appropriate to the relevant examination component.

## 4 PRIORITISATION OF APPLICATIONS

4.1 There is no prioritisation for the MCQ paper.

4.2 Subject to their being eligible in all other respects to sit the OSCE and/or SOE, priority will be given to Applicants who are:

4.2.1 Doctors currently in Deanery approved training posts on GMC approved training programmes in Intensive Care Medicine (either as part of a Single, Joint or Dual programme).

4.3 The following Applicants will be accepted, in the order listed, if the Faculty has the capacity to examine them at the sitting applied for, in the OSCE and/or SOE:

4.3.1 Doctors currently in Deanery approved training posts on GMC approved training programmes who have registered for Affiliate Trainee Registration and achieved Affiliate Fellowship; and

4.3.2 Doctors currently sponsored under the MTI IP scheme for Intensive Care Medicine; and

4.3.3 All other eligible categories not listed above.

Candidates in all the above categories will automatically be booked on to exams on application. However, the Faculty reserves the right to move candidates listed at paragraph

4.3 to a later sitting of the exam should there be insufficient capacity to examine them at the sitting applied for.

## 5 ELIGIBILITY (PRIMARY)

5.1 Eligibility criteria for the Primary FFICM to be agreed when the examination is introduced.

## 6 ELIGIBILITY (FINAL)

6.1 A person is eligible to enter the MCQ paper who:

6.1.1 is eligible for full registration with the General Medical Council (United Kingdom).

6.1.2 has passed any of the following examinations within 10 years before the published start date of the sitting applied for:

- FRCA Final
- FRCA Primary
- MRCP (UK)
- EDIC
- MRCEM Primary SBA (or MRCEM Part A between August 2012 – August 2016 or FRCEM Primary after August 2016) AND MRCEM Intermediate SBA (or MRCEM Part B between August 2012 – August 2016 or FRCEM Intermediate SAQ after August 2016) AND MRCEM OSCE after August 2014\* (or FRCEM Intermediate SJP after August 2017)

\*retrospective approval has been granted for MRCEM achieved between August 2018 – August 2021 as part of the Emergency Medicine 2021 curriculum.

- Or any of the exemption qualifications listed in the regulations of the Royal College of Anaesthetists and the Royal College of Emergency Medicine within 10 years before the published start date of the sitting applied for.

6.1.3 satisfies the requirements of these Regulations with regard to application procedures and other matters;

6.1.4 Satisfies ONE of the following regulations:

6.1.4.1 **TRAINEE DOCTOR:** A trainee doctor currently registered with the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine as a trainee in a Deanery approved training post on a GMC approved training programme in Intensive Care Medicine (either as part of a Single, Dual or Joint programme), who has completed Stage 1 ICM (Single/Dual) or Intermediate training (Joint).

6.1.4.2 **AFFILIATE FELLOW:** A trainee doctor who is currently registered with the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine as an Affiliate fellow in a Deanery approved training post on a GMC approved training programme in a specialty of one of the Faculty's parent Colleges.

6.1.4.3 **MEMBER (MFICM) & ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

- I. currently practising ICM in the UK for one continuous year prior to the date of the examination applied for; and
- II. is registered with the Faculty; and
- III. holds a satisfactory appraisal



6.1.4.4 **FORMER TRAINEE DOCTOR:** A doctor who is currently registered with the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and is a former UK ICM trainee who left ICM training no more than five years before the published start date of the sitting applied for.

6.1.4.5 **MEDICAL TRAINING INITIATIVE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME (MTI IP):**

- I. A doctor who is currently registered with the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and is sponsored under the MTI IP; and been employed in Intensive Care Medicine in a NHS post for six months immediately prior to the date of the examination applied for and holds a satisfactory NHS appraisal.
- II. A doctor who has completed their MTI sponsorship and during their sponsorship passed one or more components of the FFICM, will be allowed to sit outstanding component(s) for one further year, measured from the completion date of their sponsorship providing they remain eligible in all other respects. No further adjustments to eligibility will be made after the extended period has elapsed.

6.2 A person is eligible to enter the OSCE and/or SOE who:

6.2.1 is eligible to enter the MCQ as prescribed in regulation 6.1. And;

6.2.2 has passed the MCQ within three years on the closing date for applications, excluding any periods of maternity/paternity/adoption leave within this three-year period. For candidates who work or train on a less than full time basis, the time shall be calculated on a whole-time-equivalent basis

6.3 A person shall not be eligible to enter the MCQ or OSCE and/or SOE who has already attempted and failed the component(s) six times.

## 7 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

7.1 **On- Line Applications.** Applicants must apply for examinations on-line. The FFICM examination calendar, details of on-line application/payment are available on the Faculty website <https://www.ficm.ac.uk/examinations/calendar-fees>

7.2 Applications made on-line, for admission to an examination must be received by the Faculty on or after the published opening date but not later than 5pm on the published closing date of the sitting applied for, as shown in the examination calendar. An applicant will receive an automatically generated email confirming booking has been successful and payment has been processed.

7.3 Any certificates required must be accompanied with the online application. Incomplete online applications will not be accepted.

7.4 Fees payable for admission to each part, shall be those fixed by the Board and the Council and published in the examinations calendar. Payment should be made through the online process.

7.5 **Withdrawals.** Withdrawals before the closing date may receive the full fee paid. Candidates withdrawing after the closing date may be entitled to a full refund, providing the request is made within 14 days of receipt of the application. For withdrawals greater than 14 days, the refund is subject to an admin fee. A candidate who withdraws in any other circumstance within 7 working days of an exam date, including non-issue of entry visas or failure to appear for an examination, will not be entitled to any refund of fee. Exceptional circumstances will

be considered on receipt of written evidence. Fees cannot be deferred from one exam to another.

## 8 SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1 **Pregnancy.** Regulations 8.2 to 8.3 apply only to female candidates whose pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness or condition renders them unable to attend the examination. These Regulations do not apply to any other situations. This special treatment in relation to female candidates is permitted under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.
- 8.2 Any prospective candidate should notify the Faculty via the College Examinations Department as soon as possible of the fact of their pregnancy and the expected week of confinement. Such details should, where possible, be attached to the appropriate application form and fee.
- 8.3 A prospective candidate at the time of their online application must submit an appropriate medical certificate or official doctor's letter which satisfies the Faculty if:
- 8.3.1 she has any pregnancy-related problems or illness; or
  - 8.3.2 her confinement is due shortly before or around the date of the examination; or
  - 8.3.3 her condition gives her sufficient discomfort for her to consider that it will have a detrimental effect upon her performance.
  - 8.3.4 A special arrangement in respect to exam adjustment is requested, (see Appendix 4).
- 8.4 In such circumstances, should such a candidate be unable to sit for the examination, withdrawal will be permitted and the examination fee will be refunded (subject to a deduction for administrative expenses if applicable (14 day rule applies).
- 8.5 A candidate who does not inform the Examinations Department of her pregnancy will not normally be allowed to withdraw her application after the closing date without forfeiting her examination fee. However, when the pregnancy is diagnosed after submitting an application but prior to the examination, and the candidate is subsequently unable to attend for the examination, due to pregnancy-related reasons. Then upon submission of an appropriate medical certificate or confirmation from a Faculty Tutor or Regional Advisor in Intensive Care Medicine, which satisfies the Faculty, the candidate may withdraw from the examination and the fee will be refunded (subject to a deduction for administrative expenses, if applicable 14 day rule applies).
- 8.6 **Disability and reasonable adjustment to examination conditions:** The Faculty is committed to ensure that all candidates have equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability in all FFICM examinations and will make reasonable adjustments to examination arrangements as appropriate for individual disabled candidates. The definition of 'disability' and 'reasonable adjustment' under the Equality Act 2010 including the procedure to follow for candidates seeking examination adjustments are set out at Appendix 4 of these regulations.
- 8.7 **Temporary medical conditions** The Faculty will consider special arrangements in the form of 'reasonable adjustments' for candidates who have a temporary, ongoing or fluctuating medical condition that does not meet the definition of a disability as set out in the Equality Act 2010 but does affect a candidate's ability to take a planned sitting of an examination. The procedures to follow are set out at Appendix 4.

