Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Vascular Surgery

Regulations
2015

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Regulations Relating to the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Vascular Surgery (2015)

(to be read in conjunction with appropriate Guidance Notes for Applicants)

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1. The applicant must hold a medical qualification recognised for registration by the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom or the Medical Council of Ireland. The applicant must have been qualified for at least six years.

2. The applicant must provide evidence of having reached the standard of clinical competence defined in the Intercollegiate Surgical Curriculum either for the award of the Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) by the General Medical Council or for the award of Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) by the Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee. The required standard may have been achieved through training or qualifications, and experience considered together. The passing of the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination alone does not imply that the CCT, CCST (Ireland) or placement on the Specialist Register will be automatic; the Examination will form only part of the evidence required.

3. This evidence must consist of three structured references in the format prescribed by the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE). These references must be completed by the appropriate senior colleagues with direct experience of the applicant's current clinical practice in the appropriate specialty as defined in the Guidance Notes for Referees.

4. Candidates will have up to a maximum of 7 years to complete the examination process as follows:

   Section 1: Candidates will have a two year period from their 1st attempt with a maximum of 4 attempts with no re-entry.

   Candidates who have achieved the required standard in Section 1 and have been granted eligibility to proceed to Section 2 the following will apply:

   Section 2: Candidates will have a maximum of 4 attempts with no re-entry.

   Candidates will have a maximum of 4 attempts in totality at each Section across both the Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations and the Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examinations i.e. the total of 4 attempts applies to the Intercollegiate Specialty Examinations and the Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examinations alone or any combination of the two.

   All previous Regulations will be rescinded.

Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Vascular Surgery

Guide to the Scope and Format of the Examination
Applicable to Irish surgical trainees and for UK trainees appointed to a Vascular Surgery NTN post after 1 Jan 2013.

Section 1 is a written test* composed of two Single Best Answer papers. These papers are carefully prepared to cover the curriculum content which can be best assessed in this way. A process of standard setting is performed by trained and experienced examiners to set the eligibility to proceed mark. Section 1 examinations are delivered via computer-based testing at Pearson VUE Test Centres in the UK and Ireland.

Candidates must meet the required standard in Section 1 in order to gain eligibility to proceed to Section 2.

Paper 1 120 Single Best Answer [SBA] (2 hours 15 mins)
Paper 2 120 Single Best Answer [SBA] (2 hours 15 mins)

***** Case, S.M. & Swanson, D.B. (2001). Constructing written test questions for basic and clinical sciences. 3rd Edn. National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), Philadelphia, USA.
(PDF) Constructing Written Test Questions For the Basic and Clinical Sciences (retrieved on 28/08/2025).

Section 2 is the clinical component of the examination. It will consist of a series of carefully designed and structured interviews on clinical topics – some being scenario based and some being centred around volunteers. Such volunteers will be past or present patients relevant to the specialty and recruited by the host examiner. The Section 2 examinations will be held in pre-selected UK/Ireland host centres.

The format will consist of clinical and oral examinations in all aspects of Vascular Surgery. This will include the relevant aspects of anatomy, physiology and pathology.

Examination format (from August 2022)

Clinical examinations
Long Cases (x1 40 minute clinical during which 2 **volunteers** will be seen)
Short Cases (x1 40 minute clinical during which 4 **clinical scenarios** will be discussed)

Oral examinations
4 x 30 minute oral examinations as follows:

1. Case-Based Discussion - Aneurysm & Lower Limb - 2 cases will be covered
2. Case-Based Discussion - Endovascular & Miscellaneous - 2 cases will be covered
3. Emergency Vascular Surgery Oral comprising:
   Trauma - 2 themes will be covered
   Peri-operative management / critical care - 4 themes will be covered
4. Elective Vascular Surgery Oral comprising:
   Basic Principles and Interventional Radiology - 4 themes will be covered
   Academic Foundation* - covering understanding & methodology analysis, critical appraisal & interpretation
   *Academic Foundation: candidates may be tested on any one of the key published Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and important vascular papers as determined by the SAC in Vascular Surgery. The list of top RCTs and important vascular papers is available via the Vascular Surgery Curriculum https://www.iscp.ac.uk/

For further indication of the Examination Scope, candidates should consult the Curriculum as published by the SAC in Vascular Surgery [vascular-surgery-curriculum-august-2021-version-2-july-2023.pdf].

Please note that the Intercollegiate Specialty Board in Vascular Surgery reserves the right to modify the format of the examination.

The Slaney Medal gifted by the
The Vascular Society for Great Britain and Ireland

The above medal will be awarded annually, by the Board, to a candidate who achieves the highest score in the Section 2 examination at the first attempt. All awards are made at the discretion of the Board.

A candidate who is an existing Member of one of the four participating Royal Colleges (Edinburgh, England, Glasgow, Ireland) and who is successful in the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination will be promoted to the Fellowship of their college, unless they indicate another preference. **Only those who are subsequently accorded and maintain the Fellowship of a College are entitled to use that College's associated post-nominals.**

August 2025