



Royal College of
General Practitioners

Interim Membership by Assessment of Performance (iMAP)

Regulations

Revised November 2011

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE AND CONTENT	4
3. FEES	4
4. MAKING AN APPLICATION TO UNDERTAKE IMAP	4
5. WITHDRAWALS	7
6. DISABILITY	7
7. PORTFOLIO STAGE ASSESSMENT	7
8. ORAL ASSESSMENT	11
9. MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES	14
10. ALLEGATIONS OF CANDIDATE MISCONDUCT	15
11. PLAGIARISM	15
12. FALSIFICATION OF DOCUMENTATION	16
13. QUALITY CONTROL	16
14. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS	17
15. COMPLIANCE WITH EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY LEGISLATION	20
APPENDIX 1– REVIEW PANEL	21
APPENDIX 2 – CLINICAL GOVERNANCE PANEL	22
APPENDIX 3 – IMAP MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM	23
APPENDIX 4 – IMAP COMPLAINT FORM	24
APPENDIX 5 – IMAP APPEAL FORM	25

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of these regulations

These Regulations govern the assessment of the interim assessment of performance for membership of the RCGP (iMAP).

You should note that it is a condition of entry for the assessment that you agree to be bound by these Regulations.

1.2. Date of publication

This version of these Regulations came into effect on 30 November 2011 and supersedes all others. They may change over time. Candidates should ensure that they familiarise themselves with the Regulations that are current at the time they are undertaking the iMAP programme. The current version will always be available to download from the RCGP website. The RCGP will give appropriate advance notice of any change which may have a material effect on candidates to ensure that they are not disadvantaged as a result. Please visit the RCGP website for updates on iMAP.

1.3. Data Protection

The information we hold about you will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988.

1.4. Copyright of iMAP Assessment Materials

Material relating to iMAP assessments is protected by copyright. Candidates who are found to have infringed this protection will be penalised in accordance with the guidance on misconduct in these Regulations.

1.5. Duties of a Doctor

All registered medical practitioners have a duty placed on them by the General Medical Council (GMC) to be honest and trustworthy. Candidate performance in iMAP assessments is reviewed by doctors who themselves have a duty to notify the GMC if they have concerns. Failures of a very serious nature, raising concerns about a GP's fitness to practise, evidence of lack of competence, or misconduct before, during or after assessments may be referred by the iMAP Chair to a Review Panel¹. The Review Panel may refer the matter to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel² who in turn may refer the candidate to the appropriate regulatory body (such as the GMC or the relevant Primary Care Organisation).

1.6. Contact Details

Email: iMAP@rcgp.org.uk

Telephone: +44 (0) 203 188 7661

Postal address: iMAP Office, Royal College of General Practitioners
1 Bow Churchyard
London
EC4M 9DQ

¹ Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information regarding the Review Panel.

² Please refer to Appendix 2 for further information regarding the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

2. ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

iMAP is a single assessment in two stages, portfolio and oral. Candidates are required to produce a portfolio of work, either as one submission containing the stipulated fifteen criteria (referred to as Portfolio iMAP), or as fifteen separate submissions covering the stipulated fifteen criteria (referred to as Modular iMAP), and subsequently attend an oral assessment. Only eligible candidates will be invited to attend the oral assessment and candidates will only be invited to the oral assessment if their portfolio is assessed as being of an acceptable standard by iMAP assessors. Not all candidates will pass the portfolio stage, and not all candidates will pass the oral assessment stage. Candidates will only be invited to become a member of the RCGP if they attain a satisfactory standard in both stages of the assessment.

3. FEES

3.1. There are two alternative portfolio assessment stage fee structures for iMAP, one for those who wish to complete Portfolio iMAP, and one for those who wish to complete Modular iMAP.

3.1.1. Those completing Portfolio iMAP (submitting the portfolio as one document) will pay:

- ◆ **Application fee** - payable on submission of the Application form - of £990.
- ◆ **Portfolio fee** - payable on original (first attempt) portfolio submission - of £770. This will cover assessment of original submission and up to two resubmissions of the portfolio.

3.1.2. Those completing Modular iMAP (submitting portfolio criteria individually) will pay:

- ◆ **Criterion fee** - payable on original (first attempt) submission of each criterion – of £120. This will cover assessment of original submission and up to two resubmissions of that criterion.

3.2. The fee for the Oral assessment for all candidates is £770.

3.3. The fee for a second sitting of the Oral assessment is the same as the fee for the first sitting.

3.4. Fees are not normally refunded.

3.5. Fees must be paid in advance and a delay in payment of a fee will delay the relevant part of the assessment.

3.6. In exceptional circumstances a reduced fee may be considered at the Honorary Secretary's discretion. Please contact the iMAP Office to discuss any such instances.

3.7. There is an administrative fee if a candidate wishes to appeal against the result in a part of the iMAP assessment. Please refer to Section 14 of these Regulations for further information.

4. MAKING AN APPLICATION TO UNDERTAKE iMAP

Applications for iMAP can be made from 1st September 2007.

