



The process for appealing the decisions of an examiner or their professional conduct during an exit interview from an EACTA Fellowship

6.4.1. Should an European Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthesiology (EACTA) Cardiothoracic and Vascular Anaesthesia (CTVA) Fellow or their Program Director wish to appeal against the decision made in the exit interview conducted for the EACTA Fellowship Program or make a grievance against the professional conduct of an 'examiner' present at the interview then the Fellow or the Program Director (hereinafter referred to as appellant) must inform the Chair of the EACTA Education within 7 calendar days of the interview with a written statement providing the reasons for the appeal. The appeal request must be written in English and sent by registered mail or an e-mail to the Educational Chair.

6.4.2. Before the appeal process starts, the examiner will be informed directly by the Education Chair of the allegations made against him or her and provided with the relevant evidence. If the appeal comes from the Fellow alone, the Fellowship Director will be informed of the appeal by the Education Chair. At this point the Education Chair will try to mediate between the affected parties, so that the initiation of an official appeal may be reconsidered.

6.4.3. The appeal process will start if reconciliation proves impossible or if the examiner's behaviour has clearly been unprofessional. The process will only commence after receipt of all the required documents no later than midnight of the seventh calendar day after the exit interview based on the time zone of the appellant as identifiable by date of the registered mail's postmark or sending of the e-mail.

6.4.4. The EACTA Education Chair will formally interview the examiner so that they may explain their conduct and can be questioned on it.

6.4.5. After that the Education Chair calls to action the appeal panel and conducts the appeal in whole or in part as oral interviewing of the panel members and the examiner. The appeal panel will consist of a minimum of two members of the EACTA Education Committee (hereinafter referred to as panel members) or in case of unavailability or conflict of interest, inviting a third panel member to review the appeal and the exit interview. The selection of the panel members will be responsibility of the EACTA Education Chair. Panel members must confirm in writing that they have no conflicts of interest with either the appellant (Fellow and Program Director), or the examiner. Likewise, the appellant and examiner must provide consent for panel members reviewing the appeal to have access to the recorded interview.

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6.4.6. The EACTA Education Chair will provide each panel member and the examiner with all relevant materials and documents concerning the appeal.

6.4.7. Response to the appeals will be in the form of written statements by the panel members.

6.4.8. Within 20 calendar days of the appointment of the panel members and following formal virtual interview with the EACTA Education Chair, they independently and confidentially give an account of the situation according to his/her own assessment and submit their decision and recommendations in writing to the EACTA Education Chair.

6.4.9. It is the responsibility of the EACTA Education Chair and appeal panel to recommend an initial decision on the appeal.

6.4.10. The EACTA Board of Directors has to approve the decision of the EACTA Education Chair and appeal panel. The EACTA Secretariat will then inform all parties involved that is appellant, examiner, and panel members. This ends the appeal procedure finally and no further appeal will be considered regardless of whether the appellant later cites additional evidence.

6.4.11. If the final decision supports professional misconduct of the examiner, the examiner should be removed from the EACTA Education Committee for their remaining term of office.

6.4.12. If the final decision is that the evidence does not support grounds for professional misconduct, the Board of Directors may remove the accusing Program Director from the EACTA Education Committee for their remaining term of office.

6.4.13. The conduct of every appeal investigation will be reported to the Education Committee once a decision has been approved by the Board of Directors.

Prepared in November 2020 by the EACTA Education Committee Task Force (alphabetically).

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