



Royal College of  
General Practitioners

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# MRCGP Regulations for medical practitioners training for a CCT in General Practice

MRCGP Regulations for medical practitioners training for a CCT in General Practice v3.0  
August 2023

## Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	Aug 2007	Examinations team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New regulations</li></ul>
2.0	Dec 2018	Examinations team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updates to regulations</li></ul>
3.0	Aug 2023	Examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction of revision history.</li><li>• Full review of language and item ordering to increase accessibility for all users.</li><li>• Sections 4, 5, 11, 12, 13 and 15 have been updated to include details of the Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA).</li><li>• 3.4 - New clause to clarify the need to apply for CEGPR when the AKT or SCA is passed outside of training.</li><li>• Section 4- confirms the established position, from the introduction of the RCA, that examination of clinical skills is assessed solely within WPBA.</li><li>• Section 5 - Eligibility:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ 5.2 - New clause to clarify position on trainees taking the SCA or AKT whilst out of training, specifically those who plan to return eg trainees on sabbatical, maternity or sick leave.</li><li>○ 5.5 and 5.6 - updated clauses that allow trainees entering GP Specialty training on or after 2 August 2023, a maximum of six attempts at both the AKT and SCA. There is no change for eligibility for any trainee who is currently in training.</li><li>○ 5.18 and 5.19 - updated clauses to detail the new reservation process, which is introduced in addition to the current booking process.</li><li>○ 5.20 - new clause to specify the location of the SCA, and the responsibility of the trainee to secure a suitable location for their SCA examination.</li></ul></li><li>• Section 7 - Cancellations and refunds - updated to reflect policy changes since 2018.</li><li>• Section 8 - Reasonable adjustments - updated to reflect policy changes. Trainees can now apply once for reasonable adjustments and have these applied to all subsequent sittings of the same component.</li></ul>


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- Timeframes for submission and approval of reasonable adjustments have been updated.
- 10.3 - New clause to restate pregnant trainees may request reasonable adjustments.
  - Section 16 - Feedback/complaints/appeals - updated to reflect policy changes since 2018.
  - Removal of expired CSA information where appropriate.
  - Transition section removed.
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**Review date:** August 2024 and then annually thereafter.


## Relevant Policies, Templates and Forms

The following policies, procedures and guidance should be used or referred to, when necessary, alongside this policy. All policies and templates are available on the RCGP website.

Name	Version	Date
MRCGP Examination Fifth Attempts at the Applied Knowledge Test (AKT), Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA) and Recorded Consultation Assessment (RCA) Policy, Procedure and FAQs	3.0	August 2023
MRCGP AKT/SCA/RCA - Application for an exceptional fifth attempt	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Cancellation and Refund Policy and Procedure	3.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Reasonable Adjustments Policy, Procedure and Guidance for disability assessors	1.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Mitigating Circumstances Form	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Misconduct Policy and Procedure	1.0	August 2023
MRCGP Reporting an allegation of misconduct form	1.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Feedback and Complaints Form	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Appeals Policy and Procedure	3.0	August 2023
MRCGP Request for review of examination result - Stage 1 (Form AP1)	2.0	August 2023



MRCGP Request for an appeal against a result - Stage 2 (Form AP2)	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Request for an independent appeals panel - Stage 3 (Form AP3)	2.0	August 2023



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# Duties of a medical practitioner

All registered medical practitioners have a duty placed on them by the General Medical Council (GMC) to be honest and trustworthy. Trainees whose GMC registration (or its international equivalent) is restricted in any way by their registering body must provide the RCGP with full details in advance of sitting any component of the MRCGP examination. Trainee performance in the MRCGP examination is reviewed by medical practitioners who themselves have a duty to notify the GMC if they have concerns. Misconduct before, during or after examinations, or evidence of lack of competence, may be referred to the GMC.



# 1. Introduction


## Purpose of these Regulations

- 1.1. These Regulations relate to the examinations undertaken by medical practitioners training in a GP specialty training programme in the UK. The examinations are known collectively as the examination for membership of the RCGP (MRCGP).

## Date of publication

- 1.2. These Regulations first came into effect on 1 August 2007. They change over time. A record of changes since December 2018 will be included at the beginning of the document. Trainees should ensure they are familiar with the Regulations current at the time they are taking the MRCGP. The current version will always be downloadable from the RCGP website. The RCGP will give advance notice of any change which may have a material effect on trainees to ensure that trainees are not disadvantaged as a result.

## Data protection

- 1.3. The RCGP will process and store the personal data and examination data of MRCGP trainees in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and Data Protection Act 2018. Information on individual trainee performance and trainee's performance overall will be passed to local office and deanery (both henceforth referred to as deaneries) administrators and the GMC.
  - 1.4. Personal data will also be passed to the GMC for regulatory reporting, quality assurance and research purposes and to facilitate the awarding of Certificates of Completion of Training (CCTs). Trainees wishing to exercise their data subject rights should contact the RCGP's Data Protection Officer (DPO) at [info.dataprotection@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:info.dataprotection@rcgp.org.uk).
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## Examination security and copyright

- 1.5. Examination material relating to the MRCGP is confidential, protected by copyright and subject to non-disclosure requirements which trainees must observe. It must not be placed on the internet and must not be disclosed to, or discussed with, any unauthorised person under any circumstances except with the express, written permission of the MRCGP Chief Examiner. Trainees who are found to have infringed these requirements will be penalised in accordance with the guidance on misconduct in these Regulations.