4.1. For those completing Portfolio iMAP

- 4.1.1. Applicants must complete and submit an Application form together with requisite documentation so that their eligibility to undertake the programme can be confirmed.
- 4.1.2. Applicants may commence work on their portfolio prior to submitting an application, but must have had their eligibility to undertake iMAP confirmed by the iMAP office prior to submitting their portfolio.
- 4.1.3. In order to be eligible for iMAP, applicants must hold a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration (CEGPR), formerly a Statement of Eligibility for Registration, from the GMC / PMETB, or a Certificate of Prescribed or Equivalent Experience from the JCPTGP. In addition, candidates must meet the following criteria:
- hold full registration without restrictions and with no outstanding complaints or clinical governance issues with the GMC
 - currently hold a licence to practice according to the GMC
 - be on the GP register
 - have received certification to practice as a GP
- In addition to the above:
- Candidates working in the NHS must be on a Performers List of a Primary Care Organisation or Health Board and should have no outstanding complaints or clinical governance issues
 - Candidates working in HM Armed Forces must submit consent from their commanding officer which should confirm there are no outstanding complaints or clinical governance issues
 - Candidates working in British Overseas Territories must be appropriately registered as a GP in the region that they practice and should have no outstanding complaints or clinical governance issues
 - Candidates working as independent GPs must declare in writing that they have no outstanding complaints or clinical governance issues and will be considered on an individual basis
- 4.1.4. As a requirement of participating in the iMAP process, all candidates are required to demonstrate competence in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and automated external defibrillation (AED) by providing appropriate certification. The certificate submitted must have been issued by a Resuscitation Council (UK) ALS instructor or equivalent during the 12 months before submission to the College and conform to the Resuscitation Council (UK) Guidelines in place at that time. A copy of the certificate must be submitted at the latest with the candidate's original portfolio submission.
- 4.1.5. Candidates must declare any complaints, warnings, GMC investigations or clinical governance issues at the time of their application and immediately during their assessment. All outstanding issues will be addressed on an individual basis before an applicant's eligibility is confirmed, or, in the case of existing candidates, as soon as they arise. Candidates whose GMC registration (or its equivalent overseas) is subject to suspension, referral, or any condition must provide the RCGP with full details immediately. Candidates must submit all information and correspondence relating to any complaint and/or clinical governance issues to the iMAP Manager to be reviewed by the RCGP's iMAP Clinical Governance Panel³. Candidates who have restrictions on their registration will not normally be permitted to undertake iMAP.
- 4.1.6. Once a candidate's eligibility has been confirmed, they will receive (electronically) an acknowledgement letter confirming their eligibility for iMAP, confirmation of the last submission date for their original portfolio submission, and a

³ Please refer to Appendix 2 for further information regarding the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

receipt for the fee submitted. They will be made an Associate member of the RCGP and receive further detail about this approximately two weeks later.

4.2. For those completing Modular iMAP

4.2.1. Applicants must complete and submit an Application form together with requisite documentation when their submission for each of the fifteen iMAP criteria has been accepted so that their eligibility to undertake the programme can be confirmed.

4.2.2. Applicants must have had their eligibility to complete iMAP confirmed by the iMAP office before they will be invited to attend the oral assessment.

4.2.3. In order to be eligible for iMAP, applicants must hold a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration (CEGPR), formerly a Statement of Eligibility for Registration, from the GMC / PMETB, or a Certificate of Prescribed or Equivalent Experience from the JCPTGP. In addition, candidates must meet the following criteria:

- hold full registration without restrictions and with no outstanding complaints, warnings, or clinical governance issues with the GMC
- currently hold a licence to practice according to the GMC
- be on the GP register
- have received certification to practice as a GP

In addition to the above:

- Candidates working in the NHS must be on a Performers List of a Primary Care Organisation or Health Board and should have no outstanding complaints, warnings, or clinical governance issues
- Candidates working in HM Armed Forces must submit consent from their commanding officer which should confirm there are no outstanding complaints, warnings, or clinical governance issues
- Candidates working in British Overseas Territories must be appropriately registered as a GP in the region that they practice and should have no outstanding complaints, warnings, or clinical governance issues
- Candidates working as independent GPs must declare in writing that they have no outstanding complaints, warnings, or clinical governance issues and will be considered on an individual basis

4.2.4. As a requirement of participating in the iMAP process, all candidates are required to demonstrate competence in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and automated external defibrillation (AED) by providing appropriate certification. The certificate submitted must have been issued by a Resuscitation Council (UK) ALS instructor or equivalent during the 12 months before submission to the College and conform to the Resuscitation Council (UK) Guidelines in place at that time. A copy of the certificate must be submitted at the latest with the candidate's Application form.

4.2.5. Candidates must declare any complaints, warnings, GMC investigations, or clinical governance issues at the time of their application and immediately during their assessment. All outstanding issues will be addressed on an individual basis before an applicant's eligibility is confirmed, or, in the case of existing candidates, as soon as they arise. Candidates whose GMC registration (or its equivalent overseas) is subject to suspension, referral, or any condition must provide the RCGP with full details immediately. Candidates must submit all information and correspondence relating to any complaint and/or clinical governance issues to the iMAP Manager to be reviewed by the RCGP's iMAP Clinical Governance Panel⁴. Candidates who have restrictions on their registration will not normally be permitted to undertake iMAP.

⁴ Please refer to Appendix 2 for further information regarding the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

- 4.2.6. Once a candidate's eligibility has been confirmed, they will receive (electronically) an acknowledgement letter confirming their eligibility for iMAP, and notification of the week in which they will be invited to attend the oral assessment.

5. WITHDRAWALS

Candidates who wish to withdraw from iMAP must inform the iMAP Office in writing, by post or email.

5.1. For those completing Portfolio iMAP

- 5.1.1. Candidates withdrawing from iMAP after submitting an application but before submitting their portfolio will normally forfeit their application fee.
- 5.1.2. No refund will be made to candidates withdrawing after portfolio submission.

5.2. For those completing Modular iMAP

- 5.2.1. Candidates withdrawing from iMAP after submitting any criteria will not be due for any refund of Criterion fee. Any candidate may cease to submit criteria individually should they so wish at any time. No refund of Criterion fees already paid would be made.
- 5.2.2. Candidates withdrawing from iMAP after an oral assessment date has been given will normally forfeit the Oral assessment fee.
- 5.3. If a candidate withdraws from iMAP because of mitigating circumstances (such as illness), any refund will be at the discretion of the iMAP Chair or a nominated deputy. Candidates may apply for a refund by writing to the iMAP office by post or email with a full explanation. Normally, written evidence would be required.

