

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

Terms of Reference

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

(September 2022)

Table of Contents

	Page	
A1	Introduction	2
A2	Aim of the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE)	2
A3	Membership of the JCIE	3
A4	Terms of Reference of the JCIE	3
A5	Membership of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQA)	4
A6	Terms of Reference for the Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQA)	4
A7	Membership of the Intercollegiate Specialty Boards (ISB)	5
A8	Terms of Reference for each Intercollegiate Specialty Board	5
A9	Conditions for Appointment to the Panels of Examiners	6
A10	Conditions for Appointment to the Panels of Assessors	7
A11	Conditions for Appointment of Chair Section 1 Question Writing Groups	8
A12	Conditions for Appointment of Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers Section 1	9
A13	Conditions for Appointment to Panels of Question Writers Section 1	9
A14	Conditions for Appointment of Chair Section 2 Question Writing Groups	10
A15	Conditions for Appointment of Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers Section 2	11
A16	Conditions for Appointment to Panels of Question Writers Section 2	11

A1. Introduction

The Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE) is responsible, in line with the statutory requirements of the GMC, to the Presidents and through them the Councils of the four surgical Royal Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland, for the supervision of standards, policies, Regulations and professional conduct of the Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations (Specialty Fellowship Examinations). Governance of the JCIE and Intercollegiate Specialty Boards is through the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.

Success in the examination is a mandatory requirement for surgical trainees working towards the award of Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) by the GMC or for the award of Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) by the Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee.

The examination Regulations were opened out in November 2006 to allow those not in training to enter the examination and to use success in the examination as evidence when applying to the GMC for entry to the Specialist Register under the CESR route. Applicants must be six years medically qualified and must provide evidence of having reached the standard of clinical competence as defined in the Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum of a day one Consultant in the generality of the specialty. This evidence takes the format of three structured references. All three referees must be on the UK or Irish Register and must have current (within the last two years) working knowledge of the applicant.

The Secretariat, based in Edinburgh, provides the management infrastructure to support the JCIE, the Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Committee and its ten Specialty Boards. The Secretariat is responsible for the management and conduct of the Specialty Fellowship Examinations (Section 2) conducted throughout the UK and Ireland. The Secretariat is also responsible for managing and hosting the Section 1 MCQ Question Banks, and the Section 2 Question Banks (oral questions and clinical scenarios) and for providing support to examiners and question writers.

The JCIE is also responsible to the Presidents and through them the Councils of the four Surgical Royal Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland, for the supervision of standards, policies, Regulations and professional conduct of the Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examinations (Specialty Fellowship Examinations).

The Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum Programme (ISCP) is responsible for the on-going development of the curricula and the Joint Committee on Surgical Training (JCST) is responsible for the training programmes.

A2. Aim of the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE)

The aim of the JCIE is to ensure that there is a professional examination system in place which will assess and report fairly and conscientiously whether a candidate possesses the knowledge and necessary practical abilities in diagnosis and planning of care to meet the required standard. The standard is the level of a day one Consultant in the generality of the specialty in UK and Ireland.

The JCIE is supported by ten Intercollegiate Specialty Boards, one for each of the following surgical specialties:

- Cardiothoracic Surgery
- General Surgery
- Neurosurgery
- Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Otolaryngology
- Paediatric Surgery
- Plastic Surgery
- Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery

The Boards are responsible to the JCIE for maintaining/developing the format, scope, conduct and blueprinting of the specialty examinations and for ensuring the examinations are conducted in a fair, objective and reproducible manner using a broad range of assessment tools such as Multiple Choice Questions in Single Best Answer (SBA) format (Section 1) and Clinical Examinations with and without volunteers (Section 2).

In addition to the ten Intercollegiate Specialty Boards the JCIE is supported by an IQA Committee whose remit is to report on the quality of the examination outcomes.

A3. Membership of the JCIE

Membership of the JCIE:

- Chair, JCIE
- Chair of each of the ten Specialty Boards
- Chair, IQA Committee
- Chair, JCST *ex officio*
- One representative from COPMed
- The four Presidents or their nominated representatives *ex officio*
- Chair or representative of the Intercollegiate Basic Surgical Examination (ICBSE) *ex officio*
- Lay Representative

In attendance:

- Chair, Section 1 Question Writing Groups
- Chair, Section 2 Question Writing Groups
- Head of Operations
- Senior Managers
- Specialty Managers
- Trainee representative (ASiT/BOTA) – must be post-Intercollegiate Specialty Examination

The term of appointment for the JCIE Chair is normally three years. The process for appointment is through advertisement, selection and interview. The post is advertised to all current Boards, Panels of Examiners and Assessors and to those who have demitted from either the Boards or Panels of Examiners or Assessors within the last 12 months. The current Chair would not be eligible for re-election. If the Chair is a current examiner then that person would be required to step down from examining.

The interview Panel:

- The President from each of the four surgical Royal Colleges or nominated representatives
- In attendance: Head of Operations

A4. Terms of Reference of the JCIE

The terms of reference of the JCIE are to:

1. Keep under general review Examination Regulations in line with changes in training; format and scope in line with changes in curricula for each specialty and conduct of the Examinations in line with good practice.
2. Implement agreed policy for all matters relating to the Specialty Fellowship Examinations and make recommendations for change as necessary.
3. Ensure on-going strategic planning and development of examinations.
4. Maintain consistency of approach within the Boards and their examinations.
5. Ensure the provision of training and guidance for Examiners and to monitor assessment of Examiners' examining techniques and conduct of the examinations.
6. Ensure compliance with the relevant Acts of Parliament e.g. Data Protection and Equal Opportunities.
7. Ensure effective quality assurance of examinations.
8. Maintain records of results, review and monitor examination outcomes and distribute relevant information to relevant stakeholders.
9. Maintain a Register of candidates for each of the Specialty Examinations.
10. Notify Colleges of successful candidates for the award of the Fellowship in the specialty.
11. Implement Appeals, Complaints, Mitigating Circumstances & Reasonable Adjustments procedure where necessary.
12. Ensure that the activities of the JCIE and the Boards are administered on a truly intercollegiate basis.
13. Ensure that the necessary framework and efficient administrative / management infrastructure are in place to support the work of the JCIE, IQA and the ten Intercollegiate Specialty Boards.
14. Submit audited accounts and draft budgets to the Colleges through the Planning & Review Group.
15. Keep under regular review all Regulations and documentation relating to the conduct of the Specialty Fellowship Examinations.

A5. Membership of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQA)

Membership of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee:

- Chair, IQA Committee
- Chair, JCIE *ex officio*
- A representative from each of the ten surgical specialties nominated by the Specialty Board
- Lay/Patient Representative
- Trainee Representative – must be post-Intercollegiate Specialty Examination
- Educational Advisor
- Representative of Examiner Assessors
- Representative from COPMed
- Representative from JCST

In attendance

- Head of Operations
- Senior Manager for IQA

The term of appointment for the JCIE IQA Chair is 3 years. The process for appointment is through advertisement, selection and interview. The post is advertised to all current Boards, Panels of Examiners and Assessors and to those who have demitted from either the Boards or Panels of Examiners or Assessors within the last 12 months. The current Chair would not be eligible for re-election. If the Chair is a current examiner then that person would be required to step down from examining.

The interview Panel:

- Vice President or representative from one of the Colleges (in rotation)
- Chair, JCIE
- JCIE Lay Representative
- In attendance: Head of Operations

A6. Terms of Reference for the Internal Quality Assurance Committee (IQA)

The objectives of the IQA Committee will be to monitor and review all components of the Specialty Fellowship Examinations across the ten surgical specialties and to ensure that the highest possible standards are achieved and retained. The Committee will report directly to the JCIE.

The terms of reference of the IQA Committee:

1. Monitor and review standard setting, validity, reliability and the quality of candidate and examiner experience.
2. Develop and evaluate quality assurance mechanisms and keep them under review.
3. Evaluate and audit the results of each examination sitting.
4. Monitor question performance reliability for the MCQ papers, orals and communication skills scenarios.
5. Appoint and monitor appraisers of examiners (Assessors) who will feed back individual findings to the examiner by a written report, and, if necessary, at the time of the examination. Assessment of examiners will be undertaken by medically and non-medically qualified Assessors who have been trained in assessing; this training is the responsibility of the IQA Committee.
6. Analysis of individual examiner assessment data as appropriate.
7. Regular review of Examiner Assessor reports.
8. Regular review of candidate performance statistics to include equality and diversity.
9. Make recommendations for quality improvement, highlighting areas to be improved.
10. Incorporate the views of other stakeholders such as candidates, patient representatives, trainees who have passed the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination, Consultant trainers, programme directors and postgraduate deans or their representatives.
11. Ensure that each part of the examination is based on and referenced to Good Medical Practice, and is fit for the stated purpose.
12. Provide reports as required by the JCIE, for relevant stakeholders.
13. Act on matters referred to it by the JCIE.

