

Education, Training and Examinations

RCoA Delivered Examinations Examiner Regulations (FRCA and FFPMRCA)

Commencement and Revocation

These regulations shall be known as the FRCA and FFPMRCA Examiner Regulations, governing the Primary and Final FRCA examinations and the FFPMRCA examination delivered by the Royal College of Anaesthetists, and shall come into effect in October 2024.

These regulations replace and supersede:

- The Royal College of Anaesthetists FRCA Examiner Regulations dated July 2019; and
- Any previous Faculty of Pain Medicine / FFPMRCA examiner regulations, policies, procedures or guidance relating to examiner selection, appointment, performance management, conduct, or exit processes (where applicable).

These regulations supersede all previous policies, procedures, and guidance relating to the selection, appointment, performance management, and conduct of FRCA and FFPMRCA examiners.

These regulations establish a consolidated and unified framework for the governance of all examiners involved in FRCA and FFPMRCA examinations delivered by the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

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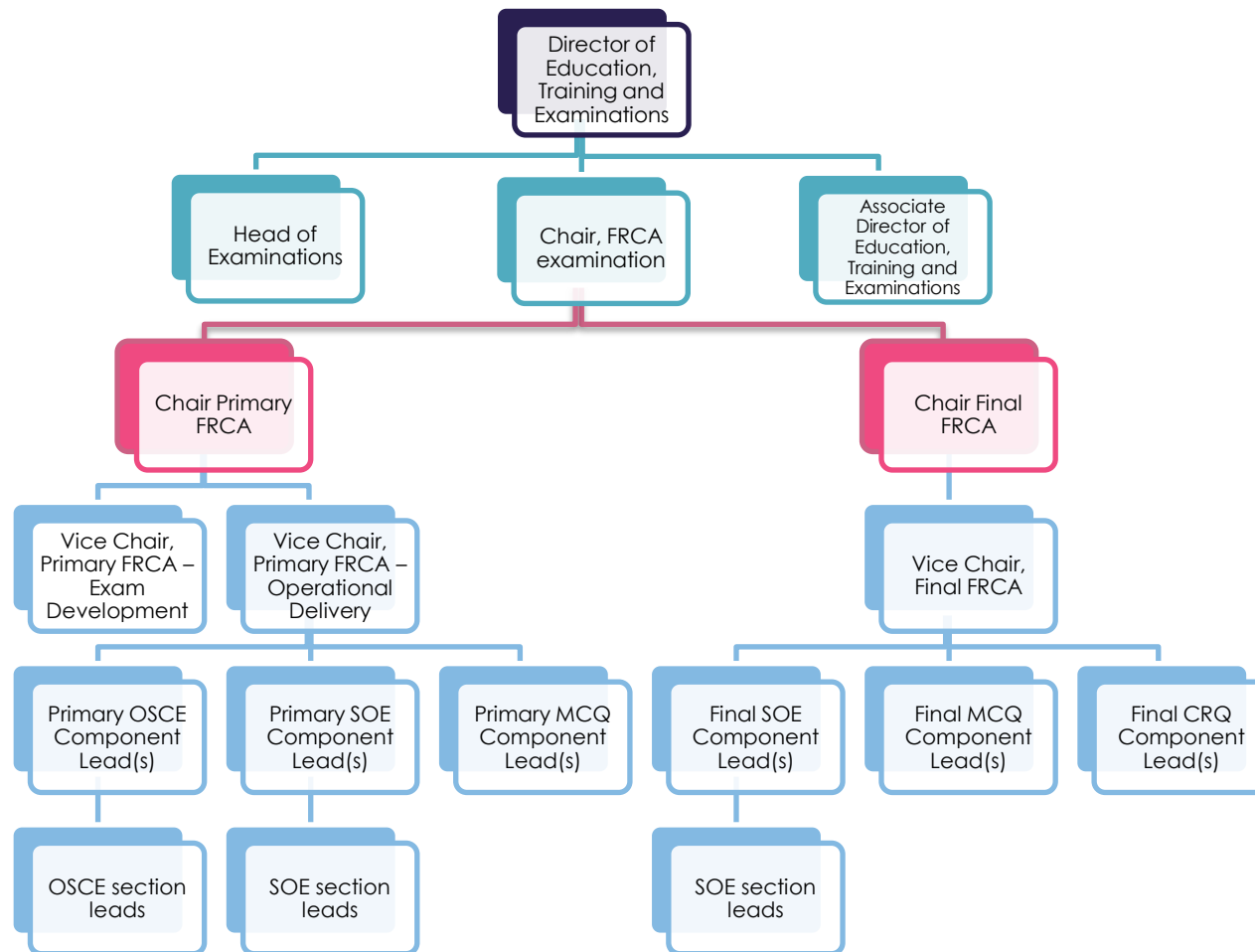
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1 Examining Governance Structures

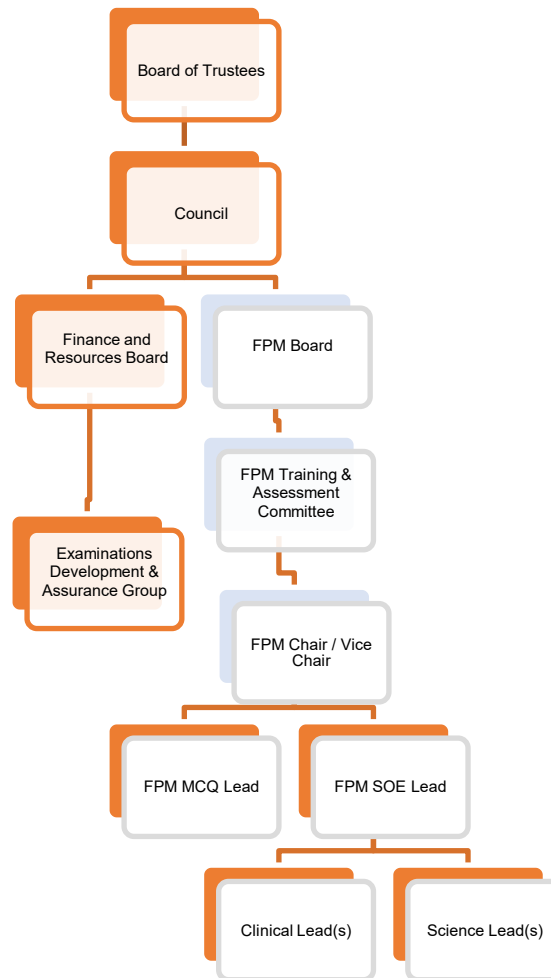
1.1 FRCA

Please see below the organisational structures for the FRCA Examinations, designed to ensure clear responsibility, specialised oversight, and efficient governance across various exam formats (OSCE, SOE, MCQ, CRQ).



1.2 FPMRCA

Please see below the organisational structures for the FPMRCA Examinations, designed to ensure clear responsibility, specialised oversight, and efficient governance across various exam formats (SOE, MCQ).



2 Recruitment to the Examining Board

2.1 Appointment of new examiners

The size of the Board of Examiners will be determined by the Examinations Committee / FPMTAC following advice from the exam leadership and the RCoA Head of Examinations. Appointments will be made for such a period as these committees may from time to time decide.

Recruitment processes may be run separately for FRCA and FPPMRCAs examiner cohorts, but must follow the same principles of transparency, fairness, and documentation set out in these Regulations.

Advertising vacancies

Details of the selection process and vacancies for the following academic year will be openly advertised in such places online and publications as the exam leadership and RCoA may decide, in sufficient time for a list of nominations to be presented to the relevant committee.

Examiner specification

Applicants will be assessed against the examiner person specification. Throughout their term of examinership, examiners are expected to adhere to the duties and responsibilities as set out in the Examiner Role Description.

Selection Procedures

At the closing date for examiner applications, all applicants are allocated a specific 'examiner application number.' Application forms with the personal information page and equal opportunities form removed, are then circulated to the selection panel, comprising members of the Examinations Committee / FPMTAC for scoring.

Scoring system

The following scoring system is used across two domains:

Domain 1 - Active involvement and commitment to training, assessment and examination preparation (skills and knowledge).

Domain 2 - Reasons for becoming an examiner (personal attributes).

Scoring criteria	
10	Meets essential criteria and excellent in ALL aspects of domain
8	Meets essential criteria and good/excellent in MOST aspects of domain
6	Meets essential criteria and good/excellent in SOME aspects of domain
4	Meets essential criteria and good/excellent in a FEW aspects of domain
2	Meets essential criteria only
0	Fails to meet essential criteria

In addition, scorers provide a global rating scale from 1-10 indicating the overall quality of the application and suitability for the role. The final score is out of a total of 30 marks.

Applicants' scores are summed and ranked. The cut-off score depends on the required number of vacancies.

Following short-listing, requests for references from the Clinical Director and Regional Advisor of each applicant are requested by email. Exam Leadership, where appropriate, will make enquiries about specific applicants from Board Members, Regional Advisors and Educational Supervisors who know the applicants. These references are considered at the Examination Committee meeting early in the calendar year where the final selections are decided upon.

At a subsequent meeting, members of the Committee will confirm the numbers of new examiners to be appointed to each board. To achieve an appropriate balance, the selection process may consider the following factors:

- Geographic distribution
- Types of hospital
- Special interests directly relevant to the FRCA / FFPMRCA examinations
- Clinical vs. academic
- Protected characteristics

The recommendations from the Examination Committee are considered by Education, Training and Examinations Board. Notification will follow by official letter. New examiners are appointed, subject to a probationary period of one year (see 5.3), to the Board of Examiners.

Examiner applicants have a right to express their dissatisfaction with the way in which any part of the selection process has been done and feel confident that such a complaint is handled in a fair and consistent way.

2.2 Appointment to Examining Leadership Roles

To ensure that the best candidates are selected for leadership roles, it is essential that the process for election is robust, transparent, and conducive to identifying individuals who are not only qualified but also well-prepared to lead examiners effectively.

The size of the leadership team is determined according to operational needs and upon agreement by the examinations leadership. Committees shall be updated accordingly.

2.2.1 Component and Section Leads

Eligibility: Candidates must have two years remaining within their 10-year tenure and meet the requirements outlined in the Role Description.

Leadership Role Tenures: Component Leads and Section Leads have a standard term of 2 years.

Vacancies for leadership roles are advertised to the relevant examiner pools at least 4 months prior to the leadership handover, allowing adequate time for applications.

Selection Process

- Applications are anonymised by assigning each candidate a unique application number to ensure fairness.
- Anonymised applications are evaluated by a selection panel based on an agreed Scoring System.
- Selected candidates are recommended to the Examination Committee for approval, with successful applicants notified 1 month before the leadership handover to ensure a smooth transition.
- Unsuccessful leadership applicants remain eligible for other leadership roles in the same tenure cycle.

Applicants have a right to express their dissatisfaction with the way in which any part of the selection process has been done and feel confident that such a complaint is handled in a fair and consistent way.

2.2.2 Examination Chair and Vice Chair

Eligibility

Candidates must:

- be within their 10-year tenure with at least 2 years remaining.
- have completed at least 4 years of their tenure.
- have already demonstrated competency in an examining leadership role.
- meet the requirements outlined in the Role Description.

Chair Tenure

The Chair and Vice Chair serve a 3-year term, subject to:

- A successful appraisal and group feedback process at the end of year 2.
- Any performance concerns being flagged prior to progression to the 3rd year.

Vacancies for lead positions are openly advertised by email to the relevant examiner pools, and as determined by examinations leadership. This occurs at least 4 months before the leadership handover, ensuring candidates have adequate time to apply.

Selection Process

- At the closing date for applications, each candidate will be assigned an anonymous 'application number' to ensure fairness. The application forms, with personal details and equal opportunities information removed, are circulated to the selection panel for evaluation. Candidates will be evaluated based on an agreed Scoring System.
- After the initial scoring, shortlisted candidates will be invited to interviews conducted by a selection panel. The interview process will assess each candidate's leadership potential, experience, and suitability for the role.
- The recommendations will be presented to the Examination Committee and subsequently to the Education, Training, and Examinations Board for ratification. Successful candidates will be notified 1 month before the leadership handover, allowing for transition planning to ensure a smooth transfer of responsibilities.

Applicants have a right to express their dissatisfaction with the way in which any part of the selection process has been done and feel confident that such a complaint is handled in a fair and consistent way.

2.3 Examiner Contracts

2.3.1 Standard Tenure and Commitment

All FRCA and FPMRCA examiners are appointed under the Standard Examiner Contract, which requires a minimum commitment of 6 years, extendable up to a maximum of 10 years by mutual agreement and subject to satisfactory performance.

FRCA examiners must complete a minimum of 10 examining days and 3 non-examining days per academic year. This annual commitment cannot be rolled over across academic years. Examiners are required to meet their full commitment within each academic year, unless there are extenuating circumstances such as ill health or personal situations, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Head of Examinations or the relevant Exam Chair.

For Final FRCA examiners, the 10 examining days must be split across both annual diets (typically 5 days per diet). Primary examiners can distribute their days across three diets as scheduling allows.

FFPMRCA arrangements will follow the same principles and minimum commitments, with diet-specific scheduling determined by the FFPMRCA exams team.

In their first year of appointment, all new examiners are required to examine for the full 5 consecutive days within their first allocated exam week. This enables appropriate observation, induction, and familiarisation with examination processes, including mandatory attendance at the initial briefing session.

2.3.2 Non-Examining Duties

Examiners must also contribute to a minimum of 3 non-examining days annually. These tasks will be assigned and directed by the relevant Exam Chair or component lead and may include (but are not limited to):

- Question writing and paper development
 - Standard setting and Angoff meetings
 - Marking CRQ papers or quality-assuring MCQ content
 - Examiner training and development sessions
 - Participating in examiner recruitment and selection panels
 - Engagement in QA or calibration activities
- Non-examining contributions are structured to ensure appropriate use of examiner expertise and to support the effective delivery and development of the FRCA / FFPMRCA examinations.

Examiners are generally not permitted to substitute non-examining days for additional examining days or vice versa. Each examiner must meet the minimum requirement for both types of days as specified.

If examiners are unable to meet these commitments, provisions such as leave or adjusted responsibilities may be considered.

2.3.3 Retire and return

If an examiner would like to continue beyond 10 years, there is the option to move to "Retire and Return".

On this contract, examiners will:

- be subject to an end of term audit and appraisal where a request is submitted at the start of the calendar year in year 10 to convert to "retire and return"
- contribute to the exam by examining for the minimum number of days per year stated in this contract
- participate in core group work, item development: writing, review, proofreading (optional)
- mark examination scripts (optional)
- be subject to biennial appraisals
- be subject to quality assurance through auditing
- **not** be permitted to apply for a leadership role
- have their contract reviewed on an annual basis

2.3.4 Examining on a Less Than Full-Time Basis (LTFT)

Purpose

LTFT examining is a temporary adjustment to an examiner's annual commitment to support short-term personal or professional circumstances that prevent full delivery of the standard examining requirement. It is not an alternative permanent contract.

Eligibility

Examiners may apply for LTFT status starting from year 2 of their 10-year tenure if personal or professional circumstances require it.

Application Process

- Applications for LTFT must be submitted via email to both the Chair of the relevant examiner pool and the Head of Examinations before the end of June each academic year.
- Applications must include a brief rationale and the period for which LTFT is requested (normally one academic year).

Decision-Making and Review:

- LTFT arrangements are approved for a fixed period, normally one academic year, to support specific circumstances.
- LTFT status does not roll over automatically. If further time is needed, examiners must reapply annually, and approval remains subject to operational need and staffing requirements.
- Where circumstances change, the Chair/Head of Examinations may agree a return to standard commitments mid-cycle, where feasible.

Commitment Requirements

- The reduced annual commitment will be agreed in advance (e.g., minimum 5 examining days and 1.5 non-examining days, unless otherwise agreed).
- To maintain skills and examiner competency, LTFT examiners should, where possible, distribute examining across more than one diet and remain engaged in core/non-examining activities as directed.

Transitioning to LTFT does not alter the standard tenure of 6 years (minimum) and 10 years (maximum).

2.3.5 Cross-Cohort Examining

Eligibility:

Examiners may apply for cross cohort examining starting from year 2 of their 10-year tenure if circumstances necessitate this adjustment.

Application Process:

- Applications for cross cohort examining must be submitted by email to the relevant Chair of the examiner pool and the Head of Examinations before the end of June each academic year.
- A reason for requesting the cross-cohort contract must be provided by the examiner.

Decision-Making and Review:

- Each application will be evaluated individually, with primary consideration given to the staffing needs of the relevant examination.
- The terms of the cross-cohort contract will be reviewed annually.

Commitment Requirements:

Cross cohort examiners are expected to fulfil a minimum number of examining days per year, as well as a minimum number of non-examining days. The cross-cohort contract examiner is subject to scheduled audits and appraisals to ensure continued performance and adherence to required standards.

Moving to a cross-cohort contract does not alter the standard tenure of 6 years (minimum) and 10 years (maximum).

2.3.6 Summary of examiner contracts

	Standard tenure	Cross cohort examining	LTFT	Retire and Return
Examining days* per annum	10 days (min)	10 days (min)	(.5) 5 days (min)	(.5) 5 days (min)
Non-examining days per annum	3 days (min)	3 days (min)	(.5) 1.5 day (min)	(.5) 1.5 day (min) <i>core group not mandatory</i>
Marking requirement?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eligible for leadership roles	✓	✓	✓	✗
Review period	6 years, 10 years	Annual	Annual	Annual
ED&I training	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual
Subject to appraisal	✓	✓	✓	✓ (biannual)

*Examining days are Monday to Friday only. Saturdays are voluntary and do not count towards the total 10 days or fewer if LTFT/Retire and Return.

2.4 Examiner Inauguration and Recognition

The College is committed to supporting and valuing its examiners, recognising the contribution they make to the FRCA / FPPMRCA examinations and the wider anaesthetic community. To formalise this, the following process has been introduced for the inauguration and public recognition of new examiners:

2.4.1 Inauguration Ceremony

Year 2 examiners, who have successfully passed their probationary period, will be formally inaugurated at an annual ceremony. This event will be held once per year, timed as follows:

- Primary FRCA Examiners: January diet (Thursday of the exam week)
- Final FRCA Examiners: December diet (Thursday of the exam week)

The ceremony will take place at the College's Council Chamber at the conclusion of the exam day and will be attended by the President or Vice President. The event is designed to celebrate the contributions of new examiners in a formal but collegial setting, providing appropriate recognition for their role.

Logistics include:

- Robing in College gowns and ceremonial use of the College mace.
- Photography for internal publications.
- A celebratory reception following the ceremony.

2.4.2 Recognition in College Communications

At the start of each academic year, the names and (where consent is provided) photographs of newly appointed examiners will be published in a College communication, such as the College Bulletin or equivalent publication. This will welcome new examiners and publicly acknowledge their contribution to members and fellows of the College.

Permanent online publication of examiner photographs will not be implemented, recognising examiner preferences regarding personal privacy.

2.4.3 Operational Considerations

Scheduling and planning for the inauguration event will be incorporated into pre-diet planning meetings.

Year 2 examiners will, where possible, be timetabled to facilitate their attendance at the ceremony.

Responsibilities for organising the ceremony, including venue booking, gowning, catering, and staffing, are defined in internal planning documentation.

This process reflects the College's commitment to examiner engagement, visibility, and appreciation, strengthening examiner identity and supporting recruitment by demonstrating the value placed on examiner roles.

3 Onboarding and Training

Online Training Modules

Examiners will be given access to online training materials to be completed at home prior to their face-to-face Examiner Training Day. These modules aim to provide them with a theoretical and contextual underpinning to examiner training. They will cover such content at the format of the MCQ and SOE examinations, the theory behind standard setting and our approach to examiner performance management.

Examiners are also expected to complete annual online EDI modules in The 'Act', PSED and discrimination; Disability, adjustments and bias and Legislation, differential attainment and consolidation.

New Examiner Training Day

RCoA New Examiner Training Day will take place at the Royal College of Anaesthetists. This day will give examiners the opportunity to meet other new examiners, current examiners in leadership roles and members of the RCoA examinations team. This day will have a practical underpinning, aiming to give examiners hands-on experience of examination delivery, marking and standardisation.

Guidance Interview Training

New examiners will also be introduced to the principles and purpose of Guidance Interviews. In their first year, they are expected to shadow a Guidance Interview, progressing to active participation from year two onwards.

4 Support, Wellbeing and Continued Professional Development

New examiners are provided with ample opportunity to learn from more experienced examiners. These opportunities include:

- A **Buddy System** which provides each new examiner with a point of contact for the first year. Buddies are assigned geographically and have a largely pastoral role in their development.
- **Observations** – Examiners will be able to observe more experienced examiners in action before delivering their first examination.
- **Working groups** – New examiners will collaborate with more experienced examiners in developing assessment material, marking and standard setting.

5 Performance Management

5.1 Examiner Code of Conduct

Examiners are required to demonstrate the highest levels of professionalism, integrity, and ethical behaviour at all times, in alignment with the standards expected by the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA). This commitment encompasses several key responsibilities:

- **Confidentiality:** Examiners must maintain strict confidentiality of all examination materials and candidate information. This includes safeguarding written materials, electronic data, and verbal communications related to examination content and candidate performance. Unauthorised disclosure of any such information is strictly prohibited.
- **Integrity in Assessment:** The fairness and integrity of the examination process must be upheld without exception. Examiners must ensure that all assessments are conducted impartially and objectively, without bias towards any candidate. This includes avoiding any actions that might influence, compromise, or appear to compromise the validity and reliability of examination results.
- **Conflict of Interest:** It is imperative that examiners disclose any potential conflicts of interest that might affect their judgment or impartiality in the examination process. This includes, but is not limited to, personal relationships, professional affiliations, or financial interests related to any candidate or the examination process itself.
- **Adherence to Guidelines:** Examiners must adhere to all operational guidelines and procedures as outlined in this and related policies. This ensures a standardised approach to all aspects of the examination process, promoting consistency across all examination settings.
- **Reporting Misconduct:** In the event of examiners witnessing or becoming aware of any breaches of conduct by others involved in the examination process, they are required to report these incidents promptly to the appropriate authorities within the RCoA. This reporting is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the examinations and ensuring that all misconduct is addressed appropriately.

5.2 Conflicts of Interest

Examiners for the FRCA and FFPMRCA must avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that could compromise the integrity and impartiality of the examination process. The following principles apply when examiners are involved in teaching, publishing, or participating in revision courses:

5.2.1 Involvement in Local Teaching and Courses

Examiners are encouraged to support local trainees and colleagues through teaching and delivering courses related to their examination. However, this involvement must not interfere with their responsibilities as an examiner or compromise the integrity of the examination.

5.2.2 Advising on Local Examination Practices

Examiners may advise other local 'examiners' on activities such as standard setting, time management, and appropriate examiner behaviour. This guidance must remain within the boundaries of maintaining examination integrity.

5.2.3 Use of Publicly Available Questions

When participating in local teaching or writing revision textbooks, examiners are only permitted to use questions that are publicly available (e.g., those published by the College) or provided by course organisers. Under no circumstances should examiners suggest topics or provide specific examples of examination questions, as this would compromise both the examination and the examiner's professional integrity.

5.2.4 Confidentiality of Exam Materials

Examiners are expected to support their examination by developing questions specifically for use in the examination. All questions developed must remain strictly confidential and must not be shared or used in any external teaching, courses, books, or other materials, as this would compromise the fairness and impartiality of the examination.

5.2.5 Conflict of Interest in Course Management and Publishing

Examiners must be aware that there is a clear conflict of interest in being an examiner while simultaneously managing or playing a significant role in a local or online examination preparation course, or in the writing of revision textbooks, apps, or other related materials. Such involvement could create the perception of an unfair advantage or the inappropriate use of examination materials.

5.2.6 Annual Review of External Activities

The Examinations Committee / FPMTAC will review any activities related to local or online courses, teaching, or publishing as part of the annual re-appointment process. These activities will be considered when deciding on the re-appointment of examiners, ensuring that no conflicts of interest are present that might undermine the integrity of the examination process.

5.3 Performance Criteria

Performance evaluations for examiners are a crucial aspect of maintaining the high standards expected by the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA). Evaluations are comprehensive and are based on several key criteria:

- **Adherence to the Code of Conduct:** Examiners must consistently demonstrate behaviours that aligns with the established Code of Conduct, showcasing professionalism, ethical behaviour, and respect for confidentiality.
- **Accuracy in Assessment:** Evaluations assess the precision and consistency of examiners in scoring and decision-making during examinations. This includes an ability to fairly and accurately measure candidate performance against standardised benchmarks.
- **Fairness and Objectivity:** Maintaining impartiality and objectivity in all assessment activities is vital. Performance evaluations will review the examiner's ability to apply examination standards uniformly to all candidates without bias.
- **Engagement and Contribution:** Active participation in examination processes and contributions to discussions and decision-making regarding examination policies and practices are also evaluated.

5.4 Probation, Review and Appraisals

5.4.1 Probationary Year

New examiners are initially appointed for a probationary year, which includes a minimum of 10 days examining. The probation year for new examiners is designed to provide essential support and guidance as they transition into their roles. This structured process ensures that examiners receive the necessary resources and feedback to succeed, while also maintaining the high standards expected in the examination.

Throughout this year, examiners will have access to various forms of assistance for support to enhance their performance and engagement:

- **Examiner Buddies:** Each new examiner will be paired with an experienced examiner who will provide guidance and support throughout the year.
- **Regular Check-ins:** New examiners will maintain regular contact with their buddies, core group leads and Chairs/vice Chairs, fostering open communication and ongoing feedback.

- **Community Support:** Engagement with the broader examiner body will provide additional resources and a sense of belonging.
- **Engagement in Working Parties:** Participation in assigned working parties will be a key focus during the probation year. Engagement in these collaborative efforts will be reviewed as part of both the probation and appraisal processes.
- **Asking for Help:** New examiners are encouraged to seek assistance whenever needed. Proactive communication is essential for personal growth and development within the role.

5.4.2 Possible Outcomes at the End of the Probation Year

At the conclusion of the probation year, there are three potential outcomes:

- **Non-Performance:** If an examiner is found to be underperforming despite receiving support and showing no improvement, they may be asked to leave the examination team.
- **Extension of Probation:** An examiner who requires additional time and support to meet the expected standards may be placed on an extended 12-month probation period.
- **Successful Completion:** If an examiner meets or exceeds the expected standards, they will successfully complete their probation, continue in their role and be inaugurated as an Examiner at the next Examiner CPD day. This formal inauguration takes place at an external venue, it is attended by either the President or one of the Vice Presidents, and examiners wear the formal gown to a ceremony where they sign the Book for Examinership.

5.4.3 Audits and self-reflection

Audits are a fruitful opportunity for examiners to receive constructive feedback about their examination practice.

