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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1997 No. 2817**

**The National Health Service (Vocational Training  
for General Medical Practice) Regulations 1997**

**PART IV**

**APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF CERTIFICATES**

**Appeals against refusal of certificates**

**13.**—(1) An applicant may appeal against a refusal by the Joint Committee to issue to him a certificate of prescribed experience or a certificate of equivalent experience, by sending a notice of appeal to the Secretary of State within the period of 28 days beginning with the day on which the decision of the Joint Committee is given to him, or (subject to paragraph (2)) such longer period as the Secretary of State may allow.

(2) The Secretary of State may allow a longer period only where he is satisfied that there was reasonable cause for failing to send the notice of appeal within the period of 28 days referred to in paragraph (1).

(3) A notice of appeal shall contain a concise statement of the facts and contentions on which the applicant intends to rely.

**Appeal bodies**

**14.**—(1) An appeal under regulation 13 shall be determined by an appeal body appointed by the Secretary of State.

(2) The Secretary of State may appoint—

- (a) a separate appeal body to determine each appeal as it arises (in which case he shall appoint it on receipt of the notice of appeal); or
- (b) a single appeal body to determine all appeals;

and in the case of an appeal body falling within sub-paragraph (b) he may with effect from a specified date rescind the appointment and appoint a differently constituted appeal body.

(3) An appeal body shall consist of four persons of whom—

- (a) one shall be a legally qualified person who shall be appointed to be the Convenor;
- (b) one shall be nominated by the Royal College of General Practitioners;
- (c) one shall be nominated by the General Medical Services Committee of the British Medical Association; and
- (d) one shall be a practitioner of consultant status employed in clinical practice by a National Health Service trust, Health Authority or Special Health Authority which provides substantial facilities for undergraduate or postgraduate clinical training and who is nominated by the Joint Consultants Committee.

(4) Any nomination for the purposes of paragraph (3) may be made either specially or generally.

(5) The Secretary of State shall appoint a person to act as secretary of the appeal body and may appoint such other officers as he considers necessary.

#### **Power of the Secretary of State to make new appointments**

**15.**—(1) Where a member of an appeal body dies or resigns or is unable or refuses to carry out his duties, the Secretary of State may appoint a new member in accordance with regulation 14 and may rescind the appointment of the member who is unable or refuses to carry out his duties.

(2) A member of an appeal body shall not be deemed to be unable to carry out his duties, or to have refused to do so, if he has indicated to the other members how he casts his vote for the purposes of regulation 17(1).

(3) Where a new member is appointed after a notice of appeal has been transmitted to the appeal body but before the body has reached a decision, the appeal body shall, notwithstanding any hearing or consideration of the appeal which has already taken place, consider the appeal afresh in accordance with regulation 16.

(4) An appeal body shall be deemed to have reached a decision when a sufficient number of the members have given such indications to constitute a majority for the purposes of regulation 17(1), notwithstanding that any document embodying the decision has not been drawn up, or signed by all or any of the members, or issued by the appeal body.

#### **Procedure on appeal**

**16.**—(1) Subject to the provisions of these Regulations, the procedure of the appeal body shall be determined by that body.

(2) The Secretary of State shall transmit a notice of appeal to the appeal body which is to determine the appeal.

(3) Before the appeal body considers the appeal, it may—

- (a) require the applicant to submit further particulars and documents in support of his appeal; and
- (b) make inquiries of such persons as it may think fit in connection with the appeal.

(4) The appeal body shall—

- (a) send to the applicant a copy of any comments made in reply to inquiries under paragraph (3)(b);
- (b) if a hearing is not to be held, give the applicant a period of 21 days beginning with the day on which the comments were sent to him to reply in writing to the comments; and
- (c) give notice to the applicant that he may, within a period specified in the notice, require the appeal body to give him an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by it.

(5) The appeal body may, or shall if so required by the applicant, hold a hearing for the purpose of considering the appeal and shall, before the beginning of the period of 21 days ending with the date on which any hearing is to be held, send notice to the applicant and to the Joint Committee of that date, and of the time and place of the hearing.

(6) The proceedings of the appeal body shall be conducted in private, unless the applicant requests a public hearing.

(7) At a hearing by the appeal body—

- (a) the applicant may appear and be heard in person, or he may be represented by Counsel, a solicitor, or any other person; and
- (b) the Joint Committee may appear and be represented by Counsel, a solicitor, or any duly authorised member or officer of the Committee.

(8) Where the applicant has required a hearing but does not appear and is not represented at the hearing, and the appeal body is not satisfied that there was good reason for the failure to appear or be represented, it may treat the requirement as having been withdrawn and either hold no hearing or (if the Joint Committee are present or represented) proceed with the hearing in the absence of the applicant.

(9) Where a hearing was to have been held in any case not falling within paragraph (8), and either the applicant or the Joint Committee does not appear at the hearing and is not represented, the appeal body may hear the party present or represented or may decide that a hearing is not to be held.

(10) Where at a hearing neither the applicant nor the Joint Committee appears or is represented, or in any case falling within paragraph (8) or (9), the appeal body may determine the appeal without further notice to the applicant or to the Joint Committee.

(11) The appeal body may accept the withdrawal of an appeal at any time before a decision on the appeal is made on receipt of written notice of withdrawal from the applicant.

(12) The appeal body may treat an appeal as having been withdrawn if—

- (a) it has not yet reached a decision on the appeal; and
- (b) it has tried to contact the applicant but has not, after a reasonable interval, been successful in doing so, or a letter properly sent to the applicant has been returned on the ground that it could not be delivered; and
- (c) it has sent notice to the applicant that his appeal will be treated as withdrawn if the applicant does not, within the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the notice was sent, confirm that he wishes to proceed with his appeal.

### **Determination of appeals**

**17.—**(1) In arriving at its decision on the appeal, whether or not a hearing has been held—

- (a) the decision of the appeal body shall be the decision of a majority; and
- (b) the Convenor shall not be entitled to vote, except in the case of an equality of votes.

(2) The appeal body shall send written notice to the applicant and the Joint Committee of its decision and the reasons for its decision.

(3) If the decision of the appeal body is that the applicant is entitled to a certificate of prescribed experience or a certificate of equivalent experience the Joint Committee shall issue the appropriate certificate to him.