A7. Membership of the Intercollegiate Specialty Boards (ISB)

Each Specialty Board comprises:

- One representative appointed by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
- One representative appointed by the Royal College of Surgeons of England
- One representative appointed by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow
- One representative appointed by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- Two representatives elected by the appropriate Specialty Association/Society
- Leader, Panel of Question Writers Section 1
- Leader, Panel of Question Writers Section 2
- JSCFE Lead - assuming the role of Chair at JSCFE Section 2 examinations
- SAC Chair *ex officio*

In Attendance

- Head of Operations
- Specialty Manager (Examinations)
- Internal Quality Assurance Representative - nominated from within the Board or Panel of Examiners
- Trainee Representative - must be post-Intercollegiate Specialty Examination

The term of appointment for Board Chair is normally 3 years but, in exceptional circumstances and at the JCIE Chair's discretion, may be extended for up to one further year. The process for appointment is through advertisement, selection and interview. The post is advertised to the current Board, Panels of Examiners and Assessors and to those who have demitted from either the Board or Panels of Examiners or Assessors within the last 12 months. The current Chair would not be eligible for re-election. The SAC Chair is not eligible to stand as Chair of the Board.

The interview Panel will consist of the following:

- Vice President or representative from one of the Colleges (in rotation)
- President or nominated senior representative of the Specialty Association
- Chair, JCIE
- Representative from either the Specialty Board or Panel of Examiners
- In attendance: Head of Operations

The term of office for Board Members is 5 years with the exception of the JSCFE Lead who is appointed for 3 years and the SAC Chair who is appointed for either 2 or 3 years (determined by the JCST).

The Colleges and Specialty Associations/Societies will appoint their representatives. Members of the Board are automatically appointed to the Panel of Examiners and must therefore comply with the Criteria for Appointment to the Panel of Examiners (A9).

The process for appointment of Leader, Panel of Question Writers Section 1, Leader, Panel of Question Writers Section 2 and JSCFE Lead is through advertisement and selection by the Specialty Board. The posts are advertised to the current Board, Panels of Examiners and Assessors and to those who have demitted from either the Board or Panels of Examiners or Assessors within the last 12 months.

The Honorary Secretary is appointed for 3 years and is nominated from, and elected by, the existing membership. If more than one nomination is received then a confidential ballot is conducted. The Honorary Secretary's term on the Board may have to be extended to complete the three year period.

A8. Terms of Reference for each Intercollegiate Specialty Board

1. Responsibility for the overall conduct of the Specialty Fellowship Examinations in accordance with policies of the Colleges and the JCIE including equal opportunities and diversity and examiner assessments.
2. Responsibility to commit the time necessary to participate in the twice/thrice yearly Board Meetings.
3. Responsibility for the audit, review and development of the examination to maintain validity, reliability and reproducibility.

4. Review, develop and modify examination format and scope, guidance notes as necessary in line with JCIE policies so that the content reflects changes in training and curricula.
5. Determine candidate eligibility to sit the examinations in accordance with criteria laid down in the Regulations.
6. Ensure the availability and suitability of examination facilities which provide a supportive environment conducive to candidates being able to properly achieve their potential.
7. Provide briefings for candidates, examiners, assessors and observers to ensure that they are fully aware of the procedures.
8. Conduct of the Calibration Session prior to the examination and Examiners' Review Meeting after the examination in accordance with the guidance notes.
9. Provide internal quality assurance both for the set up and conduct of examinations – monitored on a regular basis and, through JCIE, co-operate with external quality assurance.
10. Ensure openness to the examination procedures by welcoming appropriate outside observers and ensuring compliance with the code of practice for external observers.
11. Advertise, consider applications and recommend appointments to the Panel of Examiners in accordance with JCIE guidelines.
12. Appointment of Examiner Assessors in line with JCIE guidelines.
13. Appointment of the Leader, Panel of Question Writers Section 1, Leader, Panel of Question Writers Section 2 and JSCFE Lead from the existing membership of the Panel of Examiners.
14. Approval of the appointment of members to the Panel of Question Writers for Section 1.

