

# Refunds Policy 2020

<b>Version number:</b> 1.0	<b>Approved by:</b>
<b>Effective from:</b> February 2020	<b>Date of review:</b>
<b>Owner:</b> Samantha Bache, Head of Finance and Procurement	

## **Summary of policy**

The General Dental Council (GDC) will reimburse, in limited cases, fees paid in relation to:

- Overseas Registration Examination (ORE).
- Registration Application fees

## **Aim**

This policy is designed to provide a refunds framework within which each operational area will operate. The detailed operational area refund policies are provided as appendices to this policy.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to fees received from Candidates applying to sit the ORE and registration applicants. It is expected that each operational area will review its own detailed policy at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

Finance are responsible for the processing of any approved refunds in a timely manner.

## **Further information**

If you have any questions relating to this policy, please contact:

- Jon Harris, Head of Registration Operations (ORE)
- Sidonie Francis, Head of Registration (Registration Application Fees)
- Samantha Bache, Head of Finance and Procurement (refund processing)
- Gurvinder Soomal, Executive Director, Registration and Corporate Resources

# Refunds

Refunds are expected to be processed in limited circumstances only. However, we do recognise that there will be circumstances where allowing a refund is the right thing to do.

## Allowable circumstances

Every specific operational area's refund policy sets out the specific circumstances in which a refund will be considered admissible. Every refund policy includes an allowance for the occurrence of exceptional circumstances.

We define exceptional circumstances as circumstances that are severe, unforeseen and outside the control of the candidate/applicant.

## Application for a refund

Applications for refunds should be made by the candidate/applicant in writing to the relevant operational area, setting out a statement of why they believe a refund should be allowable.

In the case of requesting a refund under exceptional circumstances, the candidate/applicant must also provide corroborating evidence to demonstrate their exceptional circumstance.

Applications for refunds are assessed on a case by case basis.

## Authorisation of a refund

Authorisation of a refund is the responsibility of the relevant operational area. On approval of any refund request, the operational area should make a request to Finance to process the refund.

The Executive Director Registration and Corporate Resources has discretion to authorise a refund in exceptional circumstances, acting on behalf of the Registrar.

## Processing of refund

Refund requests received in Finance will be processed according to the original payment route.

Payment made by credit/debit card	Refund processed to credit/debit card used in the original transaction
Payment made by cheque	Refund processed by issue of cheque
Payment made by Direct Debit/BACS	Refund processed by BACs

Wherever possible, we aim to process refunds within 7 days of receipt into the Finance Team.

## Appendix 1 – Refund policy - Overseas Registration Examination (ORE)

Refunds are not normally offered to candidates. This is because once the GDC has submitted your name to the exam board the GDC is liable for your exam fee and does not consider it appropriate for that cost to be funded from the Annual Retention Fee paid by registrants. The cost of the place will remain the liability of the withdrawing candidate whatever stage they withdraw from the examination.

We only offer refunds in the two circumstances that are outlined below. There is no guarantee if you submit a request for refund in line with the below circumstance that you will be granted a refund.

The GDC only offers refunds in the following circumstances:

- (1) when a candidate withdraws from the examination prior to their name being submitted to the exam board (circa 5 weeks before the exam date), and the GDC can replace them with another candidate. Please note, there is no guarantee that we will be able to find another candidate to take your place and if we cannot, for whatever reason, we will be unable to offer a refund.
- (2) in exceptional circumstances. The GDC defines exceptional circumstances as circumstances that are severe, unforeseen and outside the control of the candidate e.g. serious illness, death of a close family member.

Being unable to obtain a visa does not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they are permitted to be in the UK to take the examination before they book a place.

Applications for a refund due to exceptional extenuating circumstances will be assessed on a case by case basis. A candidate can only apply once for a refund per examination.

### Applying for Refunds

In circumstance (1), you should contact the GDC to see if they can replace you and submit the withdrawal and refund form by email on that day. If you delay and do not submit the forms your name may be submitted to the exam board and your fee will not be refunded. As soon as your name is submitted to the exam board, we are unable to refund any fees. In circumstance (1) you do not need to provide corroborating evidence. Please note, there is no guarantee that we will be able to replace you for the exam, in which case you will remain liable for the entire exam fee.

In circumstance (2), If the candidate believes they are eligible for a refund due to exceptional circumstances they will need to provide the GDC with the following documentation:

- A letter outlining the reason for their refund request.
- A completed ORE Refund Form (located at the end of this policy document).
- Corroborating evidence to demonstrate their extenuating circumstances. For example:

- Medical or Death Certificates. This must demonstrate why the candidate cannot sit on the days of the exam.
- Visa documentation or evidence demonstrating a valid visa could have been obtained.
- Evidence of travel (e.g. flight details) and accommodation arrangements for the duration of the examination.

Upon receipt of the documents, the examinations team will assess whether the candidate is eligible for a refund. The decision for a refund will be considered based on the evidence provided at the time of the request. You will not be given the opportunity to provide further evidence or to reapply for the refund. Therefore, you must make sure you provide all your corroborating evidence when you apply for a refund.

The ORE Refund Form, along with your evidence should be emailed to [examinations@gdc-uk.org](mailto:examinations@gdc-uk.org)

Candidates should note that a decision will be made up to 10 working days of receipt of the request, and if granted, refunds can take up to 3 weeks to process. Refunds requests submitted after the exam has taken place may not be considered.

Contact details:      Examinations Team, General Dental Council  
                                 1 Colmore Square  
                                 Birmingham B4 6AJ  
                                 or Email: [examinations@gdc-uk.org](mailto:examinations@gdc-uk.org)

## Appendix 2 – Refund policy - Registration application fees

The application fee is made up of two elements: a processing fee and an assessment fee. Refunds are not normally provided for application fees. This is because the fee covers the cost of processing applications, which is incurred by the GDC even if your application is unsuccessful.

### Processing Fee

As the Processing Fee covers the cost of basic application processing, a refund will only be issued in the following circumstance:

- (1) an applicant completes an incorrect application type submission, which is identified before any processing has commenced.

### Assessment Fee

The GDC will only refund an assessment fee in limited circumstances. If you consider such circumstances apply to your case, you may submit a request as detailed below, which will be considered by the GDC on a case by case basis. For the avoidance of doubt, submission of a refund request does not guarantee that you will be granted a refund.

We only offer refunds in respect of the assessment fee, under the following circumstances:

- (1) in exceptional circumstances. The GDC defines exceptional circumstances as those that are severe, unforeseen and outside the control of the applicant; or
- (2) if it is immediately clear to the GDC Registration Casework Team that an application will not be successful prior to any assessment work having commenced; or
- (3) if an applicant requests a refund due to an incorrect application type submission, before any processing has commenced.

### Applying for Refunds

If you consider that you fall into the above categories, you will need to provide the GDC with the following documentation:

- A statement outlining the reason for your refund request.
- Independent corroborating evidence to demonstrate your exceptional circumstances.

Upon receipt of your documentation, the registration team will assess if you are eligible for a refund. The decision for a refund will be considered based on the evidence provided at the time of the request. You will not be given the opportunity to provide further evidence or to reapply for the refund. Therefore, you must make sure you provide all your corroborating evidence when you apply for a refund.

Contact details:      Registration Casework, General Dental Council  
1 Colmore Square  
Birmingham B4 6AJ  
or Email: [customerservices@gdc-uk.org](mailto:customerservices@gdc-uk.org)