## 9 FELLOWSHIP BY EXAMINATION

- 9.1 A person shall be entitled to be admitted as a Fellow of the Faculty if he or she has:
- 9.1.1 passed the appropriate examination; and
  - 9.1.2 complied with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Board in the regulations of the Faculty.

## 10 FAILURES AND GUIDANCE

- 10.1 **Failures.** A candidate who is unsuccessful in an examination may, subject to the provisions of Sections 5-7 and Regulation 11.2, enter for the next or any subsequent sitting of that examination.
- 10.2 **Guidance.** There are no mandatory requirements for candidates to attend guidance interviews. Guidance is not provided on failure of the MCQ examination. At the sixth attempt candidates must have attended a guidance interview, see Regulation 3.8.2.
- 10.3 A candidate who fails the SOE and/or OSCE examination more than once may request a guidance interview:
- 10.3.1 Interviews are limited to one per candidate with the exception of, at the sixth attempt. A candidate shall be entitled to a second guidance interview at the sixth attempt if required.
  - 10.3.2 Requests should be made by email ([exams@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:exams@rcoa.ac.uk)) or in writing to the Faculty via the College Examinations Department.
- 10.4 No special consideration will be given in respect of refunds following guidance interviews.
- 10.5 For the purpose of this regulation 'guidance' shall be:
- 10.5.1 carried out by one or more Faculty Examiners;
  - 10.5.2 attended by the Faculty Tutor;
  - 10.5.3 arranged locally or at the Faculty;
  - 10.5.4 subject to any other requirement that the Board may from time to time authorise.

## 11 REPRESENTATION AND RE-CALCULATION

- 11.1 The Faculty is committed to ensuring that all candidates are treated fairly and consistently during Faculty examinations. Paragraphs 12 and 13 of these regulations allow candidates to request a 'Review' of the conduct of their exam where they believe they may have been treated unfairly, and allege impropriety or bias of some kind. Any decision regarding the request for a Review is made by the Director. Candidates who remain dissatisfied with the Review decision and wish to have their case heard by an independent panel may request an Appeal.
- 11.2 All marks are awarded following strict guidelines (see Appendix 2). **Papers cannot be remarked**, marks confirmed by the Faculty are final. However, if following the outcome of a

Review or Appeal, bias or impropriety is agreed to have been proven, then the Review or Appeal body will take such action to rectify the situation identified.

- 11.2 **Re-calculation requests.** A Candidate who is dissatisfied with the determination of his/her result but is not alleging any impropriety or bias, may after the receipt of the result letter, request an additional calculation of his/her result. Re-calculation will incur a £50 administration charge, refundable only where an error is identified. Applicants should be fully aware that errors found during additional calculation are extremely rare.

11.2.1 Re-calculation requests should be made in writing to the Faculty via the College Examinations Department and accompanied by the administration charge, by cheque payable to 'The Royal College of Anaesthetists'.

## 12 REVIEWS

- 12.1 Subject to the following regulations, a candidate can ask the Director to review the conduct or the result of their examination.

- 12.2 Reviews will be entertained **which allege bias or impropriety of some kind** in the organisation, content, conduct or determination of the result of the examination. The burden of proof lies with the candidate who must prove clear reason as to why their performance was affected by impropriety or bias. The following are examples or incidents that may affect performance:

12.2.1 Organisation e.g. wrong or missing documentation, instructions or artefacts, poor seating/lighting.

12.2.2 Content e.g. questions not relevant to the examination, questions on a topic not related to the curriculum.

12.2.3 Conduct e.g. personal questions about candidate's age, gender, origins, beliefs, disabilities, workplace or experience.

12.2.4 Determination of the result e.g. the examiner(s) did not follow the marking methods set out in Appendix 2.

- 12.3 **No review, however, may be made of matters which relate solely to the examiners' judgement.**

- 12.4 Any request for a review must be:

12.4.1 submitted by the candidate to whom the Review relates setting out in full the matter on which the request is based.

12.4.2 addressed to the Director and submitted within two months of completing the relevant examination.

- 12.5 On receipt of a request for a Review, the Director will send the candidate a letter of acknowledgement and will consider the admissibility of the request. If the Director concludes that a review is inadmissible, whether on the ground of Regulation 12.3 or for any other reason, the Director will so inform the candidate in writing forthwith.

- 12.6 If the Director:
- 12.6.1 is of the opinion that the request for a review is in the nature of a request for guidance or re-calculation rather than a challenge of the examination procedure or result due to alleged impropriety or bias, the request may be treated in accordance with the appropriate regulation.
  - 12.6.2 finds that the matter on which the review is based contains any error of fact, the candidate shall be so informed without delay and shall be invited to indicate whether he or she wishes to pursue the matter. If he or she does not, the Review shall be deemed to have been dismissed.
  - 12.6.3 concludes that the matter on which the Review is based, provides proof of impropriety or bias of some kind, whether in whole or in part, the Director shall take any action necessary to rectify the situation identified and the candidate shall be informed of the findings and any corrective action to be taken.
  - 12.6.4 concludes that the matter on which the Review is based does not prove impropriety or bias, then the candidate shall be so informed in writing forthwith.
- 12.7 In conducting the review in accordance with Regulation 12.5, the Director shall consult the Examiners.
- 12.8 Applications for FFICM examinations will not be accepted whilst a matter under Review remains unresolved.

### **13 APPEALS**

- 13.1 If a candidate who has received a reply under Regulation 12.6.4 remains dissatisfied with the findings of the Director and wishes to challenge the points set out in the decision letter, he/she may submit an Appeal to the College Appeal Clerk, using the form at Appendix 5 to these Regulations. No Appeal may be made in matters which relate solely to the examiners' judgement. The Appeal must be accompanied by a fee of £1,500 (by cheque made payable to 'The Royal College of Anaesthetists') and must be received within two months of the Director's decision letter.
- 13.2 The Reviews Clerk will confirm receipt in writing and advise the Appellant of a date by which an Appeal Panel will be appointed, which will not be more than one calendar month after the date of receipt of the application. At this stage; the Appellant can request a meeting with a senior FICM examiner who is not involved in the Review or the Appeal, to discuss the FICM examination processes or marking system, the senior examiner will be nominated by the Faculty. The content of this meeting cannot be used as further evidence towards the case of the Appellant or the Faculty. The Appellant may withdraw his/her application and receive a full refund of fee providing it is prior to the final date set for the appointment of the Appeal Panel.
- 13.3 On appointment, the Panel will consist of two examiners who have not previously been involved at any time in the examination of the Appellant or his/her Review (the examiners may be drawn from the FICM or FRCA Board of Examiners), and a chair, who will have no formal connection with the Faculty or College. The Appeal hearing date will be set by the Appeals Clerk. The panel shall proceed to hear the appeal in accordance with notes for the Chair at Appendix 6 and Procedures for Appeal Hearings at Appendix 7 to these Regulations. It shall allow adequate periods of notice to both parties, an opportunity for the Appellant to

be present in person and to be represented, and an opportunity for the Appellant, or his/her representative, to present the Appeal and to respond to any answer the Director may make.

13.4 At the conclusion of the proceedings the panel shall reach its findings. The findings a panel may make shall be as follows:

13.4.1 That the Appeal is dismissed; no further appeal may be considered.

13.4.1 That the Appeal is justified in whole or in part but that the matter does not justify further action.

13.4.2 That the Appeal is justified and either that:

(a) any mark originally awarded to the Appellant shall be appropriately corrected and, if the consequence of such correction so requires, that the Appellant shall be declared successful in the examination; or

(b) the result of the Appellant's examination shall be declared void and that he/she shall be allowed to re-sit without payment of any fee.

13.5 The Chair shall have the power to decide whether all, part of or none of the Appeal fee will be returned.

13.6 In announcing its findings the panel shall give reasons for its decision in writing.

13.7 Applications for FFICM examinations will not be accepted whilst a matter under Appeal remains unresolved.

## 14 DRESS CODE, ELECTRONIC DEVICES/MOBILE PHONES AND MISCONDUCT

14.1 **Dress code for examinations:** The Faculty endorses the key recommendations of guidance on dress codes for postgraduate medical recruitment, training and assessment from the conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (CoPMeD). Full details are set out at Appendix 8 of these regulations.