## 2. Purpose of the examination

- 2.1. The MRCGP is an integrated examination system. Successful completion of its three components is required of medical practitioners who undertake the UK's specialty training programme in general practice<sup>1,2</sup> and who wish to obtain a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) in general practice. The CCT is the licence to practise as a GP in the National Health Service (NHS).
- 2.2. The MRCGP has been approved by the GMC.
- 2.3. A medical practitioner who successfully completes the MRCGP and has a licence to practise is eligible for membership of the RCGP.

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<sup>1</sup> The specialty training programme is postgraduate training that takes place after completion of a medical degree and the UK's two-year Foundation Programme or its equivalent.

<sup>2</sup> For medical practitioners training part time, the full-time equivalent period of training applies throughout these Regulations. Part time training should be at least 50% of full time.



## 3. Regulatory framework

- 3.1. The law requires medical practitioners who wish to work as GPs in the NHS to obtain a licence to practise and then to be entered into the GMC's General Practitioners Register.
- 3.2. There are two types of licence to practise, both issued by the GMC. Most medical practitioners obtain a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT). The alternative form of licence is the Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration (CEGPR).
- 3.3. The CCT in general practice is awarded on successful completion of a GP specialty training programme that conforms to the requirements of the General and Specialist Medical Practice (Education, Training and Qualifications) Order 2010.
- 3.4. Those passing the AKT or SCA after they have exited training will not be eligible for a CCT and must apply instead for a Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration (CEGPR) under Article 11 of the Order.
- 3.5. The Order requires the GMC, and those setting standards and monitoring training and assessment on its behalf, to safeguard the health and well-being of patients. The RCGP has an important duty under the law, therefore, to ensure that medical practitioners who are awarded the MRCGP are fit for independent practice as GPs in the UK.
- 3.6. Training programmes, and the examination systems that form part of them, must be approved by the GMC. Substantial changes to the MRCGP require GMC approval and will be published before being implemented.
- 3.7. More information on both types of certificate and the GP training programme is available on our website [here](#).



## 4. Examination structure and content


- 4.1. The MRCGP has three components. Each assesses a range of knowledge, skills, and capabilities and together they cover the general practice specialty training curriculum. The [GP curriculum](#) and the examinations have been approved by the GMC as meeting the required standard.
- 4.2. A Portfolio, (an electronic record of training) is made available to all trainees on registration with the RCGP. The Portfolio is used to record progress through GP specialty training, including success in the three components of the MRCGP.

### Examination of knowledge

- 4.3. The Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) is a computer-based examination that assesses the knowledge base underpinning general practice in the UK. It covers three key areas of general practice - clinical knowledge, critical appraisal/evidence-based practice, and organisation/management/administrative issues.
- 4.4. AKT passes are valid for seven years in accordance with the GMC's requirements about the currency of national professional examinations (see [Regulation 13.8](#) below for further clarification). This currency was extended to 7 years and 6 months only for a particular cohort of trainees impacted in training by the Covid-19 pandemic. Details are covered in [Regulation 13.9](#) of this document.

[Read information on what the AKT assesses and how it is delivered on the RCGP website.](#)

### Examination of clinical skills

- 4.5. Trainees' clinical consulting skills are assessed through direct observation by examiners appointed by the RCGP. Until April 2020 this was done through the Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA). During the period of Covid-19 disruption, the Recorded Consultation Assessment (RCA) was introduced as a temporary emergency examination to replace the CSA. The SCA will be delivered from November 2023 as the permanent assessment of clinical skills.
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## 5. Making an application to take the MRCGP

### Eligibility

- 5.1. Medical practitioners who are undertaking the UK's GP specialty training programme, and who have registered with the RCGP, are eligible to take the MRCGP.
- 5.2. Medical practitioners who are out of programme but are still in training and have a National Training Number (NTN) are eligible to take the MRCGP. Examples of such scenarios include but are not limited to trainees on maternity leave, and trainees who are on sabbatical.
- 5.3. The AKT, and SCA or RCA components of the MRCGP should typically be taken and passed during the GP training programme. Further attempts may be allowed during periods of extended training authorised by a deanery.
- 5.4. At the discretion of the RCGP, and subject to the rules on maximum permitted numbers of attempts, trainees may make one attempt at either the AKT or the SCA in the six-month period immediately following exit from training without receiving a CCT. Those passing the AKT or SCA after they have exited training will not be eligible for a CCT and must apply instead for a Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration (CEGPR) under Article 11 of the Order.

#### 5.5. Trainees who are already in training on 1 August 2023

An exceptional fifth attempt at the AKT, SCA or RCA may be permitted where trainees can demonstrate additional educational attainment, a satisfactory Educational Supervisor Report workplace-based assessment capability rating and compliance with the eligibility requirements given in the Exceptional fifth attempt policy document. The time limits for a further attempt at the AKT and SCA out of training, as outlined in 5.4 above, also apply to a fifth attempt.

[Read the Exceptional Fifth Attempt Policy on the RCGP website.](#)

#### 5.6. Trainees who enter GP Speciality training [on or after 2 August 2023](#)

All trainees are permitted to make a maximum of six attempts at both the AKT and SCA.

## Application process

- 5.7. A medical practitioner who has been offered a place on a training programme must register with the RCGP by the beginning of the programme. This will give access to the Training Portfolio which contains full details of all MRCGP examinations and is used throughout training.
- 5.8. Applicants will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood these Regulations at the point of applying for the AKT, SCA or RCA.
- 5.9. It is the responsibility of the applicant to apply separately and in good time for both the AKT, and SCA or RCA components and to negotiate with their clinical and educational supervisors the timings of workplace based assessments.