6. DISABILITY

- 6.1. Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessment procedures where necessary to meet the needs of individuals who have a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Acts (DDA) 1995 and 2005. These adjustments will not entail the lowering of standards of assessment.
- 6.2. Candidates who require special arrangements to be made to assist them when taking the iMAP oral assessment must state this on their Application Form and provide details of requirements needed together with independent corroborative evidence of their disability or specific need.
- 6.3. Each case will be separately assessed by the iMAP Chair or a nominated deputy. Candidates will be informed in writing whether or not adjustments to assessment procedures can be made to meet their needs.
- 6.4. The iMAP oral assessment centre is DDA compliant.

7. PORTFOLIO STAGE ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. The iMAP portfolio is a template Word document that candidates must download from the RCGP website and complete, either as one document containing the stipulated fifteen criteria, or as fifteen separate documents covering the stipulated fifteen criteria.

- 7.2. Candidates should submit evidence for each criterion as indicated in the Handbook.
- 7.3. All submissions must be sent by email to the iMAP office (imap@rcgp.org.uk). Only electronic submissions will be accepted.
- 7.4. All submissions for iMAP will be scanned through plagiarism detecting software.
- 7.5. A candidate's submission will be sent to assessors for marking by the iMAP office. It will be marked by two assessors. After the assessors have completed their independent assessments they will confer and produce a single report that is sent back to the candidate through the iMAP office.
- 7.6. Each assessor will mark the submission independently, awarding it one of four grades (Good, Satisfactory, Bare fail, and Unsatisfactory). The pair of assessors will confer after they have completed marking, and give one grade, together with comments, for each criterion. The amalgamated grades and comments will be sent to the candidate.
- 7.7. Any criterion that is marked as Unsatisfactory will be counted as a Major resubmission, and any criterion that is marked as a Bare fail will be counted as a Minor resubmission.
- 7.8. Candidates are permitted one initial submission and two resubmissions of their material.
- 7.9. The amended portfolio should be marked as Version 2 for first resubmission and Version 3 for the second resubmission. The entire document should be resubmitted to the iMAP office. Any resubmissions not sent in this format will not be accepted.
- 7.10. The submission will be accepted when it fulfils the requirements of the iMAP criteria. If the assessors are satisfied that the relevant requirements are fully fulfilled they will accept the submission and the candidate will be informed by the iMAP office of this.
- 7.11. If the portfolio does not reach an acceptable standard after the second resubmission the candidate will be notified as such by the iMAP office and the areas not of a satisfactory standard will be assessed by a second set of assessors. These assessors may decide on one of the following outcomes:
- that the submission should not be accepted
 - that the candidate should be permitted one further resubmission attempt
 - that the submission should be accepted without further amendments by the candidate
- 7.12. Candidates whose submissions have failed to meet the standard required should consider that this brings to an end this particular attempt but they are welcome to make a new attempt if they so wish. They would need to use entirely fresh evidence.
- 7.13. Although there is an appeals procedure that may be followed (please see Section 14 of these Regulations for further information) a candidate may not question the academic judgment of the assessors.
- 7.14. In the event that a candidate has previously submitted either an entire portfolio or individual criteria (having previously withdrawn from iMAP, not completed all of the criteria in time, or failed either at portfolio or at oral stage), the candidate must submit entirely new material. In the event that it is suspected that a candidate has used material previously submitted, the matter will be referred to the iMAP Chair who will request an explanation from the candidate and will refer the matter to a Review Panel⁵. The Review Panel may refer the matter on to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel⁶.

⁵ Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information regarding the Review Panel.

⁶ Please refer to Appendix 2 for further information regarding the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

7.15. Timescales for those undertaking Portfolio iMAP

- 7.15.1. Candidates will be given a deadline for initial portfolio submission by the iMAP office after their application has been received and when their eligibility to undertake the programme is confirmed. This will be one year after their eligibility is confirmed.
- 7.15.2. The completed portfolio document must be submitted by email to the iMAP office (imap@rcgp.org.uk) on or prior to the deadline previously given by the iMAP office. The feedback received for the Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire and Multi Source Feedback surveys, as well as the relevant certificate for Maintaining Good Medical Practice should be submitted with the portfolio as separate attachments to the email.
- 7.15.3. On receiving a portfolio, the iMAP office will check it for completeness and the submission's format prior to sending to assessors. The candidate may be requested to make some amendments at this stage. Although this would not count as a resubmission, timeframes stated by the iMAP office must be adhered to.
- 7.15.4. Candidates must adhere to time-frames indicated by the iMAP office if amendments prior to it being sent to the assessors are necessary. If such time-frames are not adhered to, the candidate may be marked as Out of Time, or their unsuitable submission may be sent to the assessors.
- 7.15.5. The portfolio fee as well as the signed declaration relating to the handling of questionnaires for the Relationships with Patients criterion should be posted to the iMAP office at the time the portfolio is submitted.
- 7.15.6. In the event that a candidate does not submit their completed portfolio, portfolio fee, valid CPR certificate, and signed declaration prior to their deadline, they will be marked as Out of Time. If the candidate wished to pursue iMAP, they would have to re-apply and complete a fresh portfolio.
- 7.15.7. A portfolio will not be sent to assessors until the portfolio fee, valid CPR certificate, and signed declaration relating to the handling of the patient satisfaction questionnaires are received by the iMAP office.
- 7.15.8. Material submitted in the portfolio for the five criteria required for Revalidation – Significant Event Analysis, Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire, Multi-Source Feedback, Audit, and Complaints – may be up to five years old on the date of initial submission of the portfolio. The material for the remaining criteria must be no more than one year old on the date of initial submission of the portfolio with the exception of the Safeguarding Children training as stated in the Handbook⁷. In the event it appears that dates of evidence have been altered (thereby falsified), the process for “Falsification of Documentation” (Section 12 of these Regulations) would be followed.
- 7.15.9. When candidates are asked to resubmit information they will be advised of the timescale for resubmission by the iMAP office.
- When asked for Minor resubmission(s) only, candidates will need to resubmit within one month
 - When asked for Major resubmission(s) they will need to resubmit within three months
 - When asked for both Minor and Major resubmissions they will have three months to complete all amendments
- 7.15.10. All timeframes must be adhered to, otherwise the candidate will be marked as Out of Time.

