Royal College of Surgeons of England

ADVANCING SURGICAL CARE

APPEAL REGULATIONS

Royal College of Surgeons of England

November 2026

Important note: these regulations are under continual review therefore it is recommended that candidates keep in regular contact with the College to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information.

1. Introduction

1.1 These Regulations apply to all candidates for the dental examinations governed by the Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCSEng).

1.2 Candidates should note that, by entering to sit an examination, they are deemed to have understood and agreed to abide by all relevant regulations, including these Appeal Regulations.

1.3 Any dispute as to the interpretation of these Regulations shall be referred to the Director of Examinations (or delegated representative), whose decision in the matter shall be final.

1.4 These Regulations are to be used to investigate all dental examination appeals.

1.5 An 'appeal' is defined as a request for a review of a decision made by or on behalf of an Examining Board about a candidate's performance in an examination.

1.6 A candidate who has been unsuccessful in one of the RCSEng dental examinations may have the right of appeal in terms of the circumstances given below. Appeals are only permitted on the following grounds:

1.6.1 Procedural defects or irregularities in the conduct of the examination that is within the College's control, (i.e. administrative error) which could have adversely affected a candidate's performance or the outcome of the examination. This is applicable regardless of whether the exam is delivered in a face-to-face or remote setting.

1.6.2 Exceptional personal circumstances should be communicated to the College in writing at the time of application or 14 days before the commencement of the examination date if appropriate. A candidate may appeal on the grounds of a failure of the College to take account of any exceptional personal circumstance, such as medical or adverse personal circumstances intimated in advance, as appropriate.

1.7 A candidate does not have the right of appeal against the outcome of the examination in any other circumstances, including the following:

1.7.1 Lack of understanding or awareness of the Examination Regulations

1.7.2 Seeking to question the professional or academic judgement of the examiners.

1.7.3 Insufficient hardware and electronic infrastructure to adequately complete the exam, where appropriate (remote delivery).

1.8 The outcome of an appeal submitted under these Regulations may only be determined as either:

1.8.1 Rejected as considered to be unsubstantiated or outside the permitted grounds.

1.8.2 Rejected as out of time or incomplete.

1.8.3 Upheld, result of the examination (or relevant section) annulled and attempt expunged.

1.9 Candidates should note that an appeal cannot lead to a fail result being changed into a pass result, unless it has been established that there was an error in the collation, recording or reporting of the marks meaning that had the error not occurred, it can be determined that the candidate would have passed the examination concerned.

2. Procedure

2.1 A candidate must submit any appeal via the online appeals form (LDS Appeal/ complaint form) . This must be within 30 calendar days of dispatch of the formal result letter to which it relates. The candidate should include the grounds for appeal and enclose y supporting information.

2.2 The Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) will acknowledge receipt of the appeal documentation and will then investigate. If grounds for appeal have been determined, the Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) will discuss the case with the Chair of the Examination Board and undertake further investigations, as he/she deems necessary including consultation with examinations staff, examiners and remote proctoring service (live or recorded). If the Director of Examinations or Chair of the Board forms part of any alleged irregularity relating to appeal, a senior examiner, not involved in the appeal, will be appointed to review the appeal.

2.3 If the Chair of the Examination Board considers that the appeal is within the permitted grounds, and the procedural defect, irregularity or exceptional personal circumstance has had an effect on the outcome, the result will be annulled and the attempt expunged. The candidate's examination fee will be either refunded, or they will be granted a free attempt at a future sitting. The Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) will notify the candidate accordingly.

2.4 If the Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) or Chair of the Examination Board considers that the appeal is outside the permitted grounds, the appeal will not be progressed further, and the Director of Examinations will notify the candidate of this. It is recognised that on occasion it may be initially unclear whether a case constitutes an appeal or a complaint; hence the College reserves the right to reclassify an appeal as a complaint or vice-versa at any stage in the proceedings, in consultation with the appellant/complainant. Such reclassification will always be done so that the matter can be considered in the most appropriate and fair way, and candidates will not be required to resubmit their cases following the reclassification.

2.5 If the candidate is not satisfied with the reasons given for rejection of their appeal by The Director of Examinations or the Chair of the Examination Board, they may contact the Director of Examinations within 10 working days of the date of the notification letter to request that their case be reconsidered. The candidate may provide additional information at this stage. All such requests will be reviewed in the first instance by the Chair of the Examination Board for a non-related College exam, who will determine whether sufficient evidence exists for reconsideration.

2.6 If the Chair of the Examination Board for a non-related College exam refers the appeal to an Appeal Panel, the candidate will be required to pay an appeal fee of £200. In the event that an appeal is upheld, the candidate will be entitled to a full refund of the appeal fee paid.

2.7 If the Chair of the Examination Board for a non-related College exam considers there to be insufficient evidence for consideration by an Appeal Panel, or that the appeal is outside the permitted grounds, the Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) will notify the candidate of this and confirm that the appeal procedure is at an end. The decision made by the Chair of the Examination Board for a non-related College exam will be final.

3 Conduct of an Appeal Panel

3.1 A meeting of the Appeal Panel shall be organised by the Director of Examinations or a suitable alternative. The Appeal Panel hearing will consider paper-based submissions only and the appellant is not required to attend the College in person.

3.2 The Appeal Panel shall meet as soon as reasonably practicable and shall comprise three individuals. The Appeal Panel will consist of:

- The Chair or Lead Examiner for a College examination not related to the appeal (who will act as the Chair of the Appeal Panel).
- An Examiner from a dental exam not involved in the incident giving rise to the appeal.

- A Lay Representative not involved in the incident giving rise to the appeal.

The Director of Examinations (or delegated representative), or an alternate, shall act as Secretary to the Panel.

3.3 The Director of Examinations role shall be to record the proceedings and deliberations of the Appeal Panel and advise on procedural or regulatory matters as required. He or she may not influence the decisions of the Appeal Panel in any way.

3.4 The Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) shall inform the candidate of the scheduled date of the Appeal Panel meeting as soon as possible and not less than 15 working days before the date of the meeting.

3.5 The Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) will arrange for a copy of each document that is to be sent to the Appeal Panel to be sent to the candidate not less than 10 working days before the meeting date set. This may also include recordings from the remote proctoring service if appropriate. For transparency, this will also be provided to the candidate but only if it relates to the basis of the appeal. Such documents shall include any statement(s) provided by the candidate, whose responsibility it is to ensure any such documents are received by the Director of Examinations at least 12 working days before the appeal meeting date set. Documents may not be presented to or referred to by the Appeal Panel, unless they have been circulated in this manner.

4 Appeal Panel Procedure

4.1 At its discretion, the Appeal Panel may have preliminary discussions before the appeal meeting date.

4.2 At the start of the Appeal Panel meeting all present shall introduce themselves. The Appeal Panel Chair shall then present and summarise the documentary evidence provided by the appellant in support of their case. Any further documentary evidence supplied by the College or any third parties involved will then also be considered.

4.4 The Appeal Panel shall then consider the matter and reach a decision.

4.5 The Appeal Panel shall be empowered to make the following decisions:

4.5.1 Appeal rejected with no further action to be taken; or

4.5.2 Appeal upheld, result of the examination (or relevant section) annulled, attempt expunged and appeal fee refunded. Either the candidate's

examination fee will be refunded or they will be granted a free attempt at a future sitting (as determined by the College).

4.6 The Director of Examinations (or delegated representative) will notify the candidate of the outcome within 10 working days of the Appeal Panel meeting.

4.7 The decision of the Appeal Panel will be final.

Start Date: November 2026
Review Date: November 2029