

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHANGES TO THE MRCSEd OPHTHALMOLOGY AND THE FRCSEd (OPHTH) EXAMINATIONS

The MRCSEd in Ophthalmology Examination is being discontinued in a phased manner and the format of the FRCSEd Examination is to change over the timescales detailed below. The new-format FRCSEd (Ophth) Examination has been designed for use as a conjoint examination with partner organisations overseas and is not intended for use by UK trainees. Although the examination is not recognised by PMETB as an assessment that would contribute towards the award of the Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT), UK trainees may apply for this examination if they wish to do so.

Trainees who have commenced specialty training from August 2007 onwards will NOT be permitted to use the RCSEd examinations for PMETB recognised training assessments. ONLY the Royal College of Ophthalmologists' assessments and examinations may be used for training assessment leading to a PMETB approved Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT).

Timeline for phasing-out the MRCSEd in Ophthalmology Examination:

The final diet of the **Part 1** examination was held in September 2007.

The last opportunity to sit **Part 2** for the first time was in the autumn 2008. The final diet of the Part 2 examination will be held in spring 2009 and will be open to re-sit candidates only.

The last opportunity to sit **Part 3** for the first time will be in the autumn 2009. The final diet of the Part 3 examination will be held in spring 2010 and will be open to re-sit candidates only.

Timeline for phasing-out the current FRCSEd (Ophth) Specialty Fellowship Examination:

The last scheduled diet of the existing Specialty Fellowship Examination for all candidates will be held in autumn 2008. There may be additional diets available for UK trainees if required. After 2008, UK trainees who were in Specialist Registrar (SpR) posts at the beginning of August 2007 will be permitted to apply to be examined for the existing Specialty Fellowship; this will continue until the end of the MMC transition period. **Candidates in this category can be assured that their FRCSEd (Ophth) will be considered by PMETB towards the award of a CCT.**

Introduction of the new format FRCSEd (Ophth) Examinations:

Part 1 and Part 2 Examinations

The first diet of Part 1 was held in April 2008. The first diet of Part 2 was held in September 2008

Part 3 (Clinical Skills Certificate) Examination

The first diet of Part 3 will be held in spring 2009.

Part 4 (Final) Examination

The first diet of the Final FRCSEd (Ophth) Examination will be held in spring 2009.

For further information on the new examination please visit the College website at www.rcsed.ac.uk

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL
COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF
EDINBURGH MRCS(Ed) in the subject of
Ophthalmology**

With effect from May 2006

1. Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons is open to those trainees that have completed an approved two year programme of Ophthalmology training and passed a Membership Examination.
2. To embark on the programme candidates must possess a primary medical qualification which is acceptable to the Council of the College.
3. The examination is only open to trainees who are undertaking or who have completed a training programme in Ophthalmology.
4. Successful candidates are eligible for election to Membership of the Royal College and once elected may designate themselves MRCSEd.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME:

5. Candidates must complete a minimum period of two years' training in an Ophthalmology training programme recognised by the College or (for overseas candidates) in a national training programme approved by the College. The types of approved posts that may be acceptable are given in Appendix A. Note that posts held at pre-registration, intern or Foundation Year 1 are not approved. The examination may be taken before completion of the two year period, but the MRCSEd Diploma will not be awarded until this period of training has been completed.
6. Experience on a part-time basis in a post approved by the College will be accepted provided that the duties in the post do not occupy less than half of the weekly working time. One year's experience in such a post will be considered as equivalent to six months' experience in a full-time post.

EXEMPTION FROM PARTS 1 AND 2

7. Exemption from Parts 1 and 2 of the MRCS in Ophthalmology may be granted to candidates who have passed the corresponding parts of the MRCOphth of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists (from January 1997).

APPLYING FOR THE EXAMINATION

8. Applications must be addressed to the Head of the Application Evaluation Section and must be accompanied by certificates showing the date and place of obtaining a primary medical qualification and particulars of subsequent experience. The name on the primary medical certificate will normally be the name by which candidates are registered. Applications must also be accompanied by the full amount of the fee payable for the appropriate part of the examination. **NO ALLOWANCE WILL BE MADE FOR POSTAL OR OTHER DELAYS.**
9. The dates of the examinations and the fees payable for admission to the Membership Examination are set out in the examinations calendar which is obtainable free of charge from the College (see College Website: <http://www.rcsed.ac.uk>).
10. Candidates are not permitted to apply for any part of the examination at more than one centre within a two month period.
11. Candidates should submit their application to sit the examination no later than the closing date indicated in the examinations calendar. Applications should be forwarded to:

*Head of the Information and Examination Application Section
The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
The Adamson Centre
3 Hill Place
Edinburgh
EH8 9DS.*

WITHDRAWAL FROM AN EXAMINATION

12. Candidates withdrawing from an examination must do so in writing.
13. The entrance fee may be returned, less 20% administrative charges, or transferred to the NEXT examination if written notice is received by the College prior to the closing date for receipt of applications.
14. If written notice of withdrawal is received after the closing date but more than 21 days before the examination, half of the entrance fee may be returned or transferred to the NEXT examination.
15. If a candidate withdraws from an examination with less than 21 days' notice, or fails to attend for any reason, no refund or transfer of entrance fees will normally be made. **NO ALLOWANCE WILL BE MADE FOR POSTAL OR OTHER DELAYS.**
16. Candidates who submit an application form but are subsequently found to be ineligible to enter for the examination will have their fee returned less 20% administrative charges.

17. Candidates who do not fulfill the normal entry requirements may apply for special consideration to the Director of Training, but admission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
18. Examination candidacy during pregnancy – see Appendix B.

PROOF OF IDENTITY AT EXAMINATIONS

19. Candidates **MUST** bring their passport to each part of the examination. Exceptionally, candidates who are not in a position to provide a passport **MUST** produce an official document that includes their name, signature and a current photograph. (For example, a current driving license if it includes a photograph). Proof of identity is an essential element of the examination. The Convener of the Examinations Committee reserves the right to refuse to examine any candidate whose identity is uncertain.

CANDIDATES WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

20. Special examination and other assessment arrangements may be made for candidates with permanent or temporary disability. These arrangements are intended to allow candidates to perform to the best of their ability. It is the responsibility of the candidate to notify the Examinations Section when they submit their application of any special circumstances. Applications for special consideration must be supported by written evidence in the form of a medical report from their General Practitioner for medical conditions (an educational psychologist's report is required for requests for extra time because of dyslexia).

EXPULSION OR EXCLUSION FROM AN EXAMINATION

21. The Convener of the Examinations Committee or his/her representative may refuse to admit to the examination or proceed with the examination of any candidate who infringes the Regulations or who is considered by the examiners to be guilty of behaviour prejudicial to the management and proper conduct of the examination.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

22. Any candidate wishing to lodge a complaint must do so within thirty days of the examination. A copy of the procedural document may be obtained from the Information Section. No candidate may appeal on the basis of the results of the examination, however, he/she may complain regarding the conduct of the examination.

ELECTION TO MEMBERSHIP

23. On completion of the training programme and having passed all parts of the examination, candidates may apply for Membership of the College. Successful candidates will be sent a petition form to complete which must be sent to the

Membership Administrator together with the appropriate election fee. In the event of any candidate not being elected the election fee will be returned in full.

24. On election, Members must sign the following Declaration of Intrants: "I hereby promise faithfully to maintain and defend all the rights, liberties and privileges of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and to promote the interest thereof to the utmost of my power. I also promise faithfully to obey all the Laws of the said Royal College."
25. After signing the Declaration of Intrants every successful candidate will receive a Diploma bearing the Seal of the College and the Diploma shall state that such Member has been admitted after examination. The form of the Diploma is as follows:

"The President and Fellows of The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh hereby admit to the Membership of the College "Full name of member" who has completed the required form of training and passed the necessary examinations. He/she is hereby entitled to share all the honours and privileges enjoyed by the Member of the said College."

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FEES

26. Every Member shall pay each year such annual subscription as may be determined by the Council of the College.

DIPLOMA CEREMONIES

27. Newly elected Members will ordinarily take their seat in the College at one of the Ceremonies for the presentation of diplomas which are normally held four times a year. Members unable to attend a Diploma Ceremony may take their seat at any Annual Meeting of the College and shall intimate to the College Secretary in writing their intention of so doing and shall comply with the necessary formalities for introduction at the Meeting.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

28. Candidates must have gained at least twenty months' experience in posts approved by the College for ophthalmic training after their pre-registration, intern or Foundation Year 1.
29. Candidates should keep a log book, or portfolio, recording their training experience as it arises and we recommend the use of the Portfolio of Ophthalmic Specialist Training and Surgical Logbook. These do not form part of the formal examination.
30. During the two year period candidates must obtain satisfactory assessments from their Trainers. Formal trainee assessment forms are not required to be submitted when applying for the examination.

