



**FACULTY OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

Protecting and improving the health of the public  
through the organised efforts of our members

# **MFPH Examinations**

## **Regulations and Information for Candidates 2010**

Updated February 2020

## Foreword

The MFPH Examination Regulations 2010 apply from 1 September 2010 to the Membership of the Faculty of Public Health (MFPH) Examinations and cover both The Faculty of Public Health Diplomate (DFPH) and Final Membership examination (MFPH):.

### **Notice of future amendments to the Regulations and revisions following publication of the 2010 Regulations**

The MFPH Examination will continue to change to reflect developments in public health. While every attempt has been made to ensure that the MFPH Examination Regulations 2010 are accurate, further changes to the MFPH Examination, the Regulations, the examination calendar and closing dates may be implemented during this time. Candidates should refer to the examination pages on the FPH website ([www.fph.org.uk](http://www.fph.org.uk)) for the most up-to-date information, and where any such changes will be detailed.

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# **1 Aims and Objectives of the MFPH Examinations**

## **1.1 DFPH**

DFPH is a written examination intended to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of the scientific bases of public health, and their ability to apply their knowledge and skills to the practice of public health.

Candidates are expected to have acquired specialist knowledge and skills in public health, and show a clear understanding of the principles and methods of related disciplines — notably applied statistics, behavioural sciences, health economics and management.

Held in January and June each year, the examination may be taken in London and Hong Kong.

Success in this examination leads to Diplomat Membership of the Faculty of Public Health.

## **1.2 MFPH**

MFPH/Objective Structured Public Health Examination (OSPHE) is a 'show how' assessment of the candidate's ability to apply relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to the practice of public health. Candidates must demonstrate that they can integrate the theoretical and practical aspects of public health practice.

Success in this examination leads to nomination to election to Membership of the Faculty of Public Health.

The award of CCT requires the satisfactory completion of a training programme in approved posts and the admission to MFPH (UK) by examination.

MFPH is intended to follow successful completion of the DFPH. Applicants from specialty training programmes are advised to discuss the timing of the examination with their Training Programme Director (TPD).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### 2 Eligibility

DFPH examination is open to all people who:  
hold a university degree

or have equivalent qualifications and/or experience approved by the FPH Education Committee.

Qualifications or experience which are accepted for entry into a Master's level university programme will most likely be approved by the Education Committee for entry into the DFPH Examination.

It is not necessary to be enrolled on a training scheme or programme to sit the examination. However, those in the specialty training programme must be enrolled with the Faculty of Public Health to sit the examination.

Before applying for the MFPH candidates must have passed the DFPH or have been exempted from it, e.g. obtained reciprocal recognition of the Diploma & Part I Membership Examination held by the Irish Faculty of Public Health Medicine.

### 3 Application Procedure

**Please note**, the closing dates listed on the FPH website are absolute. Applications received after 5.00pm on the closing date cannot be accepted, and no allowance can be made for postal delays or for candidates applying from overseas.

Candidates are advised to use recorded or registered delivery and retain proof of posting if there is any doubt that their application will arrive by the closing date.

It will normally take several days to check and process entries. Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged in writing. Candidates may telephone the Education and Training Department to confirm receipt of their application if they wish.

#### 3.1 DFPH

To apply, the following documents must reach the FPH Education and Training Department no later than the published closing date:

[DFPH application form](#)  
[the requisite examination fee](#)

Applicants not on the UK Public Health training scheme are required to submit evidence of their university degree. Applicants, who are registered members of the GMC, can submit a copy of their registration certificate instead of their university degree certificate. Medical graduates not registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) must provide an original of their primary medical qualification with their application form.

A marriage certificate or other official evidence of change of name must be submitted by candidates who wish to enter the examination under a different name to that on the Medical Register or on their original diploma of qualification.

Approximately two weeks after the closing date candidates will receive an examination confirmation email. This shows the date of the examination, the start and finish times, the examination centre address and examination number. If you have not received this notification please contact the Examinations Manager. Misreading the email is not an acceptable reason for failing to attend or arriving late at an examination.

The examination number must be indicated on all examination answer folders and should be quoted in all correspondence with the Education and Training Department.

### **3.1.1 Candidates in Hong Kong**

Candidates on a Hong Kong training programme need to complete an additional and separate application to the Hong Kong College of Community Medicine (HKCCM) for the conjoint DFPH in Public Health. This form and further information can be found at [www.hkccm.org.hk](http://www.hkccm.org.hk)

Candidates with a background other than medicine (and other candidates not in a Hong Kong training programme) applying to sit the DFPH in Hong Kong also need to complete an additional application to the HKCCM. This is not an application to sit the conjoint UK/HKCCM examination. The HKCCM acts for the Faculty of Public Health in the capacity of an examination administering body, and requires a separate application form and fee to cover administrative costs.

In addition to following the normal UK application procedure outlined above, candidates should:  
complete the additional application form

pay an administrative fee as specified by the HKCCM by attaching a cheque to the application form

Additional details of the examination, e.g. venue, time etc. will be sent to each candidate by the HKCCM.

Please note, the HKCCM acts only in the capacity of an examination administering authority, which is not equivalent to the conjoint arrangements for some of the other candidates. The HKCCM will not recognise the qualification gained by candidates taking the Hong Kong sitting of the UK FPH examination if they have a background other than medicine.

### **3.2 MFPH**

Candidates should check for availability of places on the FPH website before they apply for the examination.

To apply the following documents must reach the Faculty Education and Training Department no later than the published closing date:

[MFP H application form](#)  
[the requisite examination fee](#)

A marriage certificate or other official evidence of change of name must be submitted by candidates who wish to enter under a different name to that on their certification of passing DFPH or any other document submitted in support of their application.

Candidates are strongly recommended to submit application forms well in advance of the closing date so that any problems can be resolved in good time.

**Places are offered on a first come first served basis and candidates' first choice in any MFPH sitting is not guaranteed.** Therefore, candidates should ensure that their second choice date is kept free until a confirmation of entry to a sitting has been received in writing.

All candidates are allocated a place randomly to either morning or afternoon sittings for each examination sitting.

Candidates will normally be notified of the exact date, time and location of their examination six to eight weeks prior to the examination date. Notification will be sent out to all candidates in writing as soon as the initial assessment of applications has been completed. It is not possible to provide this information over the telephone. Candidates must bring a copy of the notification letter to the examination.

### **3.2.1 Priority and Waiting Lists**

With six stations and six preparation stations, a total of 12 candidates can be examined in one sitting in a total of one hour and fifty minutes.

If candidates withdraw from an examination or waiting list, the list will be updated accordingly from names on a waiting list. Once allocated a slot a candidate will not be able to alter this other than under exceptional circumstances to be agreed by the Chair and Assistant Academic Registrar.

It is advised that candidates who appeal against an MFPH outcome from the previous sittings should not reapply and join a waiting list until the outcome of the appeal process has been concluded.

Applicants for the MFPH will be able to apply immediately after receiving their DFPH examination results normally without prioritisation. Dates will be published a year in advance to allow potential applicants the opportunity to plan ahead.

### **3.2.2 Fast Tracking of Candidates**

If any Training Programme Director (TPD) has a registrar who is close to their expected CCT date or close to ending a phase in training and they have justifiable reasons for them to sit the MFPH as soon as possible, the TPD may request that the trainee is fast tracked onto a particular sitting.

This request will enable a candidate to be given a place on a chosen MFPH OSPHE examination sitting. The request must be made in writing, at least two weeks before the closing date of the required examination and should be addressed to the Vice-Chair of the MFPH Examiners, (Logistics), and sent to the FPH Education and Training Department.



The request should outline reasons why the specialty registrar should be given consideration to sit the requested MFPH Examination and provided the reasons are valid, the candidate may be given priority to sit the examination.

The receipt of such a request will be acknowledged within 5 working days and confirmation of a decision will be sent within 10 working days. Any requests received after the examination closing date may not be considered.

## **4 Fees**

Fees for the DFPH and MFPH are set by the Board of the Faculty of Public Health. The current fees are available on the FPH website.

## **5 Preparation**

Available on the FPH website are past [DFPH papers](#) and [MFPH /OSPHE sample questions](#).

## **6 Number of Attempts and validity period of examination passes**

From 1 June 2013 the following regulatory changes will take effect regarding the MFPH Examinations:

No candidate will normally be permitted more than six attempts at either the DFPH or MFPH without providing evidence of additional educational experience. For DFPH, the attempt limit will apply irrespective of whether a candidate has banked a paper or not.

Once the DFPH has been passed, no candidate will be permitted more than seven years to pass the MFPH. The seven year validity period will be calculated from the date that a candidate passes the DFPH. Should a candidate fail to achieve a MFPH pass within the seven year limit, they will be required to take the DFPH again.

Candidates withdrawing or who are absent from an examination will not have that attempted counted. Any examination pass achieved prior to, or while on a break from the training scheme, will only be considered valid for CCT as long as the candidate enters or re-enters the training programme within seven years of passing the examination.

Candidates applying for an additional attempt over and above the limit of six, will need to complete an additional attempt form and submit this with the standard application form for the seventh or any subsequent attempt at any of the MFPH Examinations. This form can be found on the FPH website on the pages dealing with the application procedure for the DFPH and MFPH.

Guidance for completing the form, including details regarding the expectations of the additional experience are also available on the FPH website on the pages dealing with the application procedure for the DFPH and MFPH.

## **7 Withdrawal from the exam**

The Membership Examinations are high-stakes assessments and it is therefore in the interest of candidates that they sit the exam when they are able to complete it to the best of their ability.

As such, candidates should ensure that they are both physically and mentally fit to undertake an examination.

If a candidate is not fit or there are other grounds for withdrawal they should inform their Training Programme Director or Educational Supervisor who should issue a letter of support.

This application for withdrawal together with supporting evidence should be sent to the Examinations Co-ordinator as soon as possible together with other relevant supporting documentation (please see detailed guidance on the following pages).

The application and supporting evidence will be considered by the Academic Registrar and a decision will be sent within 20 working days of receipt.

If the candidate subsequently chooses to attend the examination, they are deeming themselves 'fit to sit' and the mark awarded is deemed an accurate reflection of their performance(s).

Please see the Withdrawal Information and Application Form for further details on supporting documentation, timings and refunds.

## **8 Extenuating Circumstances**

If a candidate falls ill (or experiences another extenuating circumstance) during the time near to the examination (e.g. the evening or morning before the exam) they may absent themselves from the exam and submit the application for extenuating circumstances within three working days.

If a candidate is suffering with an infectious illness they should submit an application to withdraw from the exam and not attend the exam venue. It will not be possible to accommodate a candidate in a separate room on the day of the exam. Candidates who are 'fit to sit' on entering the examination venue but become unwell during the exam (or experience another extenuating circumstance) should speak to the Chief Invigilator, Chief Officer or a member of the Examinations Team who will include this in a report for the Exam Board.

If the candidate leaves the exam in these circumstances, their answer booklet/mark sheet shall become null and void irrespective of whether the extenuating circumstances application is successful.

Please note that if the candidate wishes to continue the examination and subsequently submits an application for extenuating circumstances, a successful application will result in their attempt being discounted whatever the outcome.

### **Banked papers (Diplomate Exam)**

If a candidate withdraws from the exam when they have banked a paper at a previous sitting, providing their application is successful they will be able to retain their banked paper for future sittings and this attempt will be voided entirely.

## **Extenuating circumstances applying to just one day of the exam (Diplomate Exam)**

Please note that two days and all papers constitute one assessment, and extenuating circumstances therefore have to apply to all of the attempt or none. If a candidate attends Paper I but does not attend Paper II their entire attempt will become null and void irrespective of whether the Extenuating Circumstances application is subsequently upheld.

If a candidate attempts both papers but experiences an extenuating circumstance on day two, a successful application for extenuating circumstances will lead to their entire attempt being discounted.

Application forms and further information about withdrawing and extenuating circumstances can be found [here](#).

Please note that this policy will only be deviated from in exceptional circumstances. Instances of exceptional circumstances will be managed on a case by case basis.

## **9 Disabilities**

FPH aims to make every effort to accommodate the needs of candidates with permanent or temporary disabilities, to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability, knowledge and expertise, without being disadvantaged.

It is essential that candidates needing exceptional arrangements notify FPH well in advance of the sitting so that the necessary adjustments can be appropriately planned, with discussion where appropriate with the candidate's trainer, Chair of Examiners, Programme Director and the Assistant Academic Registrar.

Full details are provided in the *FPH Examinations Policy for Candidates with Disabilities* (Appendix 1).

## **10 Misconduct**

If candidates engage in any activity that may be deemed to constitute professional or academic misconduct, they will be reported directly to examination officers and the FPH Education and Training Department. All incidences will be investigated in accordance with the *FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy and Procedure* (Appendix 2), and if found to have engaged in misconduct candidates may have their examination result declared invalid and their name reported to their professional regulatory authority.

## **11 Appeals**

Candidates who wish to appeal against their examination results should consult the *FPH Examinations Appeals Policy & Procedure* (Appendix 3).

Candidates who wish to make a formal appeal against their examination results must write to the Chief Executive of the Faculty **within 1 calendar month of the date of dispatch** of the result, as indicated in the procedures. Candidates should ensure they read this guidance carefully to ensure that their grounds for appeal are legitimate before writing.

## 12 Complaints

There is a complaints procedure for all activities managed by FPH not directly linked to an outcome of an examination. The complaints procedure is available on the [FPH website](#).

## 13 Exemption

In order to comply with the recent GMC position on approved curricula and the role of UK and overseas exams, FPH has had to alter the reciprocal arrangement that was previously agreed with the Irish Faculty of Public Health Medicine, where a pass in the MFPHMI Part I examination lead to an exemption from the DFPH. FPH will now be transitioning to a position where an exemption from the DFPH will only be able to count towards membership of FPH as opposed to also counting towards CCT.

As part of the GMC's transitional guidelines, FPH is able to provide DFPH exemptions that count towards CCT where the following two criteria are met:

- 1 The MFPHMI Part I examination pass has been achieved before 1 June 2015
- And
- 2 The doctor enters the UK training programme before 31 December 2016.

Exemption for the purposes of gaining membership is not automatic, but must be applied for using the application for exemption from DFPH form available on the [FPH website](#), enclosing documentary evidence and the current fee. A copy of the original letter of notification from the Irish Faculty will be acceptable evidence.

Exemption from either the DFPH or MFPH examination is not allowed on any other grounds.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

### 14 DFPH Examination

#### 14.1 Content

The level of knowledge, skill and understanding required within all sections of the syllabus is that which could reasonably be expected of a competent practitioner in public health who may aspire to attain specialist status.

The DFPH syllabus, available on the [FPH website](#), provides indicative guidance on the main topics that may be examined at DFPH.

DFPH also tests the following skills:

- (a) **Design and interpretation of studies:** skills in the design of research studies; ability critically to evaluate published papers including the validity of the use of statistical techniques and the inferences drawn from them; ability to draw appropriate conclusions from quantitative and qualitative research.
- (b) **Data processing, presentation and interpretation:** ability to sort and manipulate data, and to draw appropriate conclusions from quantitative and qualitative data.
- (c) **Communication:** written presentation skills; preparation of papers for publication; preparation of material for different audiences, including expert and non-expert audiences and the media. Information handling and use of media in advising the public about health services, disease prevention (including communicable disease outbreaks and environmental hazards) and health promotion.

#### 14.2 Structure

The examination consists of two papers - Paper I and Paper II. Both Papers I and II are split into two parts/components A and B – (Paper IA, Paper IB, Paper IIA and Paper IIB) and taken over two consecutive days.

Candidates should note that there may be duplication of subject material in Paper I and Paper II.

The examination is designed to accommodate candidates from disciplines in the wider field of public health as well as candidates with experience outside the UK health service system. In setting questions, the aim is for generic questions, which, where appropriate, allow candidates to relate answers to their particular settings.

##### 14.2.1 Paper I - 'Knowledge Paper'

Paper I is designed primarily to test knowledge. The knowledge part of the syllabus is broken down into five sections further details of which are available in the syllabus. The skills tested at DFPH are not the same as those tested at the MFPH, or through the ARCP process.

An ability to extract, process and present data, to criticise research evidence and to communicate in writing to a non-specialist audience, are required for DFPH, rather than the more complex skills tested later.

Candidates must answer 10 compulsory short-answer questions across the range of the syllabus to demonstrate their knowledge of the core sciences of public health. Most questions will be of a standard format, 'write short notes on', and sub-sections within questions may incorporate additional options where appropriate. Candidates must answer a specified number of options for each question.

**Section A (2 ½ hours)**

Candidates must answer six questions covering the following subjects:

- (f) Research methods, including epidemiology, statistical methods, and other methods of enquiry including qualitative research methods
- (g) Disease prevention and health promotion
- (h) Health information

**Section B (1 hour 40 minutes)**

Candidates must answer four questions covering the following subjects:

- (a) Medical sociology, social policy and health economics
- (b) Organisation and management of health care

**14.2.2 Paper II - 'Skills Paper'**

Paper II is designed primarily to test skills - The skills part of the syllabus is broken into three sections, material from any of which may be tested at any point in the skills part of the examination.

Some core data handling skills and the ability to perform core statistical techniques will be required in the examination - sensitivity, specificity, positive and negative predictive power, numbers needed to treat, relative risk, odds ratio, attributable fraction, Standard Error and Confidence Interval (CI) of a proportion and of a difference in proportions, Chi Square for a 2 X 2 table, McNemar's test, standardisation - direct and indirect, weighted averages, CI and standard errors for means.

This paper is designed to test candidates' public health skills. Candidates must answer the question posed in both sections. There is no choice of questions on either section.

**Section A (2 ½ hours)**

Critical appraisal and commentary on material in an article from a journal and its application to a specific public health problem. The first question for this paper includes a word limit, the function of which is to focus candidates in terms of the answers they provide. The remaining questions may be phrased in general terms and allow candidates to give examples from different contexts.

**Section B (1 ½ hours)**

This is structured as five 'sections', which cover different parts of the syllabus, each section contributing 10 marks. Answers may be numerical, graphical, short phrases, sentences or a short paragraph (where indicated in the question). Multiple choice questions may be included. The paper will assess data manipulation and interpretation skills, and candidates will be provided with a basic calculator with sufficient functions for these purposes including a square root function but no other scientific functions. Candidates are not permitted to bring a different calculator into the examination.

## **14.3 Attendance at, and procedures during, the DFPH**

### **14.3.1 Documents to bring to the examination**

- (a) Candidates are required to show one of the documents listed below as proof of identity at the examination. It must be original, current and bear a photograph.
- Passport
  - UK Immigration and Nationality Department identification document
  - Home Office travel document
  - UK driving licence
  - EU identity card

If the name on the identification document is different from that on the confirmation from FPH offering a place in the examination, original evidence must be provided that the candidate is the person named in that letter. FPH will accept:

Marriage certificate or

A declaration from the awarding body which granted the primary medical qualification, stating that both names relate to the candidate.

If candidates do not bring one of the documents listed above, or if the document does not bear a photograph, they will not be allowed to take the examination. The examination fee will not be refundable under these circumstances.

### **14.3.2 Examination materials**

Candidates should bring at least one ballpoint or ink pen (with **dark** ink). Other items which may be used in the examination are: pencils, ruler, eraser. (Please note that pencil does not reproduce well in the photocopies which are sent to examiners for marking).

### **14.3.3 Prohibited items**

Prohibited items include:

English and/or foreign language dictionaries  
calculators  
laptop computers  
mobile phones including PDAs, personal  
organisers and radio pagers

Calculators will be provided by the invigilators. The model provided will be a basic (non-scientific) pocket calculator, with memory and square root functions but no floating decimal point. A knowledge of engineering notation will therefore be useful in the calculation of extremely large or small numbers (over 8 digits in length). Statistical tables will not be provided.

### **14.3.4 Invigilators**

Each examination is supervised by an invigilator to ensure that the examination is conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Faculty. The invigilator has authority in matters regarding admission to the examination hall, permission to use the toilets and discipline in general. Each invigilator will report any queries or problems to the Chair of the DFPH Examiners. In cases of serious and prolonged disruption of the examination the

invigilator will liaise with the Chair and Academic Registrar to determine the most suitable course of action.

#### **14.3.5 Admission to the examination hall**

Candidates will be invited to enter the examination hall approximately 10 minutes before the examination is due to start.

Candidates should ensure that the name and examination number on the front of their answer folder are correct.

Coats and bags must be left in the designated area. **Mobile telephones and alarm clocks must be switched off.**

Valuables should not be left in the examination room between Papers. The Faculty cannot accept responsibility for any items that are lost or stolen.

#### **14.3.6 Late arrival**

Candidates must arrive at the examination centre at least 15 minutes before the examination is due to begin.

Candidates who arrive late, but within 30 minutes of the start of the examination, will be admitted but will not be allowed any extra time.

Candidates will be expected to explain their late arrival to the invigilator who will record this in their report.

No candidate will be admitted to the examination hall after the first 30 minutes.

#### **14.3.7 Misconduct**

The invigilator may stop any candidate suspected of misconduct during the examination from completing it, and if necessary confiscate any unauthorised materials and expel the candidate from the examination room.

*Examples of serious offences include:*

possession of any prohibited items in the examination hall (except those held in bags in the designated area);

helping or receiving help from another candidate;

consulting any materials outside the examination room during the examination;

continuing to write after the invigilator has asked all candidates to stop at the end of the examination.

If candidates do any of these things or engage in any other activity that may be deemed to constitute professional or academic misconduct, they will be reported directly to examination officers and the FPH Education and Training Department. All incidences will be investigated in accordance with the FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy and Procedure (Appendix 2), and if found to have engaged in misconduct candidates may have their examination result declared invalid and their name reported to their professional regulatory authority.

#### **14.3.8 Finishing the examination**

Candidates who finish before the scheduled time will be allowed to leave the room, except during the last 15 minutes. Answer folders must be given to the invigilator before leaving. Candidates will not be readmitted.



When the examination ends, the invigilator will tell candidates to stop writing. Candidates will then have **5 minutes** to ensure that all the pages in the folder have the correct candidate number, examination, question and page numbers.

After 5 minutes, answer folders will be collected *regardless of their condition*. Answers should be placed in the folder provided, the front of which must be signed. Only work which is inside the folder will be marked by the Examiners.

Any work removed from the room may not be submitted and will not be marked by the examiners.

### **14.3.9 Leaving the examination hall**

- No candidate may leave the examination hall during the first 30 minutes.
- The invigilator will allow candidates to leave the examination hall (one at a time) for a short period after the first 30 minutes to go to the toilet.
- No candidate may leave the examination hall during the last 15 minutes of the examination.
- Once the examination has ended, candidates must remain seated in silence until all answer folders and question papers have been collected.
- Examination materials, including question papers, may not be removed from the examination hall.

If candidates feel unwell during the examination they should tell the invigilator immediately. If they cannot continue they may leave the room. If the candidate wishes the Board of Examiners to be informed of the illness they must complete and return the Extenuating Circumstances Form, available on the [FPH website](#) within three days of the examination.

Candidates are advised that marks and pass/fail decisions are unlikely to be changed as a result of notification of illness.

## **14.4 Marking System**

Papers are anonymised and marked by examiners working individually.

The process of marking DFPH questions and reaching agreement as to the final mark on each question for each candidate is as follows:

For Paper I, two examiners each mark two questions, that is pair A mark questions 1 & 2, pair B mark questions 3 & 4, etc.

For Paper II, two examiners each mark Paper IIA and two different examiners each mark Paper IIB.

A total of 14 examiners are therefore involved in marking the examination scripts from each sitting of DFPH. This process ensures that each script is double marked.

Each examiner marks their allotted scripts independently. Questions in Paper I are each marked out of 10, while each section (A & B) of Paper II is marked out of 50.

The paired examiners then discuss and compare their results in order to reach a set of agreed marks for each script. The two agreed marks from each examiner are averaged to derive the final mark for that question for each candidate.

Before submitting their agreed marks, examiners need to ensure that their two separate marks comply with certain rules:

In Paper I, the two marks may not differ by more than 2 points (e.g. a 5 and a 7 is satisfactory but not a 5 and an 8).

In Paper II, the two marks may not differ by more than 5 points (10%).

In either Paper, the two marks may not constitute a difference between a pass and a fail, i.e. they must both be either pass marks or fail marks (e.g. 3 & 4, or 5 & 6, but not 4 and 5 (or in Paper II: 23 & 24, or 25 & 26, but not 24 & 25)).

If their individual marks do not meet these rules, the examiners discuss how they reached their marks on those candidates' papers. This may sometimes lead to one or both of the examiners agreeing to change their mark(s) to ensure the rules are met (either by increasing or decreasing), or they may agree to re-mark that candidate's paper. Re-marking is often carried out when the results span the pass/fail borderline. The results following re-marking are again compared and any remaining discrepancies are re-discussed. This process continues until the rules are met, which is usually achieved within two reviews.

The final mark on each paper for **every** candidate sitting the examination is individually discussed and agreed at the Examinations Board meeting. Candidates must pass both Paper I and Paper II separately in order to pass overall. For further details see the DFPH marking algorithm (Appendix 4) used by the Executive Examiners.

## 14.5 Notification of Results

Examination results will be sent in a PDF by email within two to three working days of the DFPH results meeting (usually around six weeks after the examination). A pass list and results summary will also be published on the Faculty website on the second Monday following the DFPH results meeting. **Examination results will not be given over the telephone.** Results are not posted in the Faculty premises.

Candidates who have passed the examination, will have their names passed to the Membership Department of the Faculty for election to Diplomat Membership.

The result for all candidates will be sent to Faculty Advisers and Training Programme Directors.

## 14.6 Banking

It is possible to 'bank' papers at DFPH. This means that if the candidate does not pass the examination but has passed an individual paper, this result can be banked so that the candidate need not sit this paper again. This is feasible due to the explicit separation of knowledge and skills between Papers I and II.

Please note the following:

An individual paper (I or II) may be banked **only** when it has been passed and **only** when an overall score of 100/200 or more has been attained in the examination as a whole.

Candidates who bank a paper at a sitting must then sit the remaining paper at each subsequent examination.

A candidate will only be considered for a prize at their first sitting of the examination. There will be no change in the examination fees for sittings of individual papers.

Candidates must continue to take both parts (papers) of the examination at the same sitting, unless a paper has been banked previously.

## **14.7 Feedback**

All candidates who are unsuccessful in the examination will receive feedback on their examination performance in the form of marks as well as the question key points and examiners' general comments. Candidates will not receive detailed individual feedback

## **15 MFPH**

### **15.1 Content**

The standard required in MFPH (OSPHE) will be that which could be reasonably expected of a public health trainee with at least two years' (whole time equivalent) of service-based training left, and is normally achievable by someone in training after passing DFPH.

The examiners will assess candidates' ability to use knowledge and skills appropriately in public health settings.

The OSPHE is a test of skills and attitudes relating to every day public health issues in commonly experienced settings. The examination is a role-play examination run to time to represent the practice of public health in everyday settings and are mostly based on the real experiences of question setting examiners in the workplace. Candidates will not be required to be familiar with NHS procedures or practices. The MFPH (OSPHE) is a 'show how' assessment rather than a 'knowledge' or 'know how' assessment, which will already have been completed in DFPH.

The following skills will be tested:

1. The ability to demonstrate presenting communication skills (verbal and non-verbal) appropriately in typical public health settings: presenting to a person or audience.
2. The ability to demonstrate listening and comprehending communications skills (verbal and non-verbal) appropriately in typical public health settings: listening and responding appropriately.
3. Demonstrating ascertainment of key public health facts from the material provided and using it appropriately with regard to wider Public Health information sources.
4. Giving a balanced view and/or explaining appropriately key Public Health concepts in a Public Health setting.
5. The ability to handle uncertainty, the unexpected, challenge and conflict appropriately.

The subject matter used in the examinations will draw on material from a wide range of topics encountered in everyday public health practice. The scenarios themselves will also be varied across the six stations of the examination.

### 15.1.1 Topic areas

1. **Health Protection** (including Infection, Immunisation, Screening and Environmental subject matter).
2. **Health Promotion and Health Improvement** (including lifestyle and behavioural interventions at individual and population level, partnership working and wider determinants of health).
3. **Quality healthcare: technical aspects** of commissioning which require expert advice or assessment utilising public health skills. Examples include the application of technical material to health or health care provision.
4. **Quality healthcare: Implementation** of health or healthcare interventions and working with patients, the public, professionals or organisations.

### 15.1.2 Types of scenario

In addition to the topic areas, there are four types of scenario reflective of mainstream public health practice:

1. **Media/high profile 'public':**  
media - newspaper, radio pre-recorded;  
member of parliament or local council leader;  
press officer of NHS or partner organisation.
2. **Other non health service public health 'specialist'/key 'public health improvement' partner:**  
meeting with/briefing for senior professional (e.g. professional whose job focus has strong public health element such as Director of Children's Services or an informed chair of a non health or other organisation);  
meeting with or briefing for new PH trainees or non-specialist staff;  
meeting with other senior officer of council or other partner organisation to discuss PH actions.
3. **The Lay public:**  
meeting with local councillor/non-NHS health partnership chair or member;  
meeting with member of the public on an issue pertinent to them; meeting with representative of patient forum or pressure or lobby group.
4. **Healthcare staff - clinical and general management:**  
briefing to chair of NHS committee or board (non-clinical);  
meeting with healthcare manager - commissioning or CE or other senior;  
meeting with healthcare professional involved in care delivery - GP/Consultant/Nurse/ AHP.

## 15.2 Structure

The MFPH (OSPHE) takes the form of six scenarios or 'stations'. Each station lasts eight minutes.

The preparation time will be eight minutes for an OSPHE station.

There may be a pilot station where scenarios to be used in future examinations are being tested. Marks for this station will not count towards a candidate's final result.

For examiner training purposes FPH video-records a random sample of OSPHE stations. These videos will be used exclusively for examiner training and will not be used as part of the marking processes and not, save in exceptional cases, as evidence when considering complaints, appeals or cases of alleged misconduct. Candidates will not be permitted to opt out of being video recorded or to request copies of their station for any purpose.

The samples of MFPH OSPHE stations, available on the [FPH website](#) illustrate the format and structure that will be used in each question.

### **5.3 Attendance at, and procedures during, MFPH**

MFPH lasts about 1 hour and 55 minutes, although candidates will be in the centre for considerably longer than this. Candidates taking the examination in the afternoon should be aware that it will not finish before 16.00.

#### **15.3.1 Documents to bring to the examination**

1. Candidates examination confirmation letter.
2. Candidates are required to show one of the documents listed below as proof of identity at the examination. It must be original, current and bear a photograph.
  - Passport
    - UK Immigration and Nationality Department identification document
    - Home Office travel document
  - UK driving licence
  - EU identity card
3. If the name on the identification document is different from that on the confirmation from FPH offering a place in the examination, original evidence must be provided that the candidate is the person named in that letter. FPH will accept:
  - Marriage certificate or
  - A declaration from the awarding body which granted the primary medical qualification, stating that both names relate to the candidate.

If candidates do not bring one of the documents listed above, or if the document does not bear a photograph, they will not be allowed to take the examination. The examination fee will not be refundable under these circumstances.

#### **15.3.2 Arrival**

FPH expect all examinations to start on time. Traffic and public transport can cause delays, so candidates should allow plenty of time for their journey. If candidates are late (i.e. too late to register and be briefed with other candidates) they will not be allowed to take the examination and the fee will not be refunded.

Candidates may be asked to arrive at the centre in the morning although their examination will be in the afternoon; this is because they are not permitted to meet the candidates that took the examination in the morning.

When entering the assessment centre, candidates will be asked to store all their belongings in a locker before moving to the candidate rooms.

#### **15.3.3 Materials**

Nothing can be taken into the examination area. Candidates will be provided with all the materials needed during the examination.

#### **15.3.4 Prohibited items**

Candidates must place mobile phones and pagers in lockers before the examination.

Please note that smoking is not permitted in the examination centre.

### **15.3.5 Misconduct**

Candidates must not use or refer to any other materials or try to communicate with other candidates during the examination.

All books, pens, papers, mobile phones and other electronic equipment must be stored in lockers when entering the centre.

Candidates must not take any examination materials out of the assessment centre, must not write down the details of stations to take out and must not obtain information about stations from any source including other candidates.

If candidates do any of these things or engage in any other activity that may be deemed to constitute professional or academic misconduct, they will be reported directly to examination officers and the FPH Education and Training Department. All incidences will be investigated in accordance with the *FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy and Procedure* (Appendix 2), and if found to have engaged in misconduct candidates may have their examination result declared invalid and their name reported to their professional regulatory authority.

### **15.3.6 Completing the examination**

On the day, all candidates will be fully briefed about what they have to do.

When entering the examination area, candidates will find six preparation booths and six examination booths, known as stations. Each station requires the candidate to undertake a particular task. Some tasks will involve just reading instructions; some will involve tasks such as preparing a verbal briefing, giving a short formal talk, or being interviewed by a journalist.

Each station lasts eight minutes, and there will be approximately one minute between stations. The stations will be numbered clearly from 1 to 6 and staff will help candidates move between stations.

Candidates will receive a candidate briefing pack with the full set of six questions. Each question will be clearly marked. Candidates should take this pack with them to all stations, and to the preparation and examination rooms. Candidates may make notes on it. They will be asked to return the full set as they leave the examination suite at the end of the examination. There will also be paper in the preparation room for candidates to make notes on. Candidates can take these notes with them into the examination room but should leave them there at the end of the station.

There may be a pilot station where a new scenario will be tested. Candidates will not be told which station this is. The result in this station will not count.

Candidates will be required to perform all tasks. They will be told the number of the station at which they should begin in the briefing session and will be directed to that station when entering the examination area. The starting station will also be indicated by a number on the name badge given to each candidate when they register.

The first station will always be a preparation station where candidates will read the instructions for the examination station outlining what will be required to perform at that station. Candidates will have eight minutes before entering the examination station to read

the instructions. They must always read the station instructions carefully and respond appropriately. Candidates should not assume they know what the station is about.

An announcement will be made to inform candidates that they may then enter the examination station. There will be an examiner in each station. Candidates will not always be required to have a conversation with the examiner; and should only direct remarks to him or her if the instructions specifically ask them to do so. Candidates should undertake the task as instructed.

In some stations there may be an actor who has been provided with a detailed script beforehand. In these stations the examiner will observe and will not intervene, except in very limited circumstances.

In addition to the candidate, examiner and actor/role-player, there may be other people in the room and these others may include examiners in training, observers participating in an audit and evaluation of the MFPH OSPHE etc.

An announcement will be made after seven minutes to warn candidates that they are nearly out of time. Another announcement will be made when the time has expired. At this point, candidates must stop immediately and go to the next station. If candidates finish before the end, they must wait inside the station but should not speak to the examiner or the role-player during this time.

Candidates should continue in this way until they have completed all examination stations. They will then have finished the examination OSPHE.

Examiners will not give any feedback during examination OSPHE stations.

### **15.3.7 Leaving the examination**

At the end of the examination candidates should hand in their card/ID Badge to a member of staff, collect their belongings from the lockers and leave quietly.

## **15.4 Marking System**

The standard required in the MFPH is that which could be reasonably expected of a public health trainee with at least two years' (whole time equivalent) of service-based training left and is normally achievable by someone in training after passing DFPH.

The examiners will assess candidates' ability to use knowledge and skills appropriately in public health settings.

The OSPHE is a 'show how' assessment rather than a 'knowledge' or 'know how' assessment, which will already have been completed in DFPH. Section 15.1 describes the skills that are tested.

The five competency areas are covered at each and every station. Candidates will therefore receive six independent assessments of each of the five competency areas. At each station there will be at least two people conducting the examination. One examiner at each station will be responsible for and free to concentrate on marking.

Using marking guidance, examiners grade each competency A-E for each candidate, with A being excellent, B being good, C being satisfactory, D being just below satisfactory and E being poor. These grades are later converted into numerical scores.

MFPH applies a process of combining scores from individual stations to produce a global score and average marks for the five competency areas.

If a candidate were to be awarded a C for each competency at all six stations, this would indicate a pass overall. However, the marks for each competency are averaged, so the marking structure is such that it is possible to not do well on, say, two of the stations, and yet still pass overall by getting some marks higher than a C at other stations. The other requirement for a pass is that each competency area must be marked as satisfactory or above at half or more of the stations. See the MFPH marking algorithm (Appendix 5) for a summary of how results are determined.

No part/question of the MFPH can be banked.

## **15.5 Notification of Results**

Candidates can expect to receive their results via the email address supplied on the application within 10 working days after the examination.

There are two possible outcomes of the examination: Pass or Fail.

Candidates who have passed the examination, will have their names passed to the Membership Department of the Faculty. They will be asked to become a Member of the Faculty, which is one of the requirements for completion of training and being recommended for inclusion on the specialist register.

Following each MFPH sitting, the names of successful candidates will be published on the Faculty website. The results for all candidates will be sent to Faculty Advisers and Training Programme Directors.

## **15.6 Feedback**

Candidates who fail can request feedback to help them and their trainer with regard to areas they should consider in their personal development plan before applying to re-sit the examination. Candidates are given feedback in the form of average scores for each competency; giving them an indication of how well they have performed in the examination and which competencies may require targeted training.



## **FPH EXAMINATIONS POLICY FOR CANDIDATES REQUIRING ADJUSTMENTS**

The Faculty of Public Health (FPH) aims to make all reasonable efforts to accommodate the needs of candidates with permanent or temporary disabilities, to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability, knowledge and expertise, without being substantially disadvantaged.

### **Exceptional Arrangements for Examination candidates**

As part of the Equal Opportunities Policy of the Faculty of Public Health, special arrangements for examinations will be made to enable disabled candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject notwithstanding their disability. A flexible policy of exceptional arrangements will be adhered to in order to ensure that no candidate is substantially disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

The Assistant Academic Registrar<sup>1</sup> may, at his or her discretion, approve exceptional arrangements for the conduct of the examination for candidates with special requirements or circumstances. The Assistant Academic Registrar is responsible for considering requests for adjustments to the FPH examination conditions.

Candidates, who have a disability or any exceptional circumstances which may affect their ability to take the examination, or which may call for extra measures on the part of the Faculty, must state this on their application form. Examples include:

- Long-term conditions (at risk during the examination sitting) e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, heart problems;
- Physical impairment (affecting posture or ability to read/write) e.g. arthritis, visual impairment, spinal injury;
- Sensory-neural or developmental impairment (affecting ability to read/write) e.g. vision loss, dyslexia, dyspraxia (developmental co-ordination disorder);
- Special conditions e.g. hearing impairment or deafness, pregnancy, using a wheelchair.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, FPH will make reasonable adjustments to minimise any potential disadvantage for candidates with long term conditions or disabilities while maintaining the integrity of the examination's competence standard. FPH is happy to discuss the requirements of candidates and will be flexible with arrangements. However, it should be noted that planning for the examination can take some time and it may not always be possible to accommodate special requirements at short notice. Therefore, it is essential that candidates needing exceptional arrangements notify FPH well in advance of the examination so that the necessary adjustments can be appropriately planned, with discussion where appropriate with the candidate's trainer, Chair of Examiners, Programme Director and the Assistant Academic Registrar.

If the Assistant Academic Registrar is not able to review the request through conflicts of interest or availability, a Director of Training, who has not previously been involved, will carry out the assessment.

Candidates should note that FPH does not have a duty to make reasonable adjustments (or exceptional arrangements) in relation to the application of a competence standard, for example by lowering a pass mark. A competence standard is the academic, medical or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not an applicant has a particular level of competence or ability.

### **How to submit a request for exceptional arrangements**

*To request exceptional arrangements the following conditions must be met:*

The request for exceptional arrangements must be included or attached to, and submitted with, the application form for each examination (DFPH and MFPH) and each examination attempt.

The request for exceptional arrangements, accompanied by the appropriate documentation, must be received by the Faculty as early as possible, with a completed application for the examination ideally three weeks prior to the examination closing date. If the request and the appropriate accompanying documentation is not received by the closing date for applications, the Faculty will not be in a position to consider making the necessary adjustment(s). Late applications for adjustments will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances where a candidate experiences a change in their circumstances which may affect their ability to take the exam. An example of this would be a wrist injury that affects a candidate's ability to write. However, it may not be possible to accept any requests within five weeks of the exam. In these instances, the candidate should discuss their circumstances with Faculty and consider withdrawing from the current sitting.

The candidate should supply:

1. All written assessments relating to the situation from medical consultants, general practitioners, occupational physicians and other relevant professionals must be dated within 3 years. This must include a statement confirming that the candidate's difficulties warrant special examination arrangements. The report should confirm whether it relates to requirements for a written examination (DFPH), or a practical examination (MFPH) or to both types of examination. If this is not specified or is not sufficiently clear, the FPH may request further reports, as necessary.

In cases of dyslexia or any other learning difficulty, the exams administrator will require a Psychological Assessment Report made by a qualified educational psychologist, which must have been conducted after the candidate was sixteen years of age.

FPH reserves the right to request an additional independent assessment. Candidates will be required to sign a form declaring that full disclosure of information has been provided.

2. A letter of support from the Training Programme Director or Faculty Advisor, to state that exceptional arrangements are needed and to give an outline of what kind of arrangements would be helpful to the candidate. Candidates who are not in a UK training scheme can supply such information from their current employer.

The request will be considered by the Assistant Academic Registrar. If a candidate is not able to supply the above documents before the expiry of the application deadline, they may proceed to take the examination, but without special arrangements being in place.

Once a decision has been made by the Assistant Academic Registrar, the Education Office will then confirm the decision in writing. Candidates are required to sign a document confirming that notification of the adjustments has been received and accepted by the candidate, three weeks before the examination date. All adjustments should be finalised three weeks prior to the examination. If agreement about the level of adjustments cannot be reached by the three week deadline the examination attempt may be deferred at the candidate's option, or the candidate may proceed to attempt the examination, with the level of adjustments specified by the FPH in place. Any candidate who opts to defer taking the examination in these circumstances is required to give seven working day's written notice to FPH's Education Office so that FPH does not incur expenditure unnecessarily. Candidates who opt to defer their sitting will be considered to have withdrawn from the exam and are therefore subject to the withdrawals policy.

Should a candidate with a banked paper wish to defer their sitting as a result of adjustments not being agreed, they will need to apply to the Academic Registrar for permission to retain their banked paper.

It is the candidate's responsibility to inform FPH of any changes in circumstances or additional adjustments required that arise between the notification of proposed adjustments and the actual examination.

Candidates have the right to appeal against the process by which the original decision about the level of adjustments was made. This can be done in writing to the Education Office for the attention of the Academic Registrar within **TWO** weeks of the date of the notification of the provision awarded. The Academic Registrar will not be involved in the initial decision by the Assistant Academic Registrar, and will make an independent adjudication, which may be to uphold the original decision or else to change it by increasing, altering **or** reducing the adjustments to be made. A response will be given within 10 working days. The outcome of this appeal is final.

If no appeal is received by the appeal deadline and the candidate has not notified the Faculty of a wish to defer the examination, the FPH will act on the basis that the decision on the adjustments has been accepted and that the candidate will attend the examination when the proposed adjustments will be implemented. Candidates should make every effort to attend examinations for which adjustments are being provided.

Any candidate, whether or not disabled, is welcome to bring a back support in the form of a roll or pillow to be used in connection with standard seating arrangements.

### **Dyslexic candidates sitting the DFPH**

Along with extra time and other adjustments that may be sanctioned by the Faculty, dyslexic candidates sitting the DFPH will be provided with a coloured sticker they can at their option attach to their examination scripts. This is in order to ensure that during anonymous marking a dyslexic candidate is not penalised for spelling errors that are a result of their dyslexia. The sticker system is simply to bring to the attention of the marker that it is a dyslexic candidate and that there may be errors in written expression. Dyslexic candidates will not be penalised unduly for errors that have nothing to do with the understanding of the subject. Dyslexic candidates are under no obligation to use the sticker system and may choose not to. Other candidates (for example, those with dyspraxia) may request to use the sticker system as part of their request for exceptional arrangements. This adjustment will be considered by the Assistant Academic Registrar, as part of any request for exceptional arrangements and in accordance with the conditions above.

February 2008

*Revised August 2018*

### Summary of timeframes outlined in the Adjustment Policy

<b>Submitting a request for adjustments</b>	As early as possible, <b>with application form</b> , ideally <b>three weeks or more</b> from the examination closing date
<b>Late applications will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances</b>	Late applications due to exceptional circumstances will only be considered up until <b>5 weeks</b> before the exam. After this point we would advise the candidate to withdraw and apply for the next sitting.
<b>Written assessments from relevant professionals</b>	Written assessments from relevant professionals to accompany the applications must be dated within <b>three years</b> .
<b>Finalisation of adjustments</b>	All adjustments should be finalised <b>three weeks</b> prior to the examination.
<b>Agreement of adjustments</b>	Candidates are required to sign a document confirming that notification of the adjustments has been received and accepted <b>three weeks</b> before the exam. If agreement cannot be reached by the three week deadline the examination may be deferred. Any candidate who opts to defer the examination in these circumstances is required to give <b>seven working days'</b> notice to FPH's Education Office.
<b>Appeal against adjustment decision</b>	Candidates have the right to appeal against the process by which the original decision about the level of adjustments was made. This can be done in writing to the Education office for the attention of the Academic Registrar within <b>two</b> weeks of the notification of the provision awarded. A response will be given in <b>10 working days</b> .



**FACULTY OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

## **FACULTY OF PUBLIC HEALTH EXAMINATIONS**

### **MISCONDUCT POLICY & PROCEDURE**

## **1**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

1.2 This policy applies to all candidates for examinations of the Faculty of Public Health of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom.

1.3 The Faculty of Public Health (FPH) of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom reserves the right to debar any candidate from sitting and/or passing the 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 FPH.

1.4 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.

FPH reserve 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. FPH also reserve the right to conduct retrospective investigations, and consequentially to amend or cancel results after they have been issued to candidates.

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

1.6 Throughout these procedures, the FPH Head of Education and Training may delegate any of the duties ascribed to him/her to another appropriate member of FPH staff.

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

## **2 DEFINITIONS**

2.1 This policy and procedure cover all aspects of academic and professional misconduct in MFPH examinations. Misconduct includes, but is not restricted to:

- (d) Introduction into any examination of any materials other than those specifically permitted for the examination;
  - (e) Removal from any examination of any materials other than those specifically permitted;
  - (f) Any attempt to communicate with another candidate during the examination;
  - (g) Any attempt to gain access to or read the work of another candidate during the examination;
  - (h) Any attempt to gain or pass on information about the contents of the examination during, in advance or after the date of the examination;
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- (i) Impersonation or attempted impersonation of a candidate;
- (j) Failing to abide by the instructions of an invigilator or examiner in relation to the examination regulations.

2.2 Any invigilator or examiner present shall be empowered to refuse to allow a candidate to continue with an examination on grounds of misconduct (subject to the guidance given in other areas of this procedure - see Paragraph 3.3.1 and 3.4.2). The procedure for enacting these regulations is set out below.

### **3 REPORTING PROCEDURES**

3.1 Suspected misconduct may be reported to FPH by examiners, invigilators, examination officials, candidates, role-players and any other FPH-related personnel by person(s) who becomes aware of suspected misconduct.

3.2 Anonymous reports of misconduct will be acted upon only if there is supporting evidence. In such cases invigilators and any other relevant officials may be informed of the allegation and asked to comment.

#### **3.3 Reporting Procedure for DFPH (Written)**

3.3.1 Where an invigilator or other examination official suspects a candidate of infringing examination room rules he/she shall:

- (c) Confiscate any unauthorised material in the possession of the candidate;
- (d) Make a formal and contemporaneous note of the time when the alleged infringement was discovered. Wherever possible an invigilator should invite another invigilator or other examination official to act as witness to the suspected infringement, and then countersign the note to confirm this;
- (e) Allow the candidate(s) in question to continue the exam. *Ejection from the examination room should only take place in the event of a candidate's conduct causing disruption to other candidates;*
- (f) Inform the candidates(s) in question at the end of the examination, that a written report of the incident will be submitted to the Head of Education and Training.
- (g) Prepare within three working days a written report on the alleged incident and send it with any retained confiscated materials to the Head of Education and Training.

3.3.2 Candidates must on request surrender to the invigilator any materials or aids that are reasonably believed by the invigilator not to be permitted. The invigilator can, on request, issue a brief receipt for such articles. The invigilator must include all such materials with his/her report, which may be copied or retained by the Head of Education and Training at his/her absolute discretion.

#### **3.4 Reporting Procedure for MFPH (OSPHE)**

3.4.1 Where an examiner or other examination official or representative of FPH has grounds to suspect that a candidate has attempted to acquire information about the content of the examination in advance of commencing it, he/she must notify the Chair/Vice-Chair of the MFPH immediately. After consultation with the FPH Education Office, the Chair/Vice-Chair shall determine what action is necessary to safeguard the integrity of the examination. It should be presupposed that the examination will go ahead as scheduled, and that any necessary action will be taken after the event when the facts are known. The Chair/Vice-Chair of the DFPH shall conduct an investigation and then ensure a written report is submitted to the Head of Education and Training within three working days of the matter coming to their attention.

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3.4.2 Where an examiner considers a candidate is acting in an unprofessional or inappropriate manner during a (OSPHE) MFPH Examination, or in a way intended to result in an unfair advantage to themselves at any point during their examination, they shall alert the Chair/Vice-Chair of the MFPH Examination as soon as possible. The Chair/Vice-Chair shall:

- (a) Confiscate any inappropriate materials and decide whether the candidate in question may continue with the examination. In most cases the examination should continue as scheduled and any necessary action taken after the event. Candidates should be prevented from proceeding with the examination only if it is the view of the Chair/Vice-Chair that their conduct is likely to cause distress, influence or disrupt other candidates.
- (b) Inform the candidate at the end of the examination that a written report of the incident will be submitted to the Head of Education and Training;
- (c) Prepare within three working days a written report on the alleged incident and send it with any confiscated materials to the Head of Education and Training at the FPH Education Office.

### 3.5 All Other Instances of Academic or Professional Misconduct

The examiner or person(s) identifying the misdemeanour shall prepare a written report on the alleged incident and send it with any relevant materials to the Head of Education and Training within three working days of the examination.

## 4 PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 The procedures by which the alleged offences to the Diplomat (DFPH) examination are investigated shall be undertaken wherever possible ahead of the Examining Board meeting for the relevant examination.
- 4.2 The procedures by which the alleged offences to the Final Membership (MFPH) Examination shall be investigated as soon as possible following the relevant examination. FPH reserve the right to withhold the issuing of results for any candidate while investigations are ongoing.
- 4.3 The Head of Education and Training shall review all reports of alleged cases of misconduct, and, after consulting with other members of staff where necessary, shall determine whether there is sufficient evidence of a prima facie case to be answered. This should not preclude a letter of reprimand being issued in cases deemed to be of a very minor or technical nature where no further action is appropriate.
- 4.4 In all other cases, and within 10 working days of receiving a report of suspected misconduct, the Head of Education and Training will inform the candidate in writing of the allegations that have been made about them, and provide them with a copy of this Policy and Procedure. The candidate shall thereby be invited to admit or deny the charge, and be informed that the establishment of a Misconduct Hearing Panel can be dispensed with should they choose to accept the allegations.
- 4.5 The candidate shall provide their response in writing to the allegations within 10 working days from the date of the Head of Education and Training's letter. If no response is received within 10 days, then a warning letter shall be sent. If no response to this warning letter is received within another 10 working days, then full details of the case shall be passed to the Chair of the relevant examining board for a final decision along with a recommendation of an appropriate penalty.
- 4.6 Where a candidate admits in writing to the allegations, full details of the case shall be passed to the Chair of the relevant examining board for a final decision along with a recommendation



of an appropriate penalty. The candidate shall have the opportunity to include with their response a written statement which may be taken into account by the board.

- 4.7 Where a candidate responds within the time limit and denies the allegations (in whole or in part) the Head of Education and Training will convene a Misconduct Hearing Panel as soon as possible to formally consider the case.
- 4.8 The establishment of a Misconduct Hearing Panel under paragraph 4.7 does not preclude the candidate from, at any point, admitting the allegation in writing for action to be taken in accordance with paragraph 4.6, except that the fact of the candidate's initial denial will also be communicated to the Chair of the relevant examining board to take into account. However, all candidates who have committed misconduct should note that promptly admitting guilt, taking responsibility and expressing contrition for their actions is viewed by FPH as an important and appropriate step, and that this will be kept in mind whenever any penalty is being determined.
- 4.9 Decisions will be reached on cases passed to the Chair of an examining board (in accordance with paragraphs 4.5, 4.6 and 4.8) as soon as possible, and candidates should normally have received notification of the action to be taken in regard to their case within 15 working days of their letter. In exceptional circumstances a decision may be deferred until the next scheduled meeting of the relevant board of examiners, but candidates must be informed of this within 15 working days of their letter; and then be notified of the action to be taken in regard to their case within 5 working days of the examiners' meeting.

## **5 ESTABLISHMENT OF A MISCONDUCT HEARING PANEL**

- 5.1 A Misconduct Hearing Panel shall be convened if a candidate denies an allegation in whole or in part.
- 5.2 The purpose of the Panel is to examine the facts of a case, and the strength and veracity of the evidence being presented. It is to determine on the balance of probabilities whether the allegation of misconduct has been proven, to the satisfaction of the majority of the Panel. Where an allegation is found to be so proven, it is to determine an appropriate penalty based upon established guidelines detailed in paragraphs 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.
- 5.3 The Misconduct Hearing Panel shall be constituted with one member from each of the following categories, or their nominee:
  - (b) The FPH Assistant Academic Registrar
  - (c) The Chair/Vice-Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners
  - (d) A member of FPH's Board of Examiners (not previously involved in the examining of the candidate or specific case)
- 5.4 A Secretary to the Hearing Panel shall be appointed by the Head of Education and Training. The Secretary's role shall be to record the proceedings and deliberations of the Panel, and he/she may not attempt to guide or influence the discussions or decisions of the Panel in any way but may advise on procedural matters.
- 5.5 The first task for members of each Hearing Panel shall be to elect one of their number to act as Chair.
- 5.6 The Head of Education and Training will present the details of the allegation and all available evidence to the Panel.
- 5.7 The candidate shall have the right to be present at all proceedings of the Panel subject to the procedures detailed below in paragraphs 6.1, 6.6 and 6.8, and to present written or oral evidence to the Panel. Such evidence may include references attesting to previous good character, although candidates are advised to keep in mind that those approached to supply



such references may then subsequently expect the candidate to provide them with details of the outcome of the Hearing.

- 5.8 Proceedings of the Panel shall not be invalidated by reason of the absence of the candidate, provided that the procedure detailed below has been observed.
- 5.9 The candidate has the right to be accompanied at the Hearing by a Next Friend. The Next Friend may advise and counsel the candidate, but may not make any statements to, or cross-examine, any other person present at the Hearing. If the candidate wishes to be accompanied by a Next Friend they must provide the Secretary to the Misconduct Hearing Panel with the name, address and roles of the nominated person, and the reasons for their involvement, not less than five working days before the hearing.
- 5.10 The Head of Education and Training shall inform the candidate of the scheduled date of the Misconduct Hearing Panel as soon as possible and not less than 15 working days before the date of the Hearing. The Head of Education and Training will then arrange for a copy of each document that he/she shall present to the Panel to be sent to the candidate not less than 10 working days before the date set for the Hearing, which shall include a list of any witnesses that may be called. Such documents shall include any statement(s) provided by the candidate, whose responsibility it is to ensure any such documents and list of witnesses they intend to call are received by the Head of Education and Training at least 12 working days before the date set for the Hearing. No documents or witnesses may be presented to or referred to by the Panel, unless details have been circulated in this manner, except with the consent of the Panel, the candidate and Head of Education and Training. All documents will also be circulated in advance to members of the Panel so that they may familiarise themselves with the evidence before the date of the Hearing.
- 5.11 No confirmation of whether the candidate has provisionally passed or failed the examination in question, if results have not been released, shall be provided to either the candidate or the members of the Panel.

## **6 MISCONDUCT HEARING PANEL PROCEDURE**

- 6.1 The Panel may, at its discretion, meet before the scheduled start of the Hearing for preliminary discussions. The Head of Education and Training, the candidate, their Friend and any witnesses may not be present, although the Secretary shall be present and keep a record of proceedings.
- 6.2 At the start of the Hearing Panel all present shall introduce themselves. The Chair shall ask the Head of Education and Training to outline the allegations, and shall then ask the candidate whether they admit or deny misconduct. If, at this stage, the candidate decides to admit to the allegations in full, the Panel has the authority to proceed immediately to consideration of the penalty to be imposed as detailed below in paragraphs 6.7 and following.
- 6.3 In all cases other than those covered by 6.2 above, the Chair shall then invite the Head of Education and Training to present his/her documentary material and call witnesses. The Chair shall then invite the candidate to question the Head of Education and Training and his/her witnesses, after which members of the Panel may do the same.
- 6.4 The Chair shall then invite the candidate to present their documentary material and call witnesses in support of their case. The Head of Education and Training may then question the candidate and his/her witnesses, after which members of the Panel may do the same.
- 6.5 The validity of proceedings shall not be affected by the unwillingness or inability of any party to reply to questions or to appear before the Panel. Where the Panel concludes that an individual is unwilling to reply to a question, it may make reasonable inferences from that refusal.

- 6.6 The Hearing Panel may, at its discretion and at any time, interrupt proceedings to ask questions, or to order the room to be vacated for private discussions. Neither the Head of Education and Training, the candidate, their Friend nor any witnesses are entitled to be present at such times, although the Secretary shall be present and keep a record of proceedings.
- 6.7 Before they are dismissed, the Chair shall give the Head of Education and Training and the candidate the opportunity to make a closing statement. Before leaving, the candidate shall be reminded that he/she will be notified of the outcome within five working days.
- 6.8 The Panel shall then consider the matter in private, as soon as the Chair has reminded the Panel of its role and purpose as detailed in paragraph 5.2. The Secretary shall be present.
- 6.9 The decisions of individual Panel members shall always be treated as confidential.
- 6.10 Exceptional or mitigating circumstances shall not be considered by the Panel when determining whether an allegation has been proven, but may be referred to when an appropriate penalty is being discussed.
- 6.11 Following the meeting the Secretary shall prepare a written report summarising the proceedings and the decisions of the Panel (including where the decision is that no misconduct has been committed). This shall be sent to the candidate within five working days of the Hearing, and a copy presented to the next meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners.

## **7 APPEALS PROCEDURE**

- 7.1 Appeals may only be allowed on the following grounds:
- (a) Where there is evidence of administrative or procedural irregularity;
  - (b) Where there is new evidence of extenuating circumstances that could not reasonably have been presented before;
  - (c) Where there is evidence that the Misconduct Hearing Panel acted unreasonably.
- 7.2 Appeals against the decision of an Examining Board or Misconduct Hearing Panel must be received in writing by the Head of Education and Training no later than 10 working days after the date on which the candidate was notified of the decision. A FPH Officer, who must have no prior involvement in the case, will then review the appeal and determine whether there is sufficient evidence for an Appeals Panel to be convened based on the grounds given in 7.1.
- 7.3 The establishment and conduct of an Appeals Panel will be the same as for a Misconduct Hearing Panel, except that the Appeals Panel will normally be chaired by the FPH Academic Registrar or other FPH Officer and no member of the Panel or their Secretary may have been previously involved with the case.
- 7.4 The Appeals Panel may hear and take into account fresh evidence presented by either side as long as it is circulated in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 5.8.
- 7.5 The Appeals Panel shall have the power to confirm, reverse or amend the original decision of the Misconduct Hearing Panel in any way. The Appeals panel decision is final.

## **8 GUIDELINES FOR PENALTIES FOR ATTEMPTS TO CHEAT OR GAIN AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE**

8.1 As stated in paragraphs 4.5, 4.6 and 5.2 of the Academic and Professional Misconduct Policy and Procedure, where an allegation of academic or professional misconduct is sustained, the relevant authority will decide the appropriate penalty. In making these decisions, all involved are expected to have regard to the recommendations listed below. However, these are guidelines for normal circumstances and not binding, and do not preclude the relevant authority

from determining a lesser or more severe penalty to be appropriate should the circumstances warrant this. However, in all cases the responsible authority shall consider:

- (a) The need to preserve the integrity of the examination
- (b) Natural justice and consistency with previous sanctions
- (c) Evidence of contrition and an understanding of the gravity of the offence.

### **8.2 Summary of Standard Penalties**

- (a) No further action;
- (b) A written warning;
- (c) Results for an examination or Part of an examination to be annulled/withheld;
- (d) Candidate barred from entry for a specified period;
- (e) Candidate barred from entry to any future exams of the Faculty of Public Health;
- (f) Candidate reported to relevant regulatory body;
- (g) Any combination of any of the above, apart from (a) and apart from (d) and (e) combined
- (h) Any other sanction that is deemed appropriate.

Continued on the next page.

**8.3 Table of Typical Offences and example Penalties (the nature of misconduct may determine a more severe penalty)**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Further Information</b>	<b>Normal Range of Penalties</b>
Introduction of unauthorised material into an exam	Material irrelevant to subject, with no proof of attempt to use	b
	Material relevant to subject, or of general use (e.g. a mobile phone), with no proof of attempt to use	b and/or c
	Material relevant to subject, or of general use, with proof of attempt to use	b, c and/or d, and/or f
Contact with others	Talking during an examination	b
	Colluding with another candidate	b, c and/or f
	Copying from another candidate	b, c and/or d, and/or f
	Soliciting information about an examination from other candidates during the period of an examination	b and/or c
	Soliciting information about an examination from role-players, examiners or other source	b, c and/or d, and/or f
	Impersonation, deliberate use of wrong name and/or exam number, arranging to be impersonated	b, c - f
Sharing exam questions	Any attempt to gain or pass on information about the contents of the examination during, in advance or after the date of the examination	g or h
	Completing an exam script after time has been called, ignoring invigilators instructions	b and/or c
Breach of Regulations		
	Repeatedly ignoring invigilators' instructions, misuse of or removal of examination material from the venue	b, and/or c, and/or f
Inappropriate behaviour or answers	Obscene language or drawings, aggressive or offensive comments	b, c - e, f or h
Certification	Falsification or forgery of any document or record	b, c - e, f
Bribery	Attempting to obtain information, answers, certification or qualifications by some form of incentive	b, c - e, f
Notification from Regulatory Body	Suspension or removal from relevant regulatory body	b, c - e
Repeated Misconduct	Multiple acts of misconduct, either at the same or different occurrence	b, c - e, f



FACULTY OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

## MFPH EXAMINATIONS - OFFICE REVIEWS, APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy applies to all candidates for examinations of the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom.
- 1.2 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 Appeals Policy and documentation sent to candidates on the conduct of individual parts and components of the examination.
- 1.3 Any dispute as to the interpretation of this policy shall be referred to the Academic Registrar, whose decision in the matter shall be final.
- 1.4 This policy is to be used to investigate all examination appeals.
- 1.5 An 'appeal' is defined as a request for a review of a decision made by or on behalf of an Examining Board about the performance in an examination of a candidate or group of candidates.