A9. Conditions of Appointment to the Panels of Examiners

Examiners will be appointed, in open competition, by each Specialty Board after consideration of applications received in response to advertisements placed in College Journals and via the Specialty Associations (or otherwise) and approved by the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations. Appointments are for a period of 5 years commencing from the date of their first examination. Examiners who complete 5 years on the Panel may be invited, at the discretion of the Board, to continue for a further and final period of up to 5 years. Examiners will automatically retire from the Panel of Examiners when they no longer have a licence to practise. Examiners who retire from clinical practice and providing they have renewed their licence to practise in advance of retirement, are permitted to continue to examine for three years' post-retirement.

Examiners are permitted to deliver presentations/lectures on the scope and format of Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations and the JSCFE, and how best to prepare for them, via any platform. Examiners must not, however, participate in any mock oral or clinical examination practice sessions, irrespective of whether this be part of a commercial course or a local/regional educational provider (e.g. School of Surgery, Deanery, Royal College). It is expected, however, that examiners will assist with the preparation of candidates currently working with them as part of their day-to-day role as a Trainer, with the proviso that they do not use any JCIE related materials.

As an examiner for the JCIE, there is a requirement that you are in 'good standing' with the GMC/IMC. If you are not in 'good standing' with the GMC/IMC, you must inform us via the JCIE Head of Operations and with immediate effect refrain from any participation in JCIE activities. For our purposes, 'not in good standing' refers to either an interim order being issued and/or conditions or restrictions having been placed on practice. Any employer restriction on clinical practice and/or suspension from the workplace must be also declared and you must refrain from any participation in JCIE activities.

Criteria for Appointment to the Panels of Examiners

Applicants are required to provide two supportive structured references, one from the Chief Executive/Medical Director [with regard to Trust approval for examination commitments] and the other from either the Chair of the Surgical Training Committee or the Regional Training Programme Director [with regard to the applicant's teaching, training and examining abilities].

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

1. be a Fellow of and in good standing with one of the four surgical Royal Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland.
2. have a licence to practise and hold a substantive (min 5 years) Consultant post in the National Health Service/Public Health Service (Ireland) or have held a substantive Consultant post within the past 5 years.
3. be in 'good standing' with the GMC.

For our purposes, 'not in good standing' refers to either an interim order being issued and/or conditions or restrictions having been placed on practice by the GMC or employer and/or suspension from the workplace.

4. have significant previous examining experience (e.g. MRCS or University undergraduate) or formal trainee assessment experience.
5. be able to complete one term of office (5 years) before retirement
6. have approval of the Chief Executive or Medical Director to commit the time necessary to undertake this important educational role [Structured Reference A].
7. be prepared to relinquish any involvement or participation in crammer examination revision courses.
8. agree to adhere to the GMC published guidelines on social media (<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/doctors-use-of-social-media>).

For our purposes, this includes an agreement not to post material directly or indirectly relating to any examination activities.

Person Specification

Applicants must:

1. be able to demonstrate a policy of courtesy, fairness, and non-discrimination [Structured Reference B]
2. have high professional standards and a commitment to the teaching and development of surgeons in training [Structured Reference B]
3. have a commitment to continuing professional development and research (including publications) with up-to-date specialist knowledge [Structured Reference A]
4. have an enthusiasm for, competence in and loyalty to the surgical profession [Structured Reference B]
5. have a commitment to the professional conduct and development of the examinations and a willingness to provide the time necessary to honour commitments to write questions and attend examinations [Signed Declaration - Application Form]
6. have commitment to on-going assessment, training and development as an examiner including participation in Internal Quality Assurance processes [Signed Declaration - Application Form]
7. be able to demonstrate specialist knowledge in the areas of the needs and requirements of the relevant Intercollegiate Specialty Board

A10. Conditions for Appointment to the Panels of Assessors

Assessors will normally, but not exclusively, be drawn from the Panels of Examiners, or from lay members who have relevant experience in carrying out assessments and providing constructive feedback. The secondary yet important role of an Assessor is to act as external evaluator/quality assurer of the examination processes and procedures and to provide feedback to the Board on the suitability of the examination venues/facilities and conduct of the examination for which written feedback will be provided to the Board.

Assessors will be appointed, in open competition, by each Specialty Board after consideration of applications received in response to requests for expressions of interest circulated by Board Chairs and final approval by the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations Internal Quality Assurance Committee. Appointments are for a period of 3 years commencing from the date of their first examination. Assessors who retire from clinical practice are permitted to continue to assess for three years after relinquishing their licence to practise.

