

PAAs and AAs: Notifications

Introduction

- 1 This document sets out our policy on the notification of registration information¹ to, and about, physician associates (PAs) and anaesthesia associates (AAs), as required by the Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates Order 2024 (the AAPAO).
- 2 This policy relates only to PAs and AAs, and our approach varies from the one we take for doctors, because of the differences in the legislation governing the different registrant groups².
- 3 Registrants may have more than one entry in our registers³ if they're registered as both a doctor and a PA and / or an AA. In those circumstances, we'll apply the approach to notification set out in the legislation, policy and guidance relating to the relevant profession.
- 4 In line with good practice, we'll regularly review this policy to ensure it remains up to date, fair, proportionate, and effective.

Glossary

- 5 The following terms are used throughout this policy and should be read with the definitions below.

Appeal	An appeal against a decision which is appealable ⁴ .
Appeal case management meeting	A meeting arranged under the General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024 ⁵ .

¹ It doesn't apply to the notification of other information, such as information about decisions relating to the approval of education and training (under article 4), or any fitness to practise-related notifications.

² Doctors will continue to be regulated under the Medical Act 1983 until the UK government enacts further reform for doctors in the future.

³ Our registers include registers for doctors (comprising the principal list of the register of medical practitioners, and the GP and specialist registers), and the register of PAs and AAs.

⁴ Under article 16 or 17.

⁵ Under Rule 7(4)(c).

Appeal determination	An appeal body's reasons for their appeal decision. Appeal determinations may vary in content, detail, and length, depending on factors such as (but not limited to) the type of appeal, the appeal outcome and the appeal body which made the decision.
Appeal panel	A panel ⁶ which determines appeals under the AAPAO ⁷ .
Applicant	A person who makes an application for entry to the register of PAs and AAs (the register) ⁸ , either as an applicant for (first-time) registration, or as an applicant for re-entry. Re-entry applicants are also known as former registrants .
Appellant	A person who may appeal a decision ⁹ against a decision we've made under the AAPAO.
Associate	A person registered under the terms of the AAPAO ie a registered PA or AA ¹⁰ .
Associates tribunal	A fitness to practise panel ¹¹ which exercises functions under the AAPAO ¹² .
Business day	Any day except Saturday, Sunday, a bank holiday in the part of the United Kingdom where service is to take place, Good Friday, or Christmas Day.
Case examiner	A person who carries out case examiner functions under the AAPAO on behalf of the Regulator.
Decision	A decision or part of a decision made under the AAPAO or rules made under the AAPAO; a finding made by a decision maker. Decision in this policy means the decision maker's

⁶ Constituted in accordance with Rule 22 of the General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024

⁷ Under article 16.

⁸ Under article 6.

⁹ Under article 16 or 17.

¹⁰ As set out in article 2(1).

¹¹ Constituted under Rule 51 of the General Medical Council (Fitness to Practise) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

¹² Under articles 6(2), 10(5), 13 and 14.

	full and detailed decision – the explanation for their decision. It covers decisions to remove entries from the register, and revisions of removal decisions we've taken.
Final Measure	A requirement set out in ¹³ , and imposed under ¹⁴ , the AAPAO.
Former registrant	A person who's currently unregistered but who's previously held registration and who may also be an applicant and / or an appellant.
Internal Appeal Manager	A person employed by the Regulator who gives directions and makes decisions under the rules ¹⁵ , or a person appointed and employed by the MPTS.
Legally qualified person	A person satisfying the criteria set and published under the rules ¹⁶ .
Medical services	Employment, or the provision of services, as an associate.
MPTS	The Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service established under the Medical Act 1983 (the Act) ¹⁷ .
Notification(s)	Information we're either required or choose to provide to relevant parties (see definition below) about actions we're considering or have already taken. These actions are primarily ones required by the AAPAO (see below) but may also include circumstances outside the AAPAO's requirements, where we choose to notify relevant parties of actions we're proposing to take, for reasons of fairness, transparency, and proportionality.

