Complaints – Policy

A complaint relates to the administration or conduct of an assessment where there is no intention, as part of the complaint, to query the result of the assessment.

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.

2. 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 or educational supervisor. If the complaint is of a general nature it can be raised through the Examinations Department of the RCGP or, if the complaint is about a member of the Examinations Department, with the RCGP’s Chief Examiner.

3. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within ten working days.

4. Formal complaints are considered by the Head of Examinations or, if the complaint is about the administration of the Examinations Department and/or a member of its staff, the Chief Examiner, or a nominated deputy.

5. Complaints that are judged by the above personnel to be inappropriate or vexatious will not be accepted.

6. Clarification of the precise nature of the complaint may be sought.

7. 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.

8. Further information may be required. The parties concerned may be invited to comment on any information submitted and will be given adequate time to do so.

9. In taking a decision on whether or not a complaint is justified the Head of Examinations, the Chief Examiner or a nominated deputy, will act reasonably and objectively, observing the principles of natural justice and will reach a decision on the balance of probabilities.

10. If a complaint is upheld, the RCGP may offer an apology, a fee refund or some other appropriate form of redress.

11. If an independent review is requested, this will be conducted by a person who has had no involvement with the complaint and who will ensure that the process followed has been carried out correctly, taking all relevant evidence into account.

12. Candidates will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making a complaint.