⁷ If an extension has been granted, this timeframe may be altered. The candidate would be advised of changes in such cases.

7.15.11. No extensions of time will be granted, unless mitigating circumstances occur. There must be exceptional mitigating circumstances to allow extensions. Any extensions to deadlines will be granted at the discretion of the iMAP Chair or a nominated deputy. Requests should be submitted in writing to the iMAP office and should state the reason for the request. Evidence may be required.

7.15.12. Deferring a submission is not permissible. Candidates who are not able to submit a fully completed portfolio before their deadline must re-apply and complete a portfolio containing evidence from the relevant time period only.

7.16. Timescales for those undertaking Modular iMAP

7.16.1. Those who wish to have any iMAP module assessed must submit a Candidate Context form with the first criterion submitted for assessment. In the event that a their working pattern changes significantly, an up to date Candidate Context form must be submitted to the iMAP office.

7.16.2. The relevant Criterion fee must be paid on initial submission of each criterion.

7.16.3. On receiving a submission, the iMAP office will check it for completeness and its format of it prior to sending to assessors. The candidate may be requested to make some amendments at this stage. Although this would not count as a resubmission, timeframes stated by the iMAP office must be adhered to.

7.16.4. Time-frames indicated by the iMAP office must be adhered to if amendments prior to it being sent to the assessors are necessary.

7.16.5. Those submitting the Maintaining Good Medical Practice criterion must send the relevant certificate with their submission as a separate attachment to the email.

7.16.6. Those submitting the Multi Source Feedback criterion must send the feedback report received for the survey with their submission as a separate attachment to the email.

7.16.7. Those submitting the Relationships with Patients criterion must send the feedback report received for the survey with their submission. The signed declaration relating to the handling of questionnaires must also be sent at the time the criterion is submitted.

7.16.8. Material submitted for the five criteria required for Revalidation – Significant Event Analysis, Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire, Multi-Source Feedback, Audit, and Complaints – may be up to five years old on the date of initial submission of the portfolio. The material for the remaining criteria must be no more than one year old on the date of initial submission of the criterion with the exception of the Safeguarding Children training as stated in the Handbook. In the event it appears that dates of evidence have been altered (thereby falsified), the process for “Falsification of Documentation” (Section 12 of these Regulations) would be followed.

7.16.9. Submissions will not be sent for assessment until a Candidate Context form, the relevant fee, and, where applicable, the additional documents outlined in paragraphs 7.16.5 – 7.16.7, are received by the iMAP office.

7.16.10. When a resubmission of the criterion is requested, the timescale for this will be advised by the iMAP office.

- When asked for a Minor resubmission this must be received within one month
- When asked for a Major resubmission this must be received within three months

7.16.11. All timeframes must be adhered to, otherwise the submission will be marked as Out of Time. If the individual wished to pursue iMAP they would need to submit the criterion again using fresh evidence and pay the relevant Criterion fee again.

- 7.16.12. No extensions of time will be granted, unless mitigating circumstances occur. There must be exceptional mitigating circumstances to allow extensions. Any extensions to deadlines will be granted at the discretion of the iMAP Chair or a nominated deputy. Requests should be submitted in writing to the iMAP office and should state the reason for the request. Evidence may be required.
- 7.16.13. When all criteria have been accepted, those wishing to proceed to the oral assessment must submit an application form and valid CPR certificate.
- 7.16.14. All criteria must have been accepted no more than two years before the application form is submitted.
- 7.16.15. In the event that any criteria become out of date, these would need to be resubmitted and the relevant assessment fee paid so that paragraph 7.16.8 is adhered to.

8. Oral Assessment

8.1. Timescales

- 8.1.1. The candidate will be invited to attend the oral assessment once each criterion of the portfolio has been accepted by the assessors and after the candidate's eligibility for iMAP has been confirmed. At this time the candidate will be notified of the week in which the oral will be scheduled. The precise date and time will be confirmed to the candidate no less than four weeks prior to the date of the assessment.
- 8.1.2. Candidates must submit the oral assessment fee as soon as possible after being notified of the approximate date of their assessment and no later than three weeks prior to the date⁸.

8.2. Location

Oral assessments will be held at the RCGP's Clinical Skills Assessment Centre in Croydon, South London.

8.3. Format of the Oral Assessment

- 8.3.1. The oral assessment is in three parts and will last 90 minutes in total.
- 8.3.2. The oral assessment will consist of three separate oral assessments separated by a break of five minutes. Each candidate will be assessed by three pairs of assessors, one pair per oral, none of whom will be known to the candidate, or will have had any part in assessing the candidate's portfolio.
- 8.3.3. The first oral will last 40 minutes. The assessors will have read the candidate's portfolio and will mainly ask the candidate specific questions about it. The second and third orals will each last 20 minutes. The assessors will not have seen the candidate's portfolio, but they will discuss wider issues relating to the iMAP criteria.
- 8.3.4. Each oral will cover a number of different criteria and candidates will not be questioned on any criterion in more than one oral.
- 8.3.5. The oral assessment based on the candidate's portfolio will consider only the final accepted submission or resubmission.

⁸ If a candidate is invited to attend an oral assessment at shorter notice, they will be notified of their individual payment schedule at that time.

