

Education Training Policy

Examination Incident Report and Breach Review



Authorising Committee/ Department:	RANZCP Board
Responsible Committee/ Department:	Education Committee
Document Code:	POL EDT-TRN Examination Incident Report & Breach Policy (18.3-4)

Background

An incident report notifies the RANZCP of any discrepancy, error, unanticipated incident or alleged breach during a College centrally administered summative assessment. This is also the first step in activating the College complaints resolution process with regard to examinations.

Policy Statement & Purpose

This procedure specifies the high-level operational processes for managing incidents and/or breaches arising from a centrally administered summative assessment (e.g., multiple choice question examination or essay examinations or clinical examination, Psychotherapy Written Case or Scholarly Project) under the RANZCP Fellowship Program Regulations 2012.

Details and Process

1. Incident Reports

Incident reports should be submitted for any matter deemed to be a possible error or discrepancy in policy or procedure, a deviation from the examination or assessment rules, an ethical breach or an unanticipated incident that may have unfairly affected a candidate's performance or outcome in an examination.

An examination candidate, examiner, support or RANZCP staff or invigilator who witnessed or was involved in an incident that may have affected the outcome of that examination should individually lodge an incident report.

2. Lodgement and Processing

An incident report is to be submitted in writing via the RANZCP website. The online incident report form will be made available following an examination and will remain open for 5 working days.

Paper forms are made available at the examination venue on the day of the examination for examiners, support staff and invigilators.

2.1 De-identification

The Manager, Assessments (or delegate) will de-identify all submitted incident reports and gather relevant information.

2.2 Evaluation

The Manager, Assessments will collate all incident reports and relevant information with the examination results and will provide this to the Committee for Examinations (CFE), the Executive

Manager, Education and Training and the RANZCP Legal Officer for joint review of each incident report.

Incident reports and/or relevant information that describe the following will be considered by the CFE:

- a minor deviation from or discrepancy in the assessment procedures
- an unexpected incident or disruption to examination conditions
- a matter that requires review from an educational perspective.

Examples of these include: timing discrepancies or a slight delay, a ringing mobile phone, a candidate speaking briefly during the circuit interchange at the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), an ongoing major disturbance such as a protest outside the examination area or an examiner/role player in an OSCE station improvising outside the confines of their assigned role.

- Note: Clinical examination candidates should expect occasional sounds or interruptions, such as loudspeaker announcements or alarms, which are part of the natural workplace environment. Therefore, incident reports pertaining to disruptions of this nature will not usually result in rectification measures or actions.

2.3 Ethical Breaches

Following the evaluation process, should there be any incident reports and relevant information that may constitute an alleged ethical breach or breach of the examination rules, the candidate will be advised. The Executive Manager, Education and Training and RANZCP Legal Officer will notify the Chair, Education Committee (EC) and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) prior to any consideration of the matter.

Examples of these include: plagiarism, cheating during the examination, sitting the examination while not holding medical registration or sitting the examination under the alias of another person's name.

An alleged ethical or examination breach will be referred to the Membership Conduct Committee (MCC) for their review, consideration and determination. Should a matter regarding a candidate be referred to the MCC, the relevant authorities may be informed at the discretion of the MCC.

3. Review

Incident reports that describe the types of matters listed in point 2.2 will be reviewed and considered by the CFE.

Alleged ethical or examination breaches will be reviewed and considered by the MCC on a case-by-case basis.

3.1 Consideration of information

All relevant information pertaining to an incident or alleged breach will be considered.

Where relevant, the CFE or MCC may seek advice from and/or co-opt another member to provide specialised expertise on a particular incident or alleged breach in accordance with their Committee Regulations.

The CFE or MCC may determine that it is necessary to consider further evidence and/or may request that a candidate provide a written submission on the matter to the RANZCP Head Office by a specified date.

3.1.1 Option for MCC in reviewing a significant alleged breach

The MCC may determine that a teleconference or face-to-face meeting with a candidate is required. In this circumstance, the candidate will be advised in writing at least 10 working days prior of the date, location and the names of the MCC members who will be in attendance.

At the discretion of the MCC, the candidate may have a support person in attendance, who shall act as an observer. Any such support person must be pre-approved by the Chair, MCC.

4. The Outcome

Upon review and consideration of all relevant information:

- the CFE will determine the outcome of an incident that is the type of matter listed in point 2.2 (minor discrepancy in procedure, unexpected incident, educational matter)
- the MCC will determine the outcome of an alleged ethical or examination breach.

Where it is determined that the incident has unfairly affected the outcome of an examination or that an ethical or examination breach has occurred, there will be consideration whether rectification measures should be taken.

