

Progression review committee procedures

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1.0 Purpose

The aim of these procedures is to ensure there is an open, transparent, fair and consistent process in place for the assessment of fitness to continue training.

2.0 Scope

These procedures support the corresponding Progression Review Policy. They apply to all trainees who may not be suited for general practice, including those that have exhausted avenues for support under the Trainee Support Policy, those that have exhausted MICGP examination attempts and those that have exceeded time limits for MICGP examination attempts.

3.0 Procedure statement

3.1 General principles

The PRC can review any statement, document, information, or matter, that in its opinion may help with its assessment.

Any and all discussions, documentation, training records and any other information reviewed or collected as part of the progression review process should be kept in strict confidence and only disclosed on a need-to-know basis.

While reviewing the evidence submitted, the PRC may confer confidentially with any third party who may provide an expert assessment of the trainee's fitness to continue training.

For general principles relating to progression review, please refer to section 3.2 of the Policy.

3.1.1 Events which may lead to the initiation of a progression review procedure

A non-exhaustive list of events which may lead to the initiation of a progression review procedure are detailed in section 3.3 of the accompanying Policy.

3.1.2 How a progression review should be notified to the employer and the Irish Medical Council

The circumstances where notification of progression review to the employer and the IMC may be considered are set down in sections 3.7 and 3.8 of the Policy respectively.



Where necessary, the scheme director should notify the employer and the IMC in writing. This should take the form of a letter or email signed and dated by the scheme director.

The notification to the employer should be addressed to the trainee's line manager and copied to the human resources manager for the employing institution.

The notification to the IMC should be addressed to Preliminary Proceedings Committee or Specialist Training Division.

3.1.3 Support persons

Trainees may request the presence of a support person at the PRC hearing. The role of the support person is outlined in section 3.9 of the Policy.

3.2 Progression Review referrals

All referrals shall be presented to the PRC with the information listed in Appendix 1.

3.2.1 Referrals from training schemes

Subject to section 3 of the Policy, the Scheme Director (SD) will complete a referral to the PRC using the standard Template set out at Appendix 2.

3.2.2 Referrals from ICGP Exams and Assessment

Where trainees have exceeded time limits for completion of the MICGP examination (section 3.5), their case will be referred by the Chair of the Exams Subcommittee directly to the Chair of the PRC using the standard template set out at Appendix 3.

3.3 Progression Review hearings

If the facts of the case do not warrant a hearing, the PRC will meet to review the evidence and come to a decision. For example, where the question and evidence are clear (e.g. maximum number of examination attempts, or CSCST time-outs), the decision can be made summarily without a hearing. The PRC also has discretion, within reason, to constitute a hearing on matters relating to trainee progression not covered in section 3.3 of the accompanying policy.

Should a hearing be conducted, the trainee is given at least fourteen (14) calendar days' notice as set out in Appendix 4. The hearing will occur at an agreed time and place; this will generally be at the College offices or



an alternate venue nearby. The meeting takes place ideally in person. If meeting in person is not practical, the meeting can take place over videoconferencing (e.g. Zoom or Teams).

It is up to the trainee to ensure that their witnesses are present. The trainee should confirm their attendance to the meeting in writing to the Secretary of the PRC no less than five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting.

3.3.1 Preparatory phase

In preparation for the hearing, the PRC Secretary is responsible for collating and providing all available documentation to all members of the PRC and the trainee in advance of the Hearing Date and no less than five (5) calendar days prior to the Hearing Date.

The Secretary then prepares an agenda for the hearing which will include the following:

- Declaration of conflicts of interest
- Quorum
- Review of the terms of reference of the Committee
- The reason or reasons why the progression review hearing has been convened, including the trainee's initial reply
- Review of documentary evidence
- Witness statements
- Trainee statement
- Retirement for deliberation
- Provisional ruling
- Notification of the right to appeal

3.3.2 The Progression Review Hearing

On the day of the hearing, the Committee assembles according to its terms of reference. The agenda for the hearing is agreed.

At the commencement of the hearing, the Chair will commence by outlining the reason or reasons why the progression review hearing has been convened. The Chair will confirm the adherence to Section 3.3.1 of the Procedure and will confirm the format of the hearing.

The format of the meeting shall be determined by the Chair and shall, where appropriate, follow Section 3.3.1 above. Where any witness is called, all questions shall, unless otherwise confirmed by the Chair, be through the Chair.

The trainee may, at their discretion, then give a statement. The trainee should be given the opportunity to set out their case, answer any questions put to them by the Chair and, where relevant, respond to any information given by a witness. They may also confer with a support person.

The PRC will, at the instigation of the Chair, retire to deliberate on all information before it. Following deliberation, the Committee issues a provisional ruling through the Chair.

3.3.3 Adjournment

The Chair can adjourn a PRC Hearing where:

- Additional evidence is required;
- It becomes obvious that the hearing will last unreasonably longer than scheduled;
- There is disruption to proceedings by one or other party, including the trainee and any support person in attendance.

3.3.4 Provisional rulings

Following its deliberations the PRC, through the Chair, will issue one of the following provisional rulings:

- Allow the trainee to continue in the training programme;
 - In such cases, there are insufficient grounds or evidence upon which to issue a sanction or further remediation action;
- Probation and final warning;
 - Allow the trainee to remain on the training programme, be placed on probation and be subject to the successful completion of remediation, additional assessments and/or training as specified by the PRC;
 - The PRC will have wide discretion to determine the terms and duration of the probation
- Remove the trainee from the training programme;
 - The Committee may dismiss the trainee from the Training Programme.

Provisional rulings are issued in writing to the trainee by the Chair as soon as is practicable, usually within ten (10) working days.

3.3.5 Notification of the right to appeal



Appeals must be submitted by the trainee in writing to the Secretary to the Appeals Committee within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the provisional ruling. All communications shall be in accordance with the Training Agreement notification obligations.

3.3.6 Finalisation of rulings

Subject to the putting in place of preventative non sanction measures which may include some or all of the PRC outcomes, the ruling of the PRC may not be finalised and/or its findings implemented until:

- The Appeals process is exhausted in accordance with the Policy on appeals relating to disciplinary action and educational grievances (the “Appeals Policy”); or
- The trainee has withdrawn their appeal; or
- The trainee resigns from the training programme.

In cases where the appeals process has been completed and the trainee’s appeal has not been upheld, the case is returned to the PRC by the Appeals Committee and the ruling from the initial hearing may then be finalised and findings implemented. Any preventative measures in place remain until such time as the PRC has finalised its ruling.

Upon the finalisation of a ruling, the trainee and SD are notified in writing by the Chair of the PRC and the finding forms part of the trainee file, taking care not to include sensitive or confidential information that should only be accessible on a strictly need to know basis. See Appendix 6.

3.3.7 Trainees on probation

The Trainee may exit probation in one of three ways:

- By successfully appealing the preliminary finding of the PRC; or
- By successfully completing remediation, additional assessments and/or training to the satisfaction of the PRC; or
- By violating the terms of their probation such that they may be dismissed from the training programme.

In this latter case, the trainee will be invited to attend a Disciplinary Action Hearing per the Disciplinary Action Policy for misconduct.



3.3.8 Removal from the training programme

If the PRC ruling removes the trainee from the GP Training Programme, the SD will conduct an exit interview using the [Trainee Exit Interview Form](#) and submit the results to the GP Training Unit.

3.4 Special circumstances

“Special circumstances” as outlined in Section 5.0 of the Policy apply at all stages of these Procedures.

3.5 Records retention and disposal

All records will be kept confidential and information disclosed strictly on a need-to-know basis for 5 years. All records, including for example, emails and hand-written notes will be stored in a central repository. Any copies (other than those provided to the trainee), including personal copies held by the Committee members for the purpose of preparing and conducting the hearings will be securely disposed of (shredded, permanently deleted.)

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

Scheme Directing Team (SDT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure complete records are available for the Scheme Director and the National Directorate of GP Training and the PRC
Scheme Director (SD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide complete records as requested to the RPD and ND • Available for advice and guidance
Competency Progression Committee (CPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine a trainee's progression status and make recommendations
Regional Programme Director (RPD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communication with the CPC and ND, and RCPAC as needed • Refer to the PRC, Disciplinary Committee or IMC, as appropriate • Immediately notify the employer if they become aware of the trainee's physical or mental health or other issues potentially impacting upon the safety of the trainee, patients or others
National Directorate of GP Training (ND)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If allegations are of criminal nature, the police must be informed. • Consider whether the trainee is safe/fit to train based on evidence presented • Notify the authorities or IMC, when applicable • Notify the employer, when applicable • Should additional support/training be provided, closely monitor progress • Refer a trainee's case to the PRC • Chair the PRC • Communicate the PRC decision to the trainee
Progression Review Committee (the Committee or PRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the PRC will adhere to these terms of reference • The Chair, Secretary and members of the Committee will execute their functions in accordance with College guidelines
Appeals Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the decision of the PRC and the trainee's case records to decide whether the PRC's decision should be upheld
Trainee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform their Scheme Director and where relevant, their employer, if they are subject of a formal complaint, involved in a serious incident or if they have been referred to the IMC

