

Investigation of anomalous behaviour in online/remote examinations

Following the online/remote delivery of an examination, Colleges may need to contact candidates to investigate anomalous behaviour that has been identified in post-examination reviews of remote-proctoring videos. Once contacted, candidates will have five working days to respond to the College to provide any information requested.

Such an investigation does not mean that misconduct is suspected, or that sanctions will automatically follow. In some circumstances, anomalous behaviour in an online/remote examination will result in sanctions or outcomes that are necessary to protect the integrity of the examination as they are in breach of intercollegiate regulations on examination set-up or conduct, but do not necessarily indicate that the candidate is felt to be committing misconduct. It is the Colleges' responsibility to ensure the fair and valid delivery of all examinations, and their integrity, so candidates will be subject to outcomes for instances that are outside of their control if a candidate's conduct cannot be sufficiently verified.

The following are examples of such anomalous behaviour, with associated expected actions depending on the information obtained in the investigation of the anomalous behaviour. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of anomalous behaviour may be considered by the Colleges at their discretion:

Type of anomalous behaviour	Expected outcome
<i>No remote proctoring video of candidate's exam experience available</i>	No result issued. Free resit will be offered if it is found not to be a result of candidate's actions; attempt stands if it is found to be a result of candidate's actions
<i>Candidate not visible in remote proctoring video</i>	No result issued, attempt stands
<i>Candidate's eyes not visible in remote proctoring</i>	No result issued, attempt stands
<i>Candidate's ears not visible in remote proctoring</i>	No result issued, attempt stands
<i>Candidate speaking, talking or reading questions out loud</i>	No result issued, attempt stands
<i>Candidate looking away from screen during exam</i>	No result issued, attempt stands

Candidates who wear a hearing aid should contact the relevant College examinations department to inform them of this so that the hearing aid is not mistaken for earphones, which may prompt an investigation and sanction in line with the wearing of ear/headphones in an exam.

Candidates who do not receive a result for instances such as those above should note that they will not receive any performance feedback either. In these circumstances it is not possible to verify a candidate's conduct, therefore the data for that candidate is removed from the results data set to ensure the accuracy of the standard setting process. As such, it is not possible to generate feedback for candidates who do not have results issued.

Appeals

Appeals against a decision or sanction following investigation of anomalous behaviour in an online/remote examination will be considered by the Chair of ICBSE. Candidates who wish to appeal against a decision should address their appeal to the ICBSE Manager within five working days of the despatch of the communication of the decision or sanction.

If the Chair of ICBSE decides to convene an appeal panel to consider the appeal, the appeal panel may be composed as set out below. The panel members will be experienced in examinations but will be external to the College concerned and will not include anyone who has previously been involved with the case.

- Chair – chair of the ICBSE unless the chair made the decision that is the subject of the appeal;
- Two examiners from a surgical Royal College not the subject of the appeal;
- Educational adviser;
- Legal adviser;
- Appeals Panel Secretary (normally ICBSE Manager), to minute the meeting but not to participate in the decision.

If the Chair of ICBSE considers that sufficient grounds do not exist for consideration by an Appeal Panel, or that the Appeal is outside the permitted grounds, the ICBSE Manager will notify the candidate of this with reasons and confirm that the appeal procedure is at an end. The decision made by the Chair of ICBSE will be final.

Neither ICBSE nor any of the Colleges will meet any costs incurred by the candidate in attending either a panel meeting or an appeal meeting.