Assessors are permitted to deliver presentations/lectures on the scope and format of Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations and the JSCFE, and how best to prepare for them, via any platform. Assessors must not, however, participate in any mock oral or clinical examination practice sessions, irrespective of whether this be part of a commercial course or a local/regional educational provider (e.g. School of Surgery, Deanery, Royal College). It is expected, however, that assessors will assist with the preparation of candidates currently working with them as part of their day-to-day role as a Trainer, with the proviso that they do not use any JCIE related materials.

As an assessor for the JCIE, there is a requirement that you are in 'good standing' with the GMC/IMC. If you are not in 'good standing' with the GMC/IMC, you must inform us via the JCIE Head of Operations and with immediate effect refrain from any participation in JCIE activities. For our purposes, 'not in good standing' refers to either an interim order being issued and/or conditions or restrictions having been placed on practice. Any employer restriction on clinical practice and/or suspension from the workplace must be also declared and you must refrain from any participation in JCIE activities.

Criteria for Appointment to the Panels of Assessors

Applicants are required to be supported by the relevant Specialty Board Chair and provide detail on length of term on the Panel of Examiners, attendance at examinations, involvement in Standard Setting & Question Writing Group meetings.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

1. be a Fellow of and in good standing with one of the four Royal Surgical Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland
2. hold and licence to practise, or have held a licence to practise in the past 3 years
3. be in 'good standing' with the GMC/IMC and employer
4. For our purposes, 'not in good standing' refers to either an interim order being issued and/or conditions or restrictions having been placed on practice by the GMC/IMC or employer and/or suspension from the workplace.
5. have satisfactorily completed 10 years of examining for the relevant Intercollegiate Specialty Board
6. have the approval of their Employer's Chief Executive or Medical Director to commit the time necessary to undertake this important educational role (if in salaried NHS or equivalent post)
7. be prepared to relinquish any involvement or participation in any mock oral or clinical examination practice sessions
8. agree to adhere to the GMC published guidelines on social media
9. (<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/doctors-use-of-social-media>).
10. For our purposes, this includes an agreement not to post material directly or indirectly relating to any examination activities.

Person Specification

Applicants must:

1. be able to demonstrate a policy of courtesy, fairness, and non-discrimination
2. have high professional standards and a commitment to the teaching and development of surgeons in training
3. have a commitment to continuing professional development and research (including publications) with up-to-date specialist knowledge
4. have an enthusiasm for, competence in, and loyalty to the surgical profession
5. have a commitment to the professional conduct and development of the examinations and a willingness to provide the time necessary to honour commitments to write questions and attend examinations
6. have commitment to on-going assessment, training and development as an assessor including participation in Internal Quality Assurance processes
7. be able to demonstrate specialist knowledge in the areas of the needs and requirements of the relevant Intercollegiate Specialty Board

A11. Conditions for Appointment of Chair, Section 1 Question Writing Groups

The term of appointment for the Chair, Section 1 Question Writing Groups is 3 years. The process for appointment is through advertisement from within the current Panels of Examiners, selection and interview. A broad knowledge of the current examination system, a commitment to the continuing professional conduct and development of the examinations and a willingness to commit the time necessary to fulfil this post is required. Reporting directly to the JCIE Chair and Head of Operations, the Chair will be responsible for compliance with the policies and guidelines of the JCIE. The Chair will ultimately be responsible for coordinating the activities of the Panels of Question Writers and for the timely delivery of quality assured examination papers for the Section 1 Examinations across 10 surgical specialties.

The interview Panel will consist of the following:

- Chair, JCIE
- Chair, IQA Committee
- One Specialty Board Chair
- In attendance: Head of Operations

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

In consultation with the JCIE Chair and Head of Operations, the Chair, Section 1 Question Writing Groups will have overall responsibility for the activities of ten Specialty Writing Groups as follows:

1. To maintain, in collaboration with MCQ Bank Managers, the Section 1 question banks' coding structure for each specialty, to reflect ISCP curricula/Good Medical Practice, and to allow blueprinting.
2. To meet the internal quality assurance requirements for the Section 1 examination papers in accordance with JCIE policies.
3. To maintain and develop, in collaboration with the JCIE Psychometrician, good practice in assessment including standard setting, review of question item analyses and audit and review of examination results and question paper performance.
4. To provide support to the ten Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers for Section 1.
5. To review and audit Section 1 examination papers, in collaboration with the Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers for Section 1, to ensure blueprinting to Good Medical Practice and ISCP curricula.
6. Attendance at the JCIE and JCIE IQA meetings to report on the Section 1 examination outcomes on behalf of the ten Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers for Section 1.
7. To develop the examination in relation to educational and technological advances.
8. To promote a cohesive working environment.