## AKT

- 5.10. Eligibility for the AKT is limited to those in Specialty Training Years 2 and 3 (ST2 and ST3) of the training programme. This regulation applies equally to both full-time trainees and those training flexibly.
- 5.11. AKT examinations take place at regular intervals throughout the year at centres around the UK. The planned dates of AKT examinations are published on the RCGP website. [View the AKT examination dates on the RCGP website.](#)
- 5.12. When applying to take the examination, applicants must pay a fee to the RCGP and book their examination sitting with the examination provider within the published booking window timeframes.

## RCA


- 5.13. The RCA may be attempted when a trainee is in Specialty Training Year 3 (ST3) of the training programme. This regulation applies equally to full-time trainees and those training flexibly.
- 5.14. RCA diets take place at regular intervals throughout the year. Trainees must book an examination sitting and submit consultations by a fixed date. The planned dates of diets and the application procedure are published on the RCGP website. [View the RCA examination dates on the RCGP website.](#)
- 5.15. Applicants must make their application direct to the RCGP and pay the fee.



## SCA

- 5.16. The SCA may be attempted when a trainee is in Specialty Training Year 3 (ST3) of the training programme. This regulation applies equally to full-time trainees and those training flexibly.
- 5.17. SCA diets take place at regular intervals throughout the year. The planned dates of diets and the application procedure are published on the RCGP website. [View the SCA examination dates on the RCGP website.](#)
- 5.18. Trainees must reserve a place on an examination diet prior to applying for the examination. Reservations must be made via the Trainee Portfolio. Trainees who fail to reserve a place on a diet may not be able to sit the SCA in their preferred diet. Trainees are able to alter their reservation for free at any point before the booking date.
- 5.19. Trainees must apply for an examination sitting within the booking period as published on the RCGP website. Trainees who have reserved a place in a given diet will be provided with a link to allow them to apply.
- 5.20. The SCA will be delivered remotely, and it is the responsibility of the trainee to secure a suitable location for their SCA examination in a GP training surgery. RCGP can assist trainees in locating alternative available GP practices if a trainee's own practice is unavailable.
- 5.21. It is not permissible for trainees to sit the SCA whilst located outside of the UK.
- 5.22. Applicants must make their application direct to the RCGP and pay the fee.

## WPBA

- 5.23. Registration with the RCGP at the start of training triggers the creation of an online Portfolio in which a record of WPBA is made. There is no alternative paper-based record. Access to the information in the Portfolio is limited to those who need it for training, assessment, and administrative purposes.
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## Re-sits

- 5.24. The process for applying to re-sit, or re-take, a component of the examination is identical to the original application process.
- 5.25. Trainees who fail the AKT, SCA or the RCA may be entitled to make further attempts (see [Regulation 5.3](#) above).
- 5.26. If a trainee does not progress to a competent level in WPBA the deanery will decide what action is appropriate. The trainee may, for example, be required to undertake a further period of GP training and to repeat WPBA assessments.



## 6. Fees

- 6.1. There is a fee for each of the AKT, SCA and RCA components of the MRCGP. Fees must be paid in advance and are not normally refunded.
- 6.2. The fee for a re-sit is the same as the fee for the first sitting.
- 6.3. A fee is payable if a trainee wishes to appeal against a result in any component of the MRCGP (see [Section 16](#)). This fee will normally be refunded if the appeal is successful. The Appeals Policy contains full details, including administrative charges, and is available on the website. [Read the Appeals Policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 6.4. There is an administrative charge if a trainee cancels a booking of the AKT, RCA or SCA (see [Section 7](#)). Trainees are referred to the Cancellation Policy published on the website. [Read the Cancellation and Refund Policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 6.5. The current schedule of fees is published on the website. Read about fees on the [RCGP website.](#)

## 7. Cancellations and refunds

- 7.1. The RCGP's policy on cancellations and refunds is published on the website. [Read the Cancellation and Refund Policy](#)
- 7.2. Trainees who wish to withdraw from a sitting of the AKT, SCA or RCA must inform the RCGP in writing, by email at [exams@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:exams@rcgp.org.uk). Hard copy correspondence sent by post will not be accepted. A cancellation fee may be incurred.
- 7.3. If a trainee cancels an examination due to a pregnancy-related condition, provided appropriate medical evidence is supplied, the RCGP may refund the examination fee minus a cancellation charge.
- 7.4. If a trainee cancels an examination and there are mitigating circumstances, provided supporting evidence is supplied within the timeframe stipulated within the MRCGP Examination Cancellation and Refund Policy, the RCGP has discretion to refund some of the examination fee, minus a cancellation charge.

## 8. Reasonable adjustments

- 8.1. Trainees sitting any component of the MRCGP who have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are entitled to request reasonable adjustments to the examination. The RCGP is committed to delivering reasonable adjustments, to ensure no trainee is disadvantaged.
- 8.2. The RCGP reasonable adjustment policy sets out the process for making an application for a reasonable adjustment for examinations set and assessed by the RCGP. The policy is published on the website. [Read the reasonable adjustments policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 8.3. Trainees should refer to the RCGP webpage on Reasonable Adjustments for information about Reasonable Adjustments for Workplace Based Assessment (WPBA). [Read the Reasonable Adjustments webpage.](#)
- 8.4. It is the responsibility of the RCGP to make reasonable adjustments to any aspect of the delivery of the examination that places the trainee at a disadvantage compared to a non-disabled trainee, provided this does not affect the competence standard(s) being assessed.
- 8.5. Where a reasonable adjustment is required to enable the trainee to perform a consultation in the workplace, it is not the responsibility of the RCGP to make such an adjustment. Trainees should liaise with the GP training practice or their employer regarding such adjustments.
- 8.6. Trainees who want to request reasonable adjustments for the AKT or SCA can submit their request to the RCGP at any point upon entering training. The last date for submitting reasonable adjustment requests for each examination day or diet will be published on the RCGP website and will not be less than 15 working days before the examination booking window opens.
- 8.7. Once approved, most reasonable adjustments will apply to all subsequent sittings of the applicable component unless there is a change to trainee requirements, and these are notified to RCGP.
- 8.8. A separate Request for Reasonable Adjustment form must be completed for each component. Trainees must provide details of their diagnosis, explain how the diagnosis would potentially impact on performance on their examination, and detail what adjustments are being requested that might overcome that disadvantage.