New examiners can expect to be audited during any examination diet in their first year. Audits are carried out by trained examiners who complete an audit form whilst observing examination delivery.

The audit assesses overall examiner behavior through various criteria such as timing, resource use, questioning style and use of clarifications. The form also rates the examiner's overall manner and body language, looking at attributes like being relaxing, fair and professional. There are sections for overall feedback, areas of good practice, areas for improvement, and additional comments.

5.4.4 Appraisals

Appraisals are an opportunity to discuss progress, challenges and strengths with the Chair and Vice-Chair. In May/June, each examiner will undergo an appraisal, which may be conducted face-to-face or online. Feedback on performance and engagement will be compiled and forwarded to the exam leadership team for evaluation. As part of the appraisal process, examiners' involvement in Guidance Interviews will also be considered, including evidence of shadowing during Year 1 and subsequent participation. This forms part of the wider assessment of examiner engagement and contribution.

You may be video recorded ahead of appraisal to allow the appraiser to feedback on examiner examination delivery.

- **Year 1 Appraisal** – Signals the end of the probationary year
- **Year 5 Appraisal** – An opportunity to check in and discuss next steps.
- **Year 10 Appraisal** – An opportunity to reflect on examiner tenure.

Retired and Returning examiners are appraised every three years thereafter.

5.5 Handling Underperformance

Addressing underperformance in a structured and supportive manner is essential to maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the examination process at the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA). The following steps outline the procedure for managing underperformance among examiners:



Documentation and Confidentiality

All stages of the underperformance management process will be thoroughly documented and kept confidential within the administrative bodies handling the case. Documentation is crucial for transparency and accountability and provides a record that may be referenced in future evaluations or appeals.

By following these steps, the RCoA ensures that all examiners are supported in meeting the high standards expected, while also maintaining a fair and transparent process for addressing underperformance.

6 Addressing Misconduct

6.1 Definition of Misconduct

Misconduct encompasses a range of inappropriate behaviours that violate the established Code of Conduct, undermine the integrity of the examination process, or fail to uphold the professional standards expected of examiners. Specific examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

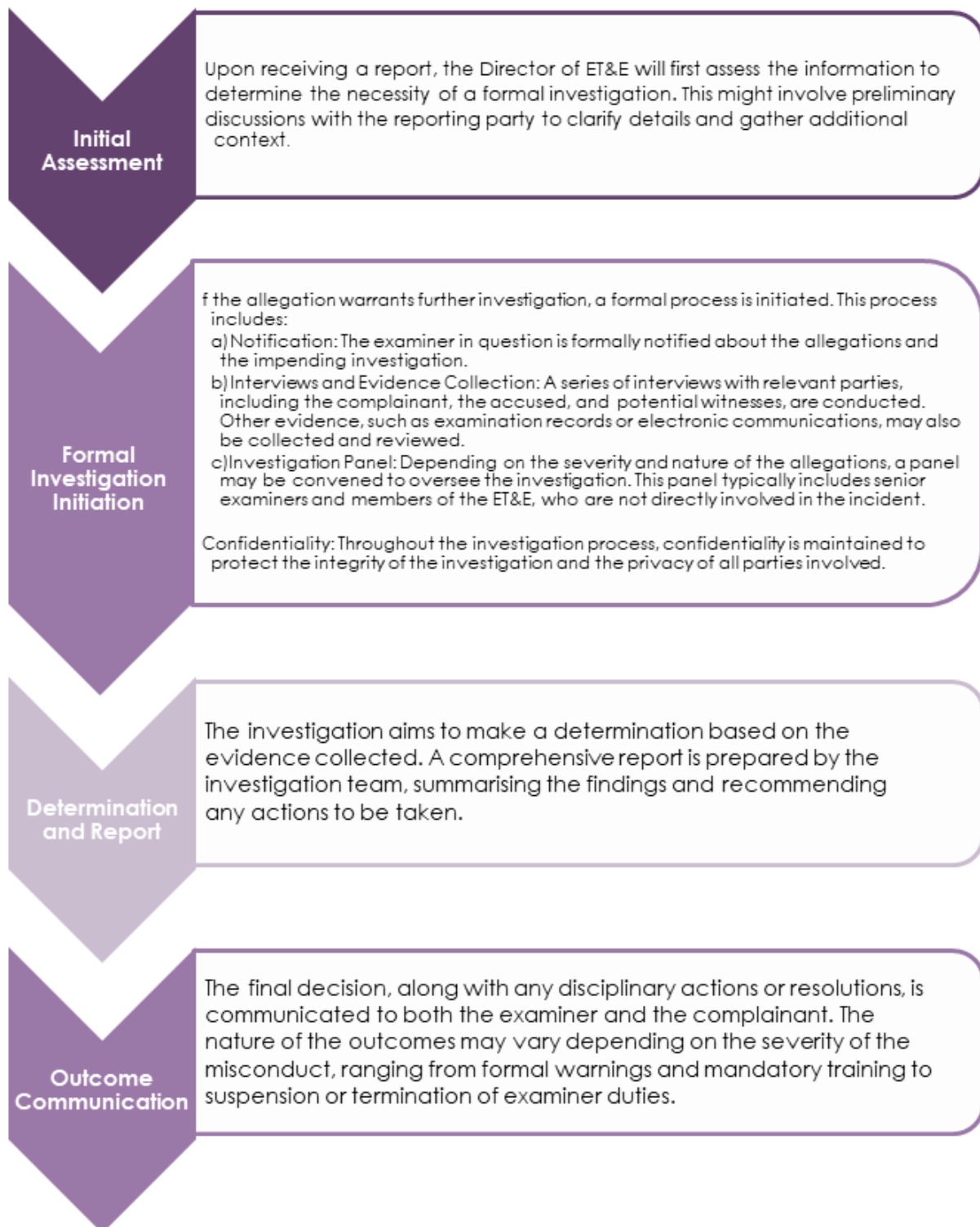
- **Breach of Confidentiality:** Unauthorised disclosure of examination content, candidate information, or any sensitive data related to the examination process.
- **Dishonest Behaviour:** This includes falsifying examination results, manipulating candidate scores, or any form of deceptive practices during the examination or in related administrative duties.
- **Discrimination or Harassment:** Engaging in discriminatory practices or harassment based on race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic. This also covers bullying and any form of abusive behaviour towards candidates, staff, or fellow examiners.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Failing to disclose or appropriately manage conflicts of interest that could influence examination outcomes or examiner impartiality.
- **Violation of Examination Policies:** Intentionally violating standard examination protocols, rules, or guidelines, including the use of prohibited materials or aiding candidates in cheating.
- **Substance Abuse:** Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while performing examination duties, which could impair judgment or professional conduct.

