



## Policy on critical incidents during the New Zealand Registration Examination (NZREX Clinical)

### Policy Statement

During the examination, any behaviour by a candidate representing a significant breach of what would be considered acceptable professional standards or ethical boundaries (as defined in the Good medical practice publication) will be recorded as a critical incident.

### Rationale

NZREX Clinical candidates whose behaviour has met the definition of a critical incident (as set out in the Good medical practice publication) may pose a risk of harm to the public. Steps must be taken to ensure these doctors are fit for registration, consistent with requirements under Section 16 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003.

### Procedures

When a candidate exhibits behaviour that the station examiner believes is a critical incident, the station examiner will record the event using the Examination Incident Report.

The actor will be interviewed by both the Examinations Director\* and the Chief Examiner. The Examinations Director\*, the station examiner and the Chief Examiner will discuss the incident and make a decision about whether the incident represents a significant breach of what would be considered acceptable professional standards or ethical boundaries and is thus a critical incident. If agreement is reached that the behaviour does constitute a critical incident, the candidate will score zero for that station.

If the behaviour is judged to be a critical incident and the candidate scores zero for the station, further action will be taken.

Where any incident occurs that reaches the level of a critical incident, the Examinations Director\* and Chief Examiner may at their discretion immediately withdraw the candidate from the examination.

1. At the post-NZREX Clinical teleconference (held the week after the NZREX Clinical to confirm the results before candidates are notified) attended by the Examinations Director, Assistant Examinations Director, Council Chairperson, Council Deputy Chairperson, Chief Executive, Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Medical Advisers, General Manager: Core Services and Senior Policy Analyst the critical incident will be discussed. In the unlikely event that the candidate has passed the examination despite scoring a zero in one of the stations, a decision may nevertheless be made to fail the candidate because of the severity of the incident.

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2. The candidate will be advised of the critical incident in the NZREX Clinical feedback letter.
  3. The candidate will be advised that the details of the incident will be placed in the candidate's file and the candidate will be given an opportunity to respond.
  4. Council will be advised of the incident and provided with the candidate's response.
  5. Based on the severity of the incident, Council may choose from the following actions:
    - the candidate will not be permitted to repeat NZREX Clinical
    - the candidate will not be permitted to sit NZREX Clinical until completing prescribed remediation and providing evidence of completion.
  6. If the candidate is permitted to re-sit NZREX Clinical and is successful in a later attempt, when registered in a provisional general scope, the prevocational educational supervisor would be advised of the critical incident and informed of any remediation the candidate has undertaken (if applicable). The prevocational educational supervisor would be asked to report any further incidents to Council (the candidate is advised of this when informed about the critical incident.)

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**Related policies** Council's *Policy on NZREX Clinical pass and fail criteria*.

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\* or Assistant Examinations Director.

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Passed at Council meeting:	August 2008
Updated at Council meeting:	April 2012
Updated at Council meeting:	October 2014
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