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Saudi Commission for Health Specialties



The Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Matching System (SCHFS-MS) is a national function that provides a fair and objective application and matching system for SCFHS postgraduate training programs¹. ©2017-18

¹ SCHFS acknowledges adapting the matching guidelines from the Canadian Matching System (CaRMS) and the United States National Resident Matching Program (NRMP).



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Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Matching System Principles and Guidelines (SCFHS-MS)

The Match Algorithm

Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Matching System (SCHFS-MS) uses a unique algorithm to match applicants into postgraduate training programs throughout accredited training centers.

What information does the Match Algorithm use?

The Match Algorithm requires two kinds of data – (1) the number of **available positions**, or quota, for each program in the match and (2) **applicant and program** rank order lists (**ROLs**).

SCFHS in coordination with Accreditation Department and Specialty Local Supervisory Committees determine which programs participate in the match and assign a number of available positions (quota) to each participating program. ROLs are submitted by applicants and programs through SCFHS-MS online.

How does the Match Algorithm work?

The Match Algorithm compares applicant and program ROLs and matches applicants to programs based on both parties' stated preferences. In phase I of the matching, ROLs submitted by applicants indicate a list of **programs** they wish to train in ranked in their order of preference within specified **cities**. Then, nominations to enroll in phase II of the matching is based on the overall score attained in the Portfolio component. Portfolio is based on preset criteria. See Appendix 1 for a detailed description of criteria.

In phase II, ROLs submitted by programs indicate the order of preference for the list of applicants that were nominated to a specific specialty within a defined city. Applicants submit ROLs for preference of training centers. The final preferences of applicants and programs, as indicated in their ROLs, determine the match outcome.

The algorithm is “**applicant-proposing**”, meaning the preferences expressed on the rank order lists submitted by applicants, not programs, initiate placement into residency training. In this way, the algorithm provides applicants with their best possible outcome based on the ROL submitted. At the end of the matching process, each applicant has either been matched to the most preferred choice possible from their ROL or all choices submitted by the applicant have been exhausted and they have not been matched.

To make the matching algorithm work best for all, create your rank order list in order of your true preferences, not how you think you will match.



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Residency Match

The R-1 Residency Match (R-1 match) for entry level postgraduate positions is SCFHS main match. For the upcoming academic year (2018-2019) only one iteration will be offered. This iteration will undergo two phases and will include all graduating students and prior years graduates from health schools who meet the basic eligibility criteria and are not enrolled actively in postgraduate training position during the academic year of admission.

Phase I involves all eligible applicants. Each applicant inserts multiple specialty choices in SCFHS-MS. Each choice is linked to a specific city. At the end of phase-I, depending on postgraduate programs, successful applicants are nominated to a specific specialty paired to a city. Phase II involves applicants that successfully passed phase I and have been nominated to a specialty.



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Eligibility criteria for application

To apply in the R-match, you must be a health profession student or graduate who has obtained, or is in the process of obtaining, a degree in the match year from an institution that is accredited by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

Only applicants without previous postgraduate training or whom have not been registered in a postgraduate training program for at least one year are eligible to attain a position.



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Pre-Match timelines

SCFHS pre-match timelines provide a schedule of important dates for PGME offices and program directors to update their information in SCHFS-MS.

Updating PGME/Academic Affairs Directors:	January 1 - 28, 2018
Updating Program Quota:	January 1 - 28, 2018
Updating program directors by PGME/Academic Affairs offices:	January 14 - February 28, 2018



Match timelines

SCFHS match timelines provide a schedule of important dates to help you complete each phase of the application process in a timely fashion.

The most important deadline in the SCFHS schedule is the **rank order list deadline** – the date by which applicants must submit their ranked list of programs. Also, programs must submit their ranked list of applicants. If you miss this deadline, you will be automatically withdrawn from the match.

Application Period

Application period:	January 28 – February 15, 2018
Nomination Day:	March 25, 2018
Interview period:	March 27 – April 21, 2018
Program rank order list deadline:	April 26, 2018
PGME ranking approval deadline:	April 26, 2018
Applicant rank order list deadline:	April 26, 2018
Match Result Announcement:	May 27, 2018

*Please note that these dates are subject to change.

Applicants

Residency Match

January 28, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) KSA Time

SCFHS-MS opens

Application: January 28 – February 15, 2018

All applicants can log into SCFHS-MS and start their application on this period. Applicants are also able to start selecting programs they wish to apply to on SCFHS-MS and upload requested documents. See appendix 1 for portfolio submission guidelines and requirements

February 15, 2018 at 16:00 KSA Time

SCFHS-MS application closes

February 15, 2018 at 16:00 KSA Time to March 25, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) KSA Time

Applicants will not have access to their application during this time period.

March 25, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) KSA Time

Nomination Day (Phase I)

SCFHS-MS reopens on this day and nominated applicants now have access to the **program and city** they were nominated to.

Nominated applicants should attend **interviews** scheduled by the training centers of programs they were nominated for.

March 27 – April 21, 2018 at 15:00 KSA Time

National interview period

Interviews for nominees are conducted during this period. Programs are now able to begin creating their rank order lists.



April 26, 2018 at 15:00 KSA Time

Deadline: Program Rank order lists

Program Directors must have their rank order list submitted through SCFHS-MS by 15:00 KSA Time. This deadline is firm, as **no rank order lists can be submitted after this time.**

PGME/Academic affairs offices also are required to review and approve the ROLs submitted by program directors at their training centers through SCFHS-MS by 15:00 KSA Time.

April 26, 2018 at 15:00 KSA Time

Deadline: Applicant order lists and PGME ranking approval

Applicants must have their rank order list submitted through SCFHS-MS by 15:00 KSA Time. This deadline is firm, as **no rank order lists can be submitted after this time.**

May 27, 2018 at 12:00 (noon) KSA Time

Match Day

Match results for the 2018 will be available through SCFHS-MS.

