



Appeals Procedure for MRCEM and FRCEM Exams

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1.0 Introduction

A candidate who has attempted exams of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine may, in the circumstances outlined below, have the right of appeal against the exam outcome. Candidates who make a complaint or appeal in good faith will not be disadvantaged in current or future exams. Candidates should feel able to lodge an appeal secure in the knowledge that it will be fairly investigated.

The sole grounds for appeal are:

- a. There is evidence of a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the exam (including administrative error) that has led to an adverse effect on the candidate's performance.
- b. There were exceptional circumstances that adversely affected the candidate's exam performance.

Appeals will not be granted on the grounds that a candidate:

- c. Was not aware of or did not understand the exam regulations
- d. Considers that his or her efforts were under-marked
- e. Seeks to question the academic or professional judgement of the examiners

1.1 Requested Appeal Outcomes

The outcome of an appeal which may be requested by a candidate are as follows:

- a. A full or partial refund of the exam fee.
- b. The exam attempt to be discounted from the candidate's exam history.
- c. Only in cases where the candidate has submitted an appeal on the grounds specified in regulation 1.0a, a procedural irregularity, **and** where the candidate is deemed to be a borderline fail (namely within one standard error of measurement from the final pass mark) that the exam result be amended from a fail to a pass.

1.2 Ill Health and Exceptional Circumstances

Candidates presenting for an exam are deemed fit and healthy to do so. Candidates who become unwell during the course of an exam should notify the Senior Invigilator immediately and provide supporting medical documentation to the Head of Exams within ten working days.

Candidates unable to attend an exam as a result of exceptional circumstances are advised to notify the Head of Exams prior to the exam date. If this is not possible, candidates must notify the Head of Exams within three working days of the exam date. Failure to do so may adversely affect the outcome of any subsequent appeal.



1.3 Candidates considering an application to re-sit the exam

It is a matter for the candidate to determine whether to re-take an exam prior to the exhaustion of the appeal process. Candidates are advised to follow the normal application procedure should they wish to re-sit an exam. The College cannot guarantee the outcome of the appeals process will be known prior to the date of the next exam.

If, having submitted an appeal, a candidate chooses to re-sit and then passes the exam before the appeal has been determined, the appeal will automatically be considered terminated.

2.0 The Preliminary Procedure

A candidate wishing to submit an appeal must do so within 20 working days of the publication of their results on the College website. The submission must include full details of the grounds for appeal and all supporting documentation the candidate wishes to be considered, together with the requested outcome as listed in regulation 1.1 above.

Appeals should be submitted via [this online form](#). If you cannot contact or complete this online form, please email exampolicy@rcem.ac.uk.

A fee of £250 must be submitted (by BACS bank transfer, bank details provided on request). The fee will be refunded if the appeal is successful. Once payment details have been provided, the appeal fee must be received within 3 working days. Failure to make payment will end the appeals process.

The Exam Policy Officer will, on receipt of an appeal, acknowledge receipt and collate all necessary documentary evidence. The Exam Policy Officer will present all details of the anonymised appeal to the College's Chief Examiner (or College's Dean if the Chief Examiner is directly involved in the appeal) who will initially consider the appeal.

If the Chief Examiner considers that the appeal falls outside of the permitted grounds for appeal, the appeal will be rejected, the appeal fee will not be refunded and the candidate will be notified by the Exam Policy Officer. This will mark the end of the appeals process, irrespective of whether there are further circumstances or evidence presented by the candidate.

3.0 Consideration by the Appeals Panel

If the Chief Examiner agrees that there are grounds for appeal, the full candidate's submission, and all available evidence, will be presented to an appeals panel for their consideration. Appeals panels typically take place on a monthly basis. The appeal will therefore be considered at the next available date. The voting panel will consist of:

- The Chief Examiner, who will act as the Chair of the Appeals Panel
- A Lead Examiner or College Officer
- An active Examiner
- A member of the Lay Advisory Group



The Dean will act as the Chair of the Appeals Panel when the Chief Examiner is unavailable.

The panel will be supported by the Exam Policy Officer (who will administer the panel) and Head of Exams, or their nominated deputy.

The candidate has the right to attend the panel and will be invited in advance by the Exam Policy Officer. Candidates attending their respective panel will be able to present their personal testimony, in support of their written submission. If a candidate wishes to attend the panel, their anonymity will be waived at the point when the written evidence is shared with the panel.

Candidates are not required to attend their respective appeals panel but they are entitled to be accompanied by one supporting attendee who should be identified ten working days in advance. The supporting attendee may advise, assist and counsel the candidate but will not be permitted to address the panel or take any part in proceedings.

The Panel will consider the appeal in accordance with the written documentation submitted and personal testimony (if available), along with any other evidence available. Further evidence and witness testimony may be requested by the panel in advance, and if attending the panel, the panel may ask the candidate for further context.

No member of the panel will have been involved in examining the candidate in the exam under appeal or have any other current or previous connection to the candidate. In such or other exceptional circumstances, if the Chief Examiner has any prior knowledge of the candidate or the exam in question, they may nominate a deputy to replace them on the Appeals Panel.

4.0 Outcome of the Appeals Panel

If the appeal is rejected, the candidate will be notified of the outcome and the reasons for the Panel's decision within ten working days. The panel's decision is final and there is no further appeals process.

If the appeal is fully or partially upheld, the candidate will be notified of the agreed outcome(s) in writing within ten working days.

In order to support candidates during the working week, we aim to share appeal outcomes from Mondays to Wednesday.

5.0 Referral to the Dean

In exceptional circumstances, the Panel may recommend a change in the exam result under section 1.1c. The anonymised case will be referred with a report and recommendation from the Chair for a final decision to the Dean, or in their absence, the Vice President (Education).

To make this recommendation, the Panel must be satisfied that had the candidate been able to complete the exam without the procedural irregularity, they would have passed.

The candidate will be informed of the Dean's decision within ten working days. The Dean's decision is final and there is no further appeals process.



6.0 Pre-emptive Appeal Outcomes

In certain circumstances where the College is made aware of substantial procedural irregularities, which have significantly affected the expected delivery of an exam, the Head of Exams may recommend the pre-emptive application of the following outcomes without the need for a candidate appeal:

- a. A full or partial refund of the exam fee.

and/or

- b. The exam attempt to be discounted from the candidate's exam history.

This will be considered by the Chief Examiner and Head of Exams in line with results processing, ratified during the relevant results sign off meeting, and communicated to candidates within ten working days of the publication of results.

Any candidates wishing to request further appeals outcomes must do so via the normal process outlined in this document.