



Royal College of
General Practitioners

MRCGP Examination Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure

MRCGP Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure v2.0
August 2023

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	August 2016	Exams team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New policy.
2.0	August 2023	Head of Examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Policy updated to reflect the introduction of the Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA).

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 Regulations for medical practitioners training for a CCT in General Practice	3.0	August 2023
MRCGP Mitigating Circumstances form	2.0	August 2023
MRCGP Examination Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure	2.0	August 2023

Introduction


1. This policy applies to the following examination components of the MRCGP that are set and assessed by the RCGP:
 - Applied Knowledge Test (AKT)
 - Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA).
2. RCGP are committed to developing a process that, as far as possible, will:
 - be practical and manageable
 - support the validity and reliability of results,
 - maintain standards.
2. Mitigating circumstances are serious, unforeseen, unpreventable events that significantly affect trainee performance.
3. Before the SCA examination date it is the trainee's responsibility, in accordance with the published specification for this examination, to ensure that:
 - IT facilities, including data connectivity are adequate
 - there is a suitable quiet and undisturbed location
 - relevant staff in the GP practice are informed of the examination date and time to prevent interruptions.

RCGP accepts no responsibility for a disrupted or curtailed examination. If a trainee fails to complete the SCA examination session this would still count as an attempt and no refund of the examination fee will be given.

Trainees are strongly advised to avail themselves of any on-boarding materials prior to the examination.

4. All trainees who present themselves for the AKT or SCA shall be 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.
5. The RCGP would normally expect a trainee who believed that their performance was likely to be affected by mitigating circumstances¹ arising *before* an examination to withdraw from that sitting and re-sit at a later date. Both the AKT and SCA can be taken more than once.

¹ For example illness or bereavement.

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6. Where mitigating circumstances arise *during* an examination which the trainee believes are having a material, detrimental effect on performance, the trainee would normally be expected to withdraw from the sitting and re-sit at a later date. Trainees wishing to proceed with a request for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account must submit a request using the mitigating circumstances form.
 7. If a trainee decides to proceed with an examination even though they believe that mitigating circumstances are having an effect on performance, then the mitigating circumstances must be reported to the invigilator who will complete a contemporaneous record and triage with the Examinations Team if necessary. Trainees that restart an examination should reconfirm that they are fit to continue with the examination. If the trainee wishes to proceed with a request for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account, the trainee must submit a request using the Mitigating Circumstances Form.
 8. All reports of mitigating circumstances must be submitted to the RCGP's Examinations Department as soon as the circumstances arise, or as soon as possible thereafter, and no later than 48 hours after the assessment takes place. The only exception is where the trainee was unaware of the mitigating circumstances at the time of the examination.
 9. A RCGP Mitigating Circumstances Form must be completed, and compelling and 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.
 10. 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.
 11. Trainees reporting mitigating circumstances *during* an examination will not normally be allowed any additional time to complete an examination unless an error of process on the part of the RCGP or test centre has denied them the full time to complete the examination.
 12. Where mitigating circumstances arise that affect a significant number of trainees² the Lead Examiner or invigilator supervising the examination will be responsible for deciding what action to take and will provide a written report to the Examinations Department.

² For example the evacuation of the building during the assessment.



13. All reports of mitigating circumstances will be considered by the Head of Examinations or the Chief Examiner, or a nominated deputy, who may consult others as they see fit. Records of any mitigating circumstances submitted in respect of other examinations may be used to inform the decision-making process.
14. Mitigating circumstances will not result in additional marks being awarded. However, trainees who report mitigating circumstances that are accepted by the RCGP may, have the fees for a re-sit waived, and/or be assisted in taking a re-sit and/or be permitted to take the AKT and SCA once more in the six-month period immediately following completion of training.
15. If an application for mitigating circumstances is refused the trainee may complain to the college using the Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure.