

**DIPLOMA IN IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE
THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH
(DipIMC RCSEd)**

REGULATIONS FROM: July 2020

PLEASE NOTE THAT TEMPORARY DEROGATIONS/ADAPTATIONS TO THE REGULATIONS DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ARE BEING APPLIED. PLEASE SEE THE ADDITIONAL TEXT BOX AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT TO SEE WHICH REGULATIONS ARE SPECIFICALLY INCLUDED.

INTRODUCTION

The examination for the Diploma in Immediate Medical Care is designed to test the underpinning knowledge, technical skills and non-technical skills of doctors, nurses and paramedics who provide pre-hospital emergency care.

The level of performance expected is that commensurate with level 5 on in the Skills for Health Career Framework for Health (www.skillsforhealth.org.uk). Level 5 practitioners have a comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within day-to-day pre-hospital emergency care clinical practice and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge.

There is a focus within this examination on timely recognition, diagnosis and management of conditions and situations in the pre-hospital environment rather than on the use of facilities for investigation and treatment that may be available predominantly within a hospital. This examination covers pre-hospital emergency care for all patient age groups from the newborn to the very elderly.

BLUEPRINTING

This examination is blueprinted against the phase 1 elements of the current edition of the UK Pre-hospital Emergency Medicine (PHEM) curriculum (available currently at www.ibtphem.org.uk). Potential candidates are strongly advised to read and consider the content of the curriculum thoroughly before applying for the examination. As a multi-professional examination it will test against these curriculum elements and will not be limited by national or local professional scopes of practice. Success in the examination however should not provide the sole evidence of competence to practice in every one of these elements however.

Candidates should have sufficient clinical experience (*at the time of application*) in the area of pre-hospital emergency care to have covered the relevant elements of the PHEM curriculum. Sufficient clinical experience may range from intensive training or experience over a relatively short time frame or accumulated infrequent experience over several years.

1. FORMAT OF EXAMINATION

The examination will consist of two parts (A and B) as follows:

1.1 Part A – A written examination of underpinning knowledge:

- 1.1.1 a multiple choice question paper (MCQ) of 180 minutes duration consisting of 180 Single Best Answer (SBA) questions.

1.2 Part B – An Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE)

- 1.2.1 The OSPE will normally consist of 14 OSPE testing stations. Twelve of the OSPE stations will each be of 8 minutes duration and two will be of 16 minutes duration. There may, in addition, be one or more rest stations.

- 1.3 The content of the examination will be based predominantly on accepted United Kingdom medical practice at the time of the examination. International candidates must adapt their answers or clinical problem solving to UK clinical practice, guidelines and consensus statements.

- 1.4 In order to gain a pass in the examination overall, candidates must achieve a pass in both Parts A and B. Candidates who are unsuccessful at either Part A or Part B may re-sit the relevant component alone provided it is within 18 months of the first attempt.
- 1.5 To facilitate the assessment of non-verbal communication skills and interaction with the examiner and patient (or actor in the role of the patient), the College reserves the right to require candidates to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all, or part of, the candidate's face.
- 1.6 All parts of the examination will be conducted in English.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 Candidates must fulfil one of the following requirements:
 - 2.1.1 **Medical Practitioners** must have been engaged in the practice of their profession for not less than two years after full registration with the UK General Medical Council. Trainees in UK approved PHEM Training Programmes must also provide a declaration that they will have completed 5 months whole-time equivalent training within the Training Programme by the date of the examination.
 - 2.1.2 **Nurses** must have been engaged in the practice of their profession for not less than two years after registration with the UK Nursing and Midwifery Council. Candidates must provide an authenticated copy of their certificate of registration.
 - 2.1.3 **Paramedics** must have been engaged in the practice of their profession for not less than two years after registration with the UK Health and Care Professions Council. Candidates must provide an authenticated copy of their certificate of registration.
- 2.2 Candidates, who do not fulfil any of the above entry requirements, may apply for special consideration. This applies for all candidates from outside the UK. Their curriculum vitae and the extent of their pre-hospital experience should be submitted in full to the Examination Section RCSEd for consideration by the Convener for Examinations in Immediate Medical Care RCSEd. The Convener may decide to refer the application for full discussion to the Pre-hospital Care Examinations Committee of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh for a final decision regarding eligibility.

3. ATTEMPTS

- 3.1 Candidates are permitted four attempts in which to pass the examination. A re-sit of an individual component part constitutes an attempt.
- 3.2 Failure to pass the examination within the permitted number of attempts will debar the candidate from applying again under these regulations.
- 3.3 The number of attempts for completion of the DIMC RCSEd cannot be increased.