[View the MRCGP AKT Request for Reasonable Adjustment form on the RCGP website](#)

[View the MRCGP SCA Request for Reasonable Adjustment form on the RCGP website](#)

- 8.9. The application form must be accompanied by appropriate supporting evidence. Details of suitable evidence are provided in the Reasonable Adjustments Policy. [Read the reasonable adjustments policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 8.10. The form and supporting evidence must be submitted electronically. Hard copies sent by post will not be accepted.
- 8.11. Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Trainees will be informed in writing whether adjustments to examination procedures will be made, and of the nature of those adjustments. Appeals against decisions regarding reasonable adjustments should be made in writing, addressed to the Chief Examiner, and emailed to [exams@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:exams@rcgp.org.uk). Hard copies sent by post will not be accepted.
- 8.12. Information and evidence about a trainee's disability and requirement for reasonable adjustments will be treated as sensitive personal information. It will be kept confidential and only passed to those who need to know. In some cases, this may include the decision makers (in the case of an appeal) or the examiners.
- 8.13. Pearson VUE test centres, used for the AKT, vary in their ability to accommodate trainees who require particular adjustments, and therefore there may be some restrictions on the choice of AKT examination centre for trainees with some impairments.

## 9. Mitigating circumstances

- 9.1. Mitigating circumstances are serious, unforeseen, unpreventable events that significantly affect trainee performance.

For details of mitigating circumstances in the AKT and SCA [read the Mitigating Circumstances Policy on the RCGP website.](#)

For details of mitigating circumstances in the RCA [read Section 4 - Mitigating Circumstances of the RCA Policy](#)

- 9.2. All trainees who present themselves for an MRCGP examination are deemed fit to take the examination and are required to submit a declaration to that effect as part of the registration process on the day.
- 9.3. All reports of mitigating circumstances must be submitted to the RCGP's examinations team as soon as the circumstances arise or as soon as possible thereafter and no later than 48 hours after the examination takes place. The only exception is where the trainee can demonstrate that they were unaware of the mitigating circumstances at the time of the examination.
- 9.4. A [RCGP Mitigating Circumstances Form](#) must be completed, supported by compelling and independent, written evidence of the mitigating circumstances, and emailed to [exams@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:exams@rcgp.org.uk). Hard copies sent by post will not be accepted. Mitigating circumstances for reasons of illness must be supported by a medical certificate and any other relevant information.
- 9.5. No report of mitigating circumstances, submitted after the publication of results, will be considered unless the trainee can provide compelling and independent evidence that they were unable, for whatever reason, to make the RCGP aware of them at an earlier stage.
- 9.6. If an application for mitigating circumstances is refused the trainee may make a complaint to the RCGP using the complaints procedure contained in Section 16 of these Regulations.

[Read Section 16: Feedback and Complaints, and Appeals.](#)

## 10. Pregnancy

- 10.1. There are a number of sittings of the AKT, SCA and RCA examinations. Pregnant trainees should plan to take an examination in sufficient time before or after their due date.
- 10.2. If a trainee has booked a sitting of the AKT, SCA or RCA and subsequently develops pregnancy-related problems or illness close to the date of the examination, or is in sufficient discomfort on the day of the examination to believe that their condition will have a detrimental effect on performance, the trainee should withdraw from the sitting and, as soon as possible thereafter, submit a medical certificate to the RCGP Examinations Team. In these circumstances the RCGP may refund some of the fee minus a standard cancellation fee.
- 10.3. Pregnant trainees may request reasonable adjustments for the AKT and SCA. The application process is identical to all other reasonable adjustment applications and supporting evidence will be required. Additional time is not granted as standard and is based on individual trainee needs.

# 11. Conduct of examinations

11.1. All trainees, examination officials, invigilators and medical practitioners involved in the delivery of a component of the MRCGP are required to adhere to the Misconduct Policy or Code of Conduct as appropriate to that component.

11.2. Trainees must comply with the MRCGP Misconduct Policy in respect to examination components set and assessed by the RCGP:

- Applied Knowledge Test (AKT)
- Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA)

Examples of misconduct and possible penalties are included within this policy.

This is available on the RCGP website. [Read the MRCGP Examination Misconduct Policy and Procedure for AKT and SCA.](#)

11.3. When sitting the AKT or SCA candidates must also comply with instructions on the conduct of examinations given on arrival at examination centres/accessing the examination platform and provided by invigilators.

11.4. Trainees taking the RCA must comply with the conduct as specified within Section 2: Taking the RCA of the Recorded Consultation Assessment Policy.

The RCA Policy is available on the RCGP website. [Read the RCA Policy on the RCGP website.](#)

11.5. All users of the RCGP Candidate Portfolio must comply with the RCGP's Candidate Portfolio and Workplace Based Assessment (WPBA): Code of Conduct for All Users.

Examples of unacceptable conduct and possible penalties are included within this policy.

This code of conduct is available on the RCGP website. [Read the WPBA code of conduct, RCGP Candidate Portfolio and Workplace Based Assessment \(WPBA\): Code of Conduct for All Users on the RCGP website](#)

11.6. As a condition of entering any component of the MRCGP trainees must agree not to disclose examination material.



# AKT

## Before an AKT

- 11.7. AKT trainees must arrive at the examination centre at the time specified by the RCGP. Trainees who arrive late will not be permitted to take the examination and will not normally be able to claim a refund of fees.
- 11.8. Where morning and afternoon sittings of the AKT take place on the same day at the same examination centre, morning trainees will be required to remain at the examination centre until released by the invigilators/duty marshals.
- 11.9. Trainees will be asked to provide officials at examination centres with proof of identity. The specific requirements for identification documents are set out in the AKT section of the RCGP website and in the email confirming an application to sit an examination. Original, documentary evidence of name changes must be provided - a marriage certificate, for example. If proof cannot be provided that meets the specific requirements, the trainee will not be permitted to take the examination and may forfeit their application fee. [View the AKT identity requirements.](#)

## During an AKT

- 11.10. During examinations and when entering and leaving examination centres, trainees must not communicate with anyone except officials directly involved in administering/delivering the examination.
- 11.11. Ahead of the examination trainees will receive detailed instructions on what may be brought into the room where the examination will take place, and on how to conduct themselves during the examination. The examination centres are all covered by CCTV.

## After an AKT

- 11.12. Examination material relating to the MRCGP is confidential and copyright and subject to non-disclosure requirements. It must not be placed on the internet or passed to or discussed with any unauthorised individual under any circumstances except with the express, written permission of the RCGP. Trainees who are found to have infringed these requirements will be penalised in accordance with the guidance on misconduct set out below.



# SCA


## Before the SCA

- 11.13. SCA trainees must log on to the examination platform by the time specified by the RCGP. Trainees who arrive late will not be permitted to take the examination and will not normally be able to claim a refund of fees.
- 11.14. Where morning and afternoon sittings of the SCA take place on the same day, morning trainees will be required to remain logged into the examination platform until released by the invigilators.
- 11.15. Trainees will be asked to provide invigilators with photographic proof of identity. The specific requirements for identification documents are set out in the SCA section of the RCGP website and in the email confirming an application to sit an examination. Original, documentary evidence of name changes must be provided - a marriage certificate, for example. If proof cannot be provided that meets the specific requirements, the trainee will not be permitted to take the examination and may forfeit their application fee.

## During the SCA

- 11.16. During examinations and when entering and leaving the examination environment, trainees must not communicate with anyone except officials directly involved in administering/delivering the examination.
- 11.17. Ahead of the examination trainees will receive detailed instructions on what may be brought into the room where the examination will take place, and on how to conduct themselves during the examination.
- 11.18. Trainees should note that the examination is being recorded throughout for quality control, security and marking purposes. The examination or contents must not be recorded or saved in any other way by the candidate. Violations of examination security may also be recorded and used as evidence in any subsequent action.

## After the SCA

- 11.19. Examination material relating to the MRCGP is confidential and copyright and subject to non-disclosure requirements. It must not be placed on the internet or passed to or discussed with any unauthorised individual under any circumstances except with the express, written permission of the RCGP. Trainees who are found to have infringed these requirements will be penalised in accordance with the guidance on misconduct set out below.
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## RCA

- 11.20. Trainees must ensure that patients consent to the recording of the consultation, and that GDPR guidance is adhered to for each consultation.
- 11.21. Although recordings are of real consultations, the RCA is an examination and appropriate aspects of examination conditions apply. The trainee may make use of the normal resources available during a consultation but must not have advice, support or coaching from any third party during the consultation.
- 11.22. Trainees must not share the uploaded recordings of their RCA submissions or potential submissions with anyone outside their own Training Programme.
- 11.23. The use of any service to screen cases prior to submission to the RCA is expressly prohibited as this is not included in patient consent and the process would therefore be in breach of General Data Protection Regulations.
- 11.24. The recordings submitted must be real consultations; it is not permissible to 'stage' a consultation with someone who is not a real patient or to record a consultation including any element which has previously been rehearsed. Individual consultations must be recorded continuously; the camera should not be turned off during the consultation and the recording must not be edited.

## WPBA

- 11.25. The use of dictation software to write entries within the Candidate Portfolio is permissible, however the content must be the candidate's original work.
- 11.26. Fraudulent misuse of the Candidate Portfolio is an extremely serious offence. This would include any form of impersonation and making entries that are deliberately misleading or malicious, particularly those that relate to assessments.
- 11.27. All allegations of misconduct and fraudulent misuse will be dealt with in accordance with the Deanery's Misconduct Procedures.



## Allegations of trainee misconduct during an assessment<sup>3</sup>

- 11.28. When misconduct is alleged during an examination the trainee will normally be allowed to complete that examination. A record of the allegation will be made by the invigilator, and a copy subsequently given to the trainee.
- 11.29. Results will be withheld whilst allegations of misconduct are investigated.
- 11.30. The Head of Examinations will collect evidence relating to the allegation. Allegations will not continue to be investigated where they lack substance or appear, upon investigation, to be malicious.
- 11.31. Where a case of misconduct is established which appears to be isolated or minor, the matter may be dealt with by the Head of Examinations. In all other cases, a misconduct panel will be convened. When a panel is convened all relevant parties, including the trainee, will be invited to comment on the evidence collected by the Head of Examinations.
- 11.32. Panels will have at least three members, none of whom will have been involved in the original examination process. They will conduct their business in accordance with the MRCGP Misconduct Policy and Procedure for AKT and SCA
- 11.33. Allegations of misconduct will normally be considered based on paper evidence only and oral hearings will not be held.
- 11.34. The panel will make its decision on the balance of probabilities. The decision will be communicated to the trainee in writing, with reasons, as soon as is reasonably possible and normally no more than six weeks after receipt of the allegation.

