

March 2022 FRCEM SBA exam results FAQs

9 June 2022

Q. What has happened?

A. A fault with our examination system affected the results of the March 2022 FRCEM SBA examinations, leading to 50 candidates incorrectly being told that they had passed the exam.

Q. How did this happen?

A. The error occurred due to a fault with our exam management system. There is no question of psychometric error.

Q: Have you let the affected candidates know?

A: On Monday 16 May, we informed all the candidates who were affected by the fault and offered our sincere apologies. This was obviously extremely disappointing news, and we are doing everything that we can to support them. We have also contacted all the candidates who sat the exam, but whose result was not affected by the fault.

Q. How is the College supporting the affected candidates?

A. We understand that this is extremely disappointing news for the affected candidates, and we are doing everything we can to put it right. The series of steps we are taking to support them are:

- A special additional diet of the FRCEM SBA has been arranged to allow candidates to retake the examination as soon as possible. The examination fee for this will be waived and we will cover all reasonable travel expenses
- The examination fee and reasonable travel expenses for the March 2022 FRCEM SBA will also be reimbursed to all 50 affected candidates.
- We are in contact with the General Medical Council (GMC) and Heads of School to determine how we can further mitigate impact on those affected.

Q: Will you be sending the affected candidates confirmation of their correct examination results?

A: Candidates have received formal confirmation of their correct examination results, as well as a full explanation of the process by which results are usually calculated.

Q. Who have you reported this incident to?

A. We have been in contact with the General Medical Council, who regulate our provision of examinations and the Charity Commission about this incident. The College and the GMC are now working together to rectify the error and going forward, the GMC will be supporting us with additional assurance of our processes. We will continue to work closely with them to ensure that this type of incident does not happen again. We have also been in touch with the Charity Commission, the charity regulator to let them know about the issue.



Q. Is there a risk to patient safety due to the incorrect exam results being issued?

A. No, we do not believe there to be immediate risk to patient safety. The FRECM SBA examination forms part of the programme of assessment for Emergency Medicine training which typically takes seven years to complete, after originally becoming qualified as a doctor. Prior to achieving their Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) in Emergency Medicine, trainees must pass the MRCEM examinations, a FRCEM OSCE and receive a successful outcome at Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP), which considers workplace-based assessments, among other factors. Any concerns relating to patient safety will be addressed via the ARCP process.

Q. Has this affected any other exams?

A: This incident only impacts the March 2022 FRCEM SBA examination.

Q. What are you doing to make sure this doesn't happen again?

A. We recognise that it is essential that we put in place measures to ensure that a situation like this does not happen again. We have already identified what went wrong in this case and rectified the problem. In addition, we have launched a full review of our examination processes, working alongside the GMC. We are also commissioning a full, independent external review of our exams operations; we will provide updates on this in due course.