

MRCPsych Code of Conduct for Examination Candidates (including Applicants)

Candidates for all MRCPsych examinations are expected to behave in a professional manner throughout their dealings with the examinations department, and to conduct themselves as is appropriate for a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. This includes behaviour in all their contact with examinations staff before, during and after the examination, as well as in their contact with examiners, invigilators, simulated patients and other candidates.

This Code of Conduct has been developed to provide a framework against which allegations of misconduct related to behaviour will be judged. This code applies to all examinations from August 2018.

Candidates should note that by applying to sit an examination they are deemed to have understood and agreed to abide by the relevant regulations including this code.

General standard of behaviour

Candidates are expected to behave in a professional manner in all activities associated with the examination. Adherence to the principles and values of the General Medical Council (GMC)'s Good Medical Practice is expected at all times. The Examinations Sub-Committee (ESC) expects all candidates to treat everyone they encounter during their examination experience with courtesy, respect and dignity.

This code applies equally to behaviour of candidates when

1. Dealing directly with personnel involved in examinations in person, on the telephone or in correspondence.
2. Publishing or posting comments on websites and social media.

Interacting with examinations personnel

Candidates are expected to act with respect for those running the examination at all times. Examiners, invigilators, role players and staff have the right to undertake their role without fear of abuse or harassment. Physical, verbal or written abuse, or threat of such abuse, will be regarded as a form of misconduct, and will be investigated accordingly by a nominated member of ESC.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour include, but are not limited to: shouting, threats of harm, inappropriate written communications, email and telephone communications, and physical contact.

Interacting with other candidates

ESC and the examinations department strive to ensure that the examination experience is as calm and pleasant as possible for all concerned.

- Candidates are expected to act with respect towards fellow candidates.
- Candidates are expected to ensure that their behaviour is not disruptive and does not affect other candidates attempting the examination at the same time.

Interacting with simulated patients (role players)

Candidates will be required to interact with simulated patients for the clinical examination.

- Candidates should maintain an awareness of role player comfort and safety at all times.
- Candidates should obtain verbal consent prior to carrying out a physical examination, and should immediately cease their examination if requested to by the role player or examiner.
- Dignity and modesty of role players should be respected at all times.
- Candidates should adhere to appropriate hygiene protocols, specifically regarding hand washing.
- Candidates must not approach or attempt to interact with role players apart from when the examination is actively running.

Academic misconduct

ESC regards any attempt to cheat with the utmost seriousness. Academic misconduct includes, but is not restricted to:

- The introduction into any examination of any materials, audio or communication devices (including mobile phones and 'smart' watches), other than those specifically permitted for the examination e.g. basic calculators are allowed for Paper B;
- Any attempt to copy or remove materials or content from an examination;
- The use of recording equipment (photographic, video or audio recording equipment);
- Any attempt to release content from an examination to a third party;
- Any attempt to communicate with another candidate;
- Any attempt to gain access to, read or copy the work of another candidate;
- Any attempt to gain or pass on information about the contents of the examination in advance of the date of the examination;
- Impersonation – or soliciting impersonation – of a candidate;
- Bribery (of another candidate, examination official or simulated patient);
- Failure to abide by the reasonable instructions of an examinations official, or breaching of Examination Regulations;
- Falsification of any results document or qualification;
- Providing any examination material to a commercial organisation running MRCPsych or similar courses;
- Any other form of cheating or conduct likely to lead to an unfair advantage;
- Aiding or abetting any of the above.

If a candidate has any concern about the conduct of a fellow candidate this should be brought to the attention of an examinations official as soon as is practicable.

Copyright

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has copyright of all materials prepared for the MRCPsych examination. Candidates must not discuss, publish or in any other way attempt to share any material from the examination, this includes to any commercial organisations running MRCPsych or similar courses.

Appeals and complaints

Appeals against examination results and complaints should be submitted in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Examinations Regulations. Appeals and complaints will be considered and investigated in a fair, timely and transparent manner.

It is occasionally necessary to approach candidates for comments on appeals or complaints, and candidates are expected to respond in an open and timely manner.

Candidates should be assured that they have the opportunity to raise matters of legitimate concern and that making an appeal or complaint will not put candidates in danger of conduct violations.

Examinations Sub-Committee

15 August 2018