¹³ In article 10(10).

¹⁴ Under articles 10(3)(b)(i), (5)(b)(ii) or 14(3)(c).

¹⁵ The General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

¹⁶ Rule 21(1)(b) of the General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

¹⁷ Section 1(3)(g) – this was inserted by article 2(1) of the General Medical Council (Fitness to Practise and Over-arching Objective) and the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (References to Court) Order 2015 (S.I. 2015/794).

Oral appeal	An appeal considered at a hearing ¹⁸ either in person or remotely, by video or audio conference.
Party to an / the appeal	The appellant or the Regulator (or its representatives).
Registrant	A person registered under article 6 ¹⁹ .
Registrar	The Registrar appointed under the AAPAO ²⁰ or a person carrying out the Registrar's functions under the AAPAO or rules made under the AAPAO.
Regulator	The General Medical Council, or the MPTS, or a person carrying out its functions under the AAPAO or rules made under the AAPAO.
Relevant parties	Stakeholders who we send notifications to about actions we're considering or have already taken, in relation to our registration functions under the AAPAO ²¹ .
Revision	The process of changing a decision.
Services as an associate	Employment, or the provision of services, as an associate only.
Standard directions	Case management directions for appeals which the Regulator determines are to apply to classes or categories of appeals.
Written appeal	An appeal considered on the papers at a meeting (in person or wholly or partly remotely) in the absence of the parties.

¹⁸ Held in accordance with the rules.

¹⁹ As set out in article 2.

²⁰ Under schedule 1, paragraph 1(b)(i).

²¹ Examples of relevant stakeholders could be applicants; appellants; registrants / former registrants; external organisations such as those who employ or have arrangements with associates to provide services as an associate; other relevant regulatory bodies (both within and outside the UK eg where an associate is registered with another healthcare or other professional regulator.)

Why do we send notifications?

- 6 Our functions and powers are set out in primary legislation, which for PAs and AAs is principally the AAPAO.
- 7 **Schedule 1, paragraph 3(1)(a) and (b)** sets out that we have the objective of promoting and maintaining public confidence in, and proper professional standards and conduct for the PA and AA professions, in addition to the overarching objective of the protection of the public as set out in the Act²².
- 8 **Schedule 1, paragraph 3(1)(d)** requires us to co-operate (where appropriate and practicable), with *‘persons concerned with the employment (whether or not under a contract of service), education or training of associates or the services they provide’*. This duty is in addition to our obligations around co-operation in the Act²³.
- 9 **Schedule 3, paragraph 2** requires us to notify applicants, registrants, appellants and, in some circumstances²⁴, third parties of decisions we’ve taken about applications for registration, about registration itself, and appeals decisions made by internal appeals panels²⁵.
- 10 **Schedule 4, paragraph 9** requires us to make rules on notifications, covering both the notification of the opportunity to make representations²⁶, and the notifications referred to above.
- 11 We’re required to discharge our functions in a way which is transparent, accountable, proportionate, and consistent²⁷. These principles underpin the way that we develop and deliver our regulatory activities, and align with our five [core organisational values](#) and with the government’s [principles of better regulation](#). Notifying relevant parties of actions we’re considering or have taken, as well as options available to those parties in relation to those actions, is a key part of our approach to meeting this requirement.

²² Section 1(1A).

²³ Section 1(1A) and (1B)(a) of and paragraph 9A(1)(b)) of Schedule 1 to the Act, which requires co-operation with public bodies or persons concerned with the: employment of provisionally or fully registered medical practitioners; education or training of medical practitioners or other health care professionals; regulation of, or the co-ordination of the regulation of other health or social care professionals; regulation of health services provision, supervision, or management of health services.

²⁴ Decisions under the following articles: 7 and 9(2)(b); revisions under article 15; panel decisions under article 16(5); removals under article 9(1)(c).

