INTRODUCTION

The Regulations which follow govern the content and conduct of the examinations leading to the award of the Fellowship or Diploma of the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Royal College of Anaesthetists. They specify:

- eligibility requirements;
- application procedures;
- limitations on the number of attempts;
- exam structure and marking systems
- Statement on Equality and Diversity;
- the requirement for guidance in the event of failure;
- procedures for making representations, complaints and appeals,
- Commendation and Prize criteria
- policies on electronic devices and mobile phones, misconduct, disability requests and candidate feedback

Edition Date: 18th January 2016
Replacing Edition Date: 1st August 2015

List of amendments/Revisions September 2013 – January 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of change</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 13</td>
<td>Paragraph 14 re-written to reflect Dress code, electronic devices/mobile phone and misconduct policies</td>
<td>Appendix 10 – Misconduct policy added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 13</td>
<td>Paragraph 10.3 – Guidance Interviews amended to include automatic offer of Guidance at the second attempt.</td>
<td>..at the second attempt will be offered a guidance interview. However interviews may be carried forward to be used at a later attempt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 14</td>
<td>Exam Commendation and Prize Paragraph 8.7 amended to reflect new policy for examination adjustments.</td>
<td>New criteria added at Appendix 3 Appendix 11 – Disability Policy added</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 14</td>
<td>New section 16 added.</td>
<td>Section 16 – Equality and Diversity statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Additional Educational Training at the 6th attempt</td>
<td>New paragraph 3.8 New appendix 12 (AET Form 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 15</td>
<td>Candidate Feedback Policy added.</td>
<td>New appendix 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>Paragraph 4 – amendment to prioritisation of applications.</td>
<td>Prioritisation amended to fit new eligibility categories Eligibility for FFPMRCA and DFMRC amended to categorise each type of applicant expected to apply for examinations.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Contact details:

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1 DEFINITIONS: TRAINING AND GENERAL 5
2 COMMENCEMENT AND REVOCATION 6
3 EXAMINATIONS 6
4 PRIORITISATION OF APPLICATIONS 8
5 ELIGIBILITY (FFPMRCA) 8
6 ELIGIBILITY (DFMRCA) 9
7 APPLICATION PROCEDURES 10
8 SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS 10
9 FELLOWSHIP BY EXAMINATION 11
10 FAILURES AND GUIDANCE 12
11 REPRESENTATIONS AND RE-CALCULATION 12
12 REVIEWS 13
13 APPEALS 14
14 DRESS CODE, ELECTRONIC DEVICES/MOBILE PHONES /MISCONDUCT AND CANDIDATE FEEDBACK 15
15 COMPLAINTS 16
16 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT 17

APPENDIX 1: The Structure of the Examination 19
APPENDIX 2: The Marking Systems 21
APPENDIX 3: Examination Commendation and Prize 22
APPENDIX 4: Dyslexic Candidates 23
APPENDIX 5: Examination Appeal Application Form 25
List of appendices continued overleaf...

**APPENDIX 6:** Appeal Panel: Notes for Chairman  
APPENDIX 7: Procedure for Appeal Hearings  
APPENDIX 8: Dress codes for examinations  
APPENDIX 9: Electronic devices and mobile phone policy  
APPENDIX 10: Misconduct Policy  
Appendix 11: Disability Policy  
Appendix 12: Additional Educational Training Form  
Appendix 13: Candidate Feedback Policy

Page 4 of 50
1  DEFINITIONS: TRAINING:

1.1 For the purpose of these regulations a trainee is someone who has received ‘approved training’ in the UK.

1.2 For the purpose of these regulations ‘approved training’ means training

1.2.1 which is part of a UK GMC approved programme of training in Anaesthesia and Pain Medicine.

1.2.2 which has been approved by the Royal College of Anaesthetists/Faculty of Pain Medicine.

1.2.3 which, in certain circumstances, has been approved as part of the Medical Training Initiative.

1.2.4 which is appropriate to the part of the examination for which the candidate is applying.

GENERAL:

1.3 The words and phrases in the left hand column below shall have the meanings assigned to them in the right hand column:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal</th>
<th>Has the meaning assigned to it in Regulation 13.1 of these Regulations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
<td>The Board of the Faculty of Pain Medicine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>The Royal College of Anaesthetists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>The Council of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>The Training and Examinations Director of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examiners</td>
<td>The Court of Examiners for the part of the examination to which a representation or appeal relates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty/FPM</td>
<td>The Faculty of Pain Medicine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>An appeal panel set up in accordance with Regulation 13.2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>Has the meaning assigned to it in Regulation 11.2 of these Regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Has the meaning attached to it in Regulation 12.2 of these Regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Clerk</td>
<td>A member of the College staff with responsibility for administering examination appeals.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2 COMMENCEMENT AND REVOCATION

2.1 These regulations shall come into force on 1st August 2015 and will apply to examinations commencing on or after that date.

2.2 These regulations are agreed by the Board of the Faculty of Pain Medicine and the Council of the Royal College of Anaesthetists and supersedes any previous regulations which are hereby revoked.

3 EXAMINATIONS

3.1 Sittings. The examination for the Fellowship of the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Royal College of Anaesthetists (FFPMRCA) will normally take place twice in each academic year. The Board may at any time decide, subject to adequate notice, to alter the number of sittings of the examination. Examinations will normally be held at the Royal College of Anaesthetists, 35 Red Lion Square, London.

3.2 Subject matter. The examination will be set according to the Pain Medicine and generic module of the CCT in Anaesthetics. The curriculum is based on spiral learning and each successive level of training builds on previous level(s). The examination therefore is based on the Basic, Intermediate, Higher and Advanced Pain Medicine training modules. The optional modules of the Advanced level of the curriculum, namely spinal cord stimulation, intrathecal drug delivery, cancer pain and paediatric pain medicine will not be examined as per the competencies of the individual options, however the examinee does require knowledge of these areas as described in the non-optional parts of the curriculum.

3.3 Examination structure, marking systems and prizes. The structure of the examination, together with details of the marking systems used and the prizes which may be awarded are described in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this regulatory document.

3.4 Format. The examination is divided into two sections taken on two separate days with an interval between the two:

- Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) paper.
- Structured Oral Examination (SOE).

3.5 Application. Candidates must apply for each section separately. The Examinations Calendar allows candidates who are successful at the MCQ to apply for the SOE at the same sitting (autumn or spring).

3.6 MCQ – Candidates must pass the MCQ paper before they can apply to sit the SOE. A pass in the MCQ paper will be valid for three years, after which time if the whole examination has not been passed, the MCQ must be re-taken.

3.7 Number of attempts. Candidates will be allowed six attempts at each section subject to remaining eligible under Regulations 5 and 6. Candidates will be required to provide
evidence of additional educational training for the sixth attempt at each section, see Regulation 3.8.

3.8 **Additional Educational Training.** In addition to remaining eligible under Regulations 5 or 6 as applicable, at the sixth attempt at any component of the FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA examinations, a candidate must provide evidence of additional educational experience/training as follows:

3.8.1 Prior to application for further attempts after the fifth attempt a candidate must:

Discuss their final attempt and suitability for Advanced Pain Medicine with their Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine. Their Regional Advisor must support a further attempt in writing through the submission of the ‘Additional Educational Training form; AET Form 1’ at Appendix 12.

The form must be submitted to the Director of Training and Examinations at the Faculty address, at least three months in advance of the date of the next intended sitting.

3.8.2 A candidate must attend a guidance interview before sitting at the final attempt of the SOE.

3.8.3 Re-application at the sixth attempt can only be made after a period of additional training which has been discuss and agreed by the Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine following consultation with the in-house anaesthetic/Pain Medicine Training team. A full training programme is mandatory and is set out on the form as follows:

I. Attendance/planned attendance at an FPM Tutorial held at the Faculty or similar event held locally.

II. Details of examination practice for the relevant component.

III. Details of further clinical exposure and training as discussed with the Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine which is appropriate to the relevant examination component.

