



# Faculty of Public Health

of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

Working to improve the public's 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 (The Faculty of Public Health Diplomate (DFPH) and Final Membership Examination (MFPH))
3. 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 Standards and Advocacy.

**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, Standards and Advocacy**

**Faculty of Public Health**

**4 St Andrews Place**

**London NW1 4LB**

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