²⁵ We’re not required to issue notifications relating to appeals determined by courts.

²⁶ Under article 18; for the purposes of this policy primarily relating to revisions being considered under article 15.

²⁷ Schedule 1, paragraph 3(1).

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- 12** Our aim is to ensure that relevant parties receive timely and relevant information, as well as to provide clarity about how they may respond to the information we provide. The framework for our approach to notifications and representations is set out in the rules we've made under the AAPAO:
- [The General Medical Council \(Registration\) \(Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates\) Rules 2024](#)
 - [The General Medical Council \(Internal Appeals\) \(Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates\) Rules 2024](#)
 - [The General Medical Council \(Revision of Decisions\) \(Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates\) Rules 2024](#)
- 13** These rules supplement the AAPAO's provisions, and describe our registration, revision, and appeals processes.
- 14** The rules set out how we'll send notifications, describing how and when we'll provide information to relevant parties and how they can respond. Further information on how notifications work in practice is set out in operational guidance. We'll publish the rules²⁸ as well as relevant guidance for applicants setting out the timeframes in which they'll need to send us information and service level expectations²⁹.
- 15** As well as providing information about actions we're considering or have taken, notifications also set out options available to relevant parties relating to those actions. We'll give specific details of what's expected of the relevant party, including:
- the nature of the proceedings to which the notification refers
 - timescales and methods for responding
 - any consequences of failing to respond, or any decisions we may take in the absence of a response
 - the right to be represented and to make representations, where relevant.
- 16** In addition, our rules provide information about the format of notifications, covering:
- their content
 - information to be provided with them

²⁸ Publication is a requirement of schedule 3, paragraph 5(1)(a).

²⁹ Not required by the AAPAO but a discretionary power.

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- the period within which they must be given
 - their service
 - the date on which they're deemed to have been received.

When will we send notifications?

- 17** Our rules set out the timescales within which we'll notify relevant parties of actions we're considering or have taken, which will vary in different circumstances.
- 18** Where there's no public protection risk requiring immediate action, we'll notify registrants of the action we're proposing to take, and our reasons for doing so before we take it. We'll give registrants clear information about what they're expected to do in response to our notifications and set out their right to make written representations (where appropriate), with timescales for responding.
- 19** Our notifications will also confirm any consequences for failing to respond to or act on the notification, such as proposed removals from the register³⁰. In some circumstances we'll confirm that the proposed action can be prevented if the associate takes specific actions themselves on receipt of the notification – such as payment of an outstanding registration fee or updating their means of contact.
- 20** In cases of automatic removals³¹, where there's a clear public protection reason to take immediate action to remove an associate's entry from the register, notification will take place after this has happened. We'll notify affected associates of the removal itself and their appeal rights where appropriate, as well as notifying any employer or contracting body, and any regulatory body with which they're registered, within specified timescales³².

What information will we notify to relevant parties?

- 21** We have a duty relating to notification requirements and set out below is the information we'll notify to relevant parties.

³⁰ Under article 9(2).

³¹ Under article 9(1)(c).

³² Currently as soon as reasonably practicable but no more than five business days beginning with the day on which the entry is removed for associates; within 10 business days for employers and regulatory bodies.

Applicants and registrants

- 22** We'll notify the following decisions to applicants and registrants as they're directly affected by them.
- **Registration and re-entry decisions**³³ - to the person who applied for registration or re-entry.
 - **Decisions to remove a registrant's entry from the register**³⁴ - to the registrant whose entry is removed.
- 23** We'll also notify applicants or registrants that they may apply to us for permission to appeal our decisions, either to an internal appeal panel³⁵ or to a court³⁶.

Other relevant parties

- 24** In addition to notifying the person directly affected by our decisions, we'll notify certain decisions / actions to other relevant parties.