14.2 **Electronic devices and mobile phones:** The Faculty will follow strict appliance of the rules set out at Appendix 9 of these regulations regarding the use of mobile phones smart watches and unauthorised electronic devices during FFICM examinations.

14.3 **Misconduct:** All aspects of misconduct at FFICM examinations will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with the misconduct policy set out at Appendix 10 of these regulations.

## 15 COMPLAINTS

15.1 The Faculty recognises that on occasion candidates may wish to express their dissatisfaction with the way in which something has been done and feel confident that any such complaint is handled in a fair and consistent way. Candidates who consider that they have grounds for complaint, regarding the provision of a service by the Faculty that does not amount to a request for a 'Review', (see paragraph 12), should use the following regulations.

15.2 A 'complaint' in accordance with these regulations, is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or a specific concern, whether given orally or in writing, about the provision or quality of a service provided during the examination process.

- 15.3. Complaints should be brought to the attention of a Faculty officer as soon as possible. All complaints given orally at the time of an examination taking place will be logged on an incident report form by the Faculty officer. Immediate action to resolve issues as they arise will be taken wherever possible and the complainant will be advised accordingly.
- 15.4 All complaints should be raised initially with the Faculty officer directly involved. The vast majority of complaints can and should be resolved in this way. If this does not resolve the matter, or this step is for any reason not possible or appropriate, the complainant should contact the Faculty by email or in writing, setting out in full the matter on which the complaint is based. Correspondence should be addressed for the attention of the Examinations Manager, within one month of the incident occurring. Complaints submitted anonymously or on behalf of another party will not be considered.
- 15.5. Where a complaint more closely fits a request for a Review or a matter such as a re-calculation, it will be reclassified and proceed in accordance with the appropriate regulation. Such reclassification will always be carried out so that the matter can be considered in the most appropriate and fair way. Candidates will not be required to resubmit their cases.
- 15.6. An informal and flexible approach to resolution of complaints will be adopted wherever possible. All complainants will be advised of the course of action taken to resolve the complaint.
- 15.7. If following communication with the Faculty a complainant remains dissatisfied and only when all attempts to resolve the complaint have been exhausted. Then a 'formal complaint' should be submitted to the Director. Following discussion with the Examinations Committee, the Director will reach a conclusion on the complaint and determine a course of action.
- 15.8 Formal complaints must be submitted in writing to the Director, headed 'Formal Complaint' stating:
- (a) The nature of the complaint.
  - (b) What has/has not been done to resolve it.
  - (c) Why the complainant is not satisfied with the course of action taken by the Faculty/Faculty officer, and
  - (d) what the complainant would like to be done to resolve the matter to their satisfaction.
- 15.9. The Director will acknowledge an official complaint within five working days of receipt. A full response will be made as soon as possible. Full reasons will be given for the decision reached.
- 15.10 The decision of the Director is final and following despatch of the decision letter the Complaint procedure will be at an end.
- 15.11 Candidate confidentiality will be observed when handling complaints wherever possible. However, it will occasionally be necessary to disclose a complainant's identity to progress an investigation. Candidates who engage in the complaints process will not be disadvantaged.

## 16. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

16.1 In the exercising of its duties when carrying out examinations in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Section 149(1) (the Act), the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine gives due regard to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In its regard for these duties, the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine aims to meet all areas of the Royal College of Anaesthetists Equal Opportunities Policy<sup>1</sup>. To ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability and that no person is treated less favourably than another on grounds of ethnic origin, nationality, disability, gender, transgender, sexual orientation, age or religion.

16.2 To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and as part of the Faculty's compliance with the Royal College of Anaesthetists Equal Opportunity Policy, the Faculty monitors exam results in relation to the candidate population.

16.3 All examiners and examinations staff undertakes regular exam specific E&D training.

16.4 The Faculty considers reasonable adjustment for examination candidates with a disability as set out at Appendix 11 of these regulations.

16.5 Equality analysis is an integral part of examinations policy and practice development. The Faculty carries out objective, evidence based equality analysis when making decisions relating to exam changes, policies, content and practice. This ensures that full consideration is given to the effect that such decision may have on the fairness of the exams and aims to prevent discrimination, promote diversity and inclusivity for all groups of people.

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<sup>1</sup> The Royal College of Anaesthetists Equal Opportunities Policy (2014)



# APPENDICES

*These appendices are not regulations. They are provided for the guidance of Candidates and may change from time to time as decided by the Board.*

## **APPENDIX 1: THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION**

The Fellowship of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FFICM) examination will initially consist of a Final part only. Following the introduction of ICM Core Training posts, date to be announced, the FFICM will consist of two parts; Primary and Final.

There are three sections to the FFICM Final Examination:

### **(1) MCQ**

The Multiple Choice Question examination will comprise of:

- (a) 50 x Multiple True/False (MTF) questions and 50 x Single Best Answer (SBA) questions, which will be selected to cover as wide an area of the curriculum as possible.

The paper is taken in one three hour sitting.

### **(2) Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)**

Up to 13 stations in approximately 1 hour 45 minutes (the OSCE will include one or more test stations, only the live stations will count towards the result). The stations will be selected to cover as wide an area of the curriculum as possible. One or more of the stations may involve the use of a medium fidelity simulator.

### **(3) Structured Oral Examination (SOE)**

Four stations, two question in each station, in approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. The questions will be selected to cover as wide an area of the curriculum as possible.

## **APPENDIX 2: THE MARKING SYSTEMS**

All sections have to be passed to pass the whole examination.

In all sections of the examination, the performance of borderline candidates is reviewed by the examiners before final marks are awarded.

If, in the opinion of the examiners, a candidate's answers in the SOEs have been dangerous then the candidate's performance is reviewed by all the examiners before the marks are confirmed.

### **(1) MCQ**

**MTF:** One mark is awarded for each correct answer. **SBA:** Four marks are awarded for each correct question. The maximum mark obtainable for the MCQ paper is 450 (MTF 50 x 5 (250) and SBA 50 X 4 (200)).

Marks are not deducted for wrong answers. The pass mark is set by the examiners using Angoff referencing and SEM adjustment.

### **(2) OSCE**

Each station is marked out of 20 with the pass mark for each station being determined by the examiners before the examination, using Angoff Referencing. The pass marks for each of the live stations are summed to obtain the pass mark for the whole examination.

### **(3) SOE**

Two examiners are present for each part of the SOE. Each examiner marks every question independently. There are eight questions; Pass = 2, Borderline performance = 1, Fail = 0, giving a maximum total of 32 marks (8 x 2 x 2). The pass mark is determined using assessment methods approved by the GMC.

## APPENDIX 3:

## EXAMINATION PRIZE

The FFICM Prize may, at the discretion of the Board of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine, be awarded annually, to the Candidate(s) who perform at the *highest* level of distinction in all parts of the FFICM Final Examination at their first attempt.

A level of distinction is defined as follows:

**FFICM MCQ:** The top 10% of examination candidates

**FFICM OSCE:** The top 10% of examination candidates

**FFICM SOE:** A maximum score of 32 marks.

All candidates who meet the levels of distinction at their first attempt in all parts of the FFICM Final, during the current academic year, will be discussed at the FFICM Examinations Committee Sub Group following the Spring sitting of the OSCE/SOE. The candidate who achieves the *highest* level of distinction in all parts of the FFICM Final Examination at their first attempt, will be recommended to the Faculty Board for the award of the Prize.

Candidates are not informed that their exam scores meet any of the above definitions of levels of distinction, unless they are awarded the prize.

## APPENDIX 4:       DISABILITY AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT POLICY

### Reasonable adjustments at examinations – arrangements for disabled candidates

This policy has been updated following the guidelines set out in the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges' 'Reasonable Adjustments for Candidates with Disabilities in High Stakes Assessments' document (July 2017), which was produced following collaborative work from medical colleges and faculties. This policy is supported by a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which are available on the Faculty website and provided to candidates who apply for all FFICM examinations.