8.4. Conduct of the iMAP Oral Assessment

- 8.4.1. All oral assessments will be conducted in the English language.
- 8.4.2. Candidates must comply with instructions on the conduct of assessments distributed on arrival at their oral assessment.
- 8.4.3. Candidates must arrive at their oral assessment at the time specified by the RCGP.
- 8.4.4. Candidates who arrive after the time specified by the RCGP will be deemed to have failed to attend and will not be permitted to take the assessment. They will not normally be able to claim a refund of fees.
- 8.4.5. Candidates will be asked to provide iMAP administrative staff at the assessment centre with photographic proof of identity. Original, documentary evidence of name changes must be provided. If proof cannot be provided to the satisfaction of the staff, the candidate will not be permitted to take the assessment and will forfeit the relevant fee.
- 8.4.6. The candidate should not be known to any of the assessors at the oral assessment. In the event that an assessor recognises a candidate they are scheduled to assess, that assessor would be substituted with a different iMAP assessor.
- 8.4.7. Candidates should bring a paper copy of their portfolio and their anonymised patient records for the criteria on to Acute Illness Management and Providing Treatment in an Emergency to the orals. The following must not be brought into the room where the assessment is taking place⁹:
- Any electronic or electrical equipment (including mobile phones)
 - Bags and coats
 - Food and drink¹⁰
 - Non-essential medicines
- 8.4.8. As part of our ongoing quality control and research and training for examiners, we record randomly selected candidates' oral assessments. Candidates are not in view on the recordings and only their voices are heard, so it is not possible to identify individuals without access to the paperwork which is held confidentially in the iMAP Office. The recordings are viewed only by assessors and consultants to the Panel of Assessors, who are committed to respecting candidates' anonymity. Recordings of this kind are made only for assessor training purposes, and do not contribute in any way to the assessment of a candidate's performance. With these safeguards in place we would hope that candidates would normally agree to their examination being video-recorded.
- 8.4.9. If you have a religious, cultural or personal reason for not being recorded please attach a letter of explanation to your application, and we will respect your wishes. In the absence of such a letter your consent to be video-recorded will be assumed.
- 8.4.10. A candidate who needs to leave the assessment room or oral assessment centre for a short period must be accompanied by the duty marshal or other official. No additional time will be allowed to complete the assessment.

⁹ Secure lockers will be provided for the storage of candidates' belongings

¹⁰ Water will be available

8.5. Marking of the Oral Assessment

- 8.5.1. Each of the six oral assessors will assign an independent provisional mark (Good, Satisfactory, Bare fail, and Unsatisfactory) to the candidate for each criterion discussed.
- 8.5.2. At the conclusion of the oral assessment the six assessors will then convene to collate the marks and provide written feedback for candidates.
- 8.5.3. Each assessor's grade for each criterion will be considered to be of equal importance when reaching the final result.
- 8.5.4. The candidate's final result will be an aggregated score from the grades of each of the six assessors.

8.6. Failures

- 8.6.1. Having a portfolio accepted does not mean that a candidate will necessarily pass the oral assessment stage.
- 8.6.2. Although candidates may appeal against a result (see Section 14 of these Regulations for further detail) the grounds for doing so do not extend to the academic judgment of the assessors being challenged.
- 8.6.3. Candidates who fail the oral assessment are permitted to request a second attempt. Please refer to Section 8.8 of these Regulations for further detail.

8.7. Notification of Results

- 8.7.1. Results will be sent by post to individual candidates within four weeks of the date of their oral assessment. In the event that a results letter is not received by the candidate by this date, a duplicate can be requested which will also be sent by post. iMAP administrative staff are not permitted to discuss results with individual candidates.
- 8.7.2. The names of successful candidates will be passed to the Membership Department of the RCGP for election to full Membership and published on the RCGP website¹¹.

8.8. Making a second attempt at the Oral Assessment

- 8.8.1. Candidates who are not successful at the oral assessment may request a second attempt.
- 8.8.2. The second attempt may be requested no sooner than six weeks after results from the original assessment are sent to candidates.
- 8.8.3. A candidate must request a second attempt no more than three months after attending the initial oral assessment.
- 8.8.4. Candidates who wish to request a second oral assessment must do so by submitting their request in writing, by letter or email, to the iMAP office. The requisite fee must be sent at the time of the request. The candidate will be invited to attend the next available session, and notified of the approximate date of this when it is requested. It is anticipated that this will be approximately six to eight weeks after the request is received. The precise date and time will be confirmed to the candidate no less than four weeks prior to the date of the assessment. Candidates are expected to make themselves available for the date offered.

¹¹ Candidates who do not wish for their name to be listed may request this by indicating as such on their application form.

- 8.8.5. A candidate may not normally take a second oral assessment more than six months after their original oral assessment.
- 8.8.6. Candidates who fail their second oral assessment will not be entitled to make a further attempt. They should consider that this brings to an end this particular iMAP application and are welcome to submit a new application, and prepare a new portfolio with fresh evidence if they so wish.

9. MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

- 9.1. Mitigating circumstances¹² will not result in additional marks being awarded. However, candidates who report mitigating circumstances that are accepted by the RCGP may, under the following Regulations, have the fees for a re-sit waived, and/or be permitted to take the oral assessment at the next available sitting.
- 9.2. The RCGP would normally expect a candidate who believed that their performance was likely to be affected by mitigating circumstances arising *before* their oral assessment to withdraw from that sitting and re-sit at a later date.
- 9.3. Where mitigating circumstances arise *during* their oral assessment which the candidate believes are having a material and detrimental effect on performance, the candidate would normally be expected to withdraw from the sitting and re-sit at a later date.
- 9.4. If a candidate decides to proceed with their oral assessment even though s/he believes that mitigating circumstances are having an effect on performance, then the mitigating circumstances must be reported to a member of the iMAP administrative staff who will complete a contemporaneous record which will be signed by the candidate. Candidates reporting mitigating circumstances *during* an assessment will not normally be allowed any additional time to complete an assessment unless an error of process on the part of the RCGP has denied them the full time to complete the assessment.
- 9.5. All reports of mitigating circumstances must be submitted to the RCGP's iMAP Office as soon as the circumstances arise or as soon as possible thereafter and no longer than 48 hours after the assessment takes place. The only exception is where the candidate was unaware of the mitigating circumstances at the time of the assessment. An RCGP Mitigating Circumstances form (in Appendix 3 of this document) must be completed, and compelling independent written evidence of the mitigating circumstances must be provided. Mitigating circumstances for reasons of illness must be evidenced in the form of a medical certificate submitted with the Mitigating Circumstances Form.
- 9.6. Where mitigating circumstances arise that affect all candidates¹³ the iMAP Chair or nominated deputy supervising the assessment will be responsible for deciding what action to take and will provide a written report to the iMAP Office.
- 9.7. All reports of mitigating circumstances will be considered by the iMAP Chair or a nominated deputy, who may consult others as they see fit. Records of any mitigating circumstances submitted in respect of other assessments may be taken into account.
- 9.8. If an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted, the assessment results will be considered void and the candidate will be offered a further attempt at a later date.