Decision	Notification to
Revised decisions ³⁷	Anyone who was originally notified of the decision that we've revised.
Decisions relating to internal appeals.	The person applying for permission to appeal.
An internal appeal panel's determination of an appeal.	The parties to the appeal.
A decision to remove an associate's entry from the register due to conviction for a listed offence ³⁸ , including the decision's effective date.	Anybody the affected registrant is employed by, or who has an arrangement with the affected registrant, to provide services as an associate, or in relation to such services.

³³ Made under article 6 (1) to (3) of the AAPAO and the General Medical Council (Registration) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

³⁴ Under article 9(2).

³⁵ Under article 16.

³⁶ Under article 17 to the County court, Court of Session (in Scotland), or High Court of Justice (in Northern Ireland, Wales, and England), dependent on both the decision being appealed and the geographical location of the appellant.

³⁷ Under article 15.

³⁸ Removal of entry under article 9(1)(c) due to conviction for offence listed in Schedule 2.

	Anybody the affected registrant is employed by, or who has an arrangement with the affected registrant, to provide services as an associate, or in relation to such services.
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Content of notifications

- 25 The information we provide with notifications will vary, depending on the circumstances requiring the notifications. We'll always confirm the outcome of decisions to applicants, registrants, and appellants, and we'll provide our reasons for making those decisions.
- 26 In some cases, such as where we grant an application, we won't provide our reasons for our decision, as we consider that notifying the applicant that we've granted their application is sufficient information.

Getting onto the register – first registration and re-entry applications

Qualification assessment

- 27 Before they can sit pre-registration assessment examinations³⁹ and apply for registration international PA and AA first registration applicants will need to have their qualification assessed by us, to determine whether it's an acceptable qualification for practising as an associate in the UK⁴⁰.
- 28 When we've assessed a qualification for acceptability, we'll notify the applicant of the outcome of our assessment, within a defined period set out in our rules. Where we decide not to accept a qualification for the purposes of registration, we'll provide our full reasons to the applicant with the notification of the outcome.

³⁹ The PA Registration Assessment and AA Registration Assessment for PAs and AAs respectively.

⁴⁰ Under article 4(1)(c).

Application using a specified state qualification

29 Where we assess a specified state qualification, we'll do so in accordance with the relevant legislation⁴¹. We'll notify the applicant of our decision within four months of the date of receipt of the complete application.

Application assessment

30 When we're assessing registration and re-entry applications, we may make enquiries and request further information to assist in our decision making. We'll provide applicants with a copy of any information we receive which is relevant to our consideration of whether their fitness to practise as an associate may be impaired, and we'll notify them that they may make written representations in response before we make a formal decision on their application.

Registration and re-entry application decisions

31 Where we grant registration or re-entry to the register we'll notify the applicant of our decision, confirming:

- that we've granted registration
- their GMC number
- the date their registration starts.

32 Where we refuse an application for registration or re-entry we'll notify the applicant of our decision, but we'll also provide:

- our reasons for the decision
- details of the applicant's right to seek permission to appeal the decision⁴².

33 Where an applicant doesn't provide the information and declarations required for a complete application, we may refuse to make a decision on their application and close it. In these circumstances we'll notify the applicant that we've closed their application and provide our reasons for doing so.

⁴¹ Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Implementation of International Recognition Agreements (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

⁴² Under article 16.