#### 1.       Policy statement

The Faculty is committed to ensure that all candidates have equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability in all types of FFICM Examination settings. To this aim, the Faculty will make 'reasonable adjustments' to examination arrangements as appropriate for individual disabled candidates. The Faculty will take account of a candidate's personal circumstances and any professional advice given in the corroborative evidence of the disability that has been supplied. Therefore adjustments are not merely based on the impairment(s) but how the impairment(s) would potentially impact on a candidate's performance.

#### 2.       Definition of disability

Disability is a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (the Act). The definition of disability under the Act is as follows:

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purpose of the Act, these words have the following meaning:

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long term' means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- 'normal day-to-day activities' include everyday things such as eating, washing, walking, working and examinations.

#### 3.       Definition and provision of reasonable adjustment

3.1 'Reasonable adjustment' is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places a candidate at a substantial disadvantage in an examination situation.

3.2 The Faculty will make reasonable adjustment for disabled candidates who undertake FFICM examinations, where any provision, criterion or practice and/or physical feature of the exam environment puts disabled candidates at a substantial disadvantage compared with those who are not disabled. The Faculty will provide or allow the use of auxiliary aids, where without one a disabled candidate will be put at a substantial disadvantage. See paragraph 6.

3.3 The Faculty will also consider temporary (such as; broken arm, back pain), on-going or fluctuating medical conditions for the purpose of examination adjustment, where the condition affects a candidate's ability to take a planned sitting of an examination. See Section 8 of these regulations regarding special arrangements for Pregnancy and short-term related conditions.

3.4 Reasonable adjustment to examination arrangements is provided to candidates with a disability in order to reduce the potential disadvantage they face compared to a non-disabled candidate. It is not designed to give any type of advantage to disabled candidates in the receiving of additional examination accommodations. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of the examination and does not apply to the application of a competence standard.

3.5 FFICM examinations are in various formats which require a number of different deliveries; computer based or Optical Mark Recognition (MCQ), Oral discussion (SOE) and practical application (OSCE). Each type of format/delivery may make different demands on the candidate and therefore may influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed and the kind of reasonable adjustment which can be put in place. The Faculty recognises that it is not possible or appropriate to attempt to define a pre-determined set of reasonable adjustments and therefore any decisions will need to be made on a case-by-case basis.

#### 4. Procedure for requesting reasonable adjustment

4.1 Any candidate who has a physical or mental disability, specific learning difficulty (SpLD) or on-going or fluctuating condition that they believe could affect their performance in an examination may be entitled to reasonable adjustments or special arrangements. All such candidates should initially inform the Faculty of this at the time of application, by completing the 'I have a disability' and the 'I require exam adjustment' boxes on the application form. Or by ticking the appropriate pop-up boxes during the online application process, this should also be carried out at all reapplications and repeat attempts at any component(s) of the examination. Candidates should not assume that they will be granted adjustments at forthcoming exams just because they were provided certain adjustments at previous attempts.

4.2 On completion of submitting their exam application and in addition to indicating they require adjustments during the application process. All candidates seeking reasonable adjustments must submit full written details of any adjustments they require to the Head of Examinations, by emailing [exams@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:exams@rcoa.ac.uk) the subject heading of the email should include the name of the examination applied for and the wording 'request for exam adjustments'. For example; "*FFICM Final MCQ, July 2017 - request for exam adjustments*". Again this process should be followed at all attempts. At the first request for reasonable adjustment candidates must supply supporting evidence from an appropriate authority, such as; the candidate's GP, their Faculty tutor or supervising consultant. See paragraph 4.4 regarding the evidence required for candidates with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD).

4.3 Candidates whose need for reasonable adjustments or special arrangements (see Section 8 of these regulations) arises after the submission of their application (due to an accident or sudden condition/illness) must contact the Head of Examinations [exams@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:exams@rcoa.ac.uk) as soon as practicable.

4.4 If a candidate is seeking reasonable adjustments for an SpLD then they must provide a report from an approved assessor\* when contacting the Head of Examinations. This assessment needs to have been undertaken and provided in English and obtained after the age of 16. The report must include recommendations in regard to exam adjustments. Reports will be held on file therefore they only need to be submitted at the first attempt. However the Faculty reserves the right to request a further report or clarification of the recommendations made, if the adjustment(s) requested is different from that recommended in the report or if there is no precedent set for the recommendation(s) listed, see paragraphs 4.6 and 5.8. Candidates must contact the Head of Examinations at each attempt at all examinations to discuss and confirm exam accommodations as the reasonable adjustments required may change from sitting to sitting.

\*Approved assessors include:

- Specialist teachers who hold a practicing certificate, such as Dyslexia Action, BDA or PATOSS. Candidates can check if an assessor holds the appropriate qualifications on the SASC (SpLD Assessment Standards Committee) [website](#)
- A practicing chartered or educational psychologist who is registered with the Healthcare Professionals Council. A candidate can check if an assessor is registered on the [HCPC website](#).

Where candidates are unclear if the person who completed their assessment is an 'approved assessor' they should contact the Head of Examinations for clarification.

- 4.5 Many assessors may not be familiar with the range of assessments undertaken by candidates sitting the FFICM examinations and working towards a CCT in Intensive Care Medicine. Therefore to assist assessors in completing their reports the Faculty is happy to provide information to help them tailor their recommendations more effectively for specific examinations. Candidates should contact the Head of Examinations and provide the contact details of the assessor compiling the report.
- 4.6 If the rationale for reasonable adjustments in the evidence or report provided is unclear or it is felt that further explanation is required the Faculty may seek consent from the candidate to approach the relevant GP, consultant or assessor/expert concerned for further clarification.
- 4.7 Candidates are advised that failure to contact the Faculty promptly may mean that there will be insufficient time for some or all of the reasonable adjustments requested to be put in place. In such cases, candidates can either agree to sit the examination with no or some reasonable adjustment or withdraw and receive a full refund. They can then reapply for the next sitting of the examination, where a full and fair assessment of the reasonable adjustments required can be made,

## **5. Consideration of Reasonable adjustments**

- 5.1 All decision makers will have received training in equality and diversity, reasonable adjustments and unconscious bias. The Faculty is responsible for undertaking an evidence based evaluation of the entitlement to adjustments for disabled candidates, as defined by the Act and to those with conditions similar to those raised at paragraph 3.3. The Faculty will undertake re-evaluations of entitlement for each exam application made by individual candidates requesting reasonable adjustments.
- 5.2 The Head of Examinations will be the primary contact for all requests for adjustments. Whilst it cannot be assumed that candidates with the same type of disability will all benefit from the same adjustments, where a precedent has already been set the Head of Examinations will use previously awarded adjustments as a starting point for their considerations and discussions. See paragraph 5.3 in regard to SpLDs.
- 5.3 Good practice in the support of candidates with SpLDs such as dyslexia is applied in offering a provision of extra time for written examinations, although this should be raised as a recommendation in the assessor's report in order to be used as a starting point for reasonable adjustment considerations. Extra time accommodations for candidates with SpLDs will also be considered for other exam components where the reading of information is required. Additionally such candidates may have different or further requirements, such as the use of particular fonts, overlays or exam questions printed on coloured paper. Where this is the case different and/or additional reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.4 Where the Faculty has no precedent for an adjustment for a particular disability or special need or where the adjustment requested is more significant than any previous adjustment permitted, then the case may be referred to the Examinations sub-Committee. If the examination date is before the next meeting of the Committee then the request will be forwarded for their consideration by confidential email, to the Chair of the Examinations Committee, the Director of Education, Training and Examinations and at least three members of the Committee which will include the chair/vice chair of the relevant examination and a lay committee representative. The Head of examinations will coordinate and compile the response and keep the candidate advised throughout the process.
- 5.5 All candidates who have submitted written requests for reasonable adjustments will be notified in writing of the reasonable adjustments that have been permitted for their examinations.
- 5.6 If a candidate is diagnosed with a disability after failing an examination component, they should contact the Head of Examinations to discuss reasonable adjustments that can be provided for future attempts. However, all previous attempts taken prior to the diagnosis will still stand. Therefore, candidates are strongly advised that should they feel that their performance may have been impaired by an underlying disability they should seek advice after their initial failure rather than taking further attempts at the examination.

