ORE Part 2 - Complaints and Appeals Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out the Consortium's Complaints Policy and Procedures for the ORE Part 2.
1.2 There are two separate processes available to candidates: complaints and appeals. These have different purposes, triggers, and timelines. It is important that candidates read this policy carefully and use the correct form before submitting.
1.3 If you are unsure which process applies to you, please read Sections 2 and 4 carefully before completing the relevant form.

2. ORE Complaints Policy

2.1 A complaint relates to concerns about the delivery or administration of the examination. A complaint must be submitted within 5 working days of the end of the examination, before results are released.
2.2 A complaint may be submitted concerning the Overseas Registration Exam (ORE) in relation to:
- 2.2.1 The provision and administration of the examination
- 2.2.2 Adherence to the Consortium's and the GDC's administrative processes
- 2.2.3 The fairness and impartiality of the ORE administration and examination process

2.3 A complaint will only be upheld where:
- 2.3.1 There is evidence of a serious defect in the provision or administration of the examination; and
- 2.3.2 There is a reasonable possibility that the defect materially affected the candidate's performance or the fairness of the examination process.
- 2.3.3 Complaints may relate to, but are not limited to, the following categories:
- 2.3.4 Technical issues during the exam
- 2.3.5 Test centre environment or conditions
- 2.3.6 An issue on the day that was not handled appropriately
- 2.3.7 Staff conduct
- 2.3.8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

2.4 Process and timeline:
- 2.4.1 Complaints must be submitted online by clicking the link to fill in the relevant complaints form .
- 2.4.2 Complaints relating to an examination diet must be received within 5 working days of the end of the examination. The Complaints Form will open on the first working day following the final day of the examination diet. Once this deadline has expired, complaints relating to that examination diet will no longer be considered. Results cannot be appealed;

complaints can only be logged up to five working days after the end of diet, which is before results are released to candidates

2.4.3 The Consortium aims to resolve complaints quickly, effectively and as smoothly as possible. We guarantee acknowledgement of all complaints within five working days of their receipt and, under normal circumstances, fully respond to each complaint soon after the General Dental Council has released the results of the examination to candidates. If we cannot give a full response soon after results have been issued, we will contact the complainant to let them know why and give a realistic timeframe for when they can expect resolution.

2.4.4 The UCL ORE Consortium will review the complaint and agree the outcome within 20 working days of receipt. Where it is necessary to obtain further information from the candidate or a third party, the Consortium will liaise with the candidate and agree a final outcome within 14 working days of receipt of the additional information.

2.5 Outcome: A complaint that is upheld may result in a candidate being offered a priority place to re-sit the examination free of charge. If the complaint is upheld, the attempt to which the complaint relates may be discounted when considering the maximum number of attempts.

3. ORE Complaints Review Procedure

3.1 When submitting an online complaint, candidates must be aware that if the complaint is upheld, they will forfeit their right to know the outcome of their ORE attempt. If the complaint is upheld, we may consider the following:

3.1.1 allowing you a free attempt

3.1.2 allowing you an additional attempt

3.1.3 any combination of the above.

3.2 Other options may be considered at the discretion of the decision maker. Please be aware that if your complaint is upheld your results will be annulled regardless of whether you were successful in your ORE attempt.

3.3 Following the submission of an online complaint, it is passed to the relevant component lead as soon as is practicable. This review also requires oversight by the Chief External Examiner, the Internal Quality Assurance Lead and the UCL Project Manager (who logs each complaint). Following this, the complaint is passed to the UCL Consortium ORE Programme Director.

3.4 The UCL Consortium ORE Programme Director assesses the complaint to determine whether it constitutes a defect in the provision of the examination or relates to the Consortium's or GDC's administrative processes.

3.5 Complaints regarding defects in the provision of the examination are forwarded to the Component Lead(s) and copied to the GDC's Chief External Examiners and ORE Consortium Lead for comment.

3.6 Complaints regarding the Consortium's administrative processes are forwarded to the UCL Project Manager for review and response.

3.7 The outcome of the complaint will be communicated to the candidate by the UCL Consortium Administrative Team. The decision at this stage is final.

3.8 An overview of all complaints and outcomes will be reviewed during the Examination Board held after each diet.

4. Notification to the General Dental Council

4.1 The UCL ORE administrative team will inform the General Dental Council of all formal written complaints within 7 working days of receipt of a complaint and will provide details of the decision of the Examination Board within 7 working days of the Examination Board Meeting.

5. Reviews Policy

5.1 A review is a formal request for the General Dental Council (GDC) to consider a decision made in relation to the ORE examination.

5.2 A review is different from a general complaint about the delivery or administration of the examination. A review is linked to a specific decision communicated to the candidate. Candidates may not request a review of the academic judgement of examiners.

5.3 A candidate may request a review in relation to the following types of decision:

- 5.3.1 Mitigating circumstances
- 5.3.2 Attempt counted in cases of exam disruption (note: this decision lies with the GDC)
- 5.3.3 Malpractice
- 5.3.4 Reasonable adjustments

5.4 A review may be requested where one or both of the following conditions are met:

- 5.4.1 There is evidence that the candidate's examination may have been adversely affected by illness or other factors which the candidate was unable to disclose before the Examination Board reached its decision; or
- 5.4.2 There is clear evidence of an administrative error, or that the examination was not conducted in accordance with the relevant instructions, regulations or procedures.

5.5 Requests for review of an outcome concerning mitigating circumstances, attempted counted or malpractice must be submitted directly to the GDC within 28 days of the decision relevant to the review.

5.6 Requests for a review of an outcome concerning reasonable adjustments must be made within 5 working days of receiving the outcome.

5.7 Requests for review should be sent to examinations@gdc-uk.org.

5.8 Candidates must submit any supporting evidence directly to the GDC as part of their request for review. Examples of supporting evidence may include:

- 5.8.1 Medical evidence
- 5.8.2 Emails or correspondence
- 5.8.3 Incident reports

5.9 Where a review is upheld, the outcome will depend on the nature of the decision under review and the circumstances of the case. This may include the annulment of an attempt where appropriate.

5.10 The review and determination of such matters are the responsibility of the General Dental Council. Any requests for further information or evidence will be communicated directly by the GDC.

6. Unfounded Complaints and Unprofessional Behaviour

6.1 Genuine complaints will be treated respectfully and will be investigated and responded to. However, spurious complaints that are a deliberate attempt to unfairly gain advantage will be considered unprofessional behaviour and maybe considered under the Suspected Malpractice Policy and Procedures.

6.2 Candidates are prohibited from contacting or attempting to contact internal or external examiners prior to or after the examination for any reason. Such behaviour will be considered unprofessional behaviour and may lead to consideration under the Suspected Malpractice Policy.

* This can also be considered within the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.