**Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations**

**Guidance Notes for Applicants**

[please read carefully - these relate to new applications for examinations taking place from 1 January 2023]

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**JCIE 2015 Regulations**
It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure they present themselves fit and prepared for the examination. Candidates will have up to a maximum of 7* years to complete the examination process as follows:

**Section 1:** Candidates have 2* years (from their 1st attempt) with a maximum of 4 attempts to gain eligibility to proceed to Section 2, with no re-entry.

**Section 2:** Candidates have a maximum of 4 attempts with no re-entry.  
[*pro rata for less than full time equivalent]

**Examination Format**

**Section 1:** A written test composed of two Single Best Answer papers. These papers are carefully prepared to cover the curriculum content which can best be 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 throughout the UK and Ireland.

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

**Section 2:** Clinical component consisting of a series of carefully designed and structured interviews on clinical topics, some being scenario based (structured orals) and some being patient based. The Section 2 examinations will be held in pre-selected UK/Ireland host centres.

The standard of the pass mark is set at the level of a day one consultant in the generality of the specialty.

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**The online examination application/payment system:**
Debit/Credit cards are accepted for payment of examination fees

1. **Section 1 Applicants [first time applicants]**
   To be considered for eligibility to sit Section 1 of the Examination, applicants are required to submit an online application by 5pm GMT on the published closing date for the relevant examination.

   Applicants will be informed by email as to their eligibility status within a few weeks of the closing date.

   **The most important dates for Section 1 [first time applicants] are the following:**

   a) **Deadline for Online Registration/Application/Upload of Mandatory Documentation & Payment Date**
   The examination will close at 5pm GMT on this published date
   - Applications which are not complete by this closing date will automatically be transferred to the subsequent diet of Section 1
   b) **What you will need to hand at the time of application:**
   - Debit/Credit Card
   - GMC/IMC Number [if you do not have a GMC/IMC number then you will have to email enquiries@jcie.org.uk to be given access to the application system]
   Applicants must 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. Any change to an applicant’s status must be communicated in writing to the JCIE for
consideration of the relevant Specialty Board. Failure to do so could render an examination outcome being deemed null and void. If you are registered or anticipate being registered with the GMC then your personal data, including data about your exam results, will be passed to the GMC for quality assurance and research purposes and to facilitate the awarding of certificates of completion of training (CCTs)

- Medical Qualification – year/country obtained
- MRCS – month/year obtained
- Preferred Pearson VUE test centre location; a drop-down option list is available at the time of application
- PDF or Word of your three completed structured reference forms. Referees MUST all be on the UK or Irish Medical Register [see 4. Below] – you will be asked to attach these at the time of online application
- PDF or Word format of your Curriculum Vitae and Operative Summary – you will be asked to attach both documents at the time of online application
- PDF format of a copy of your photographic identification

c) Once you have Registered you will have created your own Personal Profile
   - You will have access to your Personal Profile at any time
   - You will be able to track your application and view your payment transaction(s)
   - For clear communication please keep your Personal Profile up to date making any relevant changes to your email and postal address

2. Section 1 [resit candidates]

- As you are already on our system you still have access to your Personal Profile but please ensure that you keep your email and postal address up to date
- Those re-sitting Section 1 who are still within the 2 year eligibility period (max 4 attempts) are not required to submit 3 new Structured References
- GMC Status: Candidates must 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. Any change to a candidate’s status must be communicated in writing to the JCIE for consideration of the relevant Specialty Board. Failure to do so could render an examination outcome being deemed null and void.

The most important dates for Section 1 resit candidates are the following:

a) Deadline for Online Registration/Application & Payment Date
   - The examination will close at 5pm GMT on this published date
   - The fee for re-sitting Section 1 will be deducted from your current balance
   - If you have a nil balance then you will automatically be prompted to pay the full examination fee
   - Applications which are not complete by this closing date will automatically be transferred to the subsequent diet of Section 1.

b) What you will need to hand at the time of application:
   - Debit/Credit Card [if applicable]

c) Expiry of Eligibility for Section 1
   - Candidates will have a period of 2 years (maximum 4 attempts), from their first attempt at Section 1, to gain eligibility to proceed to Section 2.

3. Section 2 [resit candidates]

- As you are already on our system you will still have a Personal Profile
- For clear communication, however, it is important that you keep your email and postal address up to date on your Personal Profile
- GMC Status: Candidates must 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. Any change to a candidate’s status must be communicated in writing to the JCIE Head of Operations prior to the examination. Failure to do so could render an examination outcome being deemed null and void.

The most important date for Section 2 resit candidates is the:

a) Deadline for Online Application/Payment
   - To guarantee your resit place you must complete online application and payment by this published deadline date.
   - Places cannot be guaranteed after this date.

b) What you will need to hand at the time of application:
   - Debit/Credit Card
4. Structured References