5.0 Definitions

Fitness to continue training	A trainee's ability to engage fully with the training programme whilst maintaining appropriate standards of performance, and physical, psychological and emotional attributes that will enable them to carry out their responsibilities in a professional, competent and safe manner, and which does not have a negative impact on the trainee, or others.
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6.0 Related and supporting documentation

- Progression Review Policy
- Trainee Support Policy
- Disciplinary Action Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Guideline for committee chairs and secretaries
- Guideline on committee agendas
- Guidelines on committee minutes
- Template and sample of committee meeting minutes
- Template and sample for committee meeting agendas
- [Trainee Exit Interview Form](#)
- [Grounds for complaints to the IMC](#)
- [IMC Guide to Professional Conduct & Ethics for Registered Medical Practitioners](#)

7.0 Contact

GP Training Quality Assurance and Enhancement

gae.training@icgp.ie

Appendix 1: Referral Information

All referrals should include the following:

- Narrative letter including chronology of events
- Evidence of all concerns as indexed appendices
- Evidence to include:
 - All support plans and outcome results – signed by the trainee
 - All correspondence between training programme and trainee
 - All prior assessments and formal feedback
 - Written information on any previous incidents/concerns
 - Written information on support provided/accessed through the programme, Occupational Health, Doctors Health Programme and Health and Wellbeing Manager

Appendix 2: Progression Review Committee referral form – Training Schemes

Trainee name	
Trainee date of birth	
Year of enrolment	
Training scheme	
Scheme director	
Date of referral	
Executive summary (maximum of 10 bullet points to include list of concerns) which prompted the referral	
Signature of the Scheme Director	Signed: Date:

Appendix 3: Progression Review Committee referral form – College Examinations and Assessment

Trainee name	
Trainee date of birth	
Year of enrolment	
Training scheme	
Scheme director	
Date of referral	
Executive summary (maximum of 10 bullet points to include list of concerns) which prompted the referral	
Signature of College Examinations Committee Chair	Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 4: Notification of Hearing Before the Progression Review Committee

Trainee name	
Trainee date of birth	
Year of enrolment	
Training scheme	
Scheme director	
Date and Time of Progression Review Committee Hearing	
Location	
Brief Description of the grounds for the Hearing	
Notification of the right to a support person	You have the right to be accompanied by a support person as defined in Section 3.6 of the Progression Review Policy.
Notification of the right to invite potential witnesses and submit evidence	You have the right to invite potential witnesses or any additional information relevant to the issue at hand, provided you notify the Secretary of the PRC no less than five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting. Any documentation submitted after that time will only be considered if the Chair considers that the material is of significance to the matter being considered.
Notification of third party invited to attend the Hearing	The Chair of the Committee invited the following third party to attend to provide expert statement or witness account if such is the case.
Signature of Chair of Progression Review Committee	<p>Signed: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>

Appendix 5: Notification of Progression Review Committee provisional rulings to the trainee

Trainee name	
Trainee date of birth	
Year of enrolment	
Training scheme	
Scheme director	
Date of Progression Review Committee Hearing	
Provisional ruling (Please select as appropriate)	A: Allow the trainee to continue in the training programme B: Probation and final warning C: Remove the trainee from the training programme
Terms and duration of probation (if applicable)	
Notification of the right to appeal	This is a provisional ruling. You have the right to appeal this ruling. To appeal, you must submit an appeal to the College Training Department (gptraining@icgp.ie) within fourteen (14) calendar days of your receipt of this ruling.
Finalisation of rulings	The ruling may not be finalised and/or its findings implemented until:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Appeals process is exhausted in accordance with the Appeals Policy, or • The trainee has withdrawn their appeal, or • The trainee resigns from the training programme. <p>In cases where the Appeals process has been completed and the trainee's appeal has not been upheld, the case is returned to the PRC by the Appeals Committee and the ruling from the initial hearing may then be finalised and findings implemented. Any preventative measures in place remain until such time as the PRC has finalised its ruling.</p>
Signature of Chair of Progression Review Committee	<p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>