



## **New Zealand Registration Examination (NZREX Clinical) policy on:**

- **pass criteria**
- **critical incidents**
- **requests for resits**
- **feedback**
- **recounts of results.**

### **Policy statement**

The goal of NZREX Clinical is to provide a valid, fair, reliable assessment. The objective of the examination is to determine if candidates have sufficient knowledge and skill to be eligible for registration in the provisional general scope of practice in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### **Expected standard of practice**

The expected standard of practice is that of a newly-qualified graduate of an Aotearoa New Zealand medical school, commencing medical practice as an intern. Council applies the standards set out in *Good Medical Practice* and other statements published by the Council.

Further information about the expected standard of practice is available in the NZREX Clinical candidate handbook and on the Council's website.

### **Pass criteria**

This policy outlines how the examination results are determined, to confirm whether the candidate has passed the NZREX Clinical.

NZREX Clinical will be conducted in accordance with the principles of consistency, transparency and accountability.

### **Critical incidents**

To ensure the integrity of the examination, policy and procedures are required to ensure that critical incidents will be identified, documented, and addressed promptly, fairly, and transparently. This policy sets out the definition of a critical incident, how the incident will be documented and managed, and the consequences of an incident being raised.

### **Request for resit on basis of impairment or incident during examination**

Candidates may request an opportunity to resit the examination on the basis that their performance during the NZREX Clinical was affected because of impairment at the time of the examination, or an incident that occurred during the examination.

### **Feedback**

The Medical Council of New Zealand (Council) will provide feedback to all candidates who did not pass NZREX Clinical.

### **Recount**

NZREX Clinical candidates can request a recount of their NZREX Clinical result.

This policy outlines:

- how the examination results are determined, to confirm whether the candidate has passed the NZREX Clinical
- how critical incidents arising during an examination are identified and managed
- how requests to be permitted to resit the examination due to an incident or impairment are considered
- how feedback will be provided to unsuccessful candidates; and
- then process followed if a candidate requests a recount.

### **Pass criteria**

To pass NZREX Clinical a candidate must, in a single sitting:

- achieve an overall score greater than the cut score; and
- receive at least **seven** overall pass or borderline results out of the 12 stations.

The cut score is determined using internationally recognised statistical methods used for scoring the objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs).

A candidate may also fail the NZREX Clinical if a critical incident occurs. The severity of the incident may lead to other limitations on future exams and registration.

### **Critical incidents**

Examiners and staff may raise a critical incident about a candidate during the NZREX Clinical.

#### **Definition of a critical incident**

A critical incident is when a candidate's actions or behaviour falls significantly below the expected standards of professional and ethical conduct. The expected standards are those set out in *Good Medical Practice* and other statements published by Council.

A critical incident may also include any actions or behaviour that compromises the integrity of the assessment process. This includes behaviour that constitutes examination misconduct, as well as inappropriate behaviour towards staff, examiners, or actors. Examples of examination misconduct are set out in Appendix 1.

In assessing whether a candidate's actions or behaviour is a critical incident, the Examinations Director and Assistant Examinations Director will apply the standards set out in *Good Medical Practice*, other statements published by the Council, and the NZREX Clinical examination rules.

#### **How are critical incidents documented and managed?**

1. When a candidate exhibits behaviour during a station that an examiner believes constitutes a critical incident, the examiner must complete an examination incident report and provide this to a staff member.
2. The Examinations Director or Assistant Examinations Director will consider the incident report completed by the examiner.
3. The Examinations Director or Assistant Examinations Director will interview the examiner and actor.
4. The Examinations Director and Assistant Examinations Director will discuss the incident and decide if it meets the threshold for a critical incident. A written record of the decision will be made.

### **Withdrawal from the examination due to a critical incident**

The Examinations Director or Assistant Examinations Director may decide to withdraw the candidate from the examination if the candidate has caused a significant disruption to the examination or are a risk to the safety of one or more of the actors, examiners, staff, other candidates, or themselves.

### **Procedure following a critical incident**

1. The candidate will be advised of the critical incident within 5 working days of the examination and given an opportunity to respond within 10 working days.
2. The Examinations Director or Assistant Examinations Director will consider the severity of the incident, and the candidate's response if received, and may determine that:
  - the incident either does or does not meet the threshold for a critical incident
  - if the incident meets the threshold for a critical incident, the candidate who may otherwise have passed the examination, should instead fail the examination.
3. The Chief Executive of the Medical Council of New Zealand will consider the incident, taking advice from the Examinations Director or Assistant Examinations Director, and may additionally determine that:
  - the candidate is not permitted to re-sit the NZREX Clinical
  - the candidate is only permitted to re-sit the NZREX Clinical after providing evidence of completing appropriate remediation
  - details of the critical incident should be provided to the individual's employer, should they be subsequently registered.
4. The candidate will be advised of these decisions, and they may seek a review of the decisions by Council.