4 **PRIORITISATION OF APPLICATIONS (FFPMRCA and DFPMRCA)**

4.1 Subject to their being eligible in all other respects to sit the examination, priority will be given to applicants as below. See Sections 5 and 6 for a detailed explanation of each eligibility criteria item:

5.1.5.1 (Approved programme trainees with FRCA)

6.1.4.1 (Approved programme trainees without FRCA)
4.2 The following applicants will be accepted, if the Faculty has the capacity to examine them. See Sections 5 and 6 for a detailed explanation of each eligibility criteria item:

5.1.5.2 (Post-CCT Trainee UK with FRCA)
5.1.5.3 (Post-CCT Trainee Overseas with FRCA)
5.1.5.4 (UK Consultants with FRCA)
5.1.5.5 (Overseas Consultants with both FRCA and UK training)
5.1.5.6 (Specialty/SAS Grade with FRCA)
5.1.5.7 (MTI trainee with FRCA)
6.1.4.2 (Post-CCT Trainee UK without FRCA)
6.1.4.3 (Post-CCT Trainee Overseas without FRCA)
6.1.4.4 (UK Consultants without FRCA)
6.1.4.5 (Specialty/SAS Grade without FRCA)
6.1.4.6 (MTI trainee without FRCA)

5 ELIGIBILITY (FFPMRCA)

5.1 A person is eligible to enter the FFPMRCA Examination who:

5.1.1 is currently registered with the General Medical Council (United Kingdom) and,
5.1.2 has been awarded the Fellowship of the Royal College of Anaesthetists by Examination and remains in good standing, and,
5.1.3 satisfies the requirements of these Regulations with regard to application procedures and other matters, and,
5.1.4 if applying for the SOE, has passed the MCQ paper within the last three years on the date of the examination applied for. And
5.1.5 satisfies ONE of the following regulations (5.1.5.1 to 5.1.5.6):

5.1.5.1 TRAINEE: A trainee who is currently registered with the Royal College of Anaesthetists as a trainee in Deanery / Health Education England approved training post on a GMC approved training programme in Anaesthetics or Pain Medicine. If applying for the SOE, the trainee must have received confirmation from their local Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine (RAPM) that they have successfully completed their Higher assessment and completed at least six months of the Advanced assessment by the date of the examination applied for.

5.1.5.2 POST-CCT TRAINEE (UK): A doctor in a post-CCT Pain Medicine Fellowship with the support of their RAPM. Support should be given prior to starting the Fellowship in order to ensure appropriate assessment and review. The RAPM will consider the level of training, experience in the practice of pain medicine and evidence of continuing professional development before supporting a prospective candidate’s application.
5.1.5.3 **POST-CCT TRAINEE (OVERSEAS):** A doctor who has achieved CCT (or equivalent) training in Anaesthesitics in the UK and is now in a post-CCT Pain Medicine Fellowship overseas with the support of their RAPM. Support should be sought and given prior to starting the Fellowship in order to ensure appropriate assessment and review. It is the trainee’s responsibility to inform the RAPM about any overseas training plans. The RAPM will consider the level of training, experience in the practice of pain medicine and evidence of continuing professional development before supporting a prospective candidate’s application.

5.1.5.4 **CONSULTANT (UK):** A UK NHS or Defence Medical Services consultant in Pain Medicine / Anaesthetics or Pain Medicine, currently registered with the College / Faculty.

5.1.5.5 **CONSULTANT (OVERSEAS):** A consultant in Pain Medicine / Anaesthetics or Pain Medicine, currently registered with the College / Faculty, who has undertaken College and GMC approved training in Pain Medicine in the UK.

5.1.5.6 **SPECIALTY/SAS GRADE:** An NHS or Defence Medical Services consultant specialty / SAS grade doctor who is currently practicing Pain Medicine in the UK and is registered with the Faculty and has the support of the RAPM.

5.1.5.7 **MEDICAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (MTI):** A doctor currently sponsored under the MTI International Programme who has been employed in Pain Medicine in an NHS post for six months immediately prior to the date of the examination applied for and who holds a relevant and satisfactory NHS appraisal.

5.2 A person who has already attempted and failed the part applied for six times is not eligible to enter the MCQ or SOE examination.

5.3 The MCQ paper must be completed prior to taking the SOE.

6 **ELIGIBILITY (DFPMRCA)**

6.1 A person is eligible to enter the FFPMRCA Examination who:

6.1.1 is currently registered with the General Medical Council (United Kingdom), and

6.1.2 satisfies the requirements of these Regulations with regard to application procedures and other matters, and
6.1.3 if applying for the SOE, has passed the MCQ paper within the last three years on
the date of the examination applied for. And

6.1.4 satisfies ONE of the following regulations (6.1.4.1 to 6.1.4.6):

6.1.4.1 **TRAINEE:** A trainee who is currently registered with the Royal College of
Anaesthetists as a trainee in Deanery / Health Education England approved
training post on a GMC approved training programme in Anaesthetics or Pain
Medicine. If applying for the SOE, the trainee must have received confirmation
from their local RAPM that they have successfully completed their Higher
assessment and completed at least six months of the Advanced assessment by
the date of the examination applied for.

6.1.4.2 **POST-CCT TRAINEE (UK):** A doctor in a post-CCT Pain Medicine
Fellowship, registered with the College / Faculty, with the support of their
RAPM. Support should be sought and given prior to starting the Fellowship in
order to ensure appropriate assessment and review. It is the trainee’s
responsibility to inform the RAPM about their training plans. The RAPM will
consider the level of training, experience in the practice of pain medicine and
evidence of continuing professional development before supporting a
prospective candidate’s application.

6.1.4.3 **POST-CCT TRAINEE (OVERSEAS):** A doctor who has achieved CCT (or
equivalent) training in Anaesthetics in the UK and is now in a post-CCT Pain
Medicine Fellowship overseas with the support of their RAPM and registered
with the College / Faculty. Support should be given prior to starting the
Fellowship in order to ensure appropriate assessment and review. It is the
trainee’s responsibility to inform the RAPM about any overseas training plans.
The RAPM will consider the level of training, experience in the practice of pain
medicine and evidence of continuing professional development before supporting a
prospective candidate’s application.

6.1.4.4 **CONSULTANT:** A UK NHS or Defence Medical Services consultant in
Pain Medicine / Anaesthetics or Pain Medicine, currently registered with the
College / Faculty.

6.1.4.5 **SPECIALTY/SAS GRADE:** An NHS or Defence Medical Services specialty
/ SAS grade doctor who is currently practicing Pain Medicine in the UK and is
registered with the Faculty and has the support of the RAPM.

6.1.4.6 **MEDICAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (MTI):** A doctor currently sponsored
under the MTI International Programme who has been employed in Pain
Medicine in an NHS post for six months immediately prior to the date of the
examination applied for and who holds a relevant and satisfactory NHS
appraisal.
6.2 A person who has already attempted and failed the part applied for six times is not eligible to enter the MCQ or SOE examination.

6.3 The MCQ paper must be completed and passed prior to taking the SOE.

7 APPLICATION PROCEDURES

7.1 Applications. Applicants can apply for examinations either on-line using Exams OLS or by submitting a paper application form through the postal system. The FPM examination calendar, details of on-line application/payment and paper application forms are available on the Faculty website www.fpm.ac.uk.

7.2 Applications, whether made on-line or through the postal system, for admission to an examination must be received by the Faculty on or after the published opening date but not later than 5pm on the published closing date of the sitting applied for, as shown in the examination calendar. If applying on-line an applicant will receive an automatically generate email confirming booking has been successful and payment has been processed by PayPal. The Faculty will email applicants to confirm receipt of paper applications sent through the postal system.

7.3 Any certificates required to support an application must be sent to and received by the Faculty in advance of on-line application or must accompany the application form if using the postal system. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

7.4 The fees payable for admission to each part shall be those fixed by the Board and the Council and published in the examinations calendar and should be paid through PayPal as part of the on-line process or by a cheque made payable to; ‘The Royal College of Anaesthetists’ and drawn on a United Kingdom clearing bank, or by a sterling draft or postal order if applying through the postal system.

7.5 Withdrawals. A candidate withdrawing an application for admission to an examination before the closing date for applications may receive back the full amount of the fee paid, subject to a deduction for administrative expenses, provided the withdrawal request is received in writing. A candidate who withdraws in any other circumstances (with the exception of those described in Regulation 8) or who fails to appear for an examination will not normally be entitled to any refund of fee.

8 SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

8.1 Pregnancy. Regulations 8.2 to 8.3 apply only to female candidates whose pregnancy or pregnancy-related illness or condition renders them unable to attend the examination. These Regulations do not apply to any other situations. This special treatment in relation to female candidates is permitted under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

8.2 Any prospective candidate should notify the Faculty via the College Examinations Department as soon as possible of the fact of their pregnancy and the expected
week of confinement. Such details should, where possible, be attached to the appropriate application form if applying by post or by email to exams@rcoa.ac.uk if applying through the on-line system.

8.3 A prospective candidate at the time of application must advise the exams dept as soon as possible if:

8.3.1 you have any pregnancy-related problems or illness; or

8.3.2 your confinement is due shortly before or around the date of the examination; or

8.3.3 your condition gives you sufficient discomfort for you to consider that it will have a detrimental effect upon your performance.

8.4 In such circumstances, should such a candidate be unable to sit for the examination, withdrawal will be permitted and the examination fee will be refunded (subject to a deduction for administrative expenses).

8.5 A candidate who does not inform the Faculty Examinations Department of her pregnancy will not normally be allowed to withdraw her application after the closing date without forfeiting her examination fee. However, when the pregnancy is diagnosed after submitting an application but prior to the examination and the candidate is subsequently unable to attend for the examination due to pregnancy-related reasons, then following confirmation from a College Tutor or Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine, the candidate may withdraw from the examination and the fee will be refunded (subject to a deduction for administrative expenses).

8.6 Dyslexia (standard provisions). The regulations for accommodating dyslexic candidates are contained in Appendix 4. All other examination adjustments are dealt with in accordance with Appendix 11.