** Please refer back to this timetable regularly, as dates are subject to change.*

Fees

All SCFHS-MS fees are listed in Saudi Riyals. Fees must be paid using SADAD, VISA or MasterCard within SCFHS-MS online.

Application Fee*	Free
One time, Portfolio Re-evaluation Administrative Fee	SAR 300.00



Withdrawing

You can withdraw from the match through SCFHS-MS until the rank order list deadline found in the applicant timetable. There are no exceptions to this deadline. Withdrawing from the match removes your application from all training centers. In other words, **you are no longer participating in the match.**

Interview schedule

Individual programs make all the decisions about when they interview based on the provided timeline. A program can initially screen all nominated candidates and does not necessarily interview all of them. If “nominees” are not selected for interview by the program, they are labeled “**rejected**” and account towards the pre-set rejection rate allowed for each program/city. If a candidate does not attend the interview he/she was invited to, he/she will be labeled “**no show**” by the program director.

Program office personnel arrange interviews directly with applicants. If you are invited for an interview, your invitation will come directly from the program. Invitations to interviews outside SCFHS offices are not tracked or recorded in any way by SCFHS. Interview invitations will most likely be sent by email, so make sure your inbox is set-up to receive bulk messages.



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APPLICANTS

Match Tips

Ranking for applicants

After your interviews, you must determine the order of preference for the training centers you have applied to by ranking them from most preferred to least preferred. Programs also rank their desired applicants in order of preference. These lists are called rank order lists (ROLs) and they are the only true determinants of a match outcome.

Important reminders and tips

When creating your rank order list, be sure to consider the following:

- The sequence of your rank order list should reflect your true personal preferences.
- Match results are binding. This means you must accept any program/city that you are matched with.
- Carefully evaluate all the programs/training centers you have applied to and rank them according to your preferred discipline(s) and location(s); do not include programs you are not interested in.
- Base ranking selections on your own preferences and not how you think a center will rank you.
- **Rank order lists** are the decision makers in the match – any conversations with programs with regards to mutual interest are not official, or binding, and should not affect your decisions.
- SCFHS will not accept transmission difficulties as a reason to extend the ROL deadline. **The deadline date and time is final.**
- Programs are not permitted to ask you questions about your rank intentions and you are able to decline answering such questions.



Interview guidelines

The interview process is a key step along the path to obtaining a training position.

Interview guidelines for applicants

The interview process can be stressful. Here are a few guidelines to help.

Your rights

All individuals have equal enrollment opportunities to training programs. This is not intended to prevent organizations from choosing candidates based on skills that are required for the position.

Interview guidelines

Keep the following guidelines in mind when preparing for your interviews:

- Postgraduate programs are not permitted to ask you questions about your rank intentions and you are able to decline answering such questions.
- During the interview, neither applicants nor program interviewers must ask the other to make a commitment as to how they intend to rank the other.
- Invitations to interviews, as well as other notices from programs, will likely come via email.
- If you decide not to attend a scheduled interview, you should contact the program in advance to cancel the appointment.

Sample questions

The questions you are asked during the interview process must respect your rights but are left entirely to programs' discretion. We have provided samples of appropriate and inappropriate questions to help you prepare for your interviews.

Examples of appropriate questions:

- How do you deal with problems when they arise?
- What are you looking for in terms of learning opportunities?
- What have you found to be your strengths and weaknesses?
- What has your experience been in working with people in authority?
- Do you have any ideas about how you learn best?
- What past experiences have you had that would suit you to undertake this training program?

Examples of inappropriate questions:

- What other programs did you apply to?
- Have you attended other interviews?
- Do you plan to rank our program?
- Where on your list will you rank our program?

Contract for Applicants

A. Background

The Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Matching System (SCFHS-MS) provides a fair and transparent application and matching program for entry into postgraduate training throughout accredited training centers.

This contract describes the respective rights and obligations of the applicants and SCFHS with respect to the matching program.

In consideration of the undertaking and conditions contained in this contract, the applicant and SCFHS agree as follows:

B. Rights and obligations of applicants

1. Applicant eligibility

An applicant is eligible to participate in the matching program if (s)he has successfully passed the affiliated Saudi Licensing Exam (SLE) or equivalent and is an intern enrolled in, or a graduate of a school accredited by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

Fulfilling the applicant eligibility requirements allows for participation in the match, but does not guarantee eligibility to all residency training positions participating in the match.

2. Fees

Application will be free for eligible candidates. Applicants who would like to have one time re-evaluation for their portfolio will be required to pay additional administrative fees (SR 300).

Accepted candidates in the SCFHS postgraduate programs for the academic year 2018-2019 will be required to pay training tuitions by August 6, 2018. Failure to do so will cancel acceptance and the training seat will be offered to applicants on waiting list. Payment of fees is by SADAD through the SCFHS-MS online payment server. **All fees paid to SCFHS-MS are NON-REFUNDABLE.**

3. Application

Successful applicants receiving a nomination after phase I must ensure that they accept the nomination before the interview period posted within the R-1 applicant timeline, or the applicant risks forfeiting participation in the SCFHS-MS and name not showing at training centers.

Once an application is submitted online, no changes to any documents or information can be made. When application period closes, no program preferences can be revisited for any reason.

4. Schedules and deadlines

An applicant shall submit all required information to SCFHS-MS in accordance with the R-1 applicant timeline established by SCFHS.



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An applicant is responsible to ensure the timely completion of application to SCFHS-MS. After application deadline, SCFHS will not accept any further applications.

5. Completeness and accuracy of information

An applicant is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the information submitted to SCFHS-MS.

SCFHS shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of information directly exchanged between applicants and training programs.