An 'office review' is defined as a review carried out by the Director of Education and Professional Standards to ensure no administrative errors have occurred in the process of inputting data.

- 1.6 Please note that an appeal does not mean that a mark or result will be changed but it may lead to an attempt being discounted.

### 2 OFFICE REVIEWS

- 2.1 Candidates may request an office review if they have reason to believe that there may have been an administrative error in the calculation of their result for an examination. There is a fee for an office review, which will be refunded if the calculation is found to be incorrect and is thus amended.
- 2.2 A candidate wishing to request an office review must complete a *Request for an Office Review* form (downloadable from the [FPH website](#)) and send it to the Director of Education and Professional Standards to arrive within ten working days of publication of the result of the examination to which the request relates. Each request must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.
- 2.3 Office reviews will be carried out by the Director of Education and Professional Standards and will involve a clerical check for errors in the examination process, including in the calculation or collation of marks or grades.
- 2.4 The outcome of the office review will be reported to the candidate within 21 days of receipt of the request. If the outcome identifies a clerical error then the fee for the

review will be refunded. If the candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of an office review, he/she may proceed to an appeal.

2.5 Please see below for a flowchart of the office review process.

### **The process of an office review**

The Director of Education and Professional Standards checks the Agreed marks spreadsheet to establish that two examiners' marks spreadsheets have been inputted correctly by the administrator.

The final marks spreadsheet is then checked against the Agreed marks spreadsheet that the examiners have returned. This is following discussion and review of marks that cross the pass/fail boundary.



Any amends made after discussion at the Exam Board are checked against the final confirmed marks spreadsheet.



The final candidate results letter is checked to ensure the marks match to the confirmed marks spreadsheet.

Please note that all these processes are double-checked by the administrator throughout the results data entry process.

The Faculty of Public Health's External Education Advisor also cross-references and checks the marks during data analysis.

Finally, the Chair of Examiners carries out a spot check on a number of the final results letters to ensure the results have been copied across correctly during the mail merge from the final confirmed marks spreadsheet.

### 3 GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

- 3.1 A candidate who has attempted either the DFPH or MFPH may appeal, in certain circumstances, against the result when:

There is clear evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct or content of the Examination (including administrative error) which has adversely affected a candidate's performance.

There were exceptional circumstances, such as illness or other extenuating circumstance (for which clear documentary evidence must be provided), which adversely affected a candidate's performance in the examination. Candidates are advised to submit details of any such circumstances as soon as possible (i.e. within three working days) of the examination and not wait until they receive their results. *(Candidates should note that there is a right of withdrawal from any examination due to exceptional circumstances, and candidates appealing on the grounds stated must provide a valid reason explaining why they were not able to do this.)* More details about extenuating circumstances can be found [here](#).

- 3.2 FPH intends to deal with extenuating circumstances fairly and consistently. Candidates are provided with an [extenuating circumstances form](#). Candidates are advised that it is their responsibility to submit details of any extenuating circumstances to the FPH Education and Professional Standards department (address below) in writing before taking the examination or immediately (within three working days) afterwards. Failure to do so will be noted should an appeal be submitted.

- 3.3 Appeals will not be accepted on the grounds that a candidate:

Considers his or her efforts were under-marked.

Did not understand or was unaware of the Examination

Regulations. Seeks to question professional or academic judgment.

- 3.4 All candidates should note that this policy does not facilitate the changing of any result or pass/fail decision, *unless* it has been determined that there was an error in the results as originally communicated to the candidate. Examiners cannot accurately or numerically determine the effects of any procedural irregularity or extenuating circumstance on a candidate's performance, and so will not revise a candidate's result even if an appeal is upheld and the likely effects of the circumstances on a candidate's performance are judged to be severe. Instead Examiners may expunge the attempt from a candidate's record or offer some other remedy. The only circumstances in which a change in result will be given is if a calculation error has occurred.

- 3.5 Any expression of a specific concern about the provision or quality of a service by FPH, including issues such as staff conduct, disputes about the regulations, other procedures or the application thereof is defined as a 'complaint' and as such will not be considered under this policy (but may instead be handled in accordance with the FPH Complaints Procedures).

- 3.6 It is recognised that on occasion it may be initially unclear whether a case constitutes an appeal or a complaint, hence FPH reserves the right to reclassify appeals to complaints or vice-versa at any stage in proceedings, in consultation with the person(s) appealing or complaining. Such reclassification will always be done so that the matter can be considered in the most appropriate and fair way, and candidates will not be required to resubmit their cases following any reclassification.

## **4 PRELIMINARY PROCEDURE**

- 4.1 Any appeal shall be made in writing, together with the required fee, to the Director of Education and Professional Standards to arrive within one calendar month of the date of dispatch of the results ("the time limit"), or within 14 days of the result of an office review, and include supporting documentary evidence.
- 4.2 Any appeal submitted after this period must include an explanation and evidence (such as medical certification) as to why it could not be submitted sooner, and will only be accepted at the sole discretion of the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards.
- 4.3 On receipt of an appeal the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards will investigate and collate all relevant information, before referring it to the Chair of the Board of Examiners of the relevant Examination for initial consideration. The Chair may discuss the case or direct the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards to undertake further investigations, as he/she deems necessary.
- 4.4 If it is considered by the Chair and the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards that there is no *prima facie* case, i.e. that the appeal request is outside the permitted grounds, frivolous or unsubstantiated, the candidate will be notified of this and informed that the appeal will not be heard and that the appeals procedure is at an end. If it is considered vexatious or malicious, or that the appellant has used false information, the appeal procedure will also be at an end but in this instance the appellant may be liable for action under the FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy. This will stand irrespective of the appeal outcome.
- 4.5 If it is considered by the Chair and the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards that there is a *prima facie* case in support of the appeal, he/she may:
  - 4.5.1 arrange for an immediate remedy to be offered to the candidate;
  - 4.5.2 refer the appeal to the FPH Academic Registrar.
- 4.6 The decision of the Chair and FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards will be communicated to the appellant within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. In some cases, extra time may be needed to undertake further investigations, in which case the appellant will be informed within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal.
- 4.7 If the candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of any appeal considered under paragraph 4.5.1, they must contact the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards within 10 working days of being notified of it to request that their case be reconsidered by an MFPH Appeals Panel. All such requests will be reviewed by the FPH Academic Registrar, who will determine whether sufficient evidence remains for consideration by an Appeals Panel, following the decision of the Chair and FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards.

## **5 MFPH APPEALS PANEL**

- 5.1 An MFPH Appeals Panel shall be convened at the discretion of the FPH Academic Registrar, and established by the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards.
- 5.2 The Panel will meet as soon as practicable ("the hearing"), within a reasonable time after the date on which the appeal was received, and constituted with one member from each of the following categories, or their nominee, provided that none have previously



examined the candidate:

- a. The FPH Academic Registrar (or deputy), who shall be Chair of the Appeals Panel.
  - b. The Chair of the Board of Examiners of the relevant Examination.
  - c. A current MFPH Examiner who has not previously examined the appellant.
  - d. A member of the FPH Education Committee who has not previously examined the appellant and who has no involvement in examination procedure.
- 5.3 The FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards will inform the appellant that the appeal has been referred to the Appeals Panel, and the scheduled date of the hearing, at least fifteen working days in advance of the hearing.
- 5.4 The FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards will arrange for a copy of each document that is to be presented to the Panel to be sent to the candidate not less than 10 working days before the date set for the hearing. Such documents shall include any statement(s) provided by the candidate, whose responsibility it is to ensure any such documents and list of witnesses they intend to call in support of their appeal are received by the Director of Education and Professional Standards at least 12 working days before the date set for the hearing. No documents or witnesses may be presented to or referred to by the Panel, unless details have been circulated in this manner, except with the consent of both the Panel and the candidate. All documents will also be circulated in advance to members of the Panel so that they may familiarise themselves with the details of the case before the date of the hearing.
- 5.5 The FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards will attend the hearing as an observer, to record the proceedings and deliberations of the Panel, and to advise on procedural or regulatory matters. He or she may not influence the decisions of the Panel in any way.
- 5.6 The MFPH Appeals Panel will consider the appeal in the light of written evidence presented and will afford the appellant the opportunity of addressing the Panel at the hearing. No member of the Appeals Panel will have been involved in assessing the appellant in the Examination although the examiner(s) may be asked to provide information for the Appeals Panel to consider.
- 5.7 The appellant shall have the right to be present at all proceedings and deliberations of the Panel subject to the procedures detailed below in paragraphs 5.1, 5.5 and 5.6.
- 5.8 The appellant shall have the right to present oral evidence to the Appeals Panel at the hearing. Proceedings of the Panel shall not be invalidated by reason of the absence of the appellant, provided that the procedure detailed below has been observed.
- 5.9 The appellant shall be entitled to be accompanied by a representative. The representative may advise and counsel the appellant but will not be allowed to make statements to, or cross examine, the MFPH Appeals Panel or otherwise to take part in the proceedings, except with the permission of the Chair. The procedure to be adopted at the hearing shall be at the absolute discretion of the Chair. If the appellant wishes to be accompanied by a representative they must provide the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards with the name, address and roles of the nominated person not less than five working days before the hearing.

## **6 APPEAL HEARING PROCEDURE**

- 6.1 The MFPH Appeals Panel may, at its discretion, meet before the scheduled start of the hearing for preliminary discussions. The FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards shall be present and keep a record of proceedings.