8.7 Disability. The Faculty is committed to ensure that all candidates have equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability in all FPMRCA examinations and will make reasonable adjustments to examination arrangements as appropriate for individual disabled candidates. The definition of ‘disability’ and ‘reasonable adjustment’ under the Equality Act 2010 and the procedure to follow for candidates seeking examination adjustments are set out at Appendix 11.

9 FELLOWSHIP BY EXAMINATION AND DIPLOMA

9.1 A person shall be entitled to be admitted as a Fellow of the Faculty and granted use of the post-nominal FFPMRCA or awarded a diploma and granted use of the post-nominal DFPRMCA if he or she has:

9.1.1 passed the appropriate examination; and
9.1.2 complied with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Board in the regulations of the Faculty including formal Faculty membership.

10 FAILURES AND GUIDANCE

10.1 Failures. A candidate who is unsuccessful in an examination may, subject to the provisions of Regulations 3.8, 5, 6 and 10.2, enter for the next or any subsequent sitting of that examination.

10.2 Guidance. There are no mandatory requirements for candidates to attend guidance interviews up to the fifth attempt for each component. At the sixth attempt candidates must have attended a guidance interview, see Regulation 3.8.2. Guidance is not provided on failure of the MCQ examination or following failure at the first attempt of the SOE examination.

10.3 A candidate who fails the SOE examination at the second attempt will be offered a guidance interview in writing, by the Faculty via the College Examinations Department. However, interviews are not mandatory and may be carried forward to be used at a later attempt.

10.3.1 Interviews are limited to one per candidate.

10.3.2 All correspondence regarding Guidance Interviews should be made by email (exams@rcoa.ac.uk) or in writing to the Faculty via the College Examinations Department.

10.4 No special consideration will be given in respect of refunds following guidance interviews.

10.5 For the purpose of this regulation ‘guidance’ shall be:

- carried out by one or more Faculty Examiners.
- attended by the Local Pain Medicine Educational Supervisor.
- arranged locally or at the College.
- subject to any other requirement that the Board may from time to time authorise.

11 REPRESENTATION AND RE-CALCULATION

11.1 The Faculty is committed to ensuring that all candidates are treated fairly and consistently during Faculty examinations. Paragraphs 12 and 13 of these regulations allow candidates to request a ‘Review’ of the conduct of their exam where they believe they may have been treated unfairly, and allege impropriety or bias of some kind. Any decision regarding the request for a Review is made by the Director.
Candidates who remain dissatisfied with the Review decision and wish to have their case heard by an independent panel may request an Appeal.

11.2 All marks are awarded following strict guidelines (see Appendix 2). Papers cannot be remarked, marks confirmed by the Faculty are final. However, if following the outcome of a Review or Appeal, bias or impropriety is agreed to have been proven, then the Review or Appeal body will take such action to rectify the situation identified.

11.3 Re-calculation requests. A Candidate who is dissatisfied with the determination of his/her result but is not alleging any impropriety or bias, may after the receipt of the result letter, request an additional calculation of his/her result. Re-calculation will incur a £50 administration charge, refundable only where an error is identified. Applicants should be fully aware that errors found during additional calculation are extremely rare.

11.3.1 Re-calculation requests should be made in writing to the Faculty via the College Examinations Department and accompanied by the administration charge, by cheque payable to ‘The Royal College of Anaesthetists’.

12 REVIEWS

12.1 Subject to the following regulations, a candidate can ask the Director to review the conduct or the result of their examination.

12.2 Reviews will be entertained which allege bias or impropriety of some kind in the organisation, content, conduct or determination of the result of the examination. The burden of proof lies with the candidate who must prove clear reason as to why their performance was affected by impropriety or bias. The following are examples or incidents that may affect performance:

12.2.1 Organisation e.g. wrong or missing documentation, instructions or artefacts, poor seating/lighting.

12.2.2 Content e.g. questions not relevant to the examination, questions on a topic not related to the curriculum.

12.2.3 Conduct e.g. personal questions about candidate’s age, gender, origins, beliefs, disabilities, workplace or experience.

12.2.4 Determination of the result e.g. the examiner(s) did not follow the marking methods set out in Appendix 2.

12.3 No review, however, may be made of matters which relate solely to the examiners’ judgement.

12.4 Any request for a review must be:
12.4.1 submitted by the candidate to whom the Review relates setting out in full the
matter on which the request is based.

12.4.2 addressed to the Director and submitted within two months of completing the
relevant examination.

12.5 On receipt of a request for a Review, the Director will send the candidate a letter of
acknowledgement and will consider the admissibility of the request. If the Director
concludes that a review is inadmissible, whether on the ground of Regulation 12.3 or
for any other reason, the Director will so inform the candidate in writing forthwith.

12.6 If the Director:

12.6.1 is of the opinion that the request for a review is in the nature of a request for
guidance or re-calculation rather than a challenge of the examination
procedure or result due to alleged impropriety or bias, the request may be
treated in accordance with the appropriate regulation.

12.6.2 finds that the matter on which the review is based contains any error of fact,
the candidate shall be so informed without delay and shall be invited to
indicate whether he or she wishes to pursue the matter. If he or she does
not, the Review shall be deemed to have been dismissed.

12.6.3 concludes that the matter on which the Review is based, provides proof of
impropriety or bias of some kind, whether in whole or in part, the Director
shall take any action necessary to rectify the situation identified and the
candidate shall be informed of the findings and any corrective action to be
taken.

12.6.4 concludes that the matter on which the Review is based does not prove
impropriety or bias, then the candidate shall be so informed in writing
forthwith.

12.7 In conducting the review in accordance with Regulation 12.5, the Director shall
consult the Examiners.

13 APPEALS

13.1 If a candidate who has received a reply under Regulation 12.6.4 remains dissatisfied
with the findings of the Director and wishes to challenge the points set out in the
decision letter, he/she may submit an Appeal to the College Appeal Clerk, using the
form at Appendix 5 to these Regulations. No appeal may be made in matters which
relate solely to the examiners’ judgement. The appeal must be accompanied by a fee
of £1,500 (by cheque made payable to ‘The Royal College of Anaesthetists’) and
must be received within two months of the Director’s decision letter.
13.2 The Reviews Clerk will confirm receipt in writing and advise the Appellant of a date by which an Appeal Panel will be appointed, which will not be more than one calendar month after the date of receipt of the application. At this stage; the Appellant can request a meeting with a senior FPM examiner who is not involved in the Review or the Appeal, to discuss the FPM examination processes or marking system, the senior examiner will be nominated by the Faculty. The content of this meeting cannot be used as further evidence towards the case of the Appellant or the Faculty. The Appellant may withdraw his/her application and receive a full refund of fee providing it is prior to the final date set for the appointment of the Appeal Panel.

13.3 On appointment, the Panel will consist of two examiners who have not previously been involved at any time in the examination of the Appellant or his/her Review (the examiners may be drawn from the FRCA Board of Examiners), and a chairman, who will have no formal connection with the Faculty or College. The Appeal hearing date will be set by the Appeals Clerk. The panel shall proceed to hear the appeal in accordance with notes for the Chairman at Appendix 6 and Procedures for Appeal Hearings at Appendix 7 to these Regulations. It shall allow adequate periods of notice to both parties, an opportunity for the appellant to be present in person and to be represented, and an opportunity for the appellant, or his/her representative, to present the appeal and to respond to any answer the Director may make.

13.4 At the conclusion of the proceedings the panel shall reach its findings. The findings a panel may make shall be as follows:

13.4.1 That the Appeal is dismissed; no further appeal may be considered.

13.4.2 That the Appeal is justified in whole or in part but that the matter does not justify further action.

13.4.3 That the Appeal is justified and either that

(a) any mark originally awarded to the Appellant shall be appropriately corrected and, if the consequence of such correction so requires, that the Appellant shall be declared successful in the examination; or

(b) the result of the Appellant’s examination shall be declared void and that he/she shall be allowed to re-sit without payment of any fee.

13.5 The Chairman shall have the power to decide whether all, part of or none of the appeal fee will be returned.

13.6 In announcing its findings the panel shall give reasons for its decision in writing.

14 DRESS CODE, ELECTRONIC DEVICES/MOBILE PHONES AND MISCONDUCT

14.1 Dress code for examinations: the Faculty endorse the key recommendations of guidance on dress codes for postgraduate medical recruitment, training and
assessments from the conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (CoPMeD). Full details are set out at Appendix 8 of these regulations.

14.2 Electronic devices and mobile phones: The Faculty will follow strict application of the rules set out at Appendix 8 of these regulations regarding the use of mobile phones and unauthorised electronic devices during FRCA examinations.

14.3 Misconduct: All aspects of misconduct at FFPMRCA examinations will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with the misconduct policy set out at Appendix 10 of these regulations.

15 COMPLAINTS

15.1 The Faculty recognises that on occasion candidates may wish to express their dissatisfaction with the way in which something has been done and feel confident that any such complaint is handled in a fair and consistent way. Candidates who consider that they have grounds for complaint, regarding the provision of a service by the Faculty that does not amount to a request for a ‘Review’, (see paragraph 12), should use the following regulations.

