

Assessments and Examinations Review and Appeal Policy

Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Overview	2
3. Scope.....	2
In scope.....	2
Out of scope.....	2
4. Principles.....	3
5. Policy.....	4
Review	4
Appeal.....	6
6. Roles and responsibilities	8
Candidates.....	8
Staff members	8
ADC Review Panel members and Independent Appeals Committee members	8
7. Related documents	9
8. Document information	9
Appendix A - Definitions	9

1. Purpose

To define the Australian Dental Council (ADC) process to handle challenges to assessment and examination decisions.

2. Overview

The ADC is committed to the delivery of high-quality services and follows strict and standardised assessment and examination processes to minimise the risk of any procedural errors and to ensure candidates are assessed fairly and equitably.

This policy sets out the review and appeal procedures for those who believe that the outcome of their assessment, examination or misconduct finding has been adversely affected by a procedural error. Reviews and appeals do not involve re-scoring or re-assessment of the candidate's performance on their examination. Detailed performance scores in the different components of the examination and/or examination questions and answers, are also not released to candidates.

Review and appeal of either an assessment or examination outcome, or a misconduct finding is a two-stage process, where a Review Panel (internal review process) or an Independent Appeals Committee (external review process) reviews the assessment or examination processes undertaken and determines whether there have been any procedural errors that may have adversely impacted a candidate. Applications for review and appeal can be submitted only on the basis that there has been an alleged breach or error in the administrative process used.

Candidates need to submit an *Application for Review* first, as an *Application for Appeal* can only be considered following determination of a review, where a candidate remains dissatisfied with the review decision.

Prior to submitting an application for review or appeal, candidates are advised to read this policy carefully. Applications must be submitted via ADC Connect within the specified timeframe and should include any relevant supporting documentation and be accompanied by the stipulated fee. Applications will not be processed until the fee has been received. For a list of current fees, please refer to the 'Fee Schedule' section on the ADC website www.adc.org.au.

The ADC reserves the right to change its assessment and examination procedures. Candidates should check the ADC website www.adc.org.au for information.

3. Scope

In scope

This policy applies to all ADC candidates who believe their assessment or examination outcome or misconduct finding has been adversely affected by a procedural error. The policy allows for the review of the administrative processes carried out in the determination of their assessment or examination outcome or misconduct finding.

Out of scope

This policy does not include frontline reconsideration of initial assessment decisions by the original decision maker, as this step occurs prior to a final outcome being made. Before an initial assessment outcome is finalised, candidates are provided with the opportunity to provide additional information, evidence and clarifications to assist the assessment of their application. This includes bringing to the ADC's attention any relevant evidence that was not

available when the initial assessment application was submitted and may not have been considered.

This policy does not provide candidates with the ability to contest the decision of ADC examiners with regards to the assessment of candidates' performance during an examination. Any concerns must be raised immediately on the day of the examination to ensure these can be addressed promptly. The re-marking, re-scoring or change of an examination outcome are also out of scope.

In addition, this policy does not cover complaints about the ADC. A complaint raised by a stakeholder which expresses concern about, or dissatisfaction with, how the ADC has carried out its work is covered under the ADC Complaints policy, available on the ADC website. This may include, for example, complaints about an ADC policy or process, communication with stakeholders, or the customer service provided.

4. Principles

Commitment to our values

The ADC is a values-driven organisation. It is expected that candidates conduct themselves with integrity and in line with all ADC values. It is expected that candidates will comply with all ADC policies and procedures relating to the ADC assessment process.

All ADC staff members, ADC Review Panel members and Independent Appeals Committee members will behave according to the ADC values and will make decisions on the merits of each case and having regard to all relevant information available.

Respect

All candidates, ADC staff and stakeholders will be treated with respect and courtesy. Respectful behaviour is expected from all parties involved in a review and/or appeal process.

Inclusivity

Behaving in a respectful and inclusive manner towards others is an expectation of all candidates. Failure to meet this expectation is considered a conduct issue.

Every effort will be made to ensure review and appeal processes are managed in a way that minimises stress and is culturally appropriate and accessible.

Fair treatment and the right to be heard

Candidates will be treated fairly and without biases.

The principles of natural justice will be applied to the application and interpretation of this policy. This means:

- we will ensure that all parties are given adequate information and time to participate or respond meaningfully
- we will give all people an opportunity to present their point of view and respond to facts presented, and
- we will manage review and appeal processes in an equitable and unbiased manner.

Timeliness

The ADC will:

- consider all cases promptly; and

- notify a candidate of the outcome of a review and/or appeal within two weeks from the date a decision is made.

Confidentiality

All matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988 and the ADC's Privacy Policy and will be treated with strict confidentiality. The ADC reserves the right to release information about misconduct matters to relevant authorities, such as regulatory and administrative bodies like Ahpra and the National Boards, the Australian Federal Police or the Department of Home Affairs, where required by law and/or in other instances, where there may be a risk to public safety, property and/or persons.

5. Policy

Review

An *Application for Review* must:

- be submitted via ADC Connect within 28 days of the date when the candidate is notified of the outcome;
- relate only to the administrative procedures of either the candidate's assessment or examination or the misconduct finding against them;
- specify the relevant grounds for review;
- include all relevant supporting documentation (where applicable); and
- be accompanied by payment of the relevant fee.

An *Application for Review* is deemed eligible where a candidate can demonstrate that the following **grounds for review** are met:

- the Standards for Assessment of Overseas Trained Dental Practitioners as published on the ADC website were incorrectly applied; or
- there were significant deficiencies in the processes used by the ADC to reach a decision; or
- the procedural requirements and instructions, as specified by the ADC in the relevant published documentation and/or in the instructions for specific examination sessions provided to candidates, were not followed or not followed to a significant extent; or
- the candidate's performance was adversely affected by significant deficiencies in the examination procedures beyond the control of the candidate.

An *Application for Review* is deemed ineligible where the grounds for review are not met. By way of example, the following matters are not considered grounds for review:

- disagreement with the standards set by the ADC for assessment of overseas trained dental practitioners;
- disagreement with the standard set by the ADC for the Written or Practical Examination in the relevant Examination Handbook;
- disagreement with the mark or grade awarded to a candidate for their Written or Practical Examination or for any section of the examination;
- personal or other reasons that inhibit a candidate's ability to provide the required documentation for an eligibility assessment;
- personal or other reasons that inhibit a candidate's ability to undertake or prepare sufficiently for an examination;
- personal illness experienced during an examination.

Upon receipt of an *Application for Review*, the Executive Director, Assessments and Examinations assesses if the application meets the requirements and the grounds for consideration.

Where an *Application for Review* is deemed to not meet the requirements and/or the grounds for consideration, the candidate is notified of the reasons that their application is not valid and cannot be accepted. A full refund of the application fee is provided for ineligible applications.

Where an *Application for Review* is deemed to meet the requirements and the grounds for consideration, the Executive Director, Assessments and Examinations refers the application to a Review Panel.

The Review Panel comprises a minimum of two representatives of the ADC Assessment Committee (including the Chair), a member of the ADC Accreditation Committee and a member with experience in assessments and examinations from another accreditation authority. Candidates will be notified of the members appointed to the Review Panel and will be given an opportunity to express any concerns regarding the panel's composition prior to the commencement of the review process.

The Executive Director, Assessments and Examinations will make available to the Review Panel relevant information and records related to the candidate's claims. The candidate does not have the right to appear before the Review Panel unless the Review panel determines otherwise.

The Review Panel must consider the administrative process, the outcome and all relevant information.

The Review Panel has the right to inform itself as it sees fit, subject to the rules of procedural fairness and natural justice.

The Review Panel may, with any conditions it considers appropriate:

- a) direct that the outcome of the candidate's eligibility assessment is overturned;
- b) direct that the candidate be permitted a further opportunity to resubmit an application for assessment to be assessed at the earliest opportunity, without charging (or refunding if already paid) an additional assessment fee;
- c) direct that the candidate be permitted a further attempt at the examination at the earliest opportunity, without charging (or refunding if already paid) an additional examination fee. This may also include retention of the candidate's standing in relation to eligibility criteria as at the time of attempting the examination which is the subject of review;
- d) direct that the finding of misconduct is set aside and recommend that an alternative process be undertaken to arrive at a decision;
- e) direct that the finding of misconduct is overturned and any penalties applied are revoked;
- f) not uphold the candidate's claims or find them to be a non-contributing factor to the overall outcome.

The Review Panel may NOT:

- a) exempt a candidate from the requirement to meet the ADC Standards for Assessment of Overseas Dental Practitioners and/or to complete one or more stages of the assessment process;
- b) overturn the result of an examination and change a FAIL grade to a PASS grade in any section of the examination or in the examination overall;
- c) exempt a candidate from the requirement to pass an examination in a single examination attempt or exempt a candidate from any other requirements of the examination (other than exemption from the eligibility criteria above).

A candidate who is permitted a further attempt at the examination must:

- a) meet any conditions imposed by the Review Panel;
- b) sit the examination at a time specified by the Review Panel.

The Review Panel makes a recommendation on behalf of the ADC.

The Review Panel is required to give reasons for its decision.

The Executive Director, Assessments and Examinations will advise the candidate of the outcome within 14 days from the date of the decision being made by the the Review Panel.

If the Review Panel upholds the candidate's submission, the ADC will fully refund the review application fee to the candidate.

Appeal

A candidate who remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Review Panel may submit an *Application for Appeal* and request a hearing from an Independent Appeals Committee (IAC).

A candidate may make an *Application for Appeal* only after an *Application for Review* has been made and determined.

An *Application for Appeal* must:

- a) be submitted via ADC Connect within 28 days of the date when the candidate is notified of the outcome of the review;
- b) relate only to the administrative procedures of either the candidate's assessment or examination or the misconduct finding against them;
- c) specify the relevant grounds for appeal;
- d) be made only on the same grounds considered in the *Application for Review*;
- e) include all relevant supporting documentation (where applicable);
- f) be accompanied by payment of the relevant fee.

An *Application for Appeal* is deemed eligible where a candidate can demonstrate that following **grounds for appeal** are met:

- a) the Standards for Assessment of Overseas Trained Dental Practitioners as published on the ADC website were incorrectly applied; or
- b) there were significant deficiencies in the processes used by the ADC to reach a decision; or
- c) the procedural requirements and instructions, as specified by the ADC in the relevant published documentation and/or in the instructions for specific examination sessions provided to candidates, were not followed or not followed to a significant extent; or
- d) the candidate's performance was adversely affected by significant deficiencies in the examination procedures beyond the control of the candidate.

An *Application for Appeal* is deemed ineligible where the grounds for appeal are not met; and/or new or additional grounds not already specified in the original *Application for Review* are raised. By way of example, the following matters are not considered grounds for review:

- a) disagreement with the standards set by the ADC for assessment of overseas trained dental practitioners;
- b) disagreement with the standard set by the ADC for the Written or Practical Examination in the relevant Examination Handbook;
- c) disagreement with the mark or grade awarded to a candidate for their Written or Practical Examination or for any section of the examination;
- d) personal or other reasons that inhibit a candidate's ability to provide the required documentation for an eligibility assessment;

- e) personal or other reasons that inhibit a candidate's ability to undertake or prepare sufficiently for an examination;
- f) personal illness experienced during an examination.

Upon receipt of an *Application for Appeal*, the CEO assesses if the application meets the requirements and the grounds for consideration.

Where an *Application for Appeal* is deemed to not meet the requirements and/or the grounds for consideration, the candidate is notified that their application is not valid and cannot be accepted. A full refund of the application fee is provided for ineligible applications.

Where an *Application for Appeal* is deemed to meet the requirements and the grounds for consideration, the CEO convenes an IAC.

The IAC comprises of two external dental practitioners and at least one practitioner from another profession with experience in academia and assessments or examinations. All members are independent of the ADC and the ADC Review Panel. Candidates will be notified of the members appointed to the IAC and will be given an opportunity to express any concerns regarding the panel's composition prior to the commencement of the appeal process.

The candidate has the right to appear and address the IAC and may be accompanied by a support person, but is not entitled to bring an advocate or spokesperson or legal representation before the IAC, unless the IAC has given its prior consent.

The IAC must decide each appeal on its merits.

The IAC is not bound by the rules of evidence and, subject to this policy and the rules of natural justice and procedural fairness, may regulate its own conduct and operation as it sees fit, and may:

- a) inform itself on any matter, and in such manner as it sees fit;
- b) consider all relevant information which it sees fit;
- c) invite any person to appear before it or to provide information.

The proceedings of the IAC, and other information provided to the IAC, shall be kept confidential, except information released with the consent of the candidate and the report of findings to the ADC.

The IAC may, with any conditions it considers appropriate:

- a) direct that the outcome of the candidate's eligibility assessment is overturned;
- b) direct that the candidate be permitted a further opportunity to resubmit an application for assessment to be assessed at the earliest opportunity, without charging (or refunding if already paid) an additional assessment fee;
- c) direct that the candidate be permitted a further attempt at the examination at the earliest opportunity, without charging (or refunding if already paid) an additional examination fee. This may also include retention of the candidate's standing in relation to eligibility criteria as at the time of attempting the examination which is the subject of the appeal;
- d) direct that the finding of misconduct is set aside and recommend that an alternative process be undertaken to arrive at a decision;
- e) direct that the finding of misconduct is overturned and any penalties applied are revoked;
- f) not uphold the candidate's claims or find them to be a non-contributing factor to the overall outcome, and reject the appeal.