5.7 The FFICM OSCE and SOE examinations are regarded as competence tests, assessing understanding, cognitive skills and behaviour as well as clinical knowledge. As such the method of assessment is a crucial element of these examination components and any adjustments made must maintain the integrity and validity of these assessments and not affect the format of the examinations.

GMC guidance<sup>2</sup> indicates that while there is a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, in enabling the competence standards in Tomorrow's Doctors<sup>3</sup> to be met, there is no requirement to make adjustments that would alter the standard of competency required.

5.8 In all cases the Faculty reserves the right to take independent advice to ensure that any proposed adjustments are appropriate and in accordance with any applicable legislation.

5.9 Details and statistical information of requests for reasonable adjustment shall be regularly reported to the Examinations Committee for the purpose of monitoring and review.

5.10 Where a candidate does not believe the adjustments they have been granted are reasonable, they should refer to the FFICM Examinations Regulations and Appeal.

## 6 Examples of reasonable adjustments

The Act sets out three different considerations that organisations must take reasonable steps to comply with when considering reasonable adjustments. They must avoid substantial disadvantage through provision, criterion or practice and from physical features and provide or allow the use of auxiliary aids where without one a disabled person would be substantially disadvantaged. The table below gives examples of the reasonable adjustments that could be applied to each of the three considerations - they are included for guidance purposes only:

Element of exam requiring adjustment	Example reasonable adjustments
Provision, criterion or practice	Extra time for candidates with SpLD. Rest breaks for candidates with certain medical conditions or to allow medication to be taken. Exam papers in large fonts or specific colour.
Physical features	Adjusting exam cubicles to allow wheelchair access. Provision of access lifts, accessible toilets and staircase ramps.
Auxiliary aids	Hearing induction loop. Coloured overlays.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.gmc-uk.org/9\\_Health\\_and\\_Disability\\_in\\_Postgraduate\\_Medical\\_Education\\_and\\_Training.pdf](http://www.gmc-uk.org/9_Health_and_Disability_in_Postgraduate_Medical_Education_and_Training.pdf) 46554398.pdf

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.gmc-uk.org/Tomorrow\\_s\\_Doctors\\_1214.pdf](http://www.gmc-uk.org/Tomorrow_s_Doctors_1214.pdf) 48905759.pdf

## APPENDIX 5: EXAMINATION APPEAL APPLICATION FORM



### Examination Appeal Application Form

Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS in BLACK ink.

Please attach a cheque for the appeals fee made payable to 'The Royal College of Anaesthetists' and return to: Reviews Clerk, The Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine, Churchill House, 35 Red Lion Square, LONDON WC1R 4SG

#### Part 1 To be completed by the appellant

1.1 Title 1.2 First name(s)

1.3 Last name

1.4 Address and postcode (home)

1.5 Faculty Reference Number

1.6 Date of Examination

1.7 Email address

1.8 Candidate Number

1.9 Please summarise in 50 words the grounds on which you base your appeal (if you wish to submit a more detailed account, please attached additional pages):

Appeals will be entertained which allege bias or impropriety of some kind in the organisation, content, conduct or determination of the result of the examination. No Appeal may be made which relates solely to matters of the examiners' judgement. Please indicate on what basis your Appeal is made:



- Organisational issues
- Content of the examination questions
- Conduct of the examination
- Determination of the result

If your Appeal is successful, please indicate what outcome you are seeking:

- No further action** (as detailed in Regulation 13.4.1)
- Upgrading of a previously allocated section mark, and to be declared successful if this change so affects your overall examination result** (as detailed in Regulation 13.4.2a)
- Your examination result to be declared void and that you resit the examination without payment of any fee** (as detailed in Regulation 13.4.2b)
- Some other result** (please specify below)

1.10 Name of applicant

1.11 Signature of applicant

1.12 Date declaration signed

Part 2

To be completed by the Director

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

Appeal fee paid      £

Signature of the  
College Official     

Date received     

A/C Reference No.      **1101/22/A**

2.1 Full Name

2.2 Please summarise in 50 words the grounds on which the earlier review was rejected (please give a full account on separate pages if desired):

NOTES:

- 1 Section 1 to be completed by the Appellant and returned to the Reviews Clerk; the Reviews Clerk is to forward a copy to the Director.
- 2 Section 2 to be completed by the Director and returned to the Reviews Clerk.
- 3 Completed form to be copied to the Appellant, the Director and members of the Appeal Panel.

## APPENDIX 6:

## APPEAL PANEL: NOTES FOR CHAIR

- 1 Appeals will be entertained which allege bias or impropriety of some kind in the organisation, content, conduct or determination of the result of the examination, for example:
  - 1.1 Organisation e.g. wrong or missing documentation, instructions or artefacts poor seating/lighting.
  - 1.2 Content e.g. questions not relevant to the examination, questions on a topic not included in the syllabus.
  - 1.3 Conduct e.g. personal questions about candidate's age, gender, origins, beliefs disabilities, workplace or experience.
  - 1.4 Determination of the result e.g. the examiner(s) rejected a correct answer.
- 2 No appeal may be made which relates solely to matters to the examiners' judgement.
- 3 No recording equipment is allowed in the hearing; the Reviews Clerk will minute the proceedings (long or short-hand) as the only record. The minutes will reflect the bare facts of the event, i.e. not the intricate details.
- 4 The Appellant's Representative can be medically qualified but should not be his legal representative and may be:
  - 4.1 an Intensivist (e.g. Faculty Tutor)
  - 4.2 a friend
  - 4.3 a Trade Union representative
- 5 If the Appellant chooses their Representative to present their case, then the Appellant can only contribute as a witness.
- 6 **Witnesses**
  - 6.1 Character witnesses may be requested to submit a written testimonial rather than appear in person at the hearing. Witnesses of fact should appear in person.
  - 6.2 The decision to call witnesses will rest with the Chair whose permission shall not be unreasonably withheld. Normally not more than two witnesses would attend.
  - 6.3 In the case of multiple witnesses, the Chair may require witnesses to present written statements rather than to appear in person. All those to be present at the Appeal hearing will be notified of the witnesses.
  - 6.4 Witnesses for the Faculty will be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred (normally) within the UK. The Appellant's witnesses will not be reimbursed by the Faculty but the Chair has the power to reimburse those expenses of a successful applicant which are reasonably incurred in attending the appeal hearing.
- 7 Explain to the Appellant that Appeal Regulation 13.4.2(b), "that the result of the appellant's examination shall be declared void", means that their attempt will not be counted.
- 8 Steps 5 to 10 of the Appeal Hearing Procedure should only be repeated if new material is introduced in Step 11.
- 9 The Chair shall have the power to decide whether all, part or none of the appeal fee will be returned.

## APPENDIX 7:

## PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL HEARINGS

- 1 To be present:
  - 1.1 **Appeal Panel** Chair  
Two nominated examiners not previously involved in the examination or appeal of the Appellant
  - 1.2 **Attending** Appellant  
Appellant's Representative (if desired by the Appellant)  
Training and Examinations Director (Director), on behalf of the examiners  
Reviews Clerk to minute the proceedings  
Witnesses
- 2 Chair to explain the procedure to the Appellant and Appellant's Representative if present.
- 3 Appellant's Representative**
  - 3.1 The Appellant may appoint a representative who may be medically but not legally qualified.
  - 3.2 If an Appellant's Representative is present, the Chair is to establish whether the Appellant or the Appellant's Representative is to present the Appellant's case and answer questions. If the Appellant's Representative is to present the case, then the Appellant may only contribute as a witness.
- 4 New evidence may be brought to the hearing by either side e.g. the Director may approach the Appellant's Faculty Tutor and any report from him/her may be presented at the hearing. Other than in exceptional circumstances, this new evidence should be made available to the Appellant or Director at least ten days before the date of the hearing.
- 5 Witnesses**
  - 5.1 Either party may request witnesses to be present, subject to notifying the Chair of the Appeal Panel in writing not later than 21 days before the appeal hearing, with the reason why they have been invited.
  - 5.2 The decision to call witnesses will rest with the Chair of the Appeal Panel whose permission will not be unreasonably withheld. Normally not more than two witnesses would attend.
  - 5.3 In the case of multiple witnesses, the Chair may require witnesses to present written statements rather than to appear in person. All those to be present at the appeal hearing will be notified of the names of the witnesses.
  - 5.4 Witnesses for the College will be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred and normally within the UK. The Appellant's witnesses will not be reimbursed by the College.
- 6 Presentation of Evidence**
  - 6.1 Appellant**
    - 6.1.1 The Appellant/Appellant's Representative presents the grounds of the appeal with reference to, and contributions from, any witnesses permitted by the Chair.
    - 6.1.2 The Director may question the Appellant/Appellant's Representative and witnesses.
    - 6.1.3 The Appellant or Appellant's Representative will have the right to re-examine, after which there may be further cross-examination and re-examination.