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<sup>3</sup> Most, but not all, of the Regulations in this section relate only to the AKT and SCA components of the MRCGP.



11.35. The panel may impose one or more of the following sanctions or any other sanction as it sees fit:

- formal written warning if a further offence is committed a more serious penalty may be applied
- withholding or annulling results for a particular examination
- withholding or annulling results for all examinations attempted
- being barred from taking an examination or examinations for a specified or indefinite period
- referral to the General Medical Council.

11.36. Depending on the circumstances the RCGP reserves the right to inform the deanery of any case of alleged misconduct proven or otherwise.

11.37. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to inform the police.



## 12. Marking

- 12.1. The three components of the MRCGP are marked/assessed in different ways.
- 12.2. The marks/outcomes of all three components are received and considered by the host deanery at the end of each year of training and at the end of training.
- 12.3. Confirmation that a trainee has reached the standard required for independent practice is ultimately the responsibility of the deanery's GP director. To fulfil this responsibility the deanery will set up a panel to consider the candidate's results. The panel will be composed in accordance with the Guide to Postgraduate Specialty Training: "*The Gold Guide*". [Read "The Gold Guide" on COPMeD's website.](#)


### AKT

- 12.4. The AKT is a computer-based examination. Marks are generated electronically. Trainees are awarded one mark for each question answered correctly. There is no negative marking.

### SCA

- 12.5. The SCA is an examiner-marked examination, and a trained RCGP examiner marks each case/consultation following the examination day. A different examiner is assigned to each case, resulting in 12 examiners contributing to the overall mark. Examiners do not participate in the consultations.

### RCA

- 12.6. The RCA is an examiner-marked examination, and a trained RCGP examiner marks each case/consultation. A different examiner is assigned to each case. Examiners do not participate in the consultations.
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## WPBA

- 12.7. Trainees are responsible for completing assessments throughout training. All assessors need to be compliant with the GMC regulations for assessors. Guidance on who can complete assessments can be found on the RCGP website. Read 'Who can complete workplace-based assessments'.
- 12.8. The educational supervisor conducts regular, structured reviews of candidate progress, normally every six months. Deaneries undertake annual reviews of competency progression on all candidates, full time and flexible, in accordance with the requirements of the *Gold Guide*.
- 12.9. The educational supervisor makes a recommendation to the deanery on whether the trainee has reached the necessary standard within the planned period of training. A deanery panel review also takes place at the end of training and recommends whether the trainee can proceed to their Certificate of Completion of Training CCT, in accordance with the requirements of the *Gold Guide*. Trainees who cannot proceed will discuss the implications of further training with their deanery.

# 13. Results

## Notification of results

- 13.1. Results for the AKT, SCA and RCA will be published by the RCGP, in accordance with published timescales, via each candidate's Portfolio. Results are also issued to the trainee's host deanery.
- 13.2. Examinations Team staff are not permitted to discuss results with individual trainees.

## Feedback

- 13.3. All trainees are given feedback on each component of the examination, in a form consistent with the purpose of the examination component.
- 13.4. Deaneries are provided with feedback on the performance of individual trainees training in their deanery. Anonymised and statistical information on trainees' performance may be made available to other organisations and published.

### AKT

- 13.5. Individual feedback, with comparative data, is given on performance in each of the three key subject areas. General descriptions about the areas causing difficulty for trainees overall are also published on the AKT examinations website and shared with deaneries.

### SCA/RCA

- 13.6. Quantitative and qualitative feedback is given to all trainees. For trainees for whom fitness to practise concerns are raised, more specific feedback from individual examiners may be made available.

### WPBA

- 13.7. WPBA is a process of continuous assessment and feedback. A trainee's educational supervisor is ultimately responsible for the provision of feedback in this component.



## Currency of Passes

- 13.8. In accordance with the GMC's expectations about the currency of national professional examinations, AKT, SCA, RCA and CSA passes are valid for seven calendar years from the date when the assessment was undertaken. The seven-year currency rule applies to all trainees, whether the trainee has been in training on a continuous basis or has left and then re-joined the training programme. The College may, however, apply the rule flexibly to a particular cohort in some circumstances.
- 13.9. **AKT trainees impacted by Covid-19:** Any trainee (which includes TGPT, LTFT and those on maternity leave) who were in ST2 or ST3 between 18 March 2020 and 3 August 2021, and whose training may therefore have been affected by the pandemic will have had the currency of their AKT examination extended from 7 years to 7 years and 6 months.
- 13.10. **CSA or RCA trainees impacted by Covid-19:** Any trainee (which includes TGPT, LTFT and those on maternity leave) who were in ST3 between 18 March 2020 and 3 August 2021, and whose training may therefore have been affected by the pandemic will have had the currency of their CSA, RCA or SCA examination extended from 7 years to 7 years and 6 months.