¹² For example illness or bereavement

¹³ For example the evacuation of the building during the assessment

- 9.9. If an application for mitigating circumstances is refused, the candidate may complain to the RCGP using the complaints procedure contained in Section 14 of these Regulations.

10. ALLEGATIONS OF CANDIDATE MISCONDUCT

- 10.1. When misconduct is alleged during an assessment the candidate will normally be allowed to complete that component of the assessment. A record of the allegation will be made by a member of iMAP administrative staff and a copy given to the candidate.
- 10.2. Alleged misconduct before, during or after assessments will be reported to the iMAP Chair or a named deputy.
- 10.3. Results will be withheld whilst allegations of misconduct are being investigated.
- 10.4. Allegations will not continue to be investigated where they lack substance or appear, upon investigation, to be malicious. Where a case of misconduct is apparent, the iMAP Chair may, if the case appears to be isolated or minor, deal with the matter him/herself.
- 10.5. In other cases, a Review Panel¹⁴ may be convened. The Review Panel may decide to refer the matter on to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel¹⁵. Alternatively, the iMAP Chair may, if s/he deems it appropriate, refer the matter directly to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

11. PLAGIARISM

- 11.1. Candidates are advised that the RCGP does not tolerate any form of plagiarism or collusion in candidates' submissions for iMAP. A definition of plagiarism follows and illustrates the consequences of submitting any plagiarised work. On the application form candidates are asked to give their consent to allow their portfolio to be scanned through plagiarism detecting software. By giving consent candidates are agreeing that, subject to conventional rules on the use of source material, allowable quotations and citation of sources, their answers are their own work. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be investigated and, where plagiarism is identified, will result in severe consequences, including referral to the GMC where appropriate.
- 11.2. It is misconduct to commit any act whereby a candidate might obtain for him/herself or for any other candidate an unfair advantage in the iMAP assessment. In particular plagiarism shall be regarded in instances where candidates:
- Plagiarise or use in any other way unauthorised material or the work of any other candidate
 - Partake in unauthorised collaboration with others in a piece of work
- 11.3. Plagiarism is presenting work as your own when it is derived substantially from someone else's work, as a result of using someone else's thoughts or words without using quotation marks and identifying the origin, or using someone else's work without proper acknowledgement. This applies to all published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form. Collusion is another form of plagiarism involving unauthorised collaboration with others in a piece of work with the intention of deceiving the RCGP.
- 11.4. All submissions for iMAP will be scanned through plagiarism detecting software.
- 11.5. If plagiarism is suspected or blatant, the following procedure will be followed:

¹⁴ Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information regarding the Review Panel.

¹⁵ Please refer to Appendix 2 for further information regarding the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

- 11.5.1. The iMAP Manager will write to the iMAP Chair to inform him/her of their concerns, identifying suspect statements, pieces of text etc.
- 11.5.2. The iMAP Chair will review the information and write to the applicant informing him/her of their concern. The applicant will be asked to provide a full explanation in writing within ten working days.
- 11.5.3. Allegations will not continue to be investigated where they lack substance or appear, upon investigation, to be malicious. Where a case of plagiarism is apparent, the iMAP Chair may, if the case appears to be isolated or minor, deal with the matter him/herself.
- 11.5.4. In other cases, a Review Panel may be convened. The Review Panel may decide to refer the matter on to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel. Alternatively, the iMAP Chair may, if s/he deems it appropriate, refer the matter directly to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

12. FALSIFICATION OF DOCUMENTATION

- 12.1. If falsification of documentation (including but not limited to the embellishment of records letters and the altering of dates of events) is suspected or blatant, the following procedure will be followed:
 - 12.1.1. The iMAP Manager will write to the iMAP Chair to inform him/her of their concerns, identifying suspect statements, pieces of text etc.
 - 12.1.2. The iMAP Chair will review the information and write to the applicant informing him/her of their concern. The applicant will be asked to provide a full explanation in writing within ten working days.
 - 12.1.3. Allegations will not continue to be investigated where they lack substance or appear, upon investigation, to be malicious. Where a case of falsification of documentation is apparent, the iMAP Chair may, if the case appears to be isolated or minor, deal with the matter him/herself.
 - 12.1.4. In other cases, a Review Panel may be convened. The Review Panel may decide to refer the matter on to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel. Alternatively, the iMAP Chair may, if s/he deems it appropriate, refer the matter directly to the iMAP Clinical Governance Panel.

13. QUALITY CONTROL

13.1. Oversight

The RCGP oversees the delivery and quality control of the iMAP programme.

13.2. Assessors

- 13.2.1. RCGP iMAP assessors are formally recruited and trained in assessment techniques.
- 13.2.2. The performance of assessors is continually monitored and reviewed.

13.3. Data review and use

The RCGP reviews candidate performance data, misconduct cases, complaints, appeals and equal opportunities monitoring data. From time to time the RCGP will also analyse anonymised data relating to its assessments, including iMAP, for research and development purposes. Consent to use of this data will be assumed unless exemption is specifically requested.

14. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

14.1. Description

- 14.1.1. A complaint relates to the administration or conduct of an assessment where there is no intention to query the result of the assessment.
- 14.1.2. An appeal is a request for a review of the decision of the RCGP to fail a candidate in a component of iMAP.
- 14.1.3. The two processes are separate but the subject of one may later become the subject of the other.
- 14.1.4. Appeals and complaints relating to the portfolio and the oral assessment components of iMAP should be made in writing and submitted to the iMAP office. The relevant form (in the Appendices of this document) must be completed and submitted.
- 14.1.5. Any submission must be made by the candidate themselves and should be addressed to the iMAP office. The RCGP will not usually enter into correspondence with any third parties in relation to complaints or appeals.
- 14.1.6. The content of complaints and appeals procedures are intended to be internal and confidential. No-one involved in them shall, without the prior written consent of the RCGP, communicate, publish or otherwise disclose any detail, written material or evidence produced to any unauthorised person.

14.2. Complaints

- 14.2.1. A complaint will not normally be considered if its specific subject matter or closely related subject matter is currently being considered by the RCGP as part of an appeal process, by the GMC under fitness to practise procedures, or by a court, tribunal or similar.
- 14.2.2. Candidates will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint.
- 14.2.3. In the first instance a candidate should attempt to resolve a complaint informally, during or immediately after an assessment, with the most relevant person, for example the duty marshal. If the complaint is of a general nature it should be submitted to the iMAP office at the RCGP or, if the complaint is about a member of iMAP administrative staff, the RCGP's Head of Examinations.
- 14.2.4. Formal complaints must normally be received no later than ten working days after the assessment took place. The only exception is when an appeal has been lodged. In these circumstances a complaint must be lodged within ten working days of receipt of the decision relating to the appeal panel.
- 14.2.5. Formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the form available in Appendix 4 of this document and must include supporting evidence.

- 14.2.6. There is no fee for making a complaint.
- 14.2.7. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within ten working days.
- 14.2.8. Formal complaints are considered in the first instance by the iMAP Manager or, if the complaint is about the administration of the iMAP office and/or a member of its staff, by the RCGP's Head of Examinations.
- 14.2.9. Clarification of the precise nature of the complaint may be sought.
- 14.2.10. Any individual complained about and/or the person directly responsible for the matter being complained about will be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- 14.2.11. Further information may be required. The parties will be invited to comment on any information submitted by the other and will be given adequate time to do so.
- 14.2.12. In taking a decision on whether or not a complaint is justified, the Head of Examinations, or iMAP Chair, or nominated deputy, will act reasonably and objectively, observing the principles of natural justice and will make its decision on the balance of probabilities.
- 14.2.13. The decision will be final and communicated to the complainant in writing, with reasons, as soon as is reasonably possible and normally no more than six weeks after receipt of the complaint.
- 14.2.14. Complaints that are judged to be inappropriate or unsubstantiated will not be accepted.
- 14.2.15. If a complaint is upheld, the RCGP may offer an apology, or some other appropriate form of redress.

14.3. Appeals

- 14.3.1. An appeal will not normally be considered if its specific subject matter or closely related subject matter is currently being considered by the RCGP as part of the complaints process, by the GMC under fitness to practise procedures, or by a court, tribunal or similar.
- 14.3.2. The purpose of an appeal is to review the decision of the RCGP to fail a candidate in a component of the iMAP programme.
- 14.3.3. There is an administrative fee for making an appeal. This will be equivalent to the cost of the assessment component that the appeal relates to i.e. portfolio assessment £770 and oral assessment £770. This is payable to the RCGP at the time of submitting the appeal.
- 14.3.4. The following are grounds for appeal:
- there was an error in the calculation/collation of marks
 - there was an irregularity in any part of the assessment
- 14.3.5. No appeal will be entertained solely on the grounds that the candidate wishes to challenge the academic judgment of the assessors.
- 14.3.6. Candidates will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making an appeal.
- 14.3.7. Appeals must be lodged by the candidate in writing using the form available in Appendix 5 and must include supporting evidence.

- 14.3.8. A candidate wishing to appeal must submit written representations, together with the required fee and supporting evidence to the iMAP office.
- 14.3.9. Appeals must be received within ten working days of the date of receipt of the result of the assessment.
- 14.3.10. Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged within ten working days.
- 14.3.11. In the first instance appeals will be considered by the iMAP Manager. Clarification of the precise nature of the appeal may be sought.
- 14.3.12. The iMAP Manager will notify the iMAP Chair of the appeal, and a Review Panel¹⁶ would be convened. The Review Panel will decide if there is a prima facie case for an appeal. If there is no evidence of grounds for an appeal, this will be communicated to the candidate in writing, with reasons, as soon as is reasonably possible and normally no more than six weeks after receipt of the appeal. If the Review Panel concurs that there is prima facie case for an appeal, this will be communicated to the candidate in writing as soon as is reasonably possible and normally no more than six weeks after receipt of the appeal, and an Appeal Panel will be convened.
- 14.3.13. Appeals that are judged to be inappropriate or unsubstantiated will not be accepted.
- 14.3.14. The Appeal Panel will be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable. The panel will have three members, two of whom will be iMAP assessors who were not involved in the original assessment. The third member, who will chair the panel, will be an RCGP assessor who is not involved in the iMAP process. None of the panel members will know the candidate.
- 14.3.15. The appellant will be supplied with, and given the opportunity to comment in advance on, all the information to be considered by the Appeal Panel.
- 14.3.16. Appeals will normally be considered on the basis of paper evidence only. Appellants will, however, have the right to request an oral hearing and the right to be accompanied at the hearing by a friend, colleague or a member of their professional body. Candidates should not normally be accompanied by a family member or legal representative. A candidate seeking to be accompanied should identify the person accompanying him or her and inform the RCGP at least five days in advance of the hearing.
- 14.3.17. In reaching a decision on whether to uphold or dismiss an appeal, the panel will act reasonably and objectively, observing the principles of natural justice. The panel will make its decision on the balance of probabilities.
- 14.3.18. The Appeal Panel may reach one of the following conclusions:
- That the appeal should be dismissed
 - That the appeal should be upheld and either that:
 - any mark originally awarded to the appellant should be corrected and, if the consequence of the correction requires it, the appellant be declared successful in that component
 - the result of the component should be declared void and the appellant be allowed to re-sit without payment of a fee and/or
 - some other form of redress be offered to the appellant, at the discretion of the panel
- 14.3.19. The Chair of the Appeal Panel shall communicate its decision to the appellant in writing, with brief reasons, within one month of the date of the Appeal Panel meeting.
-

The Chair of the panel will be authorised to decide whether all, part of, or none of the appeal fee should be refunded.

