

Overseas Registration Exam Part 1 **Policy and Procedures**

Notification of Mitigating Circumstances

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mitigating circumstances are defined as “recognisably disruptive or unexpected events, beyond the candidate’s control, that might have a significant and adverse impact on their academic performance.”

The College applies the principle that a candidate who attends, submits or participates in any form of assessment shall be considered by the College to be in a position to do so.

1.2 This document outlines the policies and procedures regarding illness and other serious mitigating circumstances occurring during or immediately before the ORE Part 1 examination and resulting in the candidate withdrawing at short notice.

2. APPLICATIONS TO WITHDRAW

2.1. Applications for withdrawal that are *not* the consequence of mitigating circumstances will be considered by the GDC; the GDC may liaise with King’s College London regarding their decision but ultimately the decision and subsequent notification of the candidate regarding any such request for withdrawal will be made by the GDC.

2.2. Applications for withdrawal due to mitigating circumstances will first be considered by the King’s College London ORE Examination Board and, if necessary, will also be referred to the GDC’s External Examiner Team for that part of the ORE Part 1. The usual outcome of a successful application will be withdrawal from both parts of the examination with no provisional credit for any part already successfully completed.

2.3. Requests for withdrawal due to mitigating circumstances made up to seven days prior to the sitting of the first examination paper will be considered by the King’s College London ORE Mitigating Circumstances Adjudication Panel and wherever possible a decision will be issued to the candidate prior to the exam itself. Any decision made by the panel will need to be approved by a GDC appointed External Examiner and reported to the GDC. Requests received up to 1 week after this time will then be considered at the King’s College London ORE Examination Board following that diet of exams. King’s College London will forward details of all withdrawal requests that are the result of mitigating circumstances to the GDC.

- 2.4. If a candidate *having sat the ORE Part 1* determines that she/he was not in a fit state to do so and that her/his ability to make a reasoned judgement to this affect had been impaired as a result of the same, then that candidate may submit an application to *withdraw retrospectively* from the examination. Any request for retrospective withdrawal must normally be made within 2-working days of the paper being sat and must be accompanied by documentation that independently and professionally corroborates the claims being made. Upon submission of a retrospective request for withdrawal, a candidate may (upon written request) have an additional 2-working days to supply any corroborating documentation deemed necessary to support the application. Requests for retrospective withdrawal will be considered by the ORE Assessment Board.
- 2.5 Should a candidate arrive at the examination venue to discover that illness or other unforeseen circumstances is likely to impact upon their performance in the examination, the candidate should report their concerns to an invigilator in the registration/examination hall who will provide them with a signed "incidence report form". The signed "incidence report forms" will be reviewed at the Examination Board, however, unless a mitigating circumstances form has also been submitted, the candidates' results will stand. Candidates who wish to withdraw prior to the start of the exam must submit details of the Mitigating Circumstances as soon as possible, normally no later than 2 working days after the date of the examination. Candidates will also be required to submit formal corroborating documentation (a medical certificate in the case of illness) as soon as is reasonably possible, and in all cases within an additional 2 workings days of the date of the examination. For such candidates who, sat the exam and wish to withdraw retrospectively see 2:4. The Mitigating Circumstances Form will be considered in conjunction with the incidence report form.
- 2.6. No application for withdrawal will be considered after the publication of the final results.
- 2.7. The decision of the Examination Board will normally be sent to the candidate within ten working days of the examination board, regardless of when her/his application was received.

3. ILLNESS

- 3.1 Candidates who feel unwell must make a professional decision as to whether or not they are fit to enter the examination or to continue if taken ill during the examination. Candidates will be expected to accept the consequences of their decision as detailed below.
- 3.2 In relation to candidates that become ill after the GDC has confirmed their booking but before the first day of the examination:
- a) If a candidate becomes too ill to sit the examination, she/he should contact the King's College London ORE Examinations Team as soon as possible. The candidate must complete the Notification of Mitigating Circumstances Application Form available from the King's College London ORE Part 1 website (www.kcl.ac.uk/dentistry/postgraduate/ore.aspx) and email it to the King's College London ORE Examination Team (oreexams@kcl.ac.uk). If for some reason emailing the form is not possible please telephone the Examinations Team via the number on the website.

- b) All applications must be supported by documentary evidence such as a medical certificate, doctor's letter or other relevant evidence and include a statement of the issue together with the date and duration, or likely duration, of the illness. Medical self-certification is unacceptable.
- c) The King's College London ORE Examination Team will notify the GDC of the candidate's withdrawal. The GDC *may* then provide a refund of the examination fee in line with their Examination Withdrawal and Refund Policy (<https://www.gdc-uk.org/professionals/ore/booking-your-exam>).