6.2 Reporting Misconduct

Any allegations of misconduct by an examiner must be reported immediately. Reports can come from a variety of sources including candidates, other examiners, or staff. The initial report should be directed to the Director of Education, Training, and Examinations (ET&E) at the RCoA. This initiates the official record and ensures that the allegation is handled consistently with established procedures.

6.3 Investigative Process

The RCoA upholds a detailed process for investigating allegations of misconduct as follows:



This structured approach ensures that all allegations of misconduct are treated with the seriousness they deserve, following due process to protect the rights of all involved and maintain the integrity of the examination process.

6.4 Possible Sanctions

Based on the findings from the investigations of either misconduct or underperformance, the following sanctions may be applied:

- **Written Warnings:** For lesser offenses or initial instances of underperformance, written warnings may be issued, detailing the nature of the misconduct or underperformance and expectations for future behaviour.
- **Retraining:** Examiners may be required to undergo additional training to address specific deficiencies identified during the performance review or misconduct investigation.
- **Suspension:** Temporary suspension from examination duties may be imposed during the investigation or as a sanction, depending on the severity of the misconduct or the extent of underperformance.
- **Removal from Examining Duties:** In cases of severe misconduct or continued underperformance despite previous sanctions, examiners may be permanently removed from their roles.
- **Other Disciplinary Actions:** Additional sanctions may include demotion within examiner roles, exclusion from certain examining activities, or other disciplinary measures appropriate to the specific circumstances of the case.

6.5 Communication of Outcomes

The outcomes of investigations or performance reviews, along with any imposed sanctions, will be communicated to the examiner in writing. This communication will:

- Detail the decision, the reasons behind it, and any sanctions imposed.
- Specify any required actions the examiner must take, such as attending training sessions or meeting with a supervisor to discuss the outcomes.
- Include information on how the examiner can appeal the decision if they wish to do so.

6.6 Appeals Process

If an examiner wishes to appeal a decision related to misconduct or performance issues, the following procedure will be followed:

- **Notification of Appeal:** Examiners must notify the Director of Education, Training, and Examinations within a specified period, usually four weeks from the date they receive the decision.
- **Appeals Panel:** The appeal will be heard by an Appeals Panel, which may include:
 - Vice Dean or Vice President as the chair.
 - Senior examiners not involved in the original investigation.
 - A lay representative to ensure impartiality.
 - The Director of ET&E may attend as an observer.
- **Process:** The examiner is allowed to present their case, and both written and verbal submissions can be made. The Appeals Panel will review all relevant documents and may call for additional evidence or testimonies if necessary.
- **Decision:** The Appeals Panel will deliberate and make a decision, which may uphold, overturn, or modify the original decision. This decision is final, and no further appeals are permitted within the RCoA.

7 Exiting Examinership

7.1 Sabbaticals

The relevant chair and Head of Examinations may approve requests to take one sabbatical year from examining on grounds of individual professional or personal circumstances such as pregnancy or ill health.

If the request is made during an academic year, the relevant chair will at his/her discretion allow the examiner to be absent from the rest of that academic year's examinations.

Any examiner requesting a sabbatical for one year will automatically have their examinership term extended by one year. Further extensions beyond one year, will be managed on a case-by-case basis according to the individual circumstances.

7.2 Standing down

Examiners may be asked to stand down by the relevant Chair to manage the number of examiners. Any examiner requested to stand down will have their examinership term automatically extended by one year. For subsequent requests to stand down, the term extension will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Committee.

7.2.1 Approving Requests to Stand Down

Each academic year, all examiners are asked if they wish to stand down. The Examination Executive team may approve or request an examiner to stand down based on the following grounds:

- Managing the number of new examiners to maintain the Court of Examiners at its approved strength.
- Individual professional or personal circumstances.

7.2.2 Extensions to Examinership Terms

Examiners who are approved or asked to stand down will automatically have their examinership term extended by one year. If a second or subsequent stand down is requested, the extension will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Examination Executive team.

If an examiner requests to stand down during the academic year due to pregnancy or ill health, their term will automatically be extended by one year. Any further extensions will be handled individually by the Executive team.

7.2.3 In-Year Requests to Stand Down

If an examiner requests to stand down during the academic year, the Chair may grant the request, allowing the examiner to be absent for the remainder of that year. If the examiner also requests an extension to their term, the Examination Executive will consider the request on a case-by-case basis.