6.1.4 At the end of this process, members of the Panel may question a witness, after which the cycle of re-examination, cross-examination and re-examination may continue if requested.

## **6.2 Training and Examinations Director**

6.2.1 The Director states why the review was rejected, with reference to, and contributions from, any witnesses.

6.2.2 Procedures 6.1.2 - 6.1.4 are followed on behalf of the Director and his witnesses.

6.3 When appropriate, the Chair of the Panel will release witnesses.

6.4 The Appellant/Appellant's Representative makes a final summary statement of the Appellant's case - no new material may be introduced during the summary statement.

7 The Appellant, Appellant's Representative and the Director leave the room.

8 The Appeal Panel reaches its findings which will normally be declared immediately.

9 The Chair shall have the power to decide whether all, part or none of the appeal fee will be returned.

10 In announcing its finding, the panel shall give reasons for its decision.

11 The decision of the Appeal Panel is to be confirmed in writing to the Appellant and the Director.

## APPENDIX 8:

## DRESS CODE FOR EXAMINATIONS

The Faculty endorse the key recommendations of the Guidance on Dress Codes for postgraduate medical recruitment, training and assessment from the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (COPMeD)<sup>1</sup> In particular, candidates are reminded that the same dress code should apply for professional examinations as it does for day to day clinical practice/contact with patients. This means that forms of dress should not constrain the Candidate's ability to demonstrate recognised skills including effective communication with simulated patients or examiners, nor hinder easy verification of the Candidate's identity.

Hence Candidates are requested not to wear forms of dress that cover the face while attending any of the FICM examinations. Candidates are also advised that there is no requirement to wear clinical/theatre clothing during any of the examinations.

<sup>1</sup> *Dress codes for postgraduate medical and dental recruitment, training and assessment. COPMeD, October 2011.*

## APPENDIX 9: ELECTRONIC DEVICES MOBILE PHONE and SMART WATCH POLICY

In response to the increased potential for cheating and the disturbance of other candidates, the Faculty will follow the strict appliance of the following rules regarding the use of electronic devices and mobile phones during examinations:

1. Mobile phones, smart watches and other electronic devices have no place at examinations and should be left at home wherever possible. Mobile phones, smart watches or electronic devices (see list of examples at paragraph 2), brought to examinations must be switched off and fully deactivated for the duration of the examination.

Candidates should ensure the following action is taken regarding mobile phones/smart watches/electronic devices:

**Written examinations** (before sitting at exam desk):

- Powered off and stored in bag, which should be placed in designated area defined by Invigilator. Or,
- If no bag then mobile phone/smart watch/electronic device should be powered off and handed to invigilator. Invigilator will place in envelope and mark with candidate No. Returned in exchange for exam papers.

**SOE/OSCE examinations** (on arrival at main reception area):

- Powered off in front of the faculty officer at reception.
- Store in secure locker/luggage for duration of time in Faculty. Or;
- Hand to Faculty officer. Faculty officer will place in envelope and mark with candidate No. Returned in exchange for candidate badge on leaving the Faculty.

2. The following are some examples of 'electronic devices', it is not intended to be complete, if in doubt then candidates should ask the Faculty Officer/Invigilator in attendance:

*Calculator, laptops, electronic tablet, recording devices, MP3 players, Bleepers, smart watches and any timing device that make audible beeps.*

3. If any type of electronic device is required as part of an examination test then it will be supplied by the Faculty. Regular time checks are given by invigilators and therefore candidates will not need to use additional timing devices. Watches that do not emit sound may be used.
4. **Non-compliance.**

**Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to disqualification from the examination.**

a. The following constitutes non-compliance of the above rules:

- A mobile phone, smart watch or electronic device found in the possession of a candidate during an examination.
- The ringing, vibrating or any audible 'beep' heard from a mobile phone, smart watch or electronic device whilst an examination is taking place, which is deemed by the Faculty officer/invigilator to have disrupted other candidates.

b. In all cases of non-compliance an incident report form will be submitted to the Examinations Sub-Committee for their consideration. Candidates cited for non-compliance will be required to sign the incident report form before leaving the examination room and may be required to attend the Faculty to give further information/evidence regarding the incident.

- c. Where the Examinations Sub-Committee agree that non-compliance is proven they will consider the following, before a penalty is agreed:
- The need to preserve the integrity of the examination.
  - The disturbance caused to others.
  - Consistency with previous penalties.
- d. The Examinations Sub-Committee may consider awarding one of the following standard penalties or may give a more specific penalty where felt appropriate:
- No further action.
  - A written warning.
  - Result for an examination or part of an examination under investigation, to be declared void.
  - Candidate barred from applying for an exam for a specified period.
  - Where cheating is proved act in accordance with sub-paragraph 14.2.
- e. Examination results of candidates cited for non-compliance will be withheld until a decision has been reached by the Examination Committee. Investigations will be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible and candidates will be kept informed of progress. Candidates will be informed of the outcome in writing by the Director of Training and Examinations on behalf of the Examinations Committee.



**Misconduct policy**

The Integrity of FFICM examinations is fundamental to the values promoted by the Faculty. It is important that all candidates are judged on their ability, and no candidate be allowed to gain an advantage unfairly over others. By virtue of entering to sit an examination, candidates are deemed to have understood and agreed to abide and respect all examination regulations and policies. Any aspect of misconduct at FFICM examinations will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with the following Misconduct policy. With the exception that, where non-compliance of Faculty regulations is cited due to the use of electronic devices or mobile phones, then these matters will proceed in accordance with the policy set out at Appendix 9 of the these regulations.

1. **Misconduct includes**, but is not restricted to:
  - a. Failure to abide by the reasonable instructions of an invigilator or Faculty Officer.
  - b. The introduction or/and use of any materials or documents other than those specifically permitted for the examination.
  - c. Any attempt to gain access to or read the work of another candidate.
  - d. Any attempt to communicate with another candidate.
  - e. Unacceptable or disruptive behaviour during the examination.
  - f. Removal by a candidate, of material or content from an examination, other than those documents specifically permitted.
  - g. The release of content from an examination to a third party without the expressed permission of a Faculty Officer.
  - h. Falsification or alteration of eligibility or identification documents.
  - i. Impersonation of a candidate.
  - j. Any other form of cheating, deception, fraud or conduct that is likely to give an unfair advantage to a candidate or candidates.
2. **Reporting misconduct:**
  - 2.1 Under normal examination conditions suspected misconduct should be reported to the Faculty through the submission of 'an Incident report form' (available on request through a Faculty officer). Incident report forms can be completed by examiners, invigilators, Faculty officers, examination candidates and any other such person who becomes aware of any incident that may affect the examination processes or its regulations. Forms completed by exam candidates regarding suspected misconduct of another candidate *must* be countersigned by a witness such as a Faculty official. All forms must be completed as soon as possible with full details of fact, they must be signed and dated and given to the duty Faculty officer. Full instructions for completion of Incident Report forms are set out on the back of the form.
  - 2.2 Any materials that are reasonably believed by an invigilator or Faculty officer not to be permitted as part of the exam will be confiscated. Electronic devices will be returned at the end of the exam with details logged on the Incident report form. The Candidate concerned will be asked to acknowledge agreement of the confiscation of other materials on the Incident report form. All such materials will be included as part of the report.
  - 2.2 Where misconduct is suspected after an examination or outside examination conditions, such as where a candidate is suspected of passing on or unauthorised use of examination content that has not been released into the public domain, then a written report of the incident should be submitted to the Director at the Faculty address. Such reports should give full details of the person suspected of misconduct *and* the person submitting the report.