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- 34** Applicants for re-entry will need to demonstrate that their fitness to practise isn't impaired⁴³ where the reason for their removal from the register was because of a final measure removal, or in the following circumstances.
- They had a final measure of conditions or suspension in place at the time their entry was removed from the register.
 - They had an unresolved fitness to practise concern at the time their entry was removed from the register.
 - A concern has been raised about their fitness to practise since the date their entry was removed from the register.
 - They were automatically removed from the register for being convicted of a listed offence, including where the conviction has been quashed.
 - They had their entry removed from the register on the basis that it was procured fraudulently.
- 35** All re-entry applications following final measure removal will be referred to an associates tribunal⁴⁴. Following the tribunal's decision on the applicant's fitness to practise, we'll make a decision on the registration application itself, taking the tribunal's decision into account alongside the other required evidence and information.
- 36** Before making a re-entry decision, we'll provide the applicant with a copy of any information relevant to our consideration of their fitness to practise, where applicable, and notify them that:
- they have a right to make written representations, within a specified period⁴⁵
 - if they fail to provide written representations, we may make a decision on their application based on the available information.
- 37** Whether we've made a decision on the application or we've refused to make a decision and closed the application instead, we'll notify the applicant of the decision. Where we close an application, we'll provide our reasons for doing so.

⁴³ Consideration is by associates tribunal for final measure removals, and by the Registrar for the other circumstances set out at paragraph 26.

⁴⁴ Under Rule 44 of the General Medical Council (Fitness to Practise) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

⁴⁵ Currently 28 days beginning with the day on which the notification is served.

38 Where we refuse an application we'll provide our refusal reasons, confirm any limitation on making a further application (where relevant) and provide details of the applicant's right to appeal the refusal decision⁴⁶.

Removal from the register

39 An associate's register entry can only be removed for the reasons outlined in the AAPAO and rules. We're required to remove entries⁴⁷ where:

- we're satisfied that an associate has died
- a fitness to practise tribunal has imposed a final measure on an associate's entry
- an associate has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule 2 of the AAPAO.

40 Additionally, we have discretion to remove entries⁴⁸ where:

- we determine that an associate was granted registration on the basis that they'd acted fraudulently
- we granted registration in error
- an associate asks us to remove their entry
- an associate hasn't complied with particular requirements of our fitness to practise processes ie undertaking a required assessment or providing information that we've requested
- an associate hasn't maintained the requirements of holding registration, including paying their annual fee, holding adequate and appropriate insurance and / or indemnity cover, or maintaining effective contact details.

41 This policy relates only to notifications relating to registration, which means that final measure removals aren't covered.

⁴⁶ To a panel or a court, under article 16 and article 17(1) respectively.

⁴⁷ Under article 9(1).

⁴⁸ Under article 9(2).

Automatic removal

- 42** When an associate has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule 2 of the AAPAO, we're required to remove their register entry as soon as is reasonably practicable. This is known as automatic removal.
- 43** We'll notify the former registrant of their removal, as soon as reasonably practicable after removal⁴⁹. Our notification will include:
- reasons for the removal
 - the date the removal is effective
 - the date on which notification of the removal is served, and
 - details of their right of appeal⁵⁰.
- 44** Within 10 business days of removal, we'll notify details of the removal and its effective date to (where known), any:
- person by whom the former registrant is employed, or with whom they have an arrangement, to provide services as an associate, or in respect of such services, and
 - regulatory body with which the former registrant is registered.

Death removal

- 45** When we remove an entry from the register because an associate has died, we won't usually need to make any notifications. There may be circumstances, however, when we decide to notify third parties such as employing organisations, where we consider doing so is in the public interest. For example, as a fraud prevention measure.

Voluntary removal

- 46** Where we grant an associate's application for voluntary removal from the register, we'll notify them of the outcome. In some circumstances we may refer a voluntary removal application to a case examiner or an associates tribunal for consideration.

⁴⁹ Within a period of five business days beginning with the day on which their entry is removed.

⁵⁰ To a court under article 17(1) of the AAPAO.

47 In both scenarios, we'll notify the associate of the referral with our reasons for it, as well as notifying them of the case examiner or tribunal's decision. Our notification will confirm whether the application has been:

- **granted** - and that the removal will take effect on the day on which it's served, or
- **refused** - with reasons for that decision, and the associate's right to seek permission to appeal.