All determinations shall be minuted in accordance with the RANZCP's governance practices and the RANZCP Privacy Policy.

4.1 Possible outcomes

Possible outcomes of incidents or breaches related to assessments or examinations may include, but are not limited to:

- cancellation of accrued examination or assessment attempt
- revisiting the candidate's individual progress trajectory as per the Progression through Training Policy
- no action required
- cancellation or withholding of examination or assessment results
- targeted learning
- suspension from training
- reporting to regulatory bodies
- removal from the RANZCP Fellowship Program or Specialist Pathway
- other actions or requirements as approved by the relevant committee.

4.2 Logging and reporting

The Manager, Assessments, the **Executive Manager**, Education and Training and the RANZCP **Legal Officer** will be notified of the outcomes of all incident reports, examination breaches and ethical breaches. These outcomes will be logged and reported to the relevant committees and Director of Training where appropriate.

4.3 Communication with the candidate

The candidate will be advised in writing of the outcome and the reasons for the decision. In general, candidates receive a written response to a lodged incident report with their examination results.

- Note: The release of a candidate's examination or assessment results will not usually be delayed by a review of a minor discrepancy or deviation in process or a minor unanticipated incident.

The outcome will also be communicated to the relevant Director of Training and any other relevant parties in accordance with the RANZCP Privacy Policy.

4.4 Suspension or removal from the RANZCP Fellowship Program or Specialist Pathway

Following the process outlined in point 4.1, any determination to suspend or remove a candidate from the RANZCP Fellowship Program or Specialist Pathway must be recommended to the RANZCP Board for consideration and for final approval (with notification to the EC).

4.5 Reporting to regulatory bodies

Following the process outlined in point 4.1, any determination to report a candidate to a regulatory body must be recommended to the RANZCP Board for consideration and for final approval (with notification to the EC).

5. Completion of rectification measures if required

On the completion of any rectification measures, or their time limit for completion, the candidate will be required to advise the relevant committee that the requirements have or have not been completed.

With regard to any candidate who was removed from the RANZCP Fellowship Program, any application for re-entry to the RANZCP Fellowship Program must follow the process detailed in the Exit and Re-entry Policy and Procedure (30.1).

6. Review of Decisions

6.1 Clarification

Candidates are encouraged to discuss the determination with their Director of Training and/or supervisor prior to seeking clarification of the determination and outcome.

A candidate may apply in writing for clarification of the determination to the Chair of the relevant committee within 10 working days.

6.2 Review

If, following clarification from the CFE or the MCC, the candidate continues to be dissatisfied with the decision, they should follow the education review process and may utilise the RANZCP Reconsideration and Appeal Policy.

Associated Documents

1. Regulation: **18.1** Essay Examinations Education Training Regulation
18.2 Clinical Examinations Education Training Regulation
27.1 Ethics and Conduct in Training Education Training Regulation
Committee for Examinations Regulations
Membership Conduct Committee Regulations

2. Policy: **18.1** MCQ Examination Education Training Policy and Procedure
18.1 Essay Examinations (MEQ and CEQ) Policy and Procedure
18.5 Objective Structured Clinical Examination Education Training Policy and Procedure
30.1 Exit and Re-entry Policy and Procedure
RANZCP Privacy Policy
RANZCP Reconsideration and Appeals Policy
Education Reviews Policy
3. Forms: Online Incident Report Form, Exam Centre
4. Other: RANZCP Code of Ethics
RANZCP Code of Conduct
5. References:

Revision record

Contact:		Project Officer, Education and Training	
Date	Version	Approver	Description
19/07/14	1.0	RANZCP Board	New document. Reviewed by CFE and TRC March 2014. Approved by EC out of session April 2014. Approved by CGRC out of session April 2014. Approved by RANZCP Board B2014/4 R15.
21/07/16	1.1	RANZCP Board	Revised to reflect targeted learning/targeted learning plan (formally remediation/remediation plan) and standard expected at End of stage 3 (formally junior consultant standard) terminology changes. EC approved 29/04/2016. CGRC reviewed 28/04/2016. RANZCP Board approved B2016/4. Minor update from 2012 Fellowship Program to RANZCP Fellowship Program and Legal Officer to Legal Counsel.
05/03/2021	1.2	RANZCP Board	Amendments of the policy as a result of decoupling the previous Essay-style Examination into two independent examinations: Modified Essay Questions (MEQ) Examination and Critical Essay Questions (CEQ) Examination. (EC approved 23/04/2021)
July 2021		NEXT REVIEW	