15.2 A ‘complaint’ in accordance with these regulations, is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or a specific concern, whether given orally or in writing, about the provision or quality of a service provided during the examination process.

15.3 Complaints should be brought to the attention of a Faculty officer as soon as possible. All complaints given orally at the time of an examination taking place will be logged on an incident report form by the Faculty officer. Immediate action to resolve issues as they arise will be taken wherever possible and the complainant will be advised accordingly.

15.4 All complaints should be raised initially with the Faculty officer directly involved. The vast majority of complaints can and should be resolved in this way. If this does not resolve the matter, or this step is for any reason not possible or appropriate, the complainant should contact the Faculty by email or in writing, setting out in full the matter on which the complaint is based. Correspondence should be addressed for the attention of the Examinations Manager, within one month of the incident occurring. Complaints submitted anonymously or on behalf of another party will not be considered.

15.5 Where a complaint more closely fits a request for a Review or a matter such as a re-calculation, it will be reclassified and proceed in accordance with the appropriate regulation. Such reclassification will always be carried out so that the matter can be considered in the most appropriate and fair way. Candidates will not be required to resubmit their cases.
15.6. An informal and flexible approach to resolution of complaints will be adopted wherever possible. All complainants will be advised of the course of action taken to resolve the complaint.

15.7. If following communication with the Faculty a complainant remains dissatisfied and only when all attempts to resolve the complaint have been exhausted. Then a ‘formal complaint’ should be submitted to the Director. Following discussion with the Examinations Committee, the Director will reach a conclusion on the complaint and determine a course of action.

15.8 Formal complaints must be submitted in writing to the Director, headed ‘Formal Complaint’ stating:
   (a) The nature of the complaint.
   (b) What has/has not been done to resolve it.
   (c) Why the complainant is not satisfied with the course of action taken by the Faculty/Faculty officer, and
   (d) what the complainant would like to be done to resolve the matter to their satisfaction.

15.9. The Director will acknowledge an official complaint within five working days of receipt. A full response will be made as soon as possible. Full reasons will be given for the decision reached.

15.10 The decision of the Director is final and following despatch of the decision letter the Complaint procedure will be at an end.

15.11 Candidate confidentiality will be observed when handling complaints wherever possible. However, it will occasionally be necessary to disclose a complainant’s identity to progress an investigation. Candidates who engage in the complaints process will not be disadvantaged.

16. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

16.1 In the exercising of its duties when carrying out examinations in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Section 149(1) (the Act), the Faculty of Pain Medicine gives due regard to:
   - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
   - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
   - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
In its regard for these duties the Faculty of Pain Medicine aims to meet all areas of the Royal College of Anaesthetists Equal Opportunities Policy\textsuperscript{1} to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability and that no one is treated less favourably than another on grounds of ethnic origin, nationality, disability, gender, transgender, sexual orientation, age or religion.

16.2 To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and as part of the Faculty’s compliance with the Royal College of Anaesthetists Equal Opportunity Policy, the Faculty monitors exam results in relation to the candidate population.

16.3 All examiners and examinations staff undertakes regular exam specific E&D training.

16.4 The Faculty considers reasonable adjustment for examination candidates with a disability as set out at Appendix 11 of these regulations.

\textsuperscript{1} The Royal College of Anaesthetists Equal Opportunities Policy (2014)
APPENDIX 1  THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION

There are two sections to the FFPMRCA Examination:

(1) MCQ

There are three sub-sections to the MCQ examination comprising:

(a) *MTF (Multiple True-False) sub-section:*
    40 MTFs each with 5 items

(b) *SBA (Single Best Answer) sub-section:*
    25 SBAs

(c) *EMQ (Extended Marking Question) paper:*
    25 EMQs

All three sub-sections are taken as one paper in a three hour sitting. The MCQ paper will test all Pain Medicine and generic areas of the *CCT in Anaesthetics.*

(2) SOE

There are two sub-sections to the Structured Oral Examination comprising:

(a) *Clinical Pain Medicine*

The Clinical Structured Oral Examination (SOE1) is 50 minutes in duration and comprises of a long case and three short clinical questions (SCQs). The long case will consist of; 10 minute preparation time, during which the candidate will be given the opportunity to read a case history and view relevant investigation results provided. During this time the candidate may make notes on paper provided for this purpose. This is followed by a 20 minute examination devoted to the clinical material. The clinical long case will examine a candidate’s in-depth knowledge of the assessment and management of a complex chronic pain patient. Knowledge of clinical assessment tools and investigations relevant to clinical practice and available treatments will be required. The final 20 minutes will be given to the three short clinical questions. The topics of these questions could be any aspect of clinical pain medicine. No patients or actors are used. A list of clinical topics covered in previous FFPMRCA examinations, are available on the Faculty website.
(b) *Clinical Science*

The Science Structure Oral Examination (SOE2) is 30 minutes in duration and comprises of four sections; anatomy, physiology, pharmacology and a section covering psychology, epidemiology and clinical measurement. The importance of the scientific basis of Pain Medicine for the FFPMRCA examination must be emphasized. A list of clinical science topics covered in previous FFPMRCA examinations, are available on the Faculty website.
APPENDIX 2  THE MARKING SYSTEMS

Both sections must be passed to pass the whole examination.

Applicants must hold the FRCA to achieve the FFPMRCA. Candidates who pass the whole examination who do not hold the FFPMRCA will be awarded the DFPMRCA.

In all sections of the examination, the performance of borderline candidates is reviewed by the examiners before final marks are awarded.

If, in the opinion of the examiners, a candidate’s answers in the SOEs have been dangerous then the candidate’s performance is reviewed by all the examiners before the marks are confirmed.

(1)  MCQ

MTF: 1 mark is awarded for each correct answer.
SBA: 4 marks are awarded for each correctly answered question.
EMQ: 4 marks awarded for each question correctly matched.

The marks of the three MCQ sub-sections are added together to give a total mark. With 40 MTF, 25 SBA and 25 EMQ the maximum mark obtainable is 400. Marks are not deducted for wrong answers. The pass mark is set by the examiners using assessment methods approved by the GMC.

(2)  SOE

Two examiners are present for each part of the SOE. Each examiner marks every question independently. There are 10 questions; Pass = 2, Borderline performance = 1, Fail = 0, giving a total of 40 marks for the two sub-sections. The pass mark is determined using assessment methods approved by the GMC.
APPENDIX 3  EXAM COMMENDATION AND PRIZE

All candidates that reach the level of ‘distinction’ in both parts of the FFPMRCA examination at their first attempt will receive a letter of commendation from the Chairman of the Court of FFPMRCA Examiners.

At the discretion of the Board of the Faculty of Pain Medicine, the Candidate(s) who achieve the highest level of distinction in both parts of the FFPMRCA, based on the letters of commendation for each academic year will be awarded the FFPMRCA Examination Prize.

A level of distinction is defined as follows:

FFPMRCA MCQ: The top 10% of examination candidates
FFPMRCA SOE: A maximum score of 40 marks

On completion of the Spring SOE examination a list of candidates who received commendation letters over the current academic year, along with their scores in each part of the examination will be provided to the FFPMRCA Training and Assessment Committee. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Board of the Faculty of Pain Medicine for the award of the Prize, to the candidate(s) who has achieved the highest level of distinctions from the commendations made for that academic year. The successful candidate will be advised in writing and invited to be presented with the FFPMRCA Examination Prize at the FPM’s Annual Meeting.
APPENDIX 4  DYSLEXIC CANDIDATES

The following guidelines specify the standard procedure and provisions for dyslexic candidates. Please note that these provisions will only be allowed if the application and appropriate documentation is received by the closing date of the sitting applied for.

To qualify for the standard provisions candidates must supply:

(a) a written assessment from an educational psychologist which includes a statement confirming that the candidate’s difficulties warrant additional time arrangements and that such additional time has been required on previous occasions in similar circumstances (only required at the first request see paragraph (d)); and

(b) a letter of support from their Local Pain Medicine Educational Supervisor or Regional Adviser in Pain Medicine (or supervising consultant of equivalent standing if applying from overseas) (only required at the first request see paragraph (d)); and

(c) Other ‘reasonable adjustments’ may be requested at time of application in accordance with paragraph 8.7/Appendix 11 of these Regulations

(d) Candidates who have already received ‘standard provisions for dyslexia’ for the MCQ examination as set out in this Appendix and previously satisfied paragraphs (a) and (c) above do not need to submit a written assessment or a letter of support if applying to re-sit the exam but will need to advise the examinations dept by email if standard provisions are required. Otherwise the Faculty will presume the applicant is sitting the examination under standard circumstances.

An application for standard provisions for dyslexia will be considered by the Chairman of the relevant examination, who will bear in mind the occupational requirements of the specialty. If a candidate is not able to supply the above documents before the commencement of the examination, the candidate may choose to:

(a) withdraw without penalty as per the standard procedure, or

(b) proceed without special arrangements.