A12. Conditions for Appointment of Leader, Panel of Question Writers (Section 1)

The Leader, Panel of Question Writers for Section 1 will be selected by the relevant Board from within the current Panel of Examiners. The appointment will be for a period of 5 years, succession planning in Year 4, by approval of the relevant Specialty Board. The Leader of a Panel must have a keen interest in continuing medical education, an enthusiasm for writing Single Best Answer (SBA) questions and a willingness to provide the time necessary to honour the commitments of this post. The Leader will report directly to the relevant Board, Chair of the Section 1 Question Writing Groups, JCIE Chair and Head of Operations for compliance with the policies and guidelines of the JCIE. The Leader will ultimately be responsible for the timely delivery of quality assured examination papers for the Section 1 Examinations in the relevant surgical specialty.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

In consultation with the Head of Operations, the Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers will be responsible to the Chair, Section 1 Question Writing Groups and the Board Chair in their Specialty for:

1. Developing, training and supporting members of the writing group in order to deliver quality assured questions for the Section 1 question banks.
2. Working closely with the MCQ Bank Managers to ensure that the coding structure reflects the ISCP curricula and four domains of Good Medical Practice (GMP).
3. Working with the question bank managers, to produce and validate final examination papers ensuring that these are mapped to ISCP curricula and the four domains of GMP.
4. Ensuring good internal quality control of examination papers in accordance with good assessment process.
5. Collaboration with the JCIE Psychometrician and question bank managers, to maintain good Standard Setting processes and procedures, including analyses and performance of questions and elimination where necessary.
6. Carrying out audit and review of examination results and question paper performance.
7. Overseeing the blueprinting of Section 1 Examinations.

A13. Conditions for Appointment to the Panel of Question Writers (Section 1)

Applicants to the Panel of Question Writers must have a keen interest in continuing medical education and an enthusiasm for writing Single Best Answer (SBA) questions for Section 1 of the Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations. Newly appointed Members will be provided with training in SBA writing. Members of the Panel of Question Writers for Section 1 are required to hold a Fellowship of one of the four Surgical Royal Colleges and must hold a substantive Consultant or SAS surgeon post in the UK or Ireland. Applications from both experienced and newly appointed Consultants and SAS surgeons are encouraged and welcomed. SAS surgeons who are applying will have been successful in the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination.

The standard method of appointment is by submission of an application form to the Intercollegiate Specialty Boards. Applications are assessed by the Specialty Leader, Panel of Question Writers and are subject to the

formal approval of the relevant Intercollegiate Specialty Board. Appointment to the Panel of Question Writers would preclude Question Writers from any involvement or participation in crammer MCQ examination revision courses and applicants must be prepared to relinquish any such involvement. Appointment to the Panel of Question Writers for Section 1 is for an initial period of three years but may be extended up to 5 years. Question Writers will automatically retire from the Panel when they no longer have a licence to practise. Question Writers who retire from clinical practice and providing they have renewed their licence to practise in advance of retirement, are permitted to continue to on the Panel for three years' post-retirement.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

1. be a Fellow of and in good standing with one of the four surgical Royal Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland. SAS surgeons will have been successful in the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination.
2. have a licence to practise and hold a substantive, newly appointed or otherwise, Consultant or SAS surgeon post within the National Health Service or Public Health Service (Ireland).
3. be in 'good standing' with the GMC
For our purposes, 'not in good standing' refers to either an interim order being issued and/or conditions or restrictions having been placed on practice by the GMC or employer and/or suspension from the workplace.
4. have a keen interest in continuing medical education and an enthusiasm for constructing written test questions for Section 1 of the Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations.
5. be prepared to relinquish any involvement or participation in any crammer MCQ examination revision courses.
6. agree to adhere to the GMC published guidelines on social media
<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/doctors-use-of-social-media>
For our purposes, this includes an agreement not to post material directly or indirectly relating to any examination activities.