6. Consent

An applicant consents to the collection, use and disclosure of his or her personal information by SCFHS for the purpose of operating the matching program, including verification of credentials. An applicant also consents that his or her personal information may be disclosed to the postgraduate offices of the training program to which the applicant is nominated.

7. Withdrawal deadlines

An applicant who wishes to withdraw an application must withdraw the application **before the start of the interview period** provided in the SCFHS-MS R-1 applicant timeline.

8. Rank order lists

To participate in the matching program (phase II), an applicant shall (a) accept the nomination, (b) attend interviews in centers of nominations, and (c) submit a ROL electronically through SCFHS MS. If there is no submitted ROL before the announced deadline provided in the SCFHS-MS R-1 applicant timeline the applicant risks removal from the match and not receiving match result.

ROLs may only be submitted online. For greater certainty, ROLs may be entered in more than one session and may be modified multiple times prior to the ROL submission deadline. **An applicant is encouraged to finish this process as early as possible before the ROL submission deadline and prior to the peak utilization period when SCFHS-MS may be less accessible.**

SCFHS will not modify a submitted ROL or, if an applicant misses the ROL deadline, SCFHS will not submit a rank order list on the applicant's behalf.

9. Finalizing Enrollment

A matched applicant must meet all of the criteria to join the training program according to the timeline announced. **Training tuitions** will be due by the specified date (**August 6, 2018**) and **registration requirements** will be due by (**September 24, 2018**). Failure to meet the criteria set by the training center will result in the automatic release from the program and void the match contract.

10. Match commitment

A matched applicant shall be available to begin training in the program to which they are matched into by 1st of October 2018 (Commence of the training).

11. Restriction on persuasion

An applicant and a training program may express a high degree of interest in each other but may not make statements implying a commitment.

The following activities shall be considered as breaches of this contract and subject to penalties as described in sections 18 and 19:

- a. An applicant making any verbal or written contract for appointment to a training position prior to completion of the matching program; and
- b. An applicant requesting the ranking preference of a training program.

C. Rights and obligations of SCFHS

12. Verification of credentials/documents

SCFHS reserves the right to verify the credentials/documents of all applicants. It is acknowledged and agreed by applicants that SCFHS is authorized to communicate with health schools and other institutions and organizations relevant to the verification process.

SCFHS shall notify all applicants whose credentials/documents cannot be verified or where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that the credentials/documents submitted by the applicant are not authentic or have been falsified. The applicant will be given the opportunity to substantiate their credentials. **The applicant shall be immediately removed from the matching program,** subject to the completion of the investigation procedures and the ultimate resolution/decision of the Executive directorate of training regarding verification of submitted credentials.

Applicants will not be permitted to proceed with the match or enter future matches where their credentials could not be verified. The Executive directorate of training shall proceed in the same manner as set out in the Match Breaches Policy and False Document Policy. Applicants may appeal the ultimate resolution/decision of the Executive directorate of training to the SCFHS Matching committee. The decision of the SCFHS matching committee shall be final.

13. Rank order lists

SCFHS will treat the ROLs as confidential information. SCFHS will not release or disclose such information in any manner that permits individual identification of either a training program or an applicant.

14. Schedule of dates

An annual R-1 applicant timeline is published by SCFHS and is incorporated in this contract by reference. It is the applicant's responsibility to meet the deadline dates in the R-1 applicant timeline to optimize their application. SCFHS will not be held liable for negative impacts as a result of delaying applications.

15. Availability of match site

SCFHS does NOT guarantee the availability of SCFHS-MS online at all times.

16. Application documentation

SCFHS **does NOT accept any applicant documents via mail**. All documents must be submitted electronically as per the instructions in SCFHS-MS. SCFHS will not consider documents or additional information that is added to the application after the electronic submission has been finalized.

17. Match results

SCFHS shall make available applicant match results and contact information at the time specified in the R-1 applicant timeline.

Individual applicant match results will be sent to:

- a. The individual accepted applicant.
- b. The postgraduate office of the residency program to which the applicant has been matched.
- c. SCFHS has the right of sharing and analyzing match results based on SCFHS discretion.

18. Removal from matching program

SCFHS may remove from the matching program/training center any applicant who falls into one or more of the following categories:

- a. An applicant whose credentials or other supporting documents cannot be verified by SCFHS or where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that such credentials or supporting documents are not authentic or that the candidate has submitted falsified documents; and
- b. An applicant for whom SCFHS has reasonable grounds to believe that (s)he has breached the terms of this contract.

19. Breaches of the match contract

SCFHS maintains the highest professional standards in the conduct of the matching program and in its interactions with all participants: applicants, program directors, and institutional officials. SCFHS expects all participants in the matching program to conduct their affairs in an ethical and



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professionally responsible manner. All participants must respect the right of applicants to freely investigate program options prior to submission of a final ROL.

SCFHS shall maintain and make available to applicants and residency programs, the Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Breaches of SCFHS-MS Contracts (Match Breaches Policy and False Document Policy).

The Match Breaches Policy and False Document Policy shall govern SCFHS' handling of match breaches and are incorporated by reference in and are an integral part of this contract.

In the instance SCFHS has reasonable grounds to believe that an applicant or training program has breached the terms of this contract, SCFHS is authorized to take appropriate action, including, but not limited to, withdrawal of the applicant or training program from the matching program and reporting the breach by the applicant or training program as per the procedures outlined in the Match Breaches Policy and False Document Policy.

SCFHS shall investigate alleged breaches of this contract, including, but not limited to:

- a. Discrepancies in credentials or other supporting documents;
- b. Attempts to subvert the matching process itself;
- c. Failures to offer or accept an appointment as required by the results of a match, and;
- d. Any other irregular behavior or activities that occur in connection with registration, the submission or modification of a ROL, and/or the training program or applicant's commitment to honor the match outcome.



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PROGRAMS & INSTITUTES



Match Tips

Ranking for Programs

Once applicants have applied to your program, the next step is ranking them in order of preference. You must rank applicants from most preferred to least preferred, excluding a pre-set percentage of applicants that you do not wish to train (reject). You are under no obligation to rank applicants who have been invited to an interview and not attended. The list you create is called a rank order list (ROL). ROLs are created by both applicants and programs and are the only true determinants of a match outcome.

Important reminders and tips

When creating your rank order list, be sure to consider the following:

- Match results are binding. This means you must accept any applicants that you ranked and are matched with.
- Carefully evaluate all the applicants who have applied and rank them according to your preference.
- Base ranking selections on your own preferences and not how you think an applicant will rank.
- Rank order lists are the decision makers in the match – any conversations with applicants with regards to mutual interest are not official, or binding, and should not affect your decisions.



Interview guidelines for Programs

General match participation principles

As an institution or program, you have the responsibility to:

- Define specific eligibility criteria for your program(s).
- Rank the most suitable persons based on your programs' criteria.
- Set employment terms and conditions.

In addition, the following match principles apply:

In accordance with SCFHS' privacy policy and the institution contracts, you are only permitted to use and/or hold the personal information of applicants, disclosed to you by SCFHS, for the purpose of selecting candidates for training programs. You must securely destroy, delete or convert personal information into anonymous form for all unmatched applicants unless otherwise permitted by SCFHS.

Applicant rights

All individuals have equal enrollment opportunities to training programs. This is not intended to prevent organizations from choosing candidates based on skills that are required for the position.

Preparing for interviews

We recommend you keep applicants informed about the progress and status of their application, including:

- Communicating with unsuccessful applicants by thanking them for their interest in the program and informing them that they will not be invited to an interview.
- Inviting shortlisted applicants for an interview, in keeping with the SCFHS match timetables, no less than one week before the interview date within the national interview period.

The following tips will help you prepare for conducting interviews:

- Prior to interviews, develop a set of questions to ask all applicants.
- Determine, in advance of interviews, the criteria that will be used in decisions to REJECT an applicant.
- Determine, in advance of interviews, the criteria for ranking applicants scored equally.
- Ask questions that relate directly to the residency position and avoid questions relating to personal matters.

Interview tips

We have compiled the following tips for conducting interviews:

- Interviews should be conducted in privacy and without interruption.
- Interview length is left to your discretion. SCFHS urges you to keep in mind the travel costs and effort applicants dedicate to attending interviews. Other recruitment strategies such as tours and meeting with applicants will require additional time.
- Interviews must be free of intimidation.
- Interviews cannot include personal questions about family, marital status, or finances.
- Interviews cannot include questions, allusions, remarks or coercion about other applications, interviews or ranking.
- Interviewers cannot exert undue or unwarranted pressure on the selection decisions of applicants. Both applicants and participating programs may express a high degree of interest in each other but may not make statements implying a commitment.
- Program directors and/or agents of the program (e.g. members, interviewing teams including residents) are not permitted to ask applicants how they intend to rank programs or request any information on other programs the applicant may have applied to.
- Reliable decisions are those based on aggregates of multiple assessments, either in the form of multiple interviews, multiple interviewers or both.

Sample questions

The questions you ask during the interview process must respect the applicant but are left entirely to programs' discretion. We have provided samples of appropriate and inappropriate questions to help guide you in preparing your interview questions.

Examples of appropriate questions:

- How do you deal with problems when they arise?
- What are you looking for in terms of learning opportunities?
- What have you found to be your strengths and weaknesses?
- What has your experience been in working with people in authority?
- Do you have any ideas about how you learn best?
- What past experiences have you had that would suit you to undertake this training program?

Examples of inappropriate questions:

- What other programs did you apply to?
- Have you attended other interviews?
- Do you plan to rank our program?
- Where on your list will you rank our program?

Contract for Programs

A. Background

Training positions may be offered to applicants who have registered through the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Matching System (SCFHS-MS).

SCFHS-MS is an application and matching program that provides a system for the review and confidential ranking of applicants to one or more postgraduate training centers.

This contract represents the rights and obligations of the participating training programs and SCFHS with respect to the matching program.

B. Rights and obligations of institutions with respect to training programs

1. Application procedures

All SCFHS training programs shall solicit and accept all applications and nominations exclusively through the SCFHS-MS electronic application process.

2. Schedules and deadlines

Training programs shall follow scheduling requirements and provide all required information and schedule interviews in accordance with the timetable established by SCFHS.

3. Rank order lists

Training programs shall restrict their rank order lists (ROLs) to only those applicants who are registered and have been nominated through SCFHS-MS.

The postgraduate/Academic affairs offices shall verify the ROLs of training programs prior to the deadline date established by SCFHS.

4. Rank order list submission

To participate in the matching program, training programs shall (a) register training program directors with and (b) submit ROLs through SCFHS-MS online system (match site).

ROLs may only be submitted through the match site.

Training programs agree to follow access procedures established by SCFHS with respect to the match site. For greater certainty, a ROL may be entered in more than one session and may be modified prior to the ROL submission deadline. Training programs are encouraged to complete this process well in advance of the ROL submission deadline and prior to the peak utilization period when the match site may be less accessible.



5. Appointments

Training programs shall not make, offer, or require any appointments, commitments or contracts with applicants outside of the matching process prior to the match date established by SCFHS or the completion of all match cycles.

6. Match iteration

In matches where there is more than one iteration, all participating training programs registered with the matching program that do not fill their quota in the first iteration of the matching process shall participate in the second iteration of the matching process. All quota left unfilled in the first iteration of the matching process shall be entered into the second iteration of the matching process.

The matching process is not complete until all iterations have been run.

