



MRCOG Complaints Policy



Examinations Complaints Policy and procedures

The Examination Department of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) is committed to delivering a high quality service. However, we recognise that on occasion, our service may fall short of expectations. If you believe this has happened to you, you can use this Complaints Policy, which describes how to make a complaint and how it will be handled.

This policy aims to:

- provide a fair and transparent complaints policy, which is clear and accessible for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- publicise the existence of our complaints policy so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- ensure all relevant RCOG staff know what to do if a complaint is received
- ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner
- ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved in a satisfactory manner
- use any complaints received as a learning experience to improve our work

This policy applies to all RCOG examinations:

- MRCOG Part 1
- MRCOG Part 2
- MRCOG Part 3
- DRCOG

Definition of a complaint and policy scope

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about an aspect of the RCOG Examination Department's work.

The scope of this policy relates to:

- The conduct of a member of staff
- The conduct of an examiner or invigilator
- The Examination Department's delivery of one of its policies or procedures
 - The Examination Department's application of RCOG Examination Regulations

Out of scope

- An appeal against an examination outcome (result), as such matters should be addressed via the RCOG Examinations Appeal Policy. However, should an Appellant have grounds to believe that the Examination Appeals Policy has not been adhered to in the review of an appeal they have the right to submit a complaint via this process.
- An appeal against the content of an examination or a specific question, as such matters should be addressed via the RCOG Examinations Appeal Policy
- Complaints submitted anonymously or on behalf of another party will not be considered

It is recognised that on occasion it may be initially unclear whether a case constitutes a complaint or an appeal, hence the Examinations Department reserves the right to reclassify complaints to appeals or vice-versa at any stage in proceedings, in consultation with the person(s) complaining or appealing. Such reclassification will always be done so that the matter can be considered in the most appropriate and fair way. In such instances, candidates will not be required to resubmit their cases following any reclassification.



Making a complaint

To make a complaint, please complete the [Examinations Complaints form](#) (Word document, 55kb) and email to examscomplaints@rcog.org.uk

By making your complaint in a timely manner, this will better allow the Examinations Department to investigate it and identify, where necessary, a suitable remedy.

Therefore, complaints must be submitted within 20 working days of the incident complained of. Please note that any complaint submitted after this deadline will not be reviewed unless there are highly extenuating circumstances.

Please note, working days are defined in this policy as Monday to Friday, excepting UK bank holidays and College closure over Christmas.

How your complaint will be managed

Stage 1

We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days of its receipt.

Stage 2

Within five working days of receipt of your complaint we will confirm whether your complaint falls within the scope of this policy and the appropriate next steps.

Stage 3

An appropriate qualified member of College staff will be appointed as the Investigating Manager by the Director of Examinations and Assessment. The Investigating Manager will investigate your complaint and gather the facts relevant to the complaint, ensuring that the information gathered is accurate and complete. Their response will contain reasons for either upholding or rejecting your complaint and will be issued within 30 working



days of receipt of your complaint. Where your complaint has been upheld, the response will contain a proposed remedy. In addition, if a complaint is upheld, the action taken and the lessons learned or to be learned will be logged for future purposes.

Your complaint and all accompanying documentation will be kept confidential as far as is possible in facilitating a fair and thorough investigation. While your privacy and confidentiality will be respected, this needs to be balanced with:

- The need for an open and fair investigation
- Appropriate remedial action to be taken
- The outcome of the investigation to be reported appropriately
- Action to be taken to improve our processes and quality of service

The Examinations Department will endeavour to anonymise complainants when considering complaints. However, it will occasionally be necessary to disclose a complainant's identity beyond the Investigating Manager to progress an investigation. Candidates who are not willing for their identity to be disclosed in this way should make this clear in their letter of formal complaint.

The RCOG will take all necessary steps to support all parties involved in a complaint, and undertake all investigations sensitively and expediently.

Candidates are assured that they have the opportunity to raise matters of legitimate concern through this policy without risk of disadvantage or criticism.

Data retention: All materials relating to your complaint will be kept on active file for 12 months from the date of receipt of your first email to examscomplaints@rcog.org.uk and will then be destroyed.



Appealing a complaint decision

If you are unhappy regarding the decision or outcome of your complaint, you can request a review within 10 working days of receiving the response to your complaint. You will need to provide sufficient new evidence to substantiate your appeal. The Examinations Department cannot review a decision that you disagree with if there is no new evidence to consider.

Stage 1

We will acknowledge your request for a review within two working days of its receipt.

Stage 2

Within five working days of receipt of your complaint we will confirm whether sufficient further evidence has been provided in order for this to be considered as part of a review of the complaint.

Stage 3

A different Investigating Manager, appointed by the Director of Examinations and Assessment, who has not been involved in any aspect of your complaint will consider your request for a review and respond to you with reasons for either upholding or rejecting your review, within 30 working days of receipt of your complaint appeal . Where your complaint has been upheld, you will be contacted regarding a proposed remedy. The decision of the Investigating Manager is final, and following the communication of the decision the complaints procedure is at an end.

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