



ROYAL COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS AND  
SURGEONS OF GLASGOW



## Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

### Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Neurosurgery

### Regulations 2015

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## **Regulations relating to the Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Neurosurgery (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 Postgraduate Board or for the award of Certificate of Specialist Doctor (CSD) by the Irish Surgical Postgraduate Training Committee (ISPTC). 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, CSD (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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

All previous Regulations will be rescinded.

## Intercollegiate Specialty Examination in Neurosurgery

### 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 throughout 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. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edn. National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), Philadelphia, USA.  
[www.nbme.org/PDF/ItemWriting\\_2003/2003IWGwhole.pdf](http://www.nbme.org/PDF/ItemWriting_2003/2003IWGwhole.pdf) (retrieved on 15/12/2006).

**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 patient based. The Section 2 examinations will be held in pre-selected UK/Ireland host centres.

#### Clinical examinations

The Intermediate Cases - will be structured with approximately 5 minutes for history and summation of findings, 5 minutes for examination and presentation of salient points and 5 minutes for interpretation of findings, differential diