MAP – Guidance for Criterion 9: Complaints and compliments

If submitting a complaint this criterion is in two parts.

In the first section, you should write a succinct outline of your practice complaints procedure. The complaints policy itself is not part of the assessment.

The second part of this criterion asks you to describe a complaint you’ve had (or have had a substantial personal involvement in resolving). Many general practitioners do not receive formal complaints within the timeframe but you may, for example, have been involved in a complaint against a member of the practice staff (resolving this as per your complaints procedure). The evidence provided must come from your current revalidation cycle.

If no formal complaint has occurred within the timeframe then you can use a dissatisfaction. This needs to be significant, and one where you can use part or all of the complaints procedure to resolve the issue.

For instance, maybe a patient has expressed dissatisfaction during a consultation and afterwards, on reflection, you decide to write a letter of apology and outline in that letter how you might try and prevent this happening again. For example, test reports can go astray and practice systems can fail to meet patients’ needs.

Importantly, you need to show you have made some change in your practice or practice systems to minimise the recurrence of the issue which gave rise to the complaint / dissatisfaction. It is not sufficient simply to aspire to change, saying, for example “I am going to do better here”.

Alternatively, you may choose to present a compliment or appreciative feedback that you have received in relation to your clinical practice.

You should be able to describe the patient’s view of your work but also be able to place it in perspective. For example, a patient might be especially appreciative of something you did as a matter of routine.

The compliment should refer to work you have done yourself. You should include reflection on it: the circumstances of the event, how the compliment arose, why it was especially welcome and justify why you chose to include it.

If you choose to submit a compliment, you must demonstrate resulting change in personal professional practice or that the compliment was received as a result of change in practice, in which case you must describe that change.

The criterion is about the way you appreciate and deal with feedback from patients. It is not marked on the worthiness of the compliment itself.