7.3 Retirement

Examiners may retire at the end of their appointed term, minimum 6 years / maximum 10 years.

On reaching 10 years, examiners who do not wish to retire may return on a *Retire and Return* basis (see 2.3.3).

Examiners who retire from clinical practice may continue to examine to the end of the academic year.

7.4 Resigning

If an examiner wishes to resign, it should normally take effect from the end of the academic year.

The ETE Board reserves the right, acting on the advice of the Committee, to ask an examiner to resign at any time.

An examiner who resigns may subsequently apply to be re-appointed for the balance of his/her term of office.

Examiners shall not be deemed to be appointed, re-appointed, extended, stood down, resigned or dismissed until motions to that effect have been formally approved by the Examinations Committee / FPMTAC.

8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

RCoA delivered examinations aim to provide an environment free from discrimination, ensuring that no candidate receives less favourable treatment based on their protected characteristics. Candidates are assessed solely on their performance and demonstrated competency. To support this, RCoA:

- Provides regular EDI training for examiners.
- Monitors examiner behaviour and reviews exam methods, policies, and practices for fairness and relevance.

The College and Faculty are committed to enforcing equal opportunities for all. Any behaviour from staff, examiners, or candidates that infringes upon this policy or results in unlawful discrimination will not be tolerated.

Examiners are encouraged to report any EDI concerns through the designated channels.

Data Collection

Diversity information on trainees, examiners, and examination candidates is collected at registration, with updates requested during examinership application. By providing this information, examiners consent to its use for:

- Quality control of examinations
- Supporting the provision of equal opportunities

Data will be used in conjunction with examination data in annual reports and examination statistics. It will not be used in a discriminatory manner but will inform the analysis of examiner and candidate diversity. Anonymous data may be published to provide insights into the assessment process.

9 Conclusion

These Examiner Regulations establish a comprehensive framework for the governance, recruitment, performance management, and support of examiners involved in FRCA and FPPMRCAs examinations. These regulations ensure that all examiners operate under consistent guidelines, promoting fairness, transparency, and excellence across all aspects of the examination process.

Through clear procedures for recruitment, onboarding, performance evaluation, and addressing misconduct, the regulations uphold the integrity of the examinations and maintain the high standards expected of the Royal College of Anaesthetists. By incorporating principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion, the regulations foster a supportive and unbiased environment for both examiners and candidates.

These regulations will be periodically reviewed and updated to align with evolving standards and best practices, ensuring that they continue to meet the needs of the College, its examiners, and its candidates.

10 Glossary

Term	Definition
Audit	A formal process where an examiner's performance during an examination is observed and evaluated based on specific criteria such as timing, questioning style, and professionalism
Dismissal	The removal of an examiner following a decision of the Council or the Examinations Committee / FPMTAC.
Examinership Term	The standard duration of appointment for examiners, typically 6-10 years, subject to extensions or modifications under specific conditions.
Extension	An increase in the duration of a standard examinership term, either due to standing down, sabbaticals, or other specific circumstances.
Flexible Working	An option for examiners to work on a flexible or part-time basis, such as Less Than Full Time (LTFT) or cross-cohort examining.
Misconduct	Any breach of the examiner Code of Conduct, including unauthorised disclosure of exam content, conflicts of interest, discriminatory behaviour, or failure to maintain professional standards.
Appraisal	A formal review of an examiner's performance. Appraisals provide feedback on strengths and areas for improvement and determine whether an examiner continues in their role.
Probationary Year	The first year of an examiner's tenure, where performance is closely monitored through a combination of audits, feedback, and appraisals to ensure that the examiner meets the required standards.
Sabbatical	A temporary leave from examining duties, typically for one year, granted for personal or professional reasons such as ill health or other significant circumstances.
Abbreviations	
BFICM	Board of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine
FICM	Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine
FRCA	Fellowship of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.
FFPMRCA	Fellowship of the Faculty of Pain Medicine of the Royal College of Anaesthetists
LTFT	Less Than Full Time (working basis for examiners)

11 Review and Updates

Policy Review

The RCoA will review this policy every two years or sooner if significant changes occur. A panel including the Education, Training, and Examinations team, senior examiners, and external advisors will assess the policy's effectiveness and recommend updates as needed.

Amendments

Changes to this policy may arise from new standards, legal requirements, or feedback. Amendments can be initiated by the Director of Education, Training, and Examinations and must be approved by the relevant RCoA body. Approved changes will be communicated to examiners via official RCoA channels and updated in examiner training materials.

Revision History			
Version	Date	Description	Author / Approved by
1.1	September 2025	Amendment to Section 3 (Onboarding & Training) and Section 5.4.4 (Appraisals) to clarify staged expectations for Guidance Interviews: Year 1 – awareness/shadowing; Year 5 – active participation and reflection; Year 10 – cumulative reflection and contribution.	Jameela Taylor, Examinations Quality & Standards Manager
1.0	January 2025	Comprehensive review and consolidation of FRCA, FFICM, and FPM regulations under the RCoA Delivered Examinations Examiner Regulations.	Director of Education, Training, and Examinations / Examinations Committee / FPMTAC
	April 2022	Initial release of FICM Examiner Regulations	BFICM / Training, Assessment, and Quality Committee
	April 2022	Initial release of the FPM Examiner Regulations	Faculty of Pain Medicine (BFPM)
	July 2019	Initial release of the RCoA Delivered Examinations Examiner Regulations	Director of Education, Training, and Examinations / Examinations Committee / FPMTAC