- 2.3 Anonymous reports of misconduct will not be used to initiate a formal misconduct process.
- 2.4 The Faculty acknowledges that any case of misconduct can have an adverse effect on a candidate's reputation and career. Therefore all matters of the reporting and process of alleged misconduct will be kept strictly confidential. However, where the allegation of misconduct is proven, the Faculty reserves the right to forward details of the case to the GMC/National Medical Council and in the case of UK trainees, their local Intensive Care Educational Supervisor or Regional Adviser.

### **3 Review of alleged Misconduct**

- 3.1 Incident report forms that allege misconduct and written reports received as described in paragraph 2.2 will be handed to the Director who will carry out a review of the alleged misconduct to determine if there is sufficient evidence of a *prima facie* case to warrant the incident being passed to the relevant Examinations Chair and/or the Misconduct Group (see paragraph 4).
- 3.2 Where, in the opinion of the Director, an incident is not deemed to be self-evident from the facts set out in the report or the incident is judged to be of a minor/technical issue, then the matter will not be processed and no further action will be taken. However, this will not preclude an official letter being issued to advise the candidate of the conduct of behaviour expected under examination conditions. Cases not processed beyond the Director's review will not be recorded on a candidate's personal records.
- 3.3 Where, following the review of a report and consultation with Faculty staff/witnesses as necessary, the Director deems that there is sufficient evidence to prove a case of misconduct, the Director will inform the candidate of the allegations in writing. The candidate concerned will be allowed 10 working days, from the date of the letter, to accept or challenge the case against them.
- 3.4 Examination results of candidates cited for alleged misconduct will not be processed until a decision has been reached. Investigations will be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible and candidates will be kept informed of progress.
- 3.5 If, within 10 working days a candidate admits in writing to the allegations made against them, then the matter will be forwarded to the Examinations Chair and Vice Chair for their formal consideration and the award of an appropriate penalty in accordance with paragraph 6. Where allegations are accepted by the candidate, they can submit a written statement with their response that may be taken into account by the Examinations Chair/Vice Chair. A decision will be reached as soon as possible and normally within five working days of the date of the candidate letter.
- 3.6 If a candidate denies an allegation of misconduct in writing to the Director, either in whole or in part, then the matter will be referred to the Misconduct Group who will deal with the matter electronically.

### **4 Misconduct Group process**

- 4.1 The Misconduct Group (the Group) will consist of:
- The Chair of the Examinations (Chair)
  - A Chair of a FFICM examination component, not involved in the incident
  - The Head of Faculty
  - A nominated Patient Liaison Group (PLG) representative
- 4.2 The duty of the Group will be to examine the facts of the case and to determine the strength and integrity of the evidence. Then make a decision based on the balance of probabilities, whether the allegation of misconduct is proven. Where to the satisfaction of the Group, a case is proven the Group will agree an appropriate penalty in accordance with paragraph 6. The outcome will be decided electronically/via telephone conference and therefore there will be no charge to the candidate.
- 4.3 The examinations manager will act as the Group secretary. The purpose of the Group secretary is to:

- a. Advise all parties on the deadline for submission of further evidence and the date on which the Group will announce their decision.
  - b. Co-ordinate and prepare documentation/evidence for all parties.
  - c. Provide secretarial support to the Group as required.
  - d. Maintain communication with the candidate and provide advice as required.
  - e. To produce and distribute the 'decision document' to all parties.
- 4.4 The Director will submit the case for the Board of examiners in writing to the Group, through the Group secretary.
- 4.5 The candidate has the right to submit written evidence for consideration by the Group up to the deadline given by the Group secretary.
- 4.7 The Group secretary will acknowledge receipt of all evidence submitted by the Candidate and confirm the date scheduled for the Group to make its decision. This will not be more than one calendar month following the written confirmation of denial of the allegation of misconduct, see paragraph 3.6. All documents to be used along with a copy of this policy will be sent by email attachments to the candidate and the Group members no later than 5 working days before the date set for the decision to be announced. No documents may be presented in evidence to the Group, unless circulated by the Group secretary in the manner detailed above.
- 4.8 The validity of the process will not be affected if the candidate fails to submit further documentary evidence on their behalf prior to the deadline given by the Group secretary.
- 4.9 Following referral of alleged misconduct to the Group, a candidate has the right to reverse their answer to the allegations up to 48 hours prior to the date scheduled for the Group's decision. Where allegations are then accepted by the candidate, they can submit a written statement with their response that may be taken into account by the Group. A decision on the penalty to be awarded will be made on the date announced by the Group secretary.
- 4.10 Neither the Group nor the candidate will be given any information regarding the candidate's result or performance at the examination in question.
- 4.11 The decision of the Group is to be confirmed in writing to the candidate (the decision document) as soon as possible following the decision date. A copy will be provided to each member of the Group and a copy will be held on Faculty files.

## **5 Appeals procedure**

- 5.1 Appeals must be carried out in accordance with The Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine Regulations and Appeals, Paragraph 13 and an Appeal Application (Appendix 5) with the appropriate fee must be submitted within seven working days of the date of the Groups decision. All subsequent procedures and hearings will be handled in accordance with Appendices 6 and 7 of the aforementioned regulations.
- 5.2 The Appeals panel will be advised that the Misconduct Group considered the case but will not be give details of the outcome.
- 5.3 The Appeal panel will have the power to confirm, amend or reverse the decision made by the Misconduct Group.

## **6 Penalties**

- 6.1 Where the Misconduct Group or exam chair/vice chair (paragraph 3.5), agree that the case in whole or in part, is proven whether through admission by the candidate or the outcome of the Group's findings, then they will consider the following before a penalty is agreed:
- The need to preserve the integrity of the examination.
  - The severity of the infringement proven
  - Consistency with previous penalties.
  - The evidence of remorse and the admission of the understanding of the seriousness of the case.
- 6.2 The Misconduct panel or the exam chairs (paragraph 3.5) may consider awarding one of the following standard penalties or may give a more specific penalty where appropriate:
- No further action
  - A written warning (see paragraph 6.3)
  - Result of an examination or part of an examination, to be declared void
  - Candidate barred from applying for an exam for a specified period
- 6.3 Where a written warning is agreed upon, the Group/exam chair will reflect on the severity of the misconduct proven and reserve the right to forward details of the case to the GMC/National Medical Council and in the case of UK trainees, their local Intensive Care Educational Supervisor or Regional Adviser in Intensive Care.
- 6.4 Where a candidate's examination result is declared void, the attempt will be recorded against the candidate's exam history. Exam papers will not be processed.



## FFICM Examinations – Additional Educational Training (AET Form1)

### Notes on completion of AET Form1:

1. To meet eligibility at the sixth (final) attempt at any FFICM Final examination, a candidate must provide the Court of Examiners with evidence of a plan of additional educational experience/training which is expected to be achieved before the next intended re-sit. Please note under normal circumstances the Faculty would not recommend re-applying at the next sitting.
2. Additional educational training must be as follows: Attendance at a recognised FFICM Tutorial course, either locally or nationally. Practice sessions at the relevant component. Further clinical exposure and Intensive Care Medicine training, as appropriate for the relevant examination component.
3. Proof should be provided by the submission of this form, which must be agreed and signed by an Intensive Care Medicine Faculty Tutor/Regional Advisor and **received by the Faculty at least three months** prior to the published date of the next intended examination.
4. Before completing this form the Faculty Tutor or Regional Advisor, in consultation with other hospital trainers, must hold a discussion with the candidate and giving serious consideration to previous examination results and shortfalls, agree that following additional training another attempt at the examination is recommended.
5. The Faculty Tutor or Supervising Consultant must agree to assist in the implementation of a realistic and achievable plan of additional training which must meet the criteria set out on this form.