Standard Provisions

The following provisions will be allowed for candidates who provide satisfactory documents listed above:

(a) MCQ papers: 45 minutes (25%) additional time will be allowed, i.e. three hours and 45 minutes in total.
(b) SOEs: No standard provisions are given.

To facilitate the administration of the examination, dyslexic candidates who qualify for provisions at (a) above may be required to sit the examination in a room separate from the main examination hall.
APPENDIX 5 EXAMINATION APPEAL APPLICATION FORM

THE FACULTY OF PAIN MEDICINE
OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ANAESTHETISTS

Examination Appeal Application Form

Please complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS in BLACK ink.

Please attach a cheque for the appeals fee made payable to ‘The Royal College of Anaesthetists’ and return to: Reviews Clerk, The Royal College of Anaesthetists, Churchill House, 35 Red Lion Square, LONDON WC1R 4SG

Part 1 To be completed by the appellant

1.1 Title 1.2 First name(s) 1.3 Last name

1.4 Address and postcode (home) 1.5 College Reference Number

1.6 Date of Examination

1.7 Email address 1.8 Candidate Number

1.9 Please summarise in 50 words the grounds on which you base your appeal (if you wish to submit a more detailed account, please attached additional pages):
Appeals will be entertained which allege bias or impropriety of some kind in the organisation, content, conduct or determination of the result of the examination. No appeal may be made which relates solely to matters of the examiners’ judgement. Please indicate on what basis your appeal is made:

☐ Organisational issues

☐ Content of the examination questions

☐ Conduct of the examination

☐ Determination of the result

If your appeal is successful, please indicate what outcome you are seeking:

☐ No further action (as detailed in Regulation 13.4.1)

☐ Upgrading of a previously allocated section mark, and to be declared successful if this change so affects your overall examination result (as detailed in Regulation 13.4.2a)

☐ Your examination result to be declared void and that you resit the examination without payment of any fee (as detailed in Regulation 13.4.2b)

☐ Some other result (please specify below)

1.10 Name of applicant

1.11 Signature of applicant

1.12 Date declaration signed

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Appeal fee paid £

Signature of the College Official

Date received

A/C Reference No. 1101/22/A
2.1 Full Name

2.2 Please summarise in 50 words the grounds on which the earlier review was rejected (please give a full account on separate pages if desired):

NOTES:

1 Section 1 to be completed by the Appellant and returned to the Reviews Clerk; the Reviews Clerk is to forward a copy to the Director.
2 Section 2 to be completed by the Director and returned to the Reviews Clerk.
3 Completed form to be copied to the Appellant, the Director and members of the Appeal Panel.
APPENDIX 6  APPEAL PANEL: NOTES FOR CHAIRMAN

1 Appeals will be entertained which allege bias or impropriety of some kind in the organisation, content, conduct or determination of the result of the examination, for example:

1.1 Organisation e.g. wrong or missing documentation, instructions or artefacts poor seating/lighting, error in timing allowed, which was not resolved during the examination.

1.2 Content e.g. questions not relevant to the examination, questions on a topic not included in the syllabus.

1.3 Conduct e.g. personal questions about candidate’s age, gender, origins, beliefs disabilities, workplace or experience.

1.4 Determination of the result e.g. the examiner(s) did not follow the marking methods set out in Appendix 2 of the current Examination Regulations.

2 No appeal may be made which relates solely to matters to the examiners’ judgement.

3 No recording equipment is allowed in the hearing; the Reviews Clerk will minute the proceedings (long or short-hand) as the only record. The minutes will reflect the bare facts of the event, i.e. not the intricate details. The Appeals Clerk will assist the Chairman in the production and dispatch of the ‘decision document’.

4 The Appellant’s Representative can be medically qualified but should not be his legal representative and may be:

4.1 a Local Pain Medicine Educational Supervisor or other Consultant in Anaesthesia or Pain Medicine

4.2 a friend (not appearing in a professional capacity)

4.3 a Trade Union representative

5 If the Appellant chooses their Representative to present their case, then the Appellant can only contribute as a witness.

6 Witnesses

6.1 Character witnesses may be requested to submit a written testimonial rather than appear in person at the hearing. Witnesses of fact should appear in person.

6.2 The decision to call witnesses will rest with the Chairman whose permission shall not be unreasonably withheld. Normally not more than two witnesses would attend.

6.3 In the case of multiple witnesses, the Chairman may require witnesses to present written statements rather than to appear in person. All those to be present at the appeal hearing will be notified of the witnesses.
6.4 Witnesses for the Faculty will be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred (normally) within the UK. The Appellant’s witnesses will not be reimbursed by the Faculty but the Chairman has the power to reimburse those expenses of a successful applicant which are reasonably incurred in attending the appeal hearing.

7 Explain to the Appellant that Appeal Regulation 13.4.2(b), “that the result of the appellant’s examination shall be declared void”, means that their attempt will not be counted.

8 Certain steps of the Appeal Hearing Procedure may be repeated if new material is introduced.

9 The Chairman shall have the power to decide whether all, part or none of the appeal fee will be returned.
APPENDIX 7

PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL HEARINGS

1 To be present:

1.1 **Appeal Panel** Chairman
Two nominated examiners not previously involved in the examination or appeal of the Appellant (one or both could be selected from the FFPMRCA Court of Examiners).

1.2 **Attending** Appellant
Appellant's Representative (if desired by the Appellant)
Training and Examinations Director (Director), on behalf of the examiners
Reviews Clerk to minute the proceedings
Witnesses

2 Chairman to explain the procedure to the Appellant and Appellant's Representative if present.

3 **Appellant’s Representative**

3.1 The Appellant may appoint a representative who may be medically but not legally qualified.

3.2 If an Appellant's Representative is present, the Chairman is to establish whether the Appellant or the Appellant's Representative is to present the Appellant's case and answer questions. If the Appellant’s Representative is to present the case, then the Appellant may only contribute as a witness.

4 New evidence may be brought to the hearing by either side. This new evidence should be made available to the Appellant or Director at least ten days before the date of the hearing. Neither the Appellant nor the Director can rely on any matter raised at the meeting with the senior examiner, if so used.

5 **Witnesses**

5.1 Either party may request witnesses to be present, subject to notifying the Chairman of the Appeal Panel in writing not later than 21 days before the appeal hearing, with the reason why they have been invited.

5.2 The decision to call witnesses will rest with the Chairman of the Appeal Panel whose permission will not be unreasonably withheld. Normally not more than two witnesses would attend.

5.3 In the case of multiple witnesses, the Chairman may require witnesses to present written statements rather than to appear in person. All those to be present at the appeal hearing will be notified of the names of the witnesses.
5.4 Witnesses for the College will be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred and normally within the UK. The Appellant’s witnesses will not be reimbursed by the College.

6 Presentation of Evidence

6.1 Appellant

6.1.1 The Appellant/Appellant's Representative presents the grounds of the Appeal with reference to, and contributions from, any witnesses permitted by the Chairman.

6.1.2 The Director may question the Appellant/Appellant's Representative and witnesses.

6.1.3 The Appellant or Appellant’s Representative will have the right to re-examine, after which there may be further cross-examination and re-examination.

6.1.4 At the end of this process, members of the Panel may question a witness. Finally, the Chairman will ask if there are any further questions before standing down the witness.

6.2 Training and Examinations Director

6.2.1 The Director states why the review was rejected, with reference to, and contributions from, any witnesses.

6.2.2 Procedures 6.1.2 - 6.1.4 are followed on behalf of the Director and his witnesses.

6.3 When appropriate, the Chairman of the Panel will release witnesses.

6.4 The Appellant/Appellant's Representative makes a final summary statement of the Appellant's case - no new material may be introduced during the summary statement.

7 The Appellant, Appellant's Representative and the Director leave the room.

8 The Appeal Panel reaches its findings which will normally be declared immediately.

9 The Chairman shall have the power to decide whether all, part or none of the appeal fee will be returned.

10 In announcing its finding, the panel shall give reasons for its decision.

11 The decision of the Appeal Panel is to be confirmed in writing to the Appellant and the Director (the decision document). A copy will be provided to each member of the panel and a copy held on Faculty files.
APPENDIX 8  DRESS CODE FOR EXAMINATIONS

The Faculty endorse the key recommendations of the Guidance on Dress Codes for postgraduate medical recruitment, training and assessment from the Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (COPMeD)\(^1\). In particular, candidates are reminded that the same dress code should apply for professional examinations as it does for day to day clinical practice/contact with patients. This means that forms of dress should not constrain the candidate’s ability to demonstrate recognised skills including effective communication with simulated patients or examiners, nor hinder easy verification of the candidate’s identity.

Hence candidates are requested not to wear forms of dress that cover the face while attending any of the FPM examinations. Candidates are also advised that there is no requirement to wear clinical/theatre clothing during any of the examinations.