- All three referees MUST be on the UK or Irish Medical Register [referees do not require a licence to practise in the UK or Ireland] 
[referees must be in good standing with the GMC or IMC with no restrictions to practise]
- All three referees MUST have direct experience of the applicant’s current clinical practice over a minimum of a 6-month period within the last 2 years.
- Eligibility will be granted by the relevant Board based on the applicant having met all entry criteria and having submitted three supportive structured references as follows:
  
a) UK & Republic of Ireland Trainees:
  - The Training Programme Director (i.e. Principal Referee) confirms that the applicant has acquired the applied knowledge and clinical skills to be assessed at the level of a Day 1 Consultant in the generality of the Specialty
  - The applicant must be a maximum of 2 years in advance of their indicative CCT/CCST date when Section 1 is first taken
  - The applicant has received an Outcome 1 (or 10.1) in their most recent ARCP

b) Applicants not in training: All referees must be satisfied that the applicant has equivalent experience at the level stated above for UK and Republic of Ireland trainees and has had specific training in the areas of surgical practice which will be examined in the Section 2 component of the examination. The following criteria apply;
  - The applicant must have passed the MRCS examination of one of the four Surgical Royal Colleges.
  - The applicant must have undertaken a minimum of 4 years of appropriate training in those areas of surgical practice that will be examined in the Section 2 component of the examination.
  - A minimum of 1 year of this surgical practice must have been within the UK or Ireland during which time the applicant must have participated in the mandatory requirements for maintenance of professional competence as set out by the GMC (UK) or the IMC (Ireland).
  - During the time spent in the UK or Ireland the applicant must have been signed up to ISCP and there is confirmation of competency progression referenced to this.
  - For UK applicants the Trust or Health Board’s Director of Medical Education or nominated Deputy must countersign the Principal Referee form to confirm that it has been completed by an appropriate individual (see below). For Republic or Ireland applicants this role will be undertaken by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

a) Applicants in approved training posts:
  All three referees must be on the UK/Irish Medical Register.
  **One referee MUST be the trainee’s current Programme Director** and the other two must be Consultant Trainers/Supervising Consultants or Senior Colleagues in the specialty with direct experience of the trainee’s current clinical practice within the last 2 years.

b) Applicants not in training: 
  All three referees must be on the UK/Irish Medical Register.
  **One referee MUST be the applicant’s current Lead Clinician/Head of Department/Medical Director (or equivalent)** and the other two must be Senior Colleagues in the Specialty with direct experience (6 months minimum) of the applicant’s current clinical practice within the last 2 years.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that each referee receives the Guidance Notes for Referees and the Structured Reference form. The applicant must complete Section A of the Structured Reference Form. Sponsoring referees are then required to return the reference to the applicant. **It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all 3 references are uploaded at the time of online application.**

5. ‘Eligibility to Proceed’ to Section 2

Candidates having completed Section 1 and who have gained eligibility to proceed to Section 2 will be advised by email. Confirmation of the date of your Section 2 examination will also be provided.

It should be noted that places in Section 2 may be restricted and entry will be granted strictly in order of date of receipt of current application for Section 1. Please be assured that every effort is made to accommodate all candidates into their preferred option for Section 2 but this cannot be guaranteed and an alternative date may have to be given.

6. Professionalism & Probity

It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure they present themselves fit and prepared for the examination. Candidates must 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. Any change to a candidate’s status must be communicated in writing to the JCIE for consideration of the relevant Specialty Board prior to the date of the examination in question. Failure to do so could result in an examination outcome being deemed null and void.

7. Dress Code for Section 2
We suggest that candidates dress for the clinical and oral examinations in business professional attire. Candidates must be prepared to take steps to anticipate and overcome any perceived barrier to communication in advance of the examination.

8. Requests for Reasonable Adjustment
Please ensure you read the JCIE Reasonable Adjustments Policy. The Policy and submission form are at: https://www.jcie.org.uk/content/content.aspx?ID=22

9. Medical Conditions including pregnancy-related illness
A candidate who develops a medical condition or pregnancy-related problems close to the date of the examination should withdraw from the examination where it is felt that the condition would have a detrimental effect on performance. A Medical Certificate would be required.

10. Candidates who wish to withdraw prior to an examination
Fee penalties will apply to candidates who withdraw from an examination after the closing date. Candidates are not authorised to reschedule their Section 1 test with the test centre. Candidates must therefore contact the JCIE to receive the necessary authorisation. Section 2 withdrawal: transfer/ withdrawal requests from Section 2, after the Section 1 date, will incur fee penalties: (http://www.jcie.org.uk/content/content.aspx?ID=22).

11. Candidates who withdraw during an examination
Withdrawal during an examination, for whatever reason, will be counted as an attempt and candidates would normally be deemed to have failed the examination unless they fall into the category immediately below.

12. Candidates who take ill during an examination
If a candidate takes ill during an examination and is unable to complete the examination:
1. The candidate must report the illness immediately and explain the reason for leaving.
2. A Medical Certificate must be provided and must be dated on the day of withdrawal from the examination. The Medical Certificate must be sent to the JCIE within five working days of the date of withdrawal. The JCIE cannot accept Medical Certificates dated after the date of withdrawal from the examination.

13. Candidates who fail to get to the examination at the right time or on the right day
No allowance will be made for a candidate who is late for an examination or who is absent from an examination as a result of misreading the timetable. However, this would not be counted as an attempt. The candidate would normally lose the examination fee and would be required to re-apply for a future diet of the examination.

14. Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances
Please ensure you read the JCIE Mitigating Circumstances Policy. The Policy and a submission form are at: https://www.jcie.org.uk/content/content.aspx?ID=22

15. Appeals
Please ensure you read the JCIE Appeals Policy. The Policy and a submission form are at: https://www.jcie.org.uk/content/content.aspx?ID=22

16. Complaints
Please ensure you read the JCIE Complaints Policy. The Policy and a submission form are at: https://www.jcie.org.uk/content/content.aspx?ID=22