### **Request for resit on basis of impairment or unexpected incident during examination**

Candidates may submit a request to resit the examination on the basis that their performance during the NZREX Clinical was affected because of impairment at the time of the examination, or an unexpected incident that occurred during the examination.

### **Impairment**

A candidate may, following the examination, request an opportunity to resit the examination where they believe that they may have been disadvantaged during the NZREX Clinical due to an impairment that occurred close to, or during the examination that affected their performance. This may include situations such as illness or serious domestic circumstances.

The impairment must be both serious and unexpected and be shown to have had a direct, identifiable, impact on the candidate's ability to perform during the examination.

Candidates making such a request must include:

- details of the event that led to the impairment; and
- an explanation of how the impairment was serious, unexpected, and directly impacted on the candidate's ability to perform during the examination; and
- supporting documentation or evidence such as a medical certificate or letter from another person who can attest to the circumstances.

### **Request for resit due to an unexpected incident during the examination**

A candidate may, following the examination, request an opportunity to resit the examination where they believe that:

- an incident that was outside of their control occurred during the examination and impaired or impacted on their performance; or
- that the way the examination was conducted impaired their performance in the examination.

A request may not be made on the grounds of an examiner's decision or how the decision was reached.

Candidates making such a request must include:

- details of the incident that occurred; and
- an explanation of how this impacted on the candidate's performance in this examination; and
- any supporting documentation or evidence that relates to the incident.

The Council may reschedule the examination if it deems that during the examination a significant incident (for example, a fire or earthquake) occurred that was outside the Council's or candidates' control, and it impaired the candidates' performance. Affected candidates would be offered the choice to resit or receive a refund of their examination fee.

### **Process for making a resit request**

1. Candidates must email their request for a resit to [examinations@mcnz.org.nz](mailto:examinations@mcnz.org.nz), within **3 working days** of the examination.
2. Candidates making a request will be asked to pay a fee. Information about fees can be found on Council's website [here](#).

### **Consideration of resit requests**

- The request will be considered by the Registrar, who may request further information from the candidate or Examinations Director.
- If the Registrar grants the request, the candidate will be refunded the examination fee, or be offered an opportunity to resit the examination at the next available examination date at no charge.
- A candidate's examination result will not be amended as the result of a successful request to resit.
- If the request to resit is due to an error relating to how the examination was conducted, the fee a candidate paid to make the request may also be refunded.

### **Feedback to candidates**

Council will provide limited feedback to candidates who do not pass the NZREX Clinical to assist them in understanding their result. Feedback will not be provided to candidates who pass NZREX Clinical.

This feedback will provide candidates with their grade in each station relating to communication, professionalism, cultural safety and competency, history taking, physical examination, investigations and clinical reasoning, and management. Possible grades are 'very poor, poor, satisfactory, good, and excellent'.

The candidate can refer to the competency skills sheet for the skills being assessed in each domain.

**Process to provide feedback:**

Candidates who do not pass NZREX Clinical will receive an email containing feedback on their performance within **30 working days** of the NZREX Clinical examination.

**Council will not provide any additional detail requested.**

**Recount of results**

Candidates who think their NZREX Clinical result does not accurately reflect their performance in the examination can request a recount.

The allocation of marks given to candidates by an examiner in individual stations will not be reassessed or altered as part of the recount.

**Recount process**

- If paper marking is used in place of electronic marking by an examiner, the individual results candidates have achieved in such stations will be checked to ensure they have been correctly recorded.
- The candidate's overall result will be checked to ensure that it has been correctly calculated.
- The candidate's overall result will be checked to ensure it has been correctly compared to the cut score required to pass the examination.
- The outcome of this recount will be communicated to the candidate.
- If the candidate's overall result has changed, we will refund the recount fee.

**Process for making a recount of results request**

1. Candidates must email their request for a recount to [examinations@mcnz.org.nz](mailto:examinations@mcnz.org.nz), within **10 working days** of receiving their feedback. We send feedback to unsuccessful candidates within 30 working days of the examination.
2. Requests must include the reasons for requesting the recount. Candidates making recount requests will be asked to pay a fee, which is found [here](#).

**Result of recount is final**

The result of the recount is final. We will not accept an application for a further recount.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Examination misconduct**

Here are some examples of examination misconduct:

- introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room
- obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information during the examination (or attempting to), which could be examination-related, by means of talking, written papers/notes, telephone or recording examination scenarios
- attempting to solicit information about the examination from candidates from an earlier time slot
- copying from another candidate
- collusion
- disruptive behaviour during the examination
- failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examination
- failing to abide by the instructions or advice of an examiner or Council staff member in relation to the examination rules
- impersonation: pretending to be someone else or arranging for a third party to take the candidate's place in an examination
- misuse of examination material, for example by passing or attempting to pass such material to a third party after the examination (this includes sharing any examination scenarios or examination information in any public or private forum)
- bribing or attempting to bribe an examination official
- behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the examination
- contacting or attempting to contact examiners before or after the examination for any reason.