**FACULTY OF OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE**

**ASSESSMENT MISCONDUCT POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**2021**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This policy applies to all candidates for examinations and/or assessments of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians.

1.2 The Faculty of Occupational Medicine (the FOM) reserves the right to debar any candidate from sitting and/or passing an examination or any constituent part of it if there is doubt concerning the sufficiency and/or authenticity of the certificates produced by the candidate or if there exists any other reason regarding the fitness of that candidate to become a member of the FOM.

1.3 Candidates should note that by virtue of entering to sit an examination they are deemed to have understood and agreed to respect and abide by all relevant regulations including, but not restricted to, this Misconduct Policy and documentation sent to candidates on the conduct of individual parts and components of the examination.

1.4 The FOM reserves the right to withhold the issuing of results while investigations are ongoing. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, results may be released, amended or permanently withheld. The FOM also reserves the right to conduct retrospective investigations, and consequentially to amend or cancel results after they have been issued to candidates.

1.5 In the event of a finding of misconduct, where the person responsible is subject to the regulation of a professional body such as the General Medical Council, the FOM shall consider whether it is appropriate to inform the professional body of any finding.

1.6 This policy and procedure does not apply to anyone employed by or acting in any official capacity on behalf of the FOM, including invigilators and examiners. In such cases staff and officials should expect their conduct to be investigated separately.

1.7 During an examination any invigilator or examiner present shall be empowered to refuse to allow a candidate to continue with an examination on grounds of suspected misconduct.

1.8 Any dispute as to the interpretation of this policy shall be referred to the Academic Dean, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

**EXAMINATIONS**

**2 Definition of examination misconduct**

2.1 This policy covers all aspects of academic and professional misconduct in any FOM examinations/assessments, including those held in an online format. Misconduct includes, but is not restricted to:

(a) Falsely claiming a disability or right to a reasonable adjustment;

(b) Any attempt to gain or pass on information about the contents of the examination during or in advance of the date of the examination;

(c) Colluding with others to gain material advantage in any way;

(d) Impersonation or attempted impersonation of a candidate;

(e)Introduction into any examination of any materials other than those specifically permitted for the examination;

(f) Unacceptable or disruptive behaviour during the examination, including that classed as a breach of the online procedures communicated to candidates before each examination.  
(g) Any attempt to communicate with another candidate during the examination;   
(h) Any attempt to gain access to or read the work of another candidate during the examination;  
(i)Continuing to write or give answers after the allotted time;   
(j) Failing to abide by the instructions of an invigilator or examiner in relation to the examination regulations, including instructions given at the time of an examination.   
(k) Removal from any examination of any materials other than those specifically permitted;   
(l) Encouraging or assisting any of the above.

**RESEARCH**

2.2 **RESEARCH conduct**

The following principles and definition apply to all candidates who are submitting research work of any description in support of their candidature.

**Principles of good conduct in the conduct of research**

All those to whom the regulations apply are expected to:

* maintain professional standards
* be familiar with guidance on best research practice, for example in relation to matters of policy, ethics, finance and safety
* observe legal and ethical requirements laid down by the institution or other properly appointed bodies involved in the research field
* recognise the importance of good leadership and co-operation in research groups
* take special account of the needs of young researchers
* document results and keep secure primary data
* question findings
* attribute honestly the contribution of others
* take steps to ensure the health and safety of all those associated with the research
* report any conflict of interest, actual or prospective, to the appropriate person

**Definition of research misconduct**

This policy covers all aspects of academic and professional misconduct relating to any research submitted to the FOM. Research misconduct includes, (but is not restricted to the following, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent:

* failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research
* deception in relation to research proposals
* unethical behaviour in the conduct of research, for example in relation to research subjects
* unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially
* deviation from good research practice, where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to humans, other animals or the environment
* fabrication, falsification or corruption of research data
* distortion of research outcomes, by distortion or omission of data that do not fit expected results
* dishonest misinterpretation of results
* publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading
* plagiarism, or dishonest use of unacknowledged sources
* misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors
* inappropriate attribution of authorship
* fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment
* attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct
* inciting others to be involved in research misconduct
* collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others

Fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment may be dealt with under the regulations of the institution or organisation sponsoring the research.

The FOM has a responsibility to investigate allegations of research misconduct fully and expeditiously. It also has a responsibility to protect researchers from malicious, mischievous or frivolous allegations.

All those to whom these regulations apply should report any incident of misconduct, whether witnessed or suspected. Those who raise concerns in good faith will not be penalised in any way for doing so. Allegations should be made in the first instance by emailing [exams@fom.ac.uk](mailto:exams@fom.ac.uk), accompanied, where possible, by any available supporting evidence. The relevant parties will then be informed of the course of action to be taken.