## 14. Unsuccessful examination attempts

- 14.1. The roles of trainers, royal colleges, and deaneries in the management of trainees who do not meet the required standard are described in detail in the *Gold Guide*.
- 14.2. Trainees who do not pass the AKT, SCA or RCA are entitled to make further attempts during training, subject to eligibility requirements as set out in Section 5 of these Regulations. [Read Section 5: Making an application to take the MRCGP.](#)
- 14.3. Where a lack of success in any component of the MRCGP identifies poor performance, the educational supervisor and deanery may:
  - arrange for the training programme to be extended and/or
  - revise the training and examination programme to address areas of underperformance and provide additional support or
  - recommend that the trainee should not pursue a career in general practice.
- 14.4. A deanery may seek the advice of the RCGP on whether additional training and examination is appropriate.
- 14.5. Failure to meet the required standard of a very serious nature, raising concerns about a trainee's fitness to practise, may be referred to the GMC.
- 14.6. Trainees who do not pass one or more components may have a right of appeal. This is to the deanery for WPBA and to the RCGP for the AKT, SCA or RCA. Trainees are referred to the Appeals Policy published on the website. [Read the Appeals Policy on the RCGP website](#) and [Section 16: Feedback, Complaints and Appeals of these Regulations.](#)

## 15. Quality control

- 15.1. The RCGP oversees the delivery and quality control of the MRCGP. Best practice standard-setting techniques are used to ensure that pass/fail levels are applied equitably and rigorously.

## Examiners and role-players

- 15.2. RCGP examiners are formally recruited and trained and regularly re-trained in examination techniques and equality, diversity, and inclusion. Their performance is continually monitored and reviewed.
- 15.3. Any role-players used are trained both generically and in preparation for each SCA case so that they deliver a standardised examination. They also receive training in equality, diversity, and inclusion. Their performance is monitored and reviewed by experienced examiners and role-player quality assurers.
- 15.4. Examination outcome statistics are used to quality assure cases, examiners, and role-players.

## Data review

- 15.5. The RCGP reviews trainee performance data, misconduct cases, complaints, appeals, and equal opportunities monitoring data and publishes an annual report.

## AKT

- 15.6. A standard setting process takes place after each examination sitting and regular modified Angoff meetings ensure the standard is maintained over time. Trainees may be asked to complete questionnaires assessing the impact of the AKT examination on training.




## SCA

- 15.7. A standard setting process takes place after each examination sitting. Trainees may be asked to complete questionnaires assessing the impact of the SCA on training.
- 15.8. All examiners attend mandatory training events and receive case specific training and standardisation prior to examining in each diet.
- 15.9. All examinations are recorded, and examiners are subject to a stringent quality assurance process including training, standardisation, and continual quantitative and qualitative feedback on performance. This is led by a panel of Lead Examiners and a Senior Lead Examiner.

## RCA

- 15.10. A standard setting process takes place after each examination sitting. Trainees may be asked to complete questionnaires assessing the impact of the RCA on training.
- 15.11. Examiners are subject to a stringent quality assurance process, which includes training, standardisation, and continual quantitative and qualitative feedback on performance.

## WPBA

- 15.12. The RCGP reviews deanery panels annually to ensure the requirements as set out in the *Gold Guide* are followed. In addition, the RCGP quality assurance external assessors review a sample of Portfolios and feedback to the relevant deaneries.
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# 16. Feedback, Complaints, and Appeals

## Feedback and Complaints


- 16.1. A complaint relates to the administration or conduct of an examination where the trainee feels that RCGP have failed to do something expected or done something that leaves them feeling dissatisfied and where there is no intention, as part of the complaint, to query the result of the assessment.
- 16.2. The RCGP's policy on Examination feedback and complaints is published on the website. [Read the Examination Feedback and Complaints Policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 16.3. Feedback and complaints relating to the AKT, SCA and RCA components of the MRCGP should be made to the RCGP. Feedback and complaints relating to WPBA should be made to the relevant deanery.
- 16.4. A complaint should be made within 10 days of the event concerned, or within 10 days of becoming aware that there is cause for concern.
- 16.5. Formal complaints must be submitted in writing using the RCGP Complaint Form. The form should be emailed to [exams@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:exams@rcgp.org.uk). Hard copies sent by post will not be accepted. There is no fee for making a complaint. [Access the RCGP Complaint form on the RCGP website.](#)
- 16.6. Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within 10 working days and the trainee will be given a date guide for a formal response.
- 16.7. A trainee who is not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint may request an independent review. The Complaints policy sets out how to request an independent review. The decision of the independent review is final. There is no fee for requesting an independent review.
- 16.8. Trainees will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination because of making a complaint.

## Appeals


- 16.9. An appeal is a request for a review of a decision of the RCGP to fail or disqualify a trainee in a component of the MRCGP. No appeal will be considered solely on the grounds that the trainee wishes to challenge the academic judgment of the examiners or where the candidate did not understand or was unaware of the Examination Regulations.