4. TIME LIMIT

- 4.1 Candidates applying for the DIMC under these regulations are required to pass the examination within seven years of their first attempt at the examination.

5. APPLYING FOR THE EXAMINATION

- 5.1 The examination for the Diploma in Immediate Medical Care will usually be held twice a year. The availability of the examination by different routes of application together with the dates of the examination and the venue and fees payable, are set out in the online examination calendar, which can be found via the Examinations section of the College website:
<https://www.rcsed.ac.uk/exams>

5.2 Application for entry to the examination must:

5.2.1 be made on the appropriate (paper or electronic version) application form

5.2.2 be accompanied by the specific examination fee payment, which must be received in full before a candidate is entered for the examination

5.2.3 be accompanied by an authenticated copy of the relevant certificate of registration. The name on the certificate will normally be the name by which candidates are registered. Authentication may only be undertaken by a solicitor or the awarding body. The solicitor or awarding body must stamp, sign and date a copy of the registration to confirm that it is genuine. All hospital stamps should be in English or have an official translation provided. Original certificates will not be accepted. Any certificates not correctly authenticated will be returned.

5.3 Candidates must submit their application to sit the examination no later than the closing date indicated in the examinations calendar. Postal applications and all documentation should be forwarded to:

The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
Examination Section
DIMC exams administrator
Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9DW
SCOTLAND

5.4 Late applications will not be accepted and no allowance will be made for postal or other delays. Failure to submit the documentation listed on the candidate checklist may result in an application form being rejected and/or a delay in the processing of an application.

5.5 Applicants who are ineligible for an examination as a result of failing to provide the required documentation by the closing date will not be enrolled into the examination. Applicants in this category will have their fees refunded less a 20% administrative charge.

5.6 Re-sit applicants who have previously been accepted as a candidate for the examination for which they are applying are not required to resubmit certificates. Candidates in this category may apply to re-sit the Examination online through the College website at <https://fphc.rcsed.ac.uk/examinations>

5.7 All personal information held by the Examinations Section of the College will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Acts of 1984 and 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act of 1997 and 2000 and data collected will not be released outside of the partner Regulators, Deaneries, Royal Colleges and Faculties.

6. PROOF OF IDENTITY

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 For the purposes of visual identification, any candidate sitting any part of the examination may be required to remove any clothing and/or other item, which covers all, or part of, the candidate's face. The College will observe sensitivity in the visual identification of candidates.

7. DRESS CODE

7.1 The examination follows the principle that the same dress code should apply for a professional examination as it does for day-to-day clinical practice and contact with patients. This means that

forms of dress should not, in any way, impede or constrain the candidate's ability to demonstrate relevant technical and non-technical skills or communicate with examiners, simulated patients, simulated carers and other examination staff.

- 7.2 Part A of the examination is not 'patient-facing'. Candidates are therefore permitted to wear smart casual clothes.
- 7.3 Part B of the examination is 'patient-facing'. Candidates may wear clothing commensurate with working in a simulated pre-hospital clinical environment. This may include one-piece and two-piece protective overalls at the discretion of the candidate. Helmets and high visibility jackets are not required.
- 7.4 If a candidate chooses to wear protective overalls, all markings that demonstrate the candidate's profession or professional position must be covered or removed. Similarly, clothing should not have badges or labels that name or illustrate commercial sponsors and/or particular hospitals or pre-hospital services, including NHS services. These badges or labels should either be removed or covered.

8. RESULTS

Results will be placed on the College website and sent out in the post.

9. FEEDBACK

- 9.1 All candidates will be notified of the minimum mark required to pass each part of the examination together with their achieved mark for both parts of the examination. Individual feedback will be provided for candidates who do not pass the DIMC exam within a specific 'feedback letter'.
- 9.2 For PHEM Trainees, the Examinations Section of the RCSEd will provide results to the candidate's PHEM Training Programme Director and the IBTPHEM training committee chair.

10. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EXAMINATION

- 10.1 Candidates who wish to withdraw an application for admission to any part of the examination must submit a request in writing to the College. A refund of the fee paid may be made (less an administrative fee of 20%), provided that notice of intention to withdraw is received by the Examinations Section before the closing date by which applications are due, as shown in the examinations calendar. Refunds are not normally made to candidates who withdraw after the closing date.
- 10.2 Candidates who wish to withdraw an application for admission to any part of the examination on medical, employment, compassionate or visa refusal grounds must submit a request in writing to the College. Applications for consideration of a refund on medical grounds must be accompanied by a medical certificate. Applications for consideration of a refund on employment grounds must be accompanied by a letter from the lead of the employing organisation. Applications for consideration of a refund on compassionate grounds should be supported by the Consultant/tutor responsible for training or from another appropriate professional. Applications for consideration of a refund on the grounds of being refused a visa must be accompanied by a refusal letter from the Embassy/Consulate. Each such application must be submitted to the Examinations Section within 14 days following the date of the candidate's programmed examination date.
- 10.3 Examination candidacy during pregnancy
- 10.3.1 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 effect on her performance.

10.3.2 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.

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

11. CANDIDATES WITH SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 An application for special consideration must be supported by written evidence in the form of a medical report from a General Practitioner or appropriate specialist for medical conditions or a letter of support from the candidate's Consultant trainer or Postgraduate Dean for other circumstances. In certain cases, such as dyslexia, a current Dyslexia Assessment report from an educational psychologist will be required. In the case of a temporary disability due to ill health or accident which occurs after the application has been submitted, the candidate must inform the Examinations Office/Section as soon as possible before the examination.
- 11.3 Each individual case will be separately assessed. Each candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the application for special consideration and of the arrangements that will be made to meet his/her needs.

12. IMPROPER CONDUCT BY EXAMINATION CANDIDATES

- 12.1 In the case of improper conduct of an examination candidate, as defined below, the College may impose a penalty relating to the candidate's eligibility for the relevant or future examination. Improper conduct is defined as:
 - 12.1.1 Dishonestly obtaining or attempting to obtain entry to the examination by making false claims about eligibility for the examination, or falsifying any aspects of the entry documentation.
 - 12.1.2 Obtaining or seeking to obtain unfair advantage during an examination, or inciting other candidates to do the same. Examples of unfair advantage are:
 - 12.1.2.1 having on the person any material that would give advantage in an examination once the examination has commenced (this includes electronic communication devices);
 - 12.1.2.2 communicating, or attempting to communicate, with another candidate, once the examination has commenced;
 - 12.1.2.3 refusing to follow the instructions given by invigilators, examiners or examinations staff concerning the conduct of, and procedure for, the examination.

This list is not exhaustive.
- 12.1.3 Removing or attempting to remove from the examination any confidential material relating to the examination.

12.1.4 Obtaining or attempting to obtain confidential information concerning the examination from an examiner or examination official.

12.1.5 Passing confidential information on the content of the examination to a third party.

12.1.6 This list is not exhaustive. Further information can be obtained from the guidelines on suspected malpractice available on the College website at www.rcsed.ac.uk.

12.2 If a candidate is found to have acted improperly, his/her name may be reported to his/her national authority and/or registration body. The college may also on an individual basis decide that a candidate should not be allowed to proceed further with the examination or, having passed the examination, be awarded the examination.

13. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

Candidates wishing to lodge a complaint or appeal must do so in accordance with the College Examinations Complaints and Appeals Procedure. The full procedural document can be downloaded from the College website at www.rcsed.ac.uk or obtained from:

Examination Section
The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
Nicolson Street
Edinburgh
EH8 9DW
SCOTLAND

Email: IMC.exams@rcsed.ac.uk

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 Examination Section will be able to advise you:

Tel: +44 (0) 131 527 1600
Email: IMC.exams@rcsed.ac.uk

TEMPORARY DEROGATIONS/ADAPTATIONS TO THE REGULATIONS DETAILED ABOVE DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1.3 The content of the examination will be based on current United Kingdom medical practice prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. International candidates must adapt their answers or clinical problem solving to UK clinical practice, guidelines and consensus statements. So, unless specifically stated otherwise in the question or OSPE station, you should answer or act in a way as if Covid-19 does not exist (other than wearing personal protective equipment if required/requested to do so by the RCS Ed at the time of your examination). This derogation currently applies to the January 2021 and July 2021 diets only and will be reviewed.

1.4 Any candidate who failed either part of the examination in the January 2019, July 2019 or in January 2020 will be able to re-sit the relevant component alone provided it is within 30 months of the first attempt.

1.5 Unless that clothing or item is part of essential personal protective equipment being worn by the candidate to mitigate against the risk of spreading covid-19.

4.1 Candidates applying for the DIMC under these regulations are required to pass the examination within eight years of their first attempt at the examination, if that first attempt was taken in January 2020.

7.3 – Candidates are however expected to bring their own 'eye protection' with them