7. Withdrawals

Participating training program should communicate with SCFHS (accreditation department) before the start of application period if the program has reason to close and/or reduce the number of training seats. Failure to adhere to these requirements will be a breach of this contract and subject to the penalties set out in section 19 of this contract.

8. Multiple matchings

Any participating training program that knowingly offers a position to an applicant who has been matched to a position in another participating training program in the same year shall be in breach of this contract, and may be subject to the penalties described in section 19.

9. Restrictions on persuasion

Participating residency programs shall not exert undue or unwarranted pressure on the selection decisions of applicants. Both applicants and participating programs may express a high degree of interest in each other but may not make statements implying a commitment.

The following activities shall be considered as breaches of the contract by the institution, and subject to the penalties as described in section 19:

- a. An applicant or participating program making any verbal or written contract for appointment to a position prior to completion of the matching program; and
- b. An applicant or participating program requesting the ranking preference of the other.



Participating programs understand and agree that only the final preferences of the participating programs and applicants, as reflected in their final verified rank order lists, will determine the offering of positions and the placement of applicants through the matching program.

Honest communication between applicants and program staff is essential to a successful matching process. To promote the highest ethical standards during the interview, ranking, and matching processes, program directors participating in a match shall commit to:

- **Respecting an applicant's right to privacy and confidentiality:** Program directors and other interviewers may freely express their interest in a candidate, but they shall not require an applicant to disclose ranking preferences, ranking intentions, or the locations of other programs to which the applicant has or may apply.
- **Accepting responsibility for the actions of interview team members:** Program directors shall instruct all interviewers about compliance with match policies and the need to ensure that all applicant interviews are conducted in an atmosphere that is safe, respectful, and nonjudgmental. Program directors shall assume responsibility for the actions of the entire interview team.
- **Refraining from asking illegal or coercive questions:** Program directors shall ensure that communication with applicants remains focused on the applicant's goodness of fit within their programs.
- **Declining to require second visits or visiting rotations:** Program directors shall respect the logistical and financial burden many applicants face in pursuing multiple interactions with programs and shall not require them or imply that second visits are used in determining applicant placement on a rank order list.
- **Discouraging unnecessary post-interview communication:** Program directors shall not solicit or require post-interview communication from applicants, nor shall program directors engage in post-interview communication that is disingenuous for the purpose of influencing applicants' ranking preferences.

10. Confidentiality

Information about applicants is to be treated as confidential at all times. Participating programs shall not make publicly available or otherwise disclose to any individual or organization, any information about applicants unless required by law, permitted under this contract or with the consent of the applicant concerned. For greater certainty, confidential information in this context includes the names of applicants and application information. Breaches of confidentiality, including unauthorized use, access, or disclosure of an applicant's personal information, will be subject to the penalties set out in section 19 of this contract.



11. Use of applicants' personal information

Participating programs shall only use personal information of applicants disclosed to it by SCFHS-MS for the purpose of selecting candidates.

12. Retention of information

Participating programs shall keep information provided to it by SCFHS-MS only as long as it is required for the reasons it was collected. Participating programs shall have in place procedures to destroy, delete, erase or convert personal information into an anonymous form when it is no longer required for the program's purposes.

13. Security of information

Participating programs shall have appropriate security measures to protect any information provided to it by SCFHS-MS. "Appropriate security measures" means technical, physical and procedural controls to protect information against destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorized disclosure to third parties or unauthorized access by employees or contractors employed by the institution, whether by accident or otherwise. Participating programs shall protect the confidentiality of all passwords and promptly notify SCFHS (a) if there is reason to believe that any password has been discovered by a third party and (b) of any unauthorized use of a password or any other breach of security and (c) in the event of unauthorized use, access or disclosure of any applicant's personal information maintained by the program.

C. Rights and obligations of SCFHS

14. Removal from matching program

SCFHS may remove a participating program director and/or a program from the matching program and/or not allow an applicant to be matched to a training center if SCFHS receives credible evidence that the participating program has violated the terms of this contract or does not have the required accreditation.

15. Rank order list (ROL)

SCFHS will treat the ROLs as confidential information. SCFHS will not release or disclose such information in any manner that permits individual identification of either a participating program or an applicant.

16. Access to the match site (SCFHS-MS' online system)

SCFHS shall limit access to the match site to participating programs, applicants and other authorized users.

17. Annual timetable

SCFHS shall publish an annual timetable, which is incorporated in this contract by reference.



18. Availability of match site

SCFHS does NOT guarantee the availability of SCFHS-MS online at all times.

19. Match violations

SCFHS maintains the highest professional standards in the conduct of the matching program and in its interactions with all participants: applicants, program directors, and institutional officials. SCFHS expects all participants in the matching program to conduct their affairs in an ethical and professionally responsible manner and to respect the right of applicants to freely investigate program options prior to submission of a final rank order list.

SCFHS shall investigate alleged breaches of this contract, including but not limited to:

- a. Discrepancies in credentials or other supporting documents;
- b. Attempts to subvert the matching process itself;
- c. Failures to offer or accept an appointment as required by the results of a match; and
- d. Any other irregular behavior or activities that occur in connection with the submission or modification of a rank order list, and/or the participating program's commitment to honor the match outcome.

SCFHS shall maintain and make available to applicants and participating residency programs the policies and procedures for reporting and investigating breaches of SCFHS contracts (**Match Breaches Policy** and **False Document Policy**), incorporated by reference in this contract.

The **Match Breaches Policy** shall govern SCFHS' handling of match violations and is incorporated by reference in and forms part of this contract.

Contract for Institutions

A. Background

Training positions may be offered to applicants who have registered through the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties Matching System (SCFHS-MS).

SCFHS-MS is an application and matching program that provides a system for the review and confidential ranking of applicants to one or more postgraduate training centers.

This contract represents the rights and obligations of the institution and SCFHS with respect to the matching program.