- 6.2 At the start of the hearing all present shall introduce themselves. The Chair shall then invite the appellant to present their appeal, documentary evidence and call any witnesses in support of their case. The Panel may then question the appellant and his/her witnesses.
- 6.3 The Panel may, at its discretion and at any time, interrupt proceedings to ask questions.
- 6.4 Before the appellant is dismissed, the Chair shall give them the opportunity to make a closing statement. Before leaving, the appellant shall be reminded that he/she will be notified of the outcome within ten working days.
- 6.5 The Panel shall then consider the matter, whether there are sufficient grounds and evidence for the appeal to be upheld, and what, if any, remedy should be offered to the candidate. The comments and decisions of individual Panel members shall always be treated as confidential. The MFPH Appeals Panel decision shall be made on a majority basis.
- 6.6 Following the meeting the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards shall prepare a written response summarising the decisions of the Panel. This shall be sent to the candidate within ten working days of the hearing, and a copy presented to the next meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners for its information and action, if appropriate. The candidate shall be reminded that the decision of the MFPH Appeals Panel is final, and that the appeals procedure is at an end.

## **END OF POLICY**

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**FACULTY OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH**

## **Guidance for candidates submitting an appeal**

Candidates are advised to read this guidance, as well as the appeal policy itself, before deciding to proceed with an appeal.

### **1. Personal details required**

**1.1** When submitting the appeal please provide the following personal details:

1. Name.
2. Examination (DFPH/ MFPH)
3. Candidate number.
4. Address for correspondence.

**1.2** Failure to provide these details accurately (or failure to inform the FPH Education and Professional Standards department of any amendments punctiliously) may result in delays in processing your appeal.

### **2. Grounds for appeal**

**2.1** The following information regarding grounds for appeal is required:

1. The Examination result that is being appealed against (e.g. DFPH).
2. Date of the Examination (e.g. June 2007 sitting).
3. Circumstances that you consider affected your performance or the consideration of your results.
4. Where relevant, details of why you did not disclose these circumstances at an earlier stage.
5. Documentary evidence to substantiate your claims (you should note that Medical Certificates alone are NOT accepted to support claims of illness - you will be expected to provide a letter from a medical practitioner outlining the circumstances).

**3.** Should any of these relevant details be missing in the submission of the appeal, it is likely that your case will be dismissed at the preliminary stage (you should always provide an explanation for the absence of evidence). Points to consider in submitting an appeal

**3.1** The MFPH Appeals Procedure is intended to be an open and fair process. However, it is recommended that candidates pay close attention to the following information.

**3.2** The appeal is not a process for questioning academic or professional judgment.

**3.3** The appeal is not a complaints procedure and only details that clearly demonstrate that circumstances affected your performance or the consideration and processing of your results will be considered.

**3.4** The existence of mitigating circumstances or procedural defects are not regarded generally as a substitute for academic or professional performance. Therefore, candidates should not anticipate that the upholding of an appeal will result in a fail result being converted to a pass. If professional competency standards have not been demonstrated then a candidate cannot pass the examination regardless of mitigating circumstances or procedural defects (see section 3.4 of Appeals policy).

**3.5** Candidates are advised that should an appeal be rejected there are no further opportunities to submit additional details. Please ensure that you include everything you wish to be considered as part of the appeal in the first instance.

**3.6** There are many opportunities for you to make examiners and invigilators aware of any extraneous factors before your results are considered. For example:

1. If you are ill or have a special need at the time of the Examination inform the examiners or invigilators as they may be able to take these circumstances into account and prevent a problem arising.
2. Should there be an irregularity in the conduct of the Examination, inform the examiners or invigilators so they may be able to take these circumstances into account and prevent a problem arising.
3. If at the end of an Examination you consider there are exceptional circumstances that should be taken into account, please inform the Faculty of Public Health Education and Professional Standards Department immediately (within three working days).

**3.7** Appeals may be rejected on the grounds that insufficient effort was made to disclose circumstances at an early stage or that the claims were not backed up with substantive evidence. While FPH cannot advise on how to go about making a case for appeal, we do advise you to discuss this matter with an advisory or representative body (e.g. the BMA). Please note that should there be a hearing you may attend and bring with you a representative. The representative may advise and counsel you but will not be allowed to make statements to or cross examine the MFPH Appeals Panel or to otherwise take part in the proceedings, except with the permission of the Chair. The representative may be legally qualified or professionally engaged in advocacy or legal practice but may not represent you in a legal capacity.

#### **4. The Hearing**

**4.1** There is no absolute right to have a hearing as part of the appeal unless and until the appeal has been referred to the Appeals Panel in accordance with paragraph 4.7 of the Appeals Procedure. FPH will strike out any claim that, in its opinion, is outside the permitted grounds, frivolous, vexatious, incomplete, or unsubstantiated at the preliminary stage.

**4.2** Should the appeal proceed to a hearing this will be the opportunity for you to state your complaint and respond to requests for information. The hearing will not provide the forum for explaining the procedure to the appellant and any queries regarding the workings of the appeal should be put separately in writing to the FPH Director of Education and Professional Standards.

**4.3** The MFPH Appeals Procedure is an internal administrative procedure for reviewing your performance in the MFPH Examination. It is not a forensic process.

**4.4** We appreciate it may not be practicable for some candidates, particularly those based overseas, to attend a hearing. We will allow appeals to be processed by correspondence and the Appeals Panel will consider any written statements submitted. Before dealing with any appeal by correspondence, a candidate must confirm in writing that he/she will waive their right to a hearing. Candidates will be expected to pay all their own costs (travel etc) for attending any hearing.

#### **5. Declaration**

**5.1** In your letter of appeal please clearly state that it is your intention to appeal against an MFPH Examination decision and state the grounds for your appeal. In submitting an

appeal, we would expect you to understand that the details you provide are true and complete and that you would be prepared to answer further questions in relation to any claims you make.

**5.2** All details will be treated in a confidential manner, disclosed only to those individuals involved in the appeals process, or cited by you as someone who can substantiate your claims. We will seek your permission should we need to disclose details to any other individual or party as part of the consideration of your appeal.

**5.3** Furthermore, FPH regards the submission of any false details as part of an appeal to be an act of cheating (in seeking to gain unfair consideration or an unfair advantage).

## **6. Fees**

A fee is required for every appeal. This fee will be the same as the current examination fee for the relevant MFPH examination.

The current fee for an office review is £100.

The appeal or office review fee will be refunded if the examination result is altered.

The address for all correspondence is:

**Director of Education and Professional Standards**

**Faculty of Public Health**

**4 St Andrews Place**

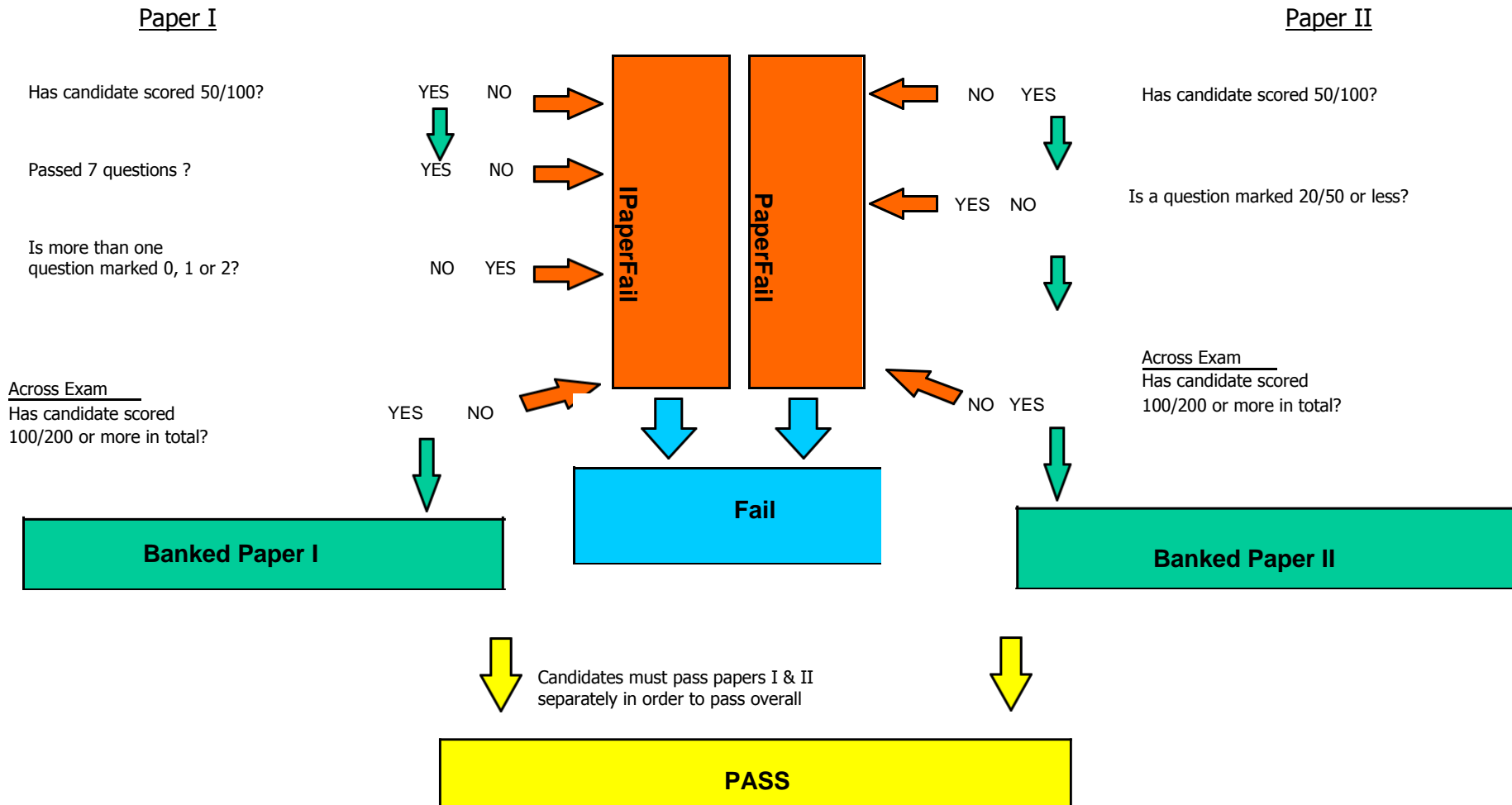
**London NW1 4LB**

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## APPENDIX 4

### DFPH EXECUTIVE GROUP EXAMINERS' CHECK LIST



## APPENDIX 5

### MFPH RESULTS CHECKLIST

