

MRCS Part B October 2020

Due to the challenges presented by COVID-19, the four Royal Surgical Colleges have applied to the GMC to make changes to the format of the MRCS Part B (OSCE) for October 2020. This is to ensure that the exam can be offered effectively either in a socially-distanced way or online. The GMC is currently reviewing the submission but the four Royal Surgical Colleges would like to keep candidates informed as much as possible.

The proposed changes to the format of the examination are summarised below:

- Reduce number of procedural skills stations from 2 to 1
- Reduce number of history taking stations from 2 to 1
- Reduce number of anatomy stations from 3 to 2
- Reduce number of pathology stations from 2 to 1
- Reduce overall number of stations from 17 to 13
- Reframe physical examination stations to allow them to be delivered without a patient/actor present by focusing on identification/discussion of signs/symptoms of described patients, followed by discussion of likely diagnoses, further investigations and management plan
- Reframe procedural skills stations to allow to be delivered without an actor present and remotely if necessary
- Introduce a single pass mark for the entire circuit rather than separate pass marks for knowledge and skills components

The plan of the four Surgical Royal Colleges is to run the examination socially-distanced in-person. However, if this is not possible due to prevailing restrictions, it is planned for the exam format detailed above to be delivered remotely using bespoke videoconferencing software. Candidates will be informed of the method of delivery when they receive their admission letters. The four Surgical Royal Colleges reserve the right to change the method of delivery at short notice if restrictions change, and candidates should bear this in mind if booking travel.

If the examination is delivered remotely, candidates will need a computer or laptop with a camera, along with internet connectivity. More detailed equipment requirements, along with an overview of how online delivery will work, will be provided for candidates with their admission letters, which will be emailed to candidates no later than four weeks prior to the examination. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document will also be prepared and published on College websites once it is available.

Candidates should check the College and ICBSE websites regularly for further information and confirmation of the temporary changes that will be made to the MRCS Part B examination.