48 When we've referred a voluntary removal application to an associate's tribunal, there may be circumstances when we decide to withdraw that referral. If we withdraw a referral, we'll notify the associate of our decision to withdraw, and that their application will be considered by a case examiner instead.

Other removals

49 Before we make a removal decision, we'll notify the associate:

- of our intention to remove their register entry
- of the reasons for the proposed removal
- that they may make representations in writing on the proposed removal within a specified time period, where applicable
- of the information they must provide, or steps they must take, in response⁵¹, in order not to be removed
- that where they provide information, or take steps as above, that we won't remove their register entry
- that if they don't make representations, a decision will be made on whether to remove their register entry.

50 Our notification will confirm the time period that the associate will have to either make representations, provide information, or take appropriate steps.

51 After this period, if we decide to remove a register entry, we'll notify the former registrant of our decision including:

- reasons for the decision

⁵¹ As opposed to representations about the proposed removal. For example: confirmation they have in force an appropriate and adequate indemnity arrangement, insurance policy or combination, or evidence of their indemnity arrangement, insurance policy or combination in force; up-to-date contact details; payment of the required fee.

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- confirmation that the removal takes effect on the day on which the notification is served on them, and
 - details of their right to appeal the removal decision.

52 If we decide not to remove a register entry, we'll notify the associate of this outcome, and we'll provide our reasons for not removing their entry. For ineffective means of contact removals, we'll send this notification in writing to the associate at their last known postal or email address.

Revisions

53 Revision is the process of changing a decision. We may⁵² revise decisions and we've set out in rules⁵³ which decisions are revisable. Our revisions policy sets out the process for considering revisions.

54 Where we're considering whether to revise a decision, we may choose to notify the person to whom the decision relates that they may make written representations, confirming:

- the decision which we're proposing to revise
- the date that representations must be received
- that failure to provide representations by the specified date doesn't affect our power to revise the decision.

55 We'll seek representations from the person to whom the decision relates where we're considering a revision outside the internal appeal process, as they may not be aware that we're considering revising a decision related to them.

56 When we revise a decision, we'll notify the person to whom the decision relates of the following information:

- the revised decision
- the date from which the revised decision is effective
- the reasons for the revised decision
- where the decision is appealable, that they may appeal the revised decision.

⁵² Under article 15.

⁵³ The General Medical Council (Revision of Decisions) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

57 We'll also notify any other person who was notified of the original decision (ie the decision which we've revised), of the:

- revised decision
- date from which the revised decision is effective.

Appeals

58 Applicants and associates have the right to appeal decisions⁵⁴. Our rules⁵⁵ set out the notification requirements relating to appeals.

Appeal case management

59 As part of the appeal process, we must decide whether to:

- **grant** permission to appeal, or
- **refuse** permission to appeal, or
- **revise** the decision being appealed, where the decision is a revisable decision under our rules⁵⁶.

60 Where we grant permission to appeal, we'll notify the appellant that the appeal will proceed. We'll also either notify the parties to the appeal that standard directions apply (and provide a copy of those directions to the parties as soon as reasonably practicable) or refer the appeal to an Internal Appeal Manager (IAM) to issue directions. The IAM will notify the parties and offer them the opportunity to provide submissions about the directions to be made.

61 Where the IAM lists an appeal case management meeting we'll give the appellant at least seven days' notice of the date and time of the meeting unless the parties agree otherwise. If the IAM issues directions, they'll provide a record of those directions to the parties as soon as reasonably practicable.

62 Where we grant permission to appeal, we may still revise the decision under appeal if the appeal hasn't concluded. In both scenarios, in addition to notifying the appellant of our

⁵⁴ As set out in articles 16 and 17 of the AAPAO and The General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

⁵⁵ The General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

⁵⁶ The General Medical Council (Revision of Decisions) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

decision, we'll also set out our reasons for revising the decision. When we revise the decision under appeal at the permission to appeal stage, the appeal will end.