\(^1\) Dress codes for postgraduate medical and dental recruitment, training and assessment. COPMeD, October 2011.
APPENDIX 9  ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND MOBILE PHONE POLICY

In response to the increased potential for cheating and the disturbance of other candidates, the Faculty will follow the strict appliance of the following rules regarding the use of electronic devices and mobile phones during examinations:

1. Mobile phones and other electronic devices have no place at examinations and should be left at home wherever possible. Mobile phones or electronic devices (see list of examples at paragraph 2), brought to examinations must be switched off and fully deactivated for the duration of the examination.

Candidates should ensure the following action is taken regarding mobile phones/electronic devices:

Written examinations (before sitting at exam desk):

- Switch off and stored in bag, which should be placed in designated area defined by Invigilator. Or,
- If no bag then mobile phone/device should be switched off and handed to invigilator. Invigilator will place in envelope and mark with candidate No. Returned in exchange for exam papers.

SOE/OSCE examinations (on arrival at main reception area):

- Switch off in front of the faculty officer at reception.
- Store in secure locker/luggage for duration of time in College. Or;
- Hand to college officer. Faculty officer will place in envelope and mark with candidate No. Returned in exchange for candidate badge on leaving the College.

2. The following are some examples of ‘electronic devices’, it is not intended to be complete, if in doubt then candidates should ask the Faculty Officer/Invigilator in attendance:

Calculator, ‘smart’ watch, laptop, electronic tablet, recording device, MP3 player, bleeper, any timing device that makes audible beeps.

3. If any type of electronic device is required as part of an examination test then it will be supplied by the Faculty. Regular time checks are given by invigilators and therefore candidates will not need to use additional timing devices. Watches that do not emit sound may be used, this does not include smart watches, even when set to silent.


Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to disqualification from the examination.
a. The following constitutes non-compliance of the above rules:

- A mobile phone or electronic device found in the possession of a candidate during an examination.
- The ringing, vibrating or any audible ‘beep’ heard from a mobile phone or electronic device whilst an examination is taking place, which is deemed by the Faculty officer/invigilator to have disrupted other candidates.

b. In all cases of non-compliance an incident report form will be submitted to the Examinations Committee for their consideration. Candidates cited for non-compliance will be required to sign the incident report form before leaving the examination room and may be required to attend the Faculty to give further information/evidence regarding the incident.

c. Where the Examinations Committee agree that non-compliance is proven they will consider the following, before a penalty is agreed:

- The need to preserve the integrity of the examination.
- The disturbance caused to others.
- Consistency with previous penalties.

d. The Examinations Committee may consider awarding one of the following standard penalties or may give a more specific penalty where felt appropriate:

- No further action.
- A written warning.
- Result for an examination or part of an examination under investigation, to be declared void.
- Candidate barred from applying for an exam for a specified period.
- Where cheating is proved act in accordance with sub-paragraph 14.2.

e. Examination results of candidates cited for non-compliance will be withheld until a decision has been reached by the Examinations Committee. Investigations will be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible and candidates will be kept informed of progress. Candidates will be informed of the outcome in writing by the Director of Training and Examinations on behalf of the Examinations Committee.
APPENDIX 10  MISCONDUCT POLICY

The Integrity of FFPMRCA examinations is fundamental to the values promoted by the Faculty. It is important that all candidates are judged on their ability, and no candidate be allowed to gain an advantage unfairly over others. By virtue of entering to sit an examination, candidates are deemed to have understood and agreed to abide and respect all examination regulations and policies. Any aspect of misconduct at FFPMRCA examinations will be investigated and acted upon in accordance with the following Misconduct policy. With the exception that, where non-compliance of Faculty regulations is cited due to the use of electronic devices or mobile phones, then these matters will proceed in accordance with the policy set out at Appendix 9 of these Examination Regulations.

1. Misconduct includes, but is not restricted to:

   a. Failure to abide by the reasonable instructions of an invigilator or Faculty Officer;

   b. The introduction or/and use of any materials or documents other than those specifically permitted for the examination;

   c. Any attempt to gain access to or read the work of another candidate;

   d. Any attempt to communicate with another candidate;

   e. Unacceptable or disruptive behaviour during the examination;

   f. Removal by a candidate, of material or content from an examination, other than those documents specifically permitted.

   g. The release of content from an examination to a third party without the expressed permission of a Faculty Officer.

   h. Falsification or alteration of eligibility or identification documents.

   i. Impersonation of a candidate.

   j. Any other form of cheating, deception, fraud or conduct that is likely to give an unfair advantage to a candidate or candidates.

2. Reporting misconduct:

2.1 Under normal examination conditions suspected misconduct should be reported to the Faculty through the submission of ‘an Incident report form’ (Available on request through a Faculty Officer). Incident report forms can be completed by examiners, invigilators, Faculty Officers, examination candidates and any other such person who becomes aware of any incident that may affect the examination processes or its regulations. Forms completed by exam candidates regarding suspected misconduct of another candidate must be countersigned by a witness such as a Faculty official. All forms must be completed as soon as possible with full details of fact, they must
be signed and dated and given to the duty Faculty Officer. Full instructions for completion of Incident Report forms are set out on the back of the form.

2.2 Any materials that are reasonably believed by an invigilator or Faculty Officer not to be permitted as part of the exam will be confiscated. Electronic devices will be returned at the end of the exam with details logged on the Incident report form. The Candidate concerned will be asked to acknowledge agreement of the confiscation of other materials on the Incident report form. All such materials will be included as part of the report.

2.3 Where misconduct is suspected after an examination or outside examination conditions, such as where a candidate is suspected of passing on or unauthorised use of examination content that has not been released into the public domain, then a written report of the incident should be submitted to the Director at the Faculty address. Such reports should give full details of the person suspected of misconduct and the person submitting the report.

2.4 Anonymous reports of misconduct will not be used to initiate a formal misconduct process.

2.5 The Faculty acknowledges that any case of misconduct can have an adverse effect on a candidate’s reputation and career. Therefore all matters of the reporting and process of alleged misconduct will be kept strictly confidential. However, where the allegation of misconduct is proven, the Faculty reserves the right to forward details of the case to the GMC/National Medical Council and in the case of UK trainees, their College Tutor and/or Regional Advisor.

2 Review of alleged Misconduct

3.1 Incident report forms that allege misconduct and written reports received as described in paragraph 2.2 will be handed to the Director who will carry out a review of the alleged misconduct to determine if there is sufficient evidence of a \textit{prima facie} case to warrant the incident being passed to the Examinations Chairman and/or the Misconduct Group (see paragraph 4).

3.2 Where, in the opinion of the Director, an incident is not deemed to be self-evident from the facts set out in the report or the incident is judged to be of a minor/technical issue, then the matter will not be processed and no further action will be taken. However, this will not preclude an official letter being issued to advise the candidate of the conduct of behaviour expected under examination conditions. Cases not processed beyond the Director’s review will not be recorded on a candidate’s personal records.

3.3 Where, following the review of a report and consultation with Faculty staff/witnesses as necessary, the Director deems that there is sufficient evidence to
prove a case of misconduct, the Director will inform the candidate of the allegations in writing. The candidate concerned will be allowed 10 working days, from the date of the letter, to accept or challenge the case against them.

3.4 Examination results of candidates cited for alleged misconduct will not be processed until a decision has been reached. Investigations will be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible and candidates will be kept informed of progress.

3.5 If, within 10 working days a candidate admits in writing to the allegations made against them, then the matter will be forwarded to the Examinations Chairman and Vice Chairman for their formal consideration and the award of an appropriate penalty in accordance with paragraph 6. Where allegations are accepted by the candidate, they can submit a written statement with their response that may be taken into account by the Examinations Chair/Vice Chair. A decision will be reached as soon as possible and normally within five working days of the date of the candidate letter.

3.6 If a candidate denies an allegation of misconduct in writing to the Director, either in whole or in part, then the matter will be referred to the Misconduct Group who will deal with the matter electronically.

4 Misconduct Group process
4.1 The Misconduct Group (the Group) will consist of:

The Chairman of the FRCA Examinations Committee (Chairman)
The Chairman of the FFPMRCA Examination Board
A nominated Patient Liaison Group (PLG) representative

4.2 The duty of the Group will be to examine the facts of the case and to determine the strength and integrity of the evidence. Then make a decision based on the balance of probabilities, whether the allegation of misconduct is proven. Where to the satisfaction of the Group, a case is proven the Group will agree an appropriate penalty in accordance with paragraph 6. The outcome will be decided electronically/via telephone conference and therefore there will be no charge to the candidate.

4.3 The PA to the Director will act as the Group secretary. The purpose of the Group secretary is to:

a. Advise all parties on the deadline for submission of further evidence and the date on which the Group will announce their decision.

b. Co-ordinate and prepare documentation/evidence for all parties.

c. Provide secretarial support to the Group as required.

d. Maintain communication with the candidate and provide advice as required.
e. To produce and distribute the ‘decision document’ to all parties.

4.4 The Director will submit the case for the Board of examiners in writing to the Group, through the Group secretary.

4.5 The candidate has the right to submit written evidence for consideration by the Group up to the deadline given by the Group secretary.