In consideration of the undertaking and conditions contained in this contract, the institution and SCFHS hereby agree as follows:

B. Rights and obligations of institutions with respect to programs

1. Postgraduate/Academic Affairs Director

The institution shall identify an individual from within the postgraduate/academic affairs office to be responsible for overseeing the matching process, and to serve as a liaison with SCFHS on all matters regarding the institution's participating programs.

2. Program eligibility

To be eligible to offer positions through the matching program, as of application deadline, an institution's participating programs shall be accredited by Accreditation Department at SCFHS.

3. Schedules and deadlines

The institution shall ensure that its participating programs follow scheduling requirements and schedule interviews in accordance with the timetable established by SCFHS.

4. Rank order lists

The institution shall ensure that its participating programs restrict their rank order lists (ROL) to only those applicants who are registered and have applied through SCFHS.

The postgraduate/academic affairs office shall verify the ROLs of participating programs prior to the deadline date established by SCFHS in the timetable.

5. Rank order list submission

To participate in the matching program, participating programs shall (a) register with and (b) submit ROLs through the SCFHS online system (match site).



ROLs may only be submitted through the match site.

The institution agrees to follow access procedures established by SCFHS with respect to the match site. For greater certainty, a ROL may be entered in more than one session and may be modified prior to the ROL submission deadline. The institution is encouraged to complete this process well in advance of the ROL submission deadline and prior to the peak utilization period when the match site may be less accessible.

6. Appointments

The institution shall ensure its participating programs follow the rules regarding appointments. Participating programs shall not make, offer, or require any appointments, commitments or contracts with applicants outside of the matching process prior to the match date established by SCFHS or the completion of all match cycles.

7. Match iteration

In matches where there is more than one iteration, all participating programs registered with the matching program that do not fill their quota in the first iteration of the matching process shall participate in the second iteration of the matching process. All quota left unfilled in the first iteration of the matching process shall be entered into the second iteration of the matching process.

The matching process is not complete until all iterations have been run.

8. Withdrawals and modifications

If a participating program has reason to close and/or reduce the number of spots, then it is the responsibility of the postgraduate/academic affair office to notify SCFHS (accreditation department) immediately and before the start of application period. Failure to adhere to these requirements will be a breach of this contract and subject to the penalties set out in section 18 of this contract.

9. Restrictions on persuasion

The institution shall ensure its participating programs follow the rules regarding restrictions on persuasion as described below:

Participating programs shall not exert undue or unwarranted pressure on the selection decisions of applicants. Both applicants and participating programs may express a high degree of interest in each other but may not make statements implying a commitment.

The following activities shall be considered as breaches of the contract by the institution, and subject to the penalties as described in section 18:

- a. An applicant or participating program making any verbal or written contract for appointment to a position prior to completion of the matching program; and



- b. An applicant or participating program requesting the ranking preference of the other.

The institution and participating programs understand and agree that only the final preferences of the participating programs and applicants, as reflected in their final verified rank order lists, will determine the offering of positions and the placement of applicants through the matching program.

10. Confidentiality

Information about applicants is to be treated as confidential at all times. The institution shall not make publicly available or otherwise disclose to any individual or organization, any information about applicants unless required by law, permitted under this contract or with the consent of the applicant concerned. For greater certainty, confidential information in this context includes the names of applicants, application information and program ranking information. Breaches of confidentiality by the institution, including unauthorized use, access, or disclosure of an applicant's personal information, will be subject to the penalties set out in section 18 of this contract.

11. Use of applicants' personal information

The institution shall only use personal information of applicants disclosed to it by SCFHS for the purpose of selecting candidates for the institution's postgraduate training programs.

12. Retention of information

The institution shall keep information provided to it by SCFHS only as long as it is required for the reasons it was collected. The institutions shall have in place procedures to destroy, delete, erase or convert personal information into an anonymous form when it is no longer required for the institution's purposes.

13. Security of information

The institution shall have appropriate security measures to protect any information provided to it by SCFHS. "Appropriate security measures" means technical, physical and procedural controls to protect information against destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorized disclosure to third parties or unauthorized access by employees or contractors employed by the institution, whether by accident or otherwise. The institution shall protect the confidentiality of all center passwords and promptly notify SCFHS (a) if there is reason to believe that any center password has been discovered by a third party and (b) of any unauthorized use of a center password or any other breach of security and (c) in the event of unauthorized use, access or disclosure of any applicant's personal information maintained by the institution.

C. Rights and obligations of SCFHS

14. Removal from matching program

SCFHS may remove a participating program director and/or program from the matching program and/or not allow an applicant to be matched to a training center if SCFHS receives credible evidence that the participating program has violated the terms of this contract or does not have the required accreditation.

15. Rank order list (ROL)

SCFHS will treat the ROLs as confidential information. SCFHS will not release or disclose such information in any manner that permits individual identification of either a participating program or an applicant.

16. Access to the match site (SCFHS-MS online system)

SCFHS shall limit access to the match site to participating programs, applicants and other authorized users.

17. Availability of match site

SCFHS DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE AVAILABILITY OF THE MATCH SITE.

18. Match violations

SCFHS maintains the highest professional standards in the conduct of the matching program and in its interactions with all participants: applicants, program directors, and institutional officials. SCFHS expects all participants in the matching program to conduct their affairs in an ethical and professionally responsible manner and to respect the right of applicants to freely investigate program options prior to submission of a final rank order list.

SCFHS shall investigate alleged breaches of this contract, including but not limited to:

- a. Discrepancies in credentials or other supporting documents;
- b. Attempts to subvert the matching process itself;
- c. Failures to offer or accept an appointment as required by the results of a match; and
- d. Any other irregular behavior or activities that occur in connection with the submission or modification of a rank order list, and/or the participating program's commitment to honor the match outcome.

