THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH

Royal College of Surgeons of England
ADVANCING SURGICAL CARE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF GLASGOW

RCSI

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Plastic Surgery

Regulations
2015

The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
Nicolson Street Edinburgh EH8 9DW
Tel: 0131 662 9222
www.jcie.org.uk

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

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

---

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 Plastic Surgery

Guide to the Scope and Format of the Examination

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.

Examination format (from August 2022)

Clinical examinations
Long Cases (x1 30 minute clinical during which 2 **volunteers** will be seen)
Medium Cases (x1 30 minute clinical during which 3 **volunteers** will be seen)
Short Cases (x1 30 minute clinical during which 5 **clinical scenarios** will be discussed)

Oral examinations
Trauma / Burns / Adult Upper Limb (x1 30 minute oral)
Acute Head & Neck Tumours / Congenital Anomalies / Trunk & Perineal Reconstruction (x1 30 minute oral)
Generic Techniques, Complex Wounds, Vascular Anomalies & Aesthetics / Skin Cancer & Sarcoma / General Professional Capability (x1 30 minute oral)

The three orals cover the range of subjects as listed below in the Guide to the Scope of the Examination.

Trauma / Burns / Adult Upper Limb
(3 themes covered in one 30 minute Oral session)

1. Assessment, resuscitation and initial management of burns
   Surgical management
   Management of complications
2. All aspects of upper limb trauma
   Management of acute & chronic upper limb pathology
3. Facial soft tissue injuries
   Craniomaxillofacial trauma
   Lower limb trauma

Acute Head & Neck Tumours, Facial Palsy / Congenital anomalies / Trunk & Perineal reconstruction
(3 themes covered in one 30 minute Oral session)

1. Excisional surgery for benign and malignant disease of head and neck
   Major reconstruction of head and neck defects
   Facial palsy management
2. Management of children with cleft lip and palate
   Management of craniofacial deformities
   Management of congenital hand deformity
   Management of congenital ear deformity

3. Perineal reconstruction
   GU reconstruction (including hypospadias)
   Breast and chest wall reconstruction
   Pressure sore management

Generic Techniques, Complex Wounds & Aesthetics / Skin cancer, Sarcoma, Vascular Anomalies / General Professional Capability (3 themes covered in one 30 minute Oral session)

1. Generic plastic surgery techniques
   Complex wound management
   Aesthetics
2. Skin cancer
   Sarcoma
   Vascular anomalies
3. Ethical and medico-legal issues
   Consent issues
   Critical incident management
   Complaint management
   Safeguarding
   Colleague issue management

For further indication of the Examination Scope, candidates should consult the Curriculum as published by the SAC in Plastic Surgery [ISCP].

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

Ian McGregor Medal gifted by the
British Association of Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgeons

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

Mission Statement

The Intercollegiate Examiners in Plastic Surgery will assess and report fairly and conscientiously whether each candidate possesses the core knowledge and the practical abilities in diagnosis and planning of care to meet an appropriate standard for that candidate to conduct safe and competent consultant practice in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in general within the United Kingdom and Ireland.

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