4.7 The Group secretary will acknowledge receipt of all evidence submitted by the Candidate and confirm the date scheduled for the Group to make its decision. This will not be more than one calendar month following the written confirmation of denial of the allegation of misconduct, see paragraph 3.6. All documents to be used along with a copy of this policy will be sent by email attachments to the candidate and the Group members no later than 5 working days before the date set for the decision to be announced. No documents may be presented in evidence to the Group, unless circulated by the Group secretary in the manner detailed above.

4.8 The validity of the process will not be affected if the candidate fails to submit further documentary evidence on their behalf prior to the deadline given by the Group secretary.

4.9 Following referral of alleged misconduct to the Group, a candidate has the right to reverse their answer to the allegations up to 48 hours prior to the date scheduled for the Group’s decision. Where allegations are then accepted by the candidate, they can submit a written statement with their response that may be taken into account by the Group. A decision on the penalty to be awarded will be made on the date announced by the Group secretary.

4.10 Neither the Group nor the candidate will be given any information regarding the candidate’s result or performance at the examination in question.

4.11 The decision of the Group is to be confirmed in writing to the candidate (the decision document) as soon as possible following the decision date. A copy will be provided to each member of the Group and a copy will be held on Faculty files.

5 Appeals procedure

5.1 Appeals must be carried out in accordance with paragraph 13 of these Regulations, an Appeal Application (Appendix 5) with the appropriate fee must be submitted within 7 working days of the date of the Groups decision. All subsequent procedures and hearings will be handled in accordance with Appendices 6 and 7 of these Regulations.

5.2 The Appeals panel will be advised that the Misconduct Group considered the case but will not be give details of the outcome.
5.3 The Appeal panel will have the power to confirm, amend or reverse the decision made by the Misconduct Group.

6 Penalties

6.1 Where the Misconduct Group or exam chairs (paragraph 3.5), agree that the case in whole or in part, is proven whether through admission by the candidate or the outcome of the Group’s findings, then they will consider the following before a penalty is agreed:

- The need to preserve the integrity of the examination.
- The severity of the infringement proven
- Consistency with previous penalties.
- The evidence of remorse and the admission of the understanding of the seriousness of the case.

6.2 The Misconduct panel or the exam chairs (paragraph 3.5) may consider awarding one of the following standard penalties or may give a more specific penalty where appropriate:

- No further action
- A written warning (see paragraph 6.3)
- Result of an examination or part of an examination, to be declared void
- Candidate barred from applying for an exam for a specified period

6.3 Where a written warning is agreed upon, the Group/exam chairs will reflect on the severity of the misconduct proven and reserve the right to forward details of the case to the GMC and in the case of UK trainees, their College Tutor and Regional Adviser.

6.4 Where a candidate’s examination result is declared void, the attempt will be recorded against the candidate’s exam history. Exam papers will not be processed.
APPENDIX 11  DISABILITY POLICY

FFPMRCA Examinations Policy of adjustments to examinations – arrangements for disabled candidates

1. Definition of disability and reasonable adjustment

1.1 The definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) is as follows:

In the Act, a person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.

For the purpose of the Act, these words have the following meaning:

- ‘substantial’ means more than minor or trivial
- ‘long term’ means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months
- ‘normal day-to-day activities’ include everyday things like eating, washing and walking etc.

1.2 The Faculty will consider temporary (i.e. broken arm, pregnancy), on-going or fluctuating medical conditions for the purpose of examination adjustment, where the condition affects a candidate’s ability to take a planned sitting of an examination.

1.3 ‘Reasonable adjustment’ is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places a candidate at a substantial disadvantage in an examination situation.

2. Policy statement

2.1 The Faculty is committed to ensure that all candidates have equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability in all types of FPMRCA Examination settings. To this aim, the Faculty will make reasonable adjustments to examination arrangements as appropriate for individual disabled candidates. A standard procedure and provision is provided for candidates with dyslexia. The Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Royal College of Anaesthetists Regulations and Appeals (the Regulations), Appendix 4, provides full details of the procedure and provisions given for dyslexic candidates.

2.2 Reasonable adjustment to examination arrangements is provided to candidates with a disability in order to level the playing field with non-disabled candidates and to ensure they are able to perform to the best of their abilities. It is not designed to give any type of advantage to disabled candidates in the receiving of additional examination accommodations. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the reliability or validity of the examination.
3. Applying reasonable adjustment

3.1 FFPMRCA examinations are in two formats, which require different deliveries; computer based OMR (MCQ) and Oral discussion (SOE). Each type of format/delivery will make different demands on the candidate and will influence whether reasonable adjustments will be needed and the kind of reasonable adjustment which can be put in place. The Faculty recognises that it is not possible or appropriate to attempt to define a pre-determined set of reasonable adjustments and therefore any decisions will need to be made on a case-by-case basis.

3.2 Good practice in the support of candidates with dyslexia is applied in offering a standard provision for the MCQ examination. However, the Faculty recognises that some dyslexic candidates may have different or additional requirements. Where this is the case further reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4. Discussing requirements for ‘reasonable adjustment’

4.1 On application to sit an FFPMRCA examination, candidates should contact the examinations manager if they consider themselves to have a disability or condition which would affect their ability to sit an examination so that this information can be recorded and their need for examination adjustment can be discussed. A candidate who declares a disability at this stage is not necessarily assumed to be requesting an adjustment for the examination, and following discussion and evaluation of the support that can be given, it may be the case that no adjustment is required.

4.2 Candidates with dyslexia do not need to contact the examinations manager directly if they wish to apply for standard provisions and should follow the guidelines set out at Appendix 4 of the Regulations. Where additional requirements are needed, which are not met by the standard provisions, such as printing examination papers in particular fonts or the use of coloured overlays, candidates should follow the procedure set out at paragraphs 4.1 and 5.1

5. Requesting reasonable adjustments

5.1 Following discussion with the examinations manager, candidates requiring reasonable adjustment to their examination conditions must specify their requirements in writing, preferably during the application window and no later than three weeks prior to the examination date. See paragraph 7.3.

5.2 On receipt of a written request for reasonable adjustment of examination conditions, the examinations manager will liaise with the Examinations Chairman and appropriate Faculty officials to identify all aspects of the candidate’s support needs, taking into account recommendations from specialist reports and/or medical documentation. The examinations manager will coordinate and finalise arrangements and advise the candidate in writing of the reasonable adjustments that will be put in place.
6. **Supporting evidence**

6.1 Disabilities and reasonable adjustments to examinations can take many forms. For example, a candidate with a hearing impediment may need examiners to sit on a particular side during an oral examination. Candidates with mobility issues may require adjustments to exam cubicle layouts or the provision of seating during an OSCE circuit. Where the disability is self-evident or the adjustment is straightforward then further medical evidence will not be required, the examinations manager may require the candidate to provide a supporting email from their Local Pain Medicine Educational Supervisor or Regional Adviser in Pain Medicine (or supervising consultant of equivalent standing if applying from overseas) where no record of the candidate’s disability or medical condition is held by the Faculty.

6.2 In cases where the adjustment is not straightforward, or would give a benefit to a non-disabled candidate, then further supporting evidence is required. For example, the standard provision for dyslexia allows candidates additional time for the MCQ examination this would clearly benefit the non-disabled candidate. Therefore as part of the procedure for applying for this standard provision, a candidate must supply a written assessment from an educational psychologist and a letter of support from their Local Pain Medicine Educational Supervisor or Regional Adviser in Pain Medicine (or supervising consultant of equivalent standing if applying from overseas). Appendix 4 of the Regulations give full details.

7. **Granting adjustments and responsibilities**

7.1 The granting of an adjustment and the level of the adjustment given are at the discretion of the Examinations Chairman. Requests described at paragraph 6.2 which are not standard provisions for dyslexia, may be referred to the Faculty Training and Assessment Committee, further expert opinion may also be sought. GMC guidance indicates that while there is a duty to make a reasonable adjustment, in enabling the competence standards in tomorrow’s doctors to be met, there is no requirement to make adjustments that would alter the standard of competency required.

7.2 The Faculty is responsible for undertaking an evidence based evaluation of the entitlement to adjustments for disabled candidates, as defined by the Act and to those with conditions outlined at paragraph 1.2. The Faculty will undertake re-evaluations of entitlement where the needs of the candidate change.

7.3 The candidate will be responsible for making a written request for reasonable adjustment before the deadlines set out at paragraph 5.1 setting out the nature of their disability/temporary condition and requested adjustment and providing appropriate evidence of the need for reasonable adjustment, where required. Candidates must also advise the Faculty should they decide not to use the agreed adjustments at least one week before the examination date.