SCFHS shall maintain and make available to applicants and participating programs the policies and procedures for reporting and investigating breaches of SCFHS contracts (Match Breaches Policy and False Document Policy), incorporated by reference in this contract.



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POLICIES

Violation review

Policies and procedures for reporting and investigating breaches of SCFHS contracts

Match Breaches Policy

SCFHS seeks to protect the integrity of the matching process by requiring all match participants to behave ethically and responsibly during the matching process.

Policy:

General

SCFHS policy requires each applicant to enter into a SCFHS match agreement. Centers offering training programs are also required to enter into an institution contract/agreement. SCFHS will investigate and take steps to resolve all alleged breaches of such agreements, including but not limited to: attempts to violate eligibility requirements, the matching process itself; failure to protect the privacy of the applicant or the applicant documents; failure to abide by the SCFHS timetable; failure to offer or accept appointments as required by the results of a match; and any other irregular behavior or activities that occur in connection with registration, the submission or modification of supporting documents or a rank order list, and/or the participant's commitment to honor the match outcome.

Procedure

1.0 Reporting procedures

Parties permitted to submit an official report to SCFHS concerning an alleged match breach includes, but is not limited to: applicants, program directors, and postgraduate/academic affairs directors.

Suspected violations must be delivered to the office of the Executive Directorate of Training, Department of Acceptance & Registration.

Suspected violations must be submitted immediately, but in any event no later than 14 days of knowledge of the alleged incident. No investigation will be initiated until SCFHS has received a written report concerning the possible violation, in which the author of the report is identified. Any request for anonymity will generally not be granted, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

SCFHS will acknowledge all such written reports in order to make an initial verification of their authenticity within seven business days of the receipt of the report.

2.0 Review process

The SCFHS review process operates as follows:

Step one (A): A complaint is issued in writing to the executive directorate of training concerning the alleged violation.



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Step one (B): An acknowledgement from SCFHS will be sent to the complainant, **within seven business days via e-mail**, regarding the receipt of the complaint.

Step two: A representative of the SCFHS Executive directorate of training will contact the party or parties (including, but not limited to: the applicant, program director, or postgraduate/academic affairs director) identified in the report and such other appropriate person(s) with knowledge of the incident. These individuals will be informed of the nature of the alleged violation, and that it is being investigated by SCFHS. All parties identified in the report as relevant to the alleged violation will be requested to provide Executive directorate of training with their version of the incident in writing and, if necessary, their response to the allegation(s). All parties are given **7 business days** to do so. The named person/institution will be given the explicit opportunity to make answer and provide submissions prior to the preparation of the preliminary report.

Step three: Executive directorate of training will prepare a preliminary report as soon as practicable, documenting the nature of the allegation and the results of the SCFHS investigation. The named person/institution will be given **7 business days** to respond to the allegations and initial findings.

Step four: A final report of the findings will be submitted to the Executive Director of Training.

Notes:

- a. If the result of the investigation fails to confirm that a violation has occurred, the recommendation will be to close out the matter and notify all parties in the original report accordingly.
- b. If the results of the investigation indicate that a violation has occurred, the Executive directorate of training may, with the concurrence of the parties and in following the SCFHS Consequences of Confirmed Violations, seek to resolve the incident to the satisfaction of the parties involved.
- c. Where any party is not in agreement with the recommendation to informally resolve or close the matter, the matter shall be referred to the SCFHS Executive Board for education and training final ruling.

Step five: If the named person/institution is found guilty of the violation, s/he is added to the SCFHS Database of Violators and if the violator is an applicant, the reports are distributed to each program to which they apply in the current match, as well as in the future matches.

3.0 Reporting of confirmed violations process

This will be used by the Executive directorate of training as a guideline for penalties for confirmed violators.

Consequences if allegations of a violation are confirmed:

1. For completed reviews confirming a violation by an applicant:



a. The final report will be delivered to the applicant with copies to:

1. The party who originally reported the violation.
2. The applicant's program director if the violation occurred in a fellowship match.
3. The SCFHS, if the applicant is to be permanently identified as a match violator or has been permanently barred from future SCFHS matches.
4. Any parties who SCFHS determines are relevant to its investigation and findings.

b. In addition, the applicant may be penalized by, but is not limited to the following:

- A remedial caution
- Disqualification from the current match
- Disqualification from entry to subsequent SCFHS matches for up to three years
- Such other action as the committee/board considers just and appropriate in the circumstances, including disqualification from future matches.

c. The decision conveyed in the final report will be displayed permanently in the SCFHS Database of Violators; the violation will be included to identify the length of time the action is in effect.

2. For completed reviews confirming a violation by a program and/or institution:

a. The participating program and/or institution may be penalized by, but is not limited to the following:

- A remedial caution
- Withdrawal of the program from the match if the violation was determined prior to match day
- Not allowing an applicant involved in a violation to be matched with the particular training center
- The program being identified as a match violator in the SCFHS website and database
- Suspension or termination of the center's access to the password-protected match site area of the SCFHS website
- Such other remedies as the committee/board considers just and appropriate in the circumstances.

b. The decision conveyed in the final report will be displayed permanently in the SCFHS Database of Violators; the violation will be included to identify the length of time the action is in effect.

Definitions

1.0 Match breach

Any violation of the applicant agreement or institution contract will be considered a match breach.

Scope

This policy applies to all SCFHS match participants.

False document policy

SCFHS seeks to protect the integrity of the matching process by requiring all match participants to behave ethically and responsibly during the matching process.

1.0 General

SCFHS requires applicants to provide complete and accurate information to SCFHS and programs. It is the policy of SCFHS to investigate discrepancies in the electronic SCFHS Online application, as well as other SCFHS application materials submitted by the applicant or on their behalf; attempts to violate the application and matching process; and any other irregularities, which may occur in connection with application activities.