14.3.20. The Appeal Panel's decision shall be made on a majority basis and shall be final.

14.3.21. Once the Appeal Panel's decision has been communicated to the appellant, the iMAP administrative staff will not normally enter into any communication with the appellant regarding the outcome of the appeal.

15. COMPLIANCE WITH EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY LEGISLATION

15.1. The RCGP is committed to promoting and developing equality and diversity in all its work. It aims to have policies and ways of working that are fair to all individuals and groups. The RCGP has an equal opportunities policy.

15.2. iMAP assessors are appointed on the principles of open competition and equal opportunity for all irrespective of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, creed, colour, ethnic origin, religion, age or disability.

15.3. iMAP assessors and iMAP administrative staff are aware of the RCGP's equal opportunities policy and abide by its principles.

15.4. The RCGP collects data on iMAP applicants and analyses iMAP results in relation to equal opportunities monitoring variables.

15.5. The RCGP will consider special arrangements for candidates with disabilities taking the iMAP Oral Assessment.

Appendix 1– Review Panel

A Review Panel would be convened as soon as is reasonably practical by the Chair of iMAP or a nominated deputy. A Review Panel would be convened to discuss instances such as the following:

- Cases where it appears a candidate may have altered patient records, such as consultation dates, in order to include them in their portfolio
- Cases where misconduct is alleged
- Cases where plagiarism is suspected or blatant
- Cases where a candidate has submitted an appeal against their result to decide whether there is prima facie case for an appeal

The panel will have three members, all of whom will be experienced iMAP assessors. The panel will be chaired by one of the members.

There will be no direct communication between the candidate and panel members. All correspondence will occur through the iMAP Manager or a nominated deputy.

None of the panel members will know the candidate to be discussed.

The panel will conduct its business in accordance with the RCGP's Guidance on the Conduct of Assessments. The panel will act reasonably and objectively, observing the principles of natural justice. The panel will make its decision on the balance of probabilities.

The Review Panel will normally convene virtually and as such, matters under discussion will be considered on the basis of paper evidence only. Candidates will therefore not be able to be present. However, they will be provided with a copy of all documents the panel will consider.

The panel may take one of the following decisions:

- that the candidate should be permitted to proceed with their iMAP assessment with no further action from the RCGP
- that the candidate should be considered by the RCGP iMAP Clinical Governance Panel
- that the candidate should be considered by an Appeal Panel

The panel's decision will be on a majority basis.

Having made a decision, the Chair of the panel will communicate its findings by letter to the candidate and the iMAP Chair.

Appendix 2 – Clinical Governance Panel

The RCGP's iMAP Clinical Governance Panel usually convenes on a quarterly basis, by means of teleconference.

The panel consists of the following members:

- RCGP Honorary Secretary (Chair)
- RCGP President
- A nominated member of Council of the RCGP
- Chair of the Professional Development Board
- Chair of the Assessment Committee
- Chair of the Postgraduate Training Board

A minimum of the Chair and two panel members are required for quorum.

There will be no direct communication between the candidate and panel members. All correspondence will occur through the iMAP Manager or a nominated deputy.

The purpose of the panel will be to

- a.) determine the eligibility of candidates who do not fully meet all eligibility criteria
- b.) to determine the most appropriate course of action in the event of candidate misconduct, plagiarism, falsified documentation, outstanding complaints, or clinical governance issues

When considering cases of candidate misconduct, plagiarism, or falsification of documentation, or if there are concerns over a doctor's fitness to practise, the Clinical Governance Panel may make one or several of the following decisions:

- that the candidate should be permitted to proceed with iMAP
- that the candidate should be referred to the relevant Primary Care Organisation or the General Medical Council
- the candidate will be issued with a formal warning and a note of the likely penalties if further misconduct takes place
- that the result for that component will be declared void with loss of all paid fees
- that the result for all components will be declared void with loss of all paid fees
- that the candidate should be barred from undertaking RCGP assessments for the purpose of becoming a member for a defined period
- that the candidate should be barred from undertaking RCGP assessments for the purpose of becoming a member indefinitely
- that the candidate's most recent submission should be returned to them so that they may complete the work required and submit the portfolio at a later date

The panel's decision will be communicated to the candidate in writing, with reasons, from the Chair of the panel as soon as is reasonably possible and normally no more than six weeks after the panel convenes.

The panel's decision will be final.

Appendix 3 – iMAP Mitigating Circumstances Form

Name of Candidate			
GMC Number / iMAP Candidate Number			
Assessment Date			
<p>Mitigating Circumstances</p> <p>Please describe below the circumstances of your assessment which you wish RCGP to take into account, and explain how you think your performance in the assessment was affected.</p>			
<p>Nature of supporting evidence submitted</p>			
Candidate Signature		Date	
Recipient at RCGP		Date	

Appendix 4 – iMAP Complaint Form

Name of Candidate			
GMC Number / iMAP Candidate Number			
Assessment Date			
Nature of Complaint			
Nature of supporting evidence submitted			
Candidate Signature		Date	
Recipient at RCGP		Date	

Appendix 5 – iMAP Appeal Form

Before completing this form please refer to the document Regulations for the Conduct of Appeals, which can be found on the RCGP website.

Name of Appellant			
GMC number / iMAP Candidate Number			
Assessment Date			
<p>Reason for Appeal</p> <p>Please indicate the nature of your appeal with reference to Section 14.3.4 of the iMAP Candidate Regulations. Appeals cannot be made solely on the grounds that you wish to challenge the academic judgment of the assessors.</p>			
Nature of supporting evidence submitted			
Fee attached		(The fee for each appeal is £700)	
Appellant Signature		Date	
Recipient at RCGP		Date	