



## **“Under Review” Scores**

A systematic review of Invigilators’ irregularity reports and data forensic analysis procedures will be applied routinely, as well as in response to particular information, to identify scores that may be subsequently classified as irregular. These scores will be deemed “*Under Review*” if the examination results cannot be certified as representing a valid measure of a candidate's competence in the domains assessed by the examination. Aberrancies in performance for which there is no reasonable and satisfactory explanation result in scores being classified as irregular and subject to review. An annotation to that effect will be entered on the online results by ID number report on the NDHCB Website.

Classification of scores as “under review” does not automatically imply any inappropriate behaviour by a candidate and irregular behaviour is not the only basis upon which scores may be invalidated.

The following procedures apply to instances in which:

- a) The results of appropriate data forensic analysis identify an aberrancy in performance, i.e., indicate that a score does not or may not represent a reasonable assessment of a candidate's knowledge or competence sampled by the examination. Such forensic analysis include, but are not limited to, analysis which indicates that:
  - i. the pattern of scores for a given candidate is markedly non uniform and one or more section scores for the candidate is below the passing level;
  - ii. the current scores for a given candidate show an unexpectedly large increase over the candidate's most recent prior scores on the same exam; or
  - iii. the degree of agreement that is observed between the wrong answers given by two or more candidates is unusually high as compared with the degree of agreement that would be expected to occur between randomly selected individuals drawn from a comparison group of candidates.
- b) The NDHCB is in possession of specific information to the effect that the candidate:
  - i. Cheated and/or breached the confidentiality/security of the exam or attempted to subvert the examination process;
  - ii. Engaged in misconduct or plagiarism;
  - iii. Failed to keep the exam content confidential, even after the exam. This may also include discussing the content with anyone who wrote the exam before the candidate, with the candidate or who has not written the exam yet;
  - iv. Used or was in possession of an electronic device (such as cell phones, cameras, pagers, I-Pods, etc) in the exam room;
  - v. Recorded or memorized exam questions with the intent to recreate parts of the exam for financial gain or not;
  - vi. Has obtained results that are believed to be invalid for any other reason.
- c) There is no evidence of errors in scoring.
- d) There is insufficient evidence available to conclude that the candidate's scores were distorted downward by factors under the control of the test administration entities.
- e) The candidate's total score on the current examination is at or above the passing level.

In such instances, the NDHCB will review any additional information available from examination records that may be helpful in explaining the aberrancies in performance and, if indicated and feasible, will conduct further investigation:

- a) In the context of non uniformity of performance, such further investigation might include review of Invigilators' reports to ascertain whether a variation in testing conditions had occurred during the test and review of any information obtained before or after the examination that might be relevant to the candidate's performance on the test.
- b) When indicated and feasible, the NDHCB will conduct, or arrange for the conduct of, additional analysis. Such analysis might include, for example, a handwriting analysis to ascertain whether impersonation might be a possible explanation for the aberrancies in performance observed. The results of additional analysis might also call for further investigation.
- c) The candidate involved will be notified of the basis for questioning the validity of scores and will be given the opportunity to submit information for presentation to the NDHCB.

If such investigation discloses that, in the judgment of the NDHCB, a clearly reasonable and satisfactory explanation for the aberrancies in the results has been obtained, the NDHCB will report the candidate's scores and no further action will be taken pursuant to these Procedures. If such investigation cannot be concluded until after the typical period for the reporting of scores, the candidate will be notified that the reporting of scores in question is being delayed pending further review and/or analysis.

The Executive Director will analyze the existing evidence to derive concise, supportable findings in the Investigation Report including:

- a) Those NDHCB policies and/or legal commitments the alleged incident or activities have violated;
- b) A description of the quantity and credibility of existing evidence;
- c) Conclusions stating whether the existing evidence supports one of the following findings:
  - i. One or more policies and/or legal commitments have been violated; or
  - ii. Additional investigation is needed to make a determination (if there is a strong possibility that additional investigation would produce important new evidence); or
  - iii. The existing evidence is insufficient to support the alleged violation.

If, at the conclusion of such investigation and the analysis of all available information, the NDHCB finds that a clearly reasonable and satisfactory explanation for the aberrancies in performance has not been disclosed, the NDHCB will cancel the scores for the candidate in question. If the scores have been reported, they will be revoked, and the candidate will be notified.

The Executive Director will then apply sanctions and/or remedies, depending on the seriousness of the incident and the nature and clarity of evidence, as follows:

- a) A written warning or notice of breach coupled with a cancellation of exam scores. This measure can include an opportunity to retest at a future regular examination administration date under either of the following conditions:
  - i. The initial (irregular) attempt is nullified (does not count as a "fail") and the candidate is allowed to retest at no additional cost; or
  - ii. The initial (irregular) attempt is counted as a "fail" and the candidate will have to pay the application fee to re-test
- b) Temporary ineligibility for testing for a period of 6 to 12 months;
- c) A permanent ineligibility for testing for the NDHCE;
- d) Referral to legal process.

*Notwithstanding the above, findings may be reported to the appropriate provincial or territorial dental hygiene regulatory authority and/or to the proper level of legal authority.*