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8. **Examples of Adjustments**

8.1 The example adjustments below are included for guidance purposes only:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element of exam requiring adjustment</th>
<th>Example reasonable adjustments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Use of Faculty facilities, separate rooms, ramps, adapted chairs or desks, adjustment of exam room screening, hearing loops, access to food &amp; drink (e.g. for diabetes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification to examiners and invigilators</td>
<td>Notifying examiners or invigilators that candidates may display symptoms or have mobility issues that need consideration but no additional adjustment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra Time</td>
<td>Standard provision for dyslexia 25% extra time at the MCQ exam. (Appendix 4 of the Regulations).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest Breaks</td>
<td>Exam time stopped and restarted to allow for breaks for rest/meals or medication to be built in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Coloured overlays, Large-font papers and answer sheets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology</td>
<td>Large computer screen/font, adapted mouse, IT to support visual impairment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 12

Additional Educational Training Form

FACULTY OF PAIN MEDICINE
of the Royal College of Anaesthetists

FPMRCA Examinations – Additional Educational Training
(AET Form1)

Notes on completion of AET Form1:

1. To meet eligibility at the sixth (final) attempt at any FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA examination, a candidate must provide the Court of Examiners with evidence of a plan of additional educational experience/training which is expected to be achieved before the next intended re-sit. Please note under normal circumstances the Faculty would not recommend re-applying at the next sitting.

2. Additional educational training must be as follows: Attendance at a recognised FPMRCA Tutorial course, either locally or nationally. Practice sessions at the relevant component. Further clinical exposure and Pain Medicine training as appropriate for the relevant examination component.

3. Proof should be provided by the submission of this form, which must be agreed and signed by the Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine and received by the Faculty at least three months prior to the published date of the next intended examination.

4. Before completing this form the Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine, in consultation with other hospital trainers, must hold a discussion with the candidate and giving serious consideration to previous examination results and shortfalls, agree that following additional training another attempt at the examination is recommended.

5. The LPMES must agree to assist in the implementation of a realistic and achievable plan of additional training which must meet the criteria set out on this form.

AET Form 1 – Evidence of Additional Educational Training:
(To be completed by CT or RA)

Name of Candidate: 

Relevant Exam component

Name of Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine: 

PTO.
Following discussion with the above candidate I confirm that, since their previous attempt, the following ‘Additional Educational Training’ plan has been agreed and put in place:

Attendance at the following *Local / *National FFPMRCA Tutorial (provide date of Tutorial):

Examination practice for relevant component (provide dates and types of sessions):

Further clinical exposure and training (give full details of clinical and other training planned):

In order to complete the above plan of additional training I have recommended that the candidate re-sits the examination at the following sitting (please refer to the exams calendar):
I recommend a further attempt at this exam component and agree to oversee the above Additional Educational Training.

Signed: …………………………………………… Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine

I agree to follow the above plan under the supervision of my Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine. I understand that I must have attended a guidance interview for this component before my next attempt.

Signed: ……………………………………………Current Medical Grade ……………………

Date form completed…………………………………..

Please submit this form to the Director of Training and Examinations at the Faculty address.
APPENDIX 12  CANDIDATE EXAMINATION FEEDBACK POLICY

This policy has been drawn up following the guidelines and standards set out in the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges’ (AoMRC) document: ‘Standards for candidate feedback in summative postgraduate medical examinations in the UK, [February 2015]’. The feedback provided to FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA examination candidates also meets the current ‘GMC Standards for Curricula and Assessment Systems’.

1. Definition of feedback

“Specific information about the comparison between a candidate’s observed performance and a standard given with the intention to assist with improving the candidate’s performance.”

1.1 The Faculty believes it is important to provide feedback to candidates beyond a standard pass-fail result to assist them in understanding and interpreting their overall result. The Faculty does not attempt to justify the overall result or the marks awarded, whether overall or for specific sections or skill domains. Marks are awarded using strict guidelines. Marks awarded by the Court of Examiners are final and therefore papers cannot be remarked.

1.2 Candidate feedback should not be confused with candidate guidance. Feedback is the provision of information relating to performance, whilst ‘guidance’ relates to the action taken in relation to certain information about performance. The rules regarding the provision of examination guidance available to candidates, is set out at Section 10, paragraphs 10.2 to 10.5 of these regulations.

2. Publishing results and providing feedback

2.1 Pass-fail lists are published on the exam pages of the Faculty website from 2pm on the release of results date. The release of results date is set out on candidate admission notices and published on the exam pages of the Faculty website.

2.2 Candidates are identified on pass-fail lists by their candidate number and College/Faculty reference number only. Candidates can choose to ‘opt out’ of the pass-fail list by contacting the examination department at least 48 hours before the release of results date. If a candidate opts out of the pass-fail list their details and result will not be published and they will receive their pass-fail result via their results letter. Pass-fail results cannot be provided to candidates by email or telephone.

2.3 The period between the exam date and the release of results date will vary for each exam component and depends on the standard setting and marking methods used to confirm results. At the FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA SOE the pass-fail
results are normally published on the website from 2pm on the first Friday following the exam date(s). The MCQ exam takes longer to mark and standard set, however the Faculty aims to publish pass-fail lists within two weeks of the date of the exam.

2.4 Feedback is provided to candidates in the form of a ‘results letter’, this will be sent by first class post, to the candidates’ home address held on the Faculty database within seven working days of the ‘release of results date’. See paragraph 3, regarding the type of feedback provided.

2.5 Appendix 2 of these regulations, give details on the marking systems and the methodology used to set pass standards used for FFPMRCA examinations.

3. Type of feedback provided

3.1 The type of feedback given to candidates will vary according to the exam component attempted. However the Faculty has ensured that the feedback provided meets the AoRMC and GMCs standards and is in line with other Medical Colleges/Faculties.

3.2 All candidates whether they pass or fail an examination will receive the same type of feedback through their results letter. This is because the Faculty believes that the provision of numerical information about a candidate’s exam performance not only assists with improving a candidate’s performance at future examinations but also provides important information on which to base further continuing professional development.

3.3 However, the Faculty is aware that doctors undergoing recruitment processes may be asked to supply a pass letter for their FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA examination and therefore to avoid recruitment bodies using feedback information to rank candidates or as part of a recruitment decision, feedback for candidates who pass the FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA examinations overall are provided as an enclosure to their results letter and need not be provided along with the provision of proof of passing the examination.

3.4 The following feedback is provided on all exam results letters/feedback enclosures:
- Confirmation of the candidate’s pass-fail result
- Confirmation of the number of attempts used/maximum number of attempts
• The examination pass mark as a raw score in relation to the maximum achievable test score (e.g. 280/400) and/or the percentage value (e.g. 70%)
• The candidate’s overall score as a raw score and/or as a percentage value

3.5 In addition to the feedback listed at paragraph 3.4 candidates are provided with the following information for each FFPMRCA exam component as set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FPMRCA Examination</th>
<th>Feedback provided, as paragraph 3.4 plus:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA MCQ</td>
<td>Candidate raw scores in MTF, SBA and EMQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum score available in MTF, SBA and EMQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of voids/unanswered questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA SOE</td>
<td>Candidate scores for each of the three sub-sections (see Appendix 1 of these regulations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Additional feedback (Examiners comments)**

In addition to the feedback provided to candidates as set out at paragraph 3, examiner comments made on candidate performance at the FFPMRCA/DFPMRCA SOE examination are provided on request. On receipt of result letters, candidates can request a transcript of their examiners’ comments by emailing exams@rcoa.ac.uk. There is no charge for this service.

5. **Who else will be provided with feedback**

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, a candidate’s examination result may be processed and passed to examiners, Regional Advisors in Pain Medicine, Postgraduate Dean, employer, etc. for legitimate purposes connected with their training. Candidates automatically agree to this when completing exam applications either in writing or on-line.

6. **Feedback in extraordinary circumstances**

The Faculty believes it is necessary to provide more detailed feedback to candidates and their trainers where a candidate’s performance at the SOE examinations is poor or causes concern. This feedback, along with suggested additional educational support which could be provided, will be sent in the form of a letter to the candidate’s Regional Advisor in Pain Medicine or senior pain medicine consultant and copied to the candidate concerned. This letter is designed to bring the trainer and candidate together to discuss poor performance and areas of concern, in order to provide support and agree additional educational training that can be put in place before the next attempt. Letters are automatically dispatched to trainers and candidates where a candidate’s score is <20/40 in the SOE component and where a candidate’s performance demonstrates a concern in regard to patient safety.
7. Acting upon feedback

7.1 The primary responsibility for acting upon feedback from an examination lies with the candidate.

7.2 Where a candidate has failed an examination they should discuss their feedback with their RAPM or trainer and undertake any specific exam preparation or additional educational training suggested in such a discussion before making any further attempt at the examination.

7.3 Where a candidate has passed an examination they should still review any feedback with their RAPM or trainer in order to try and identify any weaker areas in clinical knowledge or performance which may benefit from further training or study as part of ongoing professional development.

7.4 Trainers/RAPMs should respond to requests from candidates to discuss their feedback, providing support and assistance in the provision of additional training and preparation for examinations, including advice on the timing of their next attempt.

8. Further assistance available to examinations candidates

8.1 In addition to the examination feedback provided, candidates may also find the Examination Chairman’s summary reports useful in the interpretation of their own performance in relation to the analysis of exams data set out in this document. The Chairman’s examination summary is placed on the Faculty website following each examination.

8.2 Example questions and a list of topics covered in each exam are also available on the Faculty website.