### AET Form 1 – Evidence of Additional Educational Training:

*(To be completed by CT or RA)*

Name of Candidate:

Relevant Exam component

Name of Faculty Tutor/  
Regional Advisor:

PTO

Following discussion with the above candidate I confirm that, since their previous attempt, the following 'Additional Educational Training' plan has been agreed and put in place:

**Attendance at the following \*Local / \*National FFICM Tutorial (provide date of Tutorial):**

**Examination practice for relevant component (provide dates and types of sessions):**

**Further clinical exposure and training (give full details of clinical and other training planned):**

**In order to complete the above plan of additional training I have recommended that the candidate re-sits the examination at the following sitting (please refer to the exams calendar):**

**I recommend a further attempt at this exam component and agree to oversee the above Additional Educational Training.**

**Signed: ..... \*Faculty Tutor / \*Regional Advisor**

**I agree to follow the above plan under the supervision of my \*CT/\*Regional Advisor. I understand that I must have attended a guidance interview for this component before my next attempt.**

**Signed: .....Current Medical Grade .....**

**Date form completed.....**

*Please submit this form to the Director of Training and Examinations at the Faculty address.*

## Appendix 12: CANDIDATE EXAMINATION FEEDBACK POLICY

This policy has been drawn up following the guidelines and standards set out in the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges' (AoMRC) document: 'Standards for candidate feedback in summative postgraduate medical examinations in the UK, [February 2015]'. The feedback provided to FFICM examination candidates also meets the current 'GMC Standards for Curricula and Assessment Systems'.

### 1. Definition of feedback

*"Specific information about the comparison between a candidate's observed performance and a standard given with the intention to assist with improving the candidate's performance."*

- 1.1 The Faculty believes it is important to provide feedback to candidates beyond a standard pass-fail result to assist them in understanding and interpreting their overall result. The Faculty does not attempt to justify the overall result or the marks awarded, whether overall or for specific sections or skill domains. Marks are awarded using strict guidelines. Marks awarded by the Court of Examiners are final and therefore papers cannot be remarked.
- 1.2 Candidate feedback should not be confused with candidate guidance. Feedback is the provision of information relating to performance, whilst 'guidance' relates to the action taken in relation to certain information about performance. The rules regarding the provision of examinations guidance available to candidates, is set out at Section 10, paragraphs 10.2 to 10.5 of these regulations.

### 2. Publishing results and providing feedback

- 2.1 Pass-fail lists are published on the exam pages of the Faculty website from 2pm on the release of results date. The release of results date is set out on candidate 'admission notices' and published on the exam pages of the Faculty website.
- 2.2 Candidates are identified on pass-fail lists by their candidate number and College/Faculty reference number only. Candidates can choose to 'opt out' of the pass-fail list by contacting the examination department at least 48 hours before the release of results date. If a candidate opts out of the pass-fail list their details and result will not be published and they will receive their pass-fail result via their results letter. Pass-fail results cannot be provided to candidates by email or telephone.
- 2.3 The period between the exam date and the release of results date will vary for each exam component and depends on the standard setting and marking methods used to confirm results. At the FFICM Final OSCE/SOE the pass-fail results are normally published on the website from 2pm on the first Friday following the exam dates. The MCQ exam takes longer to mark and standard set, however the Faculty aims to publish pass-fail lists within two weeks of the date of the exam.
- 2.4 Feedback is provided to candidates in the form of a 'results letter', this will be sent by first class post, to the candidates' home address held on the Faculty database within seven working days of the 'release of results date'. See paragraph 3, regarding the type of feedback provided.
- 2.5 Appendix 2 of these regulations, give details on the marking systems and the methodology used to set pass standards used for FFICM examinations.



### 3. Type of feedback provided

- 3.1 The type of feedback given to candidates will vary according to the exam component attempted. However the Faculty has ensured that the feedback provided meets the AoRMC and GMCs standards and is in line with other Medical Colleges/Faculties.
- 3.2 All candidates whether they pass or fail an examination will receive the same type of feedback through their results letter. This is because the Faculty believes that the provision of numerical information about a candidate's exam performance not only assists with improving a candidate's performance at future examinations but also provides important information on which to base further continuing professional development.
- 3.3 However, the Faculty is aware that doctors undergoing recruitment processes may be asked to supply a pass letter for their FFICM examination and therefore to avoid recruitment bodies using feedback information to rank candidates or as part of a recruitment decision, feedback for candidates who pass the FFICM examinations overall are provided as an enclosure to their results letter and need not be provided along with the provision of proof of passing the examination.
- 3.4 The following feedback is provided on **all** exam results letters/feedback enclosures:
- Confirmation of the candidate's pass-fail result
  - Confirmation of the number of attempts used/maximum number of attempts
  - The examination pass mark as a raw score in relation to the maximum achievable test score (e.g. 168/240) and/or the percentage value (e.g. 70%)
  - The candidate's overall score as a raw score and/or as a percentage value
- 3.5 In addition to the feedback listed at paragraph 3.4 candidates are provided with the following information for each FFICM exam component as set out below:

FFICM FINAL Examination	Feedback provided, as paragraph 3.4 plus:
FFICM MCQ	Candidate raw scores in MTF and SBA Maximum score available in MTF and SBA Number of voids/unanswered questions
FFICM OSCE	Candidate scores for each live station Which station was the test station and did not count towards the total mark Candidate overall mean score
FFICM SOE	Candidate scores for each question and in which station the question was asked.

### 4. Additional feedback (Examiners comments)

In addition to the feedback provided to candidates as set out at paragraph 3, examiner comments made on candidate performance at the FFICM SOE examination are provided on request. On receipt of result letters, candidates can request a transcript of examiners comments by emailing [exams@rcoa.ac.uk](mailto:exams@rcoa.ac.uk). There is no charge for this service. No comments are provided by examiners for candidates who sit the FFICM OSCE examination.

### 5. Who else will be provided with feedback

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, a candidate's examination result may be processed and passed to examiners, Faculty Tutors, Postgraduate Dean, employer, etc for legitimate purposes connected with their training. Candidates registered or who anticipate being registered with the GMC, will have their personal data, including data about their exam results, passed to the GMC for quality assurance and research purposes and to facilitate the awarding of certificates of completion of training (CCT).

Candidates will automatically agree to this when completing exam applications either in writing or on-line.

## **6. Feedback in extraordinary circumstances**

The Faculty believes it is necessary to provide more detailed feedback to candidates and their trainers where a candidate's performance at OSCE and/or SOE examinations is poor or causes concern. This feedback, along with suggested additional educational support which could be provided, will be sent in the form of a letter to the candidate's Faculty Tutor or senior Intensive Care consultant and copied to the candidate concerned. This letter is designed to bring the trainer and candidate together to discuss poor performance and areas of concern, in order to provide support and agree additional educational training that can be put in place before the next attempt. Letters are automatically dispatched to trainers and candidates where a candidate's score is <16/32 in the FFICM SOE component and/or <120/240 in the OSCE examination, and where the candidate's performance demonstrates a concern in regard to patient safety.

## **7. Acting upon feedback**

- 7.1 The primary responsibility for acting upon feedback from an examination lies with the candidate.
- 7.2 Where a candidate has failed an examination they should discuss their feedback with their Faculty Tutor or trainer and undertake any specific exam preparation or additional educational training suggested in such a discussion before making any further attempt at the examination.
- 7.3 Where a candidate has passed an examination they should still review any feedback with their Tutor or trainer in order to try and identify any weaker areas in clinical knowledge or performance which may benefit from further training or study as part of ongoing professional development.
- 7.4 Trainers should respond to requests from candidates to discuss their feedback, providing support and assistance in the provision of additional training and preparation for examinations, including advice on the timing of their next attempt.

## **8. Further assistance available to examinations candidates**

- 8.1 In addition to the examination feedback provided, candidates may also find the Examination Chair's summary reports useful in the interpretation of their own performance in relation to the analysis of exams data set out in this document. The Chair's examination summary is placed on the Faculty website following each examination.
- 8.2 Example questions and a list of topics covered in each exam are also available on the Faculty website.