The IAC may NOT:

- a) exempt a candidate from the requirement to meet the ADC Standards for Assessment of Overseas Dental Practitioners and/or to complete one or more stages of the assessment process;
- b) overturn the result of an examination and change a FAIL grade to a PASS grade in any section of the examination or in the examination overall;
- c) exempt a candidate from the requirement to pass an examination in a single examination attempt or exempt a candidate from any other requirements of the examination (other than exemption from the eligibility criteria above).

A candidate who is permitted a further attempt at the examination must:

- a) meet any conditions imposed by the IAC;
- b) sit the examination at a time specified by the IAC.

The decision of the IAC is final.

The IAC is required to give reasons for its decision.

The CEO will advise the candidate of the outcome within 14 days from the date of the decision being made by the IAC.

If the IAC upholds the candidate's submission, the ADC will fully refund both the review application fee and the appeal application fee to the candidate.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Candidates

Candidates are required to:

- Act in accordance with the ADC values
- Submit a complete application within the required timeframes
- Demonstrate the grounds for review or appeal are met
- Meet any conditions imposed by the ADC Review Panel and Independent Appeals Committee
- Accept the decision of the Independent Appeals Committee as final.

Staff members

All staff members are required to:

- Model appropriate standards of behaviour;
- Take steps to educate and make staff aware of their obligations under this code and the law;
- Intervene quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour;
- Report complaints about breaches of this policy in accordance with the complaint handling policy; and
- Ensure people who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised.

ADC Review Panel members and Independent Appeals Committee members

ADC Review Panel members and Independent Appeals Committee members are required to:

- Act in accordance with the ADC values

- Ensure privacy and confidentiality are maintained
- Observe the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness
- Make decisions in line with this policy
- Recommend actions to be undertaken, in line with this policy, as a result of their deliberations

7. Related documents

Candidates who require assistance with their review and appeal application can contact the ADC at assess@adc.org.au regarding initial assessments and skills assessment, written@adc.org.au regarding the written examination, or practical@adc.org.au regarding the practical examination.

- [ADC Standards for Assessment of Overseas Dental Practitioners](#)
- [Candidate misconduct policy](#)
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Examination withdrawal procedure](#)
- [Written examination handbook for general dentistry](#)
- [Written examination handbook for dental hygiene and dental therapy](#)
- [Practical examination handbook for dentists](#)
- [Practical examination handbook for dental hygiene and dental therapy](#)

Further information can be found on the ADC website.

8. Document information

Policy Owner:	Executive Director, Assessment and Examinations/Deputy CEO
Approver	Board
Approval date:	12 March 2026
Effective date:	1 April 2026
Date for review*:	12 March 2029
Version:	3

*unless otherwise indicated, this policy will continue to apply beyond the review date

Appendix A - Definitions

The following definitions are applicable throughout this Policy:

Appeal

An appeal consists of the review by an independent external panel (Independent Appeals Committee) of the administrative process undertaken to reach an assessment or examination outcome or a misconduct finding. An Application for Appeal can only be submitted after completion and determination of a review.

Assessment

Assessment refers to the candidate's initial assessment and/or skills assessment.

Examination

Examination refers to either the ADC Written Examination or the ADC Practical Examination relevant to the candidate's application for review or appeal.

Independent Appeals Committee

An Independent Appeals Committee (IAC) is an impartial committee convened by the CEO which comprises members independent of the ADC and the Review Panel. The IAC is composed of two external dental practitioners and at least one practitioner from another profession with experience in academia and assessments or examinations. The role of the IAC is to hear a candidate's appeal about an adverse assessment or examination outcome or a misconduct finding and to reach a final decision regarding the candidate's appeal application.

Natural justice and procedural fairness

The principles underpinning the procedures used when making a decision. In practice these focus on the process rather than the outcome of a decision. Natural justice and procedural fairness relate to the responsibility for those making decisions to adopt fair processes and consider relevant information, and to the right for an applicant to be heard and to be treated fairly and without biases.

Review

A review consists of the review by an ADC internal panel (Review Panel) of the administrative process undertaken to reach an assessment or examination outcome or a misconduct finding.

Review Panel

A Review Panel comprises a minimum of two representatives of the ADC Assessment Committee (including the Chair), a member of the ADC Accreditation Committee and a member with experience in assessments and examinations from another accreditation authority. The role of the Review Panel is to consider a candidate's Application for Review and to make recommendations to the ADC regarding the outcome of the candidate's application.

Support person

A support person can assist and provide support to a candidate during the hearing of the IAC. Their role is to provide emotional support, or help clarify responses; it is not to be an advocate, spokesperson or legal representative for the candidate. A support person may take notes but is not entitled to address the IAC or speak on behalf of the candidate.