Person Specification

Members are required to:

1. be familiar with training and the ISCP curriculum for the relevant specialty.
2. have an ability to be able to work well in a group situation.
3. familiarise themselves with the document 'Constructing Written Test Questions for the Basic and Clinical Sciences'. This document can be downloaded from:
<https://www.nbme.org/publications/item-writing-manual.html>
4. demonstrate a willingness and ability to produce, critically assess, validate and quality assure MCQs for the Section 1 Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations.
5. have the support of their colleagues in order to commit the time necessary to attend approximately two/three meetings of the Writing Group each year.
6. provide a signed Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Form.

A14. Conditions for Appointment of Chair, Section 2 Question Writing Groups

The term of appointment for the Chair, Section 2 Question Writing Groups is 3 years. The process for appointment is through advertisement from within the current Panels of Examiners, selection and interview. A broad knowledge of the current examination system, a commitment to the continuing professional conduct and development of the examinations and a willingness to commit the time necessary to fulfil this post is required. Reporting directly to the JCIE Chair and Head of Operations, the Chair will be responsible for compliance with the policies and guidelines of the JCIE. The Chair will ultimately be responsible for coordinating the activities of the Panels of Question Writers and for the timely delivery of quality assured examination questions for the Section 2 Examinations across the 10 surgical specialties.

The interview Panel will consist of the following:

- Chair, JCIE
- Chair, IQA Committee
- One Specialty Board Chair
- In attendance: Head of Operations

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

In consultation with the JCIE Chair and Head of Operations, the Chair, Section 2 Question Writing Groups will have overall responsibility for the activities of ten Specialty Writing Groups as follows:

1. To maintain, in collaboration with Oral Question Bank Manager, the Section 2 question banks' coding structure for each specialty, to reflect ISCP curricula/Good Medical Practice, and to allow blueprinting.
2. To promote and coordinate the ongoing development of clinical scenarios required for Section 2 examinations from 2022 onwards.
3. To meet the internal quality assurance requirements for the Section 2 examinations in accordance with JCIE policies.
4. To maintain and develop, in collaboration with the JCIE Psychometrician, good practice in assessment including calibration and review of question performance.
5. To provide support to the ten Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers for Section 2.
6. To review and audit Section 2 examination questions, in collaboration with the Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers for Section 2, to ensure blueprinting to Good Medical Practice and ISCP curricula.
7. Attendance at the JCIE and JCIE IQA meetings to report on the work of the Section 2 Question Writing Groups on behalf of the ten Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers for Section 2.
8. To develop the examination in relation to educational and technological advances.
9. To promote a cohesive working environment.

A15. Conditions for Appointment of Leader, Panel of Question Writers (Section 2)

The Leader, Panel of Question Writers for Section 2 will be selected by the relevant Board from within the Panel of Examiners. The appointment will be for a period of 5 years, succession planning in Year 4, by approval of the relevant Specialty Board. The Leader of a Panel must have a keen interest in continuing medical education, an enthusiasm for writing oral questions and a willingness to provide the time necessary to honour the commitments of this post. The Leader will report directly to the relevant Board, Chair of the Section 2 Question Writing Groups, JCIE Chair and Head of Operations for compliance with the policies and guidelines of the JCIE. The Leader will ultimately be responsible for the timely delivery of quality assured examination questions for the Section 2 Examinations in the relevant surgical specialty.

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

In consultation with the Head of Operations, the Leaders of the Panels of Question Writers will be responsible to the Chair of the Section 2 Question Writing Groups and the Board Chair in their Specialty for:

1. Developing, training and supporting members of the writing group in order to deliver quality assured questions for the Section 2 question banks.
2. Working closely with the Secretariat to ensure that the coding structure reflects the ISCP curricula and four domains of Good Medical Practice (GMP).
3. Working with the Secretariat to produce and validate final examination questions ensuring that these are mapped to ISCP curricula and the four domains of GMP.
4. Ensuring good internal quality control of examination papers in accordance with good assessment process.
5. Collaboration with the JCIE Psychometrician and Secretariat to maintain good Calibration processes and procedures, including analyses and performance of questions and elimination where necessary.
6. Carrying out audit and review of examination results and question performance.
7. Overseeing the blueprinting of Section 2 Examinations.

A16. Conditions for Appointment to Panel of Question Writers (Section 2)

The Panel of Question Writers [Section 2] is drawn from the current Panel of Examiners in the specialty. Members therefore must comply with the Conditions of Appointment to the Panel of Examiners. Each year all current Members of the Panels of Examiners will be invited to attend two/three meetings of the Oral Question Writing Group for the specialty.