FORMAT OF EXAMINATION

31. The examination comprises of three progressive parts. Part 1 may be taken at any time after completion of pre-registration, intern or Foundation Year 2. Part 2 may be taken after passing Part 1 and completing at least twelve months of ophthalmic training. Candidates must have completed at least twenty months of ophthalmic training and passed Parts 1 and 2 before sitting Part 3.

PART 1 - BASIC SCIENCES RELATED TO OPHTHALMOLOGY

32. There will be one multiple choice question paper of two hours. The syllabus covers ophthalmic aspects of the following disciplines: anatomy, physiology, genetics, molecular and cell biology, pathology, microbiology, immunology, and pharmacology.

PART 2 - OPTICS, REFRACTION AND METHODS OF CLINICAL EXAMINATION

33. There are three sections to the examination. A two hour multiple choice question paper, an objective structured examination (OSE) lasting 60 minutes, a structured short cases clinical examination including retinoscopy, subjective refraction and methods of clinical examination (75 minutes).
34. Candidates must obtain an average pass mark for the MCQ and the OSE in order to progress to the clinical examination. Candidates who fail to obtain an averaged pass mark for the MCQ and the OSE must resit the entire examination. A pass will be required in each section of the clinical examination. Candidates who fail any section of the clinical examination need only resit the sections they have failed.

PART 3 – BASIC CLINICAL OPHTHALMOLOGY AND RELATED CLINICAL DISCIPLINES.

35. There are three sections to this examination. A two hour multiple choice question paper, a structured viva (40 minutes) and a structured short cases clinical examination (90 minutes).
36. Candidates must obtain an average pass mark for the MCQ and the viva in order to progress to the clinical examination. Candidates who fail to obtain an averaged pass mark for the MCQ and the viva must resit the entire examination. Candidates must pass each section of the clinical examination. Candidates who fail any section of the clinical examination need only resit the sections they have failed.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

37. Examination results will be posted on the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh website, www.rcsed.ac.uk, normally within one working week of completion of the examination. Candidates' examination numbers will be used for identification. Candidates' names will not be posted. Results, feedback advice and related documents will be mailed to candidates within one working week of completion of the examination.

- 38.** Candidates who have failed the examination will be given written advice on how they may improve their performance in preparation for resit examinations. Individual verbal counseling will not be offered.

The College may offer an early re-sit examination for Part 2 and Part 3 of the examination for candidates who fail 1 or 2 clinical sections ONLY.

NOTE: THESE REGULATIONS ARE UNDER CONTINUAL REVIEW THEREFORE IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CANDIDATES KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE COLLEGE TO ENSURE THAT THEY HAVE THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION. THE INFORMATION SECTION WILL BE ABLE TO ADVISE (00 44 (0) 131 668 9222).

APPENDIX A

APPROVED TRAINING POSTS MAY INCLUDE THOSE IN:

- (i) Hospitals in the European Union officially designated as General Teaching Hospitals.
- (ii) Non-teaching hospitals in the European Union approved by any of the Royal Surgical Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland.
- (iii) Teaching and non-teaching hospitals in overseas countries approved by any of the Royal Surgical Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland, the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, or the College of Medicine of South Africa.
- (iv) Hospitals approved by the American Board of Surgery and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, provided that the posts are held at Resident level.
- (v) Posts in Ophthalmology approved by the Royal College of Ophthalmologists.
- (vi) Posts in National Training Programmes approved by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.

Candidates are advised that not every post in an approved hospital is necessarily approved for Basic Surgical Training.

APPENDIX B

NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY AND DEFERRAL

Deferral of examination due to pregnancy-related complications

A deferral may be permitted to candidates supplying an appropriate medical report which satisfies the College indicating:

- (i) the candidate has any pregnancy related problems or illness and/or;
- (ii) the candidate's confinement is due shortly before or around the date of the examination and/or;
- (iii) the candidate has sufficient discomfort for her to consider that it will have a detrimental affect on her performance.

In such circumstances, should any such candidate be unable to sit for the examination, a deferral will be permitted and no further fee will be required.

Any candidate who does not inform the College of her pregnancy and is consequently unable to sit for that examination will not normally be allowed to defer this examination without submission of another fee.