**Assessment and Management of Delayed Examination Progress**

**Introduction.**

In medical training failure to progress in programme due to failure in mandatory examinations is a common reason for delayed training progress. Examination failure is stressful for the trainee as there are potentially high stakes of longer time in or release from training. Examination failure can also be expensive for NHS Scotland when training time needs to be extended. Examination success is a readily measured metric of educational performance which can be compared between programmes, regions and deaneries and UK nations.

It is commonly assumed that as all doctors have passed many examinations at undergraduate level they must be skilled in study and examination techniques. However, for many trainees this will be the first experience of balancing study with a busy and demanding job. Previously successful study methods may have become inadequate and examination more demanding and requiring of deeper knowledge and more critical thinking.

Many exam issues will be remediable with support from the local training team and relate to lack of preparation or poor study technique and focus. Some trainees may also struggle with exams due to issues such as situation specific or general anxiety, dyslexia, dyspraxia or memory disorder.

***Dyslexia Screening***

After 2 unsuccessful attempts at GP examination all GP TPDs in Scotland will guide trainees to a self-referral for self-funded assessment through Dyslexia Scotland ([http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk](http://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/)). If initial screening suggests that full assessment is recommended this should be accessed through HR via a request for formal testing on which to base reasonable adjustments both to the external RCGP exams and to the workplace. NES Medical Directorate will pay for such assessments for trainees currently employed by NES and will be required to fund any reasonable adjustments/ equipment recommended as a result of the assessment.

**Suggested Process following examination failure**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Single examination failure | 2 examination failures | Examination failure requiring additional time |
| Meet with ES | Meet with ES | Meet with TPDAssign case manager PSU |
| ES to follow checklist for post examination review (appendix 1) | Dyslexia screen if written component | Dyslexia screen if not done |
|  | Offer examination support if meets criteria | Offer examination support if meets criteria |

Appendix 1

**Checklist for Post Examination Failure Review Meeting**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Knowledge |  |
| Is trainee aware of curriculum? |  |
| Has curriculum being covered? |  |
| Is trainee getting to recommended teaching? |  |
| Have you discussed any formal feedback from exam itself? |  |
| Has trainee attended mock exam, used example exam or past papers as available? |  |
| Are there any exam specific resources or courses suitable? |  |
|  |  |
| Health |  |
| Are there health issues/disability impacting exam or preparation? |  |
| Was there disabling anxiety during examination? |  |
| Has the trainee been diagnosed with dyslexia? |  |
|  |  |
| Study |  |
| Does trainee have a written study plan? |  |
| Are they taking regular breaks during study? |  |
| Are they taking exercise/ having physical activity (eg walks)? |  |
| Has trainee identified own study style? |  |
| Are they studying in a suitable environment? |  |
| Do they have a non- work outside interest/ stress reduction strategy? |  |
|  |  |
| Agreed Action |  |
| When is a realistic time to sit exam again and the chance to pass? |  |
| External Resources Signposted |  |