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- 16.10. The RCGP's Appeals Policy is published on the website. [Read the MRCGP Appeals Policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 16.11. Appeals relating to the AKT, SCA or RCA components of the MRCGP must be made to the RCGP, and must be lodged by the trainee, not a third party. Appeals relating to WPBA must be made to the deanery. All deaneries operate an appeals system in accordance with the *Gold Guide*.
- 16.12. There are three stages of appeal dependent on the nature of the assessment and the relevant decision:
- Stage 1 – Review of examination result (AKT and SCA only)
  - Stage 2 – Appeal (AKT, RCA and SCA)
  - Stage 3 – Independent Appeal Review.
- 16.13. Separate appeals must be made if a trainee wishes to appeal against failure in more than one component of the MRCGP. There are administrative fees for the different stages of appeal, and trainees are referred to Appendix 2 of the Appeal policy for more details. [Read the Appeals Policy on the RCGP website.](#)
- 16.14. Requests for appeals must be submitted using the correct form and with supporting evidence. The form and supporting evidence must be emailed to [exams@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:exams@rcgp.org.uk). Hard copies sent by post will not be accepted. The request for appeal forms are available on the RCGP website. [Access the appeal forms on the RCGP website.](#)
- 16.15. A Stage 1 Review of an examination result is applicable for both the AKT and SCA examination and is a clerical check for errors in the examination process, including in the calculation or collation of marks and grades and correcting any errors that are identified.
- 16.16. A Stage 1 Review must be requested within 10 working days of the publication of the result of the examination to which the request relates.
- 16.17. The outcome of the Stage 1 Review will be reported to the trainee within 28 days of the receipt of the request and payment of fees.
- 16.18. A Stage 2 Appeal is applicable for trainees who wish to appeal either in relation to the AKT, SCA or RCA examination. The stage 2 Appeal can be made against:
- the outcome of a Stage 1 Review of Examination Result (AKT and SCA)
  - the decision of the RCGP to fail a trainee in an examination of the MRCGP (AKT, SCA and RCA)
  - the decision of RCGP to disqualify a trainee and annul their examination outcome because of an examination misconduct investigation.
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- 16.19. A Stage 2 Appeal must be requested within 10 working days of the publication of the result of the examination to which the request relates, or 28 days from the outcome of a Stage 1 Review of Examination Result (AKT and SCA).
- 16.20. The outcome of the Stage 2 Review will be reported to the trainee within 45 days of the receipt of the request and payment of fees.
- 16.21. A Stage 3 Independent Appeal Review is the final avenue of the appeal and only available following the outcome of the Stage 2 Appeal.
- 16.22. A request for a Stage 3 Independent Appeal Review can only be made on the basis that the RCGP has not followed its own appeals policy in handling the initial appeal.
- 16.23. A Stage 3 Independent Appeal Review must be requested within 15 working days of the outcome of a Stage 2 Appeal.
- 16.24. The outcome of the Stage 3 Independent Appeal Review will be reported to the trainee within 15 working days of the Independent Appeal Panel being convened.
- 16.25. Once the outcome has been communicated to the trainee the RCGP will not enter any further correspondence regarding the appeal.



## 17. Compliance with equality, diversity and inclusion legislation

- 17.1. The RCGP is committed to promoting and developing equality, diversity, and inclusion in all its work. It aims to have policies and ways of working that are fair to all individuals and groups. The RCGP conducts Equality Impact assessments (EIAs) for all new and updated policies, and processes.
  - 17.2. The RCGP collects data on MRCGP applicants and analyses MRCGP results in relation to equal opportunities monitoring variables.
  - 17.3. MRCGP examiners and Examinations Team staff are trained in equality, diversity, and inclusion.
  - 17.4. The RCGP will consider reasonable adjustments for trainees with disabilities taking the AKT, SCA and RCA. Information about reasonable adjustments can be found in Section 8 of these regulations. [Read Section 8: Reasonable Adjustments.](#)
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## 18. Organisations involved in the monitoring and delivery of the MRCGP


- 18.1. A number of organisations have a role in the management and oversight of the MRCGP, as well as the RCGP.

### The RCGP

- 18.2. The RCGP has developed the MRCGP in accordance with the GMC's standards for postgraduate curricula. [Read Excellence by design: standards for postgraduate curricula on the GMC's website.](#)
- 18.3. Medical practitioners training in general practice must register with the RCGP at the start of their training programme. The RCGP will give them information about the MRCGP and how to apply to take the three components.
- 18.4. The RCGP has overall responsibility for the administration and quality management of the MRCGP. Workplace based assessment (WPBA) is administered locally by postgraduate deaneries and quality managed jointly by the RCGP and deaneries.
- 18.5. The RCGP is responsible for recommending to the GMC that a medical practitioner who has undertaken specialty training and completed the MRCGP has reached the standard required for independent practice as a GP in the UK and should be issued with a CCT or CEGPR.

### Postgraduate deaneries

- 18.6. Alongside the RCGP, the deaneries have several important roles in the MRCGP process.
- 18.7. They fund and manage training locally.
- 18.8. They recruit trainees for specialty training programmes. They are responsible for providing trainees with full details of all three components of the MRCGP and must inform applicants offered a place on a training programme of the need to register with the RCGP and apply to take the MRCGP.
- 18.9. They are responsible for the delivery of the WPBA component of the MRCGP. The RCGP and deaneries, together, quality manage this component. Deaneries notify the RCGP when a trainee has successfully completed WPBA and is ready to apply for a CCT.

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- 18.10. They select and train GP trainers on behalf of the GMC and in accordance with GMC and RCGP standards.
  - 18.11. They set up and manage end-of-year and end-of-programme panels to consider trainee progress through training and whether training programmes need to be revised and/or extended.
  - 18.12. More information on deaneries is available on the websites of COPMeD and COGPED. [Access the COPMeD website.](#) [Access the COGPED website.](#)

## The GMC

- 18.13. The GMC regulates specialty training UK-wide, setting standards for entry to training and for training, trainers, curricula, and assessment.
- 18.14. It formally approves the structure and content of specialty training programmes and assessment systems, such as the MRCGP.
- 18.15. On the recommendation of the RCGP the GMC issues CCTs and CEGPRs in general practice.

## The Department of Health

- 18.16. The Department publishes a guide to specialty training known as A Guide to Postgraduate Specialty Training: “*The Gold Guide*” which provides guidance for all specialties on the monitoring of progress through training and the processes that should be in place for failing trainees. [Read The Gold Guide on the COPMeD website.](#)
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