3.3 In relation to candidates that become ill on the day of or during the examination:

- a) If a candidate feels unwell on the day of or during the examination she/he should speak immediately with one of the examination invigilators who will inform the Lead Examiner or the Examinations Manager. She/he will record the details of the incident for reflection at the next King's College London ORE Examination Board meeting irrespective of the candidate's final decision to leave the examination or to continue with it.
- b) A candidate must make a professional decision as to whether they are fit to continue with the examination. If they decide that they are too ill to continue they must complete the Notification of Mitigating Circumstances form available from the King's College London ORE Part 1 website (www.tobeconfirmed.ac.uk) and email it to the Examinations Team (oreexams@kcl.ac.uk) within 2-working days of the end of the final examination paper. If for some reason emailing the form is not possible, candidates should telephone the Examinations Team via the number on the website (tel: 0207 188 8095).
- c) Cases must be supported by documentary evidence such as a medical certificate, doctor's letter or other relevant evidence and include a statement of the issue together with the date and duration, or likely duration, of the illness. Medical self-certification is unacceptable.
- d) Upon receiving medical advice the Chair of the King's College London ORE Examination Board will determine whether the medical evidence is acceptable and whether the circumstances provide just cause for the withdrawal from the examination. The King's College London ORE Examinations Team will advise the GDC Examinations Team of the decision and the GDC *may* then provide a refund of the examination fee in line with their Examination Withdrawal and Refund Policy: (<https://www.gdc-uk.org/professionals/ore/booking-your-exam>).
- e) If a candidate decides to continue with the examination their performance will be judged in exactly the same way as all other candidates - results will not be adjusted and cannot be changed as a consequence of a candidate's ill-health.
- f) Where a candidate becomes acutely unwell during the examination and subsequently decides to continue with the examination, it will be at the discretion of the Lead Examiner or the Examinations Manager to decide whether the candidate is fit to continue and whether any additional time may be given to compensate for time lost and, if so, the duration of the time allowance. Additional time for toilet breaks is not permissible unless that has been agreed prior to the examination by applying for a Personalised Arrangement Provisions arrangement due to a pre-existing medical condition (or similar) at least six weeks prior to the first examination. (see the "Personalised Examination Provisions, Policy and Procedures"

document available on the website). If it becomes apparent that the nature of the illness (e.g. gastro-intestinal upset) may put other candidates and/or staff at risk of a transmissible disease then the candidates examination will be terminated (see section 2.6).

- g) The Lead Examiner or the Examinations Manager may decide to terminate the examination for a candidate if they believe that the candidate breaches “Health and Safety” protocols or is sufficiently unwell as to risk harm to themselves, to another candidate, or to the examiners and support team. This decision may not be contested at this time but any formal complaint, in addition to the submission of the mitigating circumstances form, will be considered at the King’s College London ORE Examination Board meeting for that diet.

3.4 The following will apply if a candidate decides that they are not fit to continue with the examination:

- a) If a candidate withdraws from an examination due to illness she/he will be required to sit all components of the examination (both examination papers) again.
- b) If a candidate withdraws from the first examination paper of the diet she/he may not sit subsequent papers of the examination at that diet.
- c) If a candidate has completed one examination paper of the diet prior to withdrawing and has successfully submitted details of mitigating circumstances for the second paper of the diet, the candidate will receive feedback on this paper. Such candidates will still be required to sit both papers again.

3.5 Candidates should be aware that grades will not be released until the King’s College London ORE Examination Board has met and all results are published. No application for mitigation will be considered after the publication of the results of that diet of examinations.

3.6 The King’s College London ORE Examinations Team will advise the GDC Examinations Team of the candidate’s withdrawal from the examination. The GDC may then provide a refund of the examination fee in line with their Examination Withdrawal and Refund Policy (<https://www.gdc-uk.org/professionals/ore/booking-your-exam>)

4. MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

4.1. Disability / prior-ill Health / Accident / Bereavement: These cannot be considered by the Examination Board if the candidate presents themselves at the examination as being fit for dental practice. Candidates with a disability or long-standing ill-health should consider an application for Personalised Examination Provisions (see the ORE Part 1 website for further information relating to Personalised Examination Provisions) at least six weeks prior to the first examination paper.

4.2. Serious Disturbance during the Examination: This will be considered by the King’s College London ORE Examination Board. For each circumstance the board will consider the severity, and how this may be managed.

4.3. Procedure at the meeting of the King’s College London ORE Examination Board:

- a) The Board of Examiners will consider all Notifications of Mitigating Circumstances received from candidates seeking withdrawal from the examination without prejudice.
 - b) Any Notifications of Mitigating Circumstances will be considered before the main business of the meeting. This will mean that the candidate is withdrawn from the examination prior to the consideration of their results, irrespective of whether they had passed or failed the examination.
 - i. The meeting will only consider submissions that were submitted on the correct form and supported by appropriate documentation.
 - ii. Submissions relating to a condition that existed when a candidate entered the examination and which is stable will not normally be given consideration.
 - iii. The Board of Examiners can seek advice and further information on medical conditions but not in relation to particular individuals.
 - iv. The meeting will then use its judgement when considering the medical and/or mitigating circumstances taking into account the severity, duration and likely impact.
 - v. The deliberations and recommendations of the meeting will be minuted.
 - vi. The Lead Administrator will notify the candidate of the King's College London ORE Examination Board's decision in writing within 10-working days of the board.
- 4.3 The decision of the King's College London ORE Examination Board and GDC's External Examiner Team for that diet of the ORE is final and will normally not be reconsidered.
- 4.4 Candidates who believe that a fair process has not been applied will normally be referred to the General Dental Council's ORE Advisory Group for further consideration.