All investigations will be reviewed by the SCFHS Executive directorate of training and will follow the SCFHS review process. All findings will be subject to the process set out in the SCFHS False Document Policy, and all applicants will be subject to the consequences laid out in the SCFHS Consequences of Confirmed Violations in the applicant contract.

Appeals of the final report and penalty issued can be made to the SCFHS Executive Board for education and training and their decision will be final. If violations are confirmed, the violator's information will be placed in the SCFHS Database of Violators.

SCFHS will make effort to investigate allegation(s) in a timely manner while ensuring accuracy and completeness of the final report; however, a pending investigation may interrupt the processing of application materials with questionable validity.

Procedure

1.0 Reporting procedures

Parties permitted to submit an official report to SCFHS concerning an alleged violation of falsified documents includes, but is not limited to: applicants, program directors, postgraduate/academic affairs directors.

Suspected violations must be delivered to the office of Executive Directorate of Training.



Suspected violations must be submitted immediately, but in any event no later than **14 days** of knowledge of the alleged incident. No investigation will be initiated until SCFHS has received a written report concerning the possible violation, in which the author of the report is identified. Any request for anonymity will generally not be granted, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

SCFHS will acknowledge all such written reports in order to make an initial verification of their authenticity within seven business days of the receipt of the report.

2.0 Review process

The SCFHS review process operates as follows:

Step one (A): A complaint is issued in writing to the Executive directorate of training concerning the alleged violation.

Step one (B): An acknowledgement from SCFHS will be sent to the complainant, within seven business days via e-mail, regarding the receipt of the complaint.

Step two: A representative of the Executive directorate of training will contact the party or parties (including, but not limited to: the applicant, program director, or postgraduate/academic affairs director) identified in the report and such other appropriate person(s) with knowledge of the incident. These individuals will be informed of the nature of the alleged violation, and that it is being investigated by SCFHS. All parties identified in the report as relevant to the alleged violation will be requested to provide the Executive directorate of training with their version of the incident in writing and, if necessary, their response to the allegation(s). All parties are given **7 business days** to do so. The named person/institution will be given the explicit opportunity to make answer and provide submissions prior to the preparation of the preliminary report.

Step three: The Executive directorate of training will prepare a preliminary report as soon as practicable, documenting the nature of the allegation and the results of the SCFHS investigation. The named person/institution will be given **7 business days** to respond to the allegations and initial findings.

Step four: A final report of the findings will be submitted to the Chief Academic officer.

Notes:

- a. If the result of the investigation fails to confirm that a violation has occurred, the recommendation will be to close out the matter and notify all parties in the original report accordingly.
- b. If the results of the investigation indicate that a violation has occurred, the Executive directorate of training may, with the concurrence of the parties and in following the SCFHS Consequences of Confirmed Violations, seek to resolve the incident to the satisfaction of the parties involved.
- c. Where any party is not in agreement with the recommendation to informally resolve or close the matter, the matter shall be referred to the SCFHS Executive Board for education and training for final ruling.

Step five: If the named person/institution is found guilty of the violation, s/he is added to the SCFHS Database of Violators and if the violator is an applicant, the reports are distributed to each program to which they apply in the current match, as well as in the future matches.

3.0 Reporting of confirmed violations process

This will be used by the Executive directorate of training as a guideline for penalties for confirmed violators.

Consequences if allegations of a violation are confirmed:

1. For completed reviews confirming a violation by an applicant:

- a. The final report will be delivered to the applicant with copies to:
 1. The party who originally reported the violation.
 2. The applicant's program director if the violation occurred in a fellowship match.
 3. The SCFHS, if the applicant is to be permanently identified as a match violator or has been permanently barred from future SCFHS matches.
 4. Any parties who SCFHS determines are relevant to its investigation and findings.
- b. In addition, the applicant may be penalized by, but is not limited to the following:
 - A remedial caution
 - Disqualification from the current match
 - Disqualification from entry to subsequent SCFHS matches for up to three years
 - Such other action as the committee/board considers just and appropriate in the circumstances, including disqualification from future matches.
- c. The decision conveyed in the final report will be displayed permanently in the SCFHS Database of Violators; the violation will be included to identify the length of time the action is in effect.



2. For completed reviews confirming a violation by a program and/or institution:

a. The participating program and/or institution may be penalized by, but is not limited to the following:

- A remedial caution
- Withdrawal of the program from the match if the violation was determined prior to match day
- The program being identified as a match violator in the SCFHS website and database
- Suspension or termination of the center's access to the password-protected match site area of the SCFHS website
- Such other remedies as the committee/board considers just and appropriate in the circumstances.

b. The decision conveyed in the final report will be displayed permanently in the SCFHS Database of Violators; the violation will be included to identify the length of time the action is in effect.

Definitions

1.0 Falsified documents

Falsified documents include but are not limited to, documents that have been altered, added to, or forged.

Please note: A document will be considered falsified if it has been altered in any way, to make it false in any respect (whether or not it was false in some other respect apart from that alteration).

Scope

This policy applies to all parties and/or organizations that submit documents to SCFHS and/or participate in SCFHS matching services.



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Interview complaints

SCFHS will act as an interlocutor to allow applicants to make specific complaints about problems encountered in their interviews.

All complainants must be prepared to identify themselves to SCFHS if they wish SCFHS to follow up with the complaint. SCFHS will make the complaint to the training center anonymously on behalf of the applicant.

If an applicant wishes to have an immediate reconsideration of their application for ranking by that program, they must take their complaint to the postgraduate/academic affairs director of the center where the problem occurred without the assistance of SCFHS.

To report a complaint, submit a written complaint to the office of Executive Directorate of Training.

Document retention

Application documentation will be retained by SCFHS for three months from match day.

Refunds

All fees for registration and application, including those received from applicants who later withdraw or go unmatched, are non-refundable.