- 63** Where we refuse permission to appeal, we'll set out our reasons for refusing permission and notify the appellant of their right to appeal to court⁵⁷.
- 64** In all these scenarios, we'll send notifications to relevant parties, and notify the appellant of our decision, within a specified time period⁵⁸ set out in our rules.

Failure to comply with rules or directions

- 65** If a party to an appeal doesn't comply with the relevant rules⁵⁹, or a direction made under those rules, an appeal panel may draw adverse inferences, or refuse to admit evidence, where the failure relates to that evidence. Before doing this, for written appeals only, the panel will notify the parties that they may have a reasonable opportunity to make representations about the alleged failure.

Postponements

- 66** After deciding to postpone a hearing, the IAM will notify the parties of their decision and for:
- **oral hearings** - will notify the date, time, and venue of the postponed hearing or confirm that it will be conducted using audio or video conferencing facilities
 - **written appeals** - will notify the date on which the appeal panel will meet to determine the appeal.

Adjournments

- 67** Where an oral appeal hearing has commenced or an appeal panel has met to determine a written appeal, the panel considering the appeal may adjourn the hearing or meeting on its own initiative or on the application of a party to the proceedings.
- 68** Before making an adjournment decision the appeal panel must (for an oral hearing) or may (for a written appeal) give the parties a reasonable opportunity to make representations.
- 69** After deciding to adjourn a hearing, we'll notify the parties of their decision and for:

⁵⁷ Under article 17.

⁵⁸ Currently five business days beginning with the day on which the decision is made.

⁵⁹ The General Medical Council (Internal Appeals) (Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates) Rules 2024.

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- **oral hearings** - will notify the date, time and venue of the adjourned hearing
 - **written appeals** - will notify the date on which the appeal panel will meet to determine the appeal.

Evidence

70 An appeal panel may admit any evidence they consider fair and relevant to the case before them, whether or not that evidence would be admissible in a court of law. A party to the appeal may serve notice on the other party to produce the original or a copy of a document that is:

- relevant to the appeal, and
- alleged to be in the possession, ownership, or control of that party.

Written and oral appeals

71 For both written and oral appeals, we'll notify the appellant that the appeal panel will meet, or an oral hearing will be held, to determine their appeal, no later than 28 days before the date of the panel's meeting or hearing, unless:

- we consider it's the interests of justice for the notice period to be less than 28 days, or
- the appellant consents to it being less than 28 days.

72 For oral hearings, our notification to the appellant will include details of:

- the date and time of the hearing
- the venue of the hearing, or confirmation that the hearing is to be conducted using audio or video conferencing facilities
- their right to attend the hearing
- their right to be represented at the hearing
- the power of the appeal panel to proceed in their absence
- their right to call witnesses in support of their appeal, provided the evidence of any witness is limited to the issues on appeal
- their right to submit evidence to the appeal panel
- their right to make oral and written submissions to the appeal panel

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- the appeal panel's disposal powers in respect of the appeal.

73 We'll also provide to the appellant, for:

- **both written and oral appeals** - copies of any documents which we intend to rely on, in accordance with any directions issued by the IAM
- **oral appeals** - signed witness statements containing a statement of truth of any witness on whose evidence we intend to rely.

Witnesses

74 Our rules set out the circumstances in which witnesses may give evidence, including whether:

- they may give evidence remotely
- their identity may be revealed in public
- they may be treated as vulnerable.

75 When considering these issues the IAM or appeal panel will notify the parties and give them an opportunity to make representations.

Procedure at an oral appeal hearing

76 During an oral appeal hearing the appeal panel may request clarification, further information or reports from either party or from any other person in respect of any matter which in its opinion is relevant to the appeal. This information will be provided to the parties who'll be given a reasonable opportunity to comment.

Appeal panel decisions

77 An appeal panel must determine an appeal within a period specified in the rules⁶⁰, and must:

- record its decision, and reasons for it, in writing, and
- provide a copy to us.

78 We'll notify the appellant of the appeal panel's decision within a period specified in the rules⁶¹, and our notification will include:

⁶⁰ Currently within five business days of the conclusion of their consideration of the appeal.

⁶¹ Currently within a period of five business days beginning with the day on which we receive a copy of the decision.

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- a copy of the appeal panel's decision and reasons
 - details of the appellant's right to appeal to the court, where applicable.

Legal advice on questions of law

79 For oral and written appeals, a legally qualified person may give advice on a question of law. Where this advice is given in the absence of the parties in oral appeals, and for all written appeals, the legally qualified person must give a written statement of the advice and any question which led to the advice to:

- each party who attended the hearing, for oral appeals
- all parties, for written appeals.

80 For oral appeals, we'll also provide a copy of the record of advice to a party who didn't attend the hearing, where requested.

81 Where an appeal panel doesn't accept the legally qualified person's advice, they must give a written statement of the advice, any question which led to the advice, the decision not to accept the advice, and the reasons for that decision must be given to:

- each party who attended the hearing, for oral appeals
- each party, for written appeals.

Validity of proceedings

82 We may substitute an appeal panel member, including appointing a new chair, where an appeal panel member or chair:

- is no longer on our list of appeal panel members and chairs
- becomes unavailable, or
- recuses themselves.

83 In these circumstances, where we're considering substitution, we'll notify the parties and invite and consider submissions from them. Where the question of recusal of an appeal panel member or chair arises during a hearing the appeal panel will invite and consider submissions from the parties.

How will we send notifications?

84 Our rules provide detail on how we'll send notifications, by:

- describing the methods we'll use to send notifications
- setting out when notifications are deemed to have been served on recipients
- clarifying how we'll establish notifications have been served (where proof of service is necessary).

Applicants, associates and / or appellants

85 We'll usually send notifications using one or more of the following methods.

- Personal service by handing it to them.
- First class post, or a registered next day postal service, to:
 - their registered address
 - another address which they've provided to us, or
 - their last known address, if it appears that a notification sent there is more likely to reach them.
- Leaving it at an address they've provided to us.
- By email to an email address they've provided to us for the purpose of communicating with them.
- Placing it on their GMC Online account where they've agreed to accept communications from us via the account.
- First class post or email to the address of a solicitor, professional body, or trade union where they've agreed to that address being used for communications.

Third parties

86 We'll usually serve notifications to third parties using one or more of the following methods.

- Personal service by handing it to the person.
- First or second class post, or a registered next day postal service.
- Leaving it at an address the person has provided to us.

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- Email.
 - Placing it on an online account with us where the person has agreed to accept communications from us via the account.

Service of notifications

87 A notification / notice is considered to have been served as follows.

- On the day it was served if personal service was used.
- Two days after the date it was sent where it was sent by first class post.
- Four days after the date it was sent where it was sent by second class post.
- The day after the date it was sent where it was sent by a next day delivery service.
- The day it was left, where it was left at an address provided to us.
- On the day it was sent where it was sent by email before 4pm or, if later, on the next day.
- On the day it was placed on an online account with us where this was done before 4pm or, if later, on the next day.

88 Where we require proof of service of notifications, we may get it from the following.

- A signed statement from any person serving the notice confirming it was delivered, sent to, or left at, an address.
- Confirmation of posting issued by or on behalf of the Post Office or other postal operator or delivery service.
- Confirmation of delivery by email.
- A confirmation showing the notice has been placed on the applicant's / associate's / appellant's / other recipient's online account.

Exceptional circumstances

89 Although this policy sets out the circumstances which will usually apply to notifications, there may be exceptional circumstances when we consider it appropriate or necessary to approach notifications differently. For example where strict application of the policy might

unfairly disadvantage certain applicants, registrants, or appellants. In these situations, we'll explain clearly to relevant parties the reasons for our approach.

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