

MRCP(UK) PACES Examiner Misconduct Policy

Dealing with allegations of misconduct

1. MRCP(UK) relies on the professionalism and commitment of a large number of Fellows of the three Royal Colleges of Physicians to deliver the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (PACES). To maintain the quality of the examination, MRCP(UK) monitors all aspects of the examination, including the appointment and performance of examiners, and their compliance with relevant equality and diversity legislation. PACES examiners are expected to follow the Code of Conduct for PACES Examiners, which provides a framework against which allegations of misconduct will be judged.
2. Allegations of misconduct of an examiner (for example relating to attitudes or behaviours during an examination) may be made by candidates or others involved in the examination process. In addition, routine monitoring of the examination may bring to light possible issues with examiner conduct (for example, systematic bias in the assessment of one candidate group).
3. In the event of any such allegation or occurrence, MRCP(UK) will undertake an investigation governed by the following principles:
 - The investigation will be led by the Chair of the Clinical Examining Board (CEB) and Academic Head of MRCP(UK) in conjunction with the lead (senior) examiner for the examiner's parent college.
 - No definitive action will be taken against any examiner until the investigation is complete, however, in some instances it may be necessary to suspend the examiner from examining duties pending investigation.
 - The anonymity of the examiner will be protected as far as is possible.
 - The examiner will usually be informed of the allegation and the process that the investigation will follow.
 - MRCP(UK) will regard lack of cooperation by an examiner with an investigation as a matter that should be reported to the parent college.
 - The investigation may involve asking other examiners to comment on any allegations or observations. In this case, all examiners are expected to respond to any such approaches in an open and timely manner.
 - Investigations may involve requests for examiners to attend a meeting.
 - Investigations may involve analysis of statistical information on examiner marking.

4. If the investigation substantiates the allegation, the Chair of the CEB, following confirmation with the Medical Director of MRCP(UK), will refer the examiner to their parent college, and may make recommendations for actions regarding the examiner's future involvement in the PACES examination.
5. Decisions regarding any sanction imposed upon an examiner will however be made by the parent college, after consideration of any recommendations made by the Chair of the CEB.
6. In exceptional circumstances, MRCP(UK) may also refer the examiner to the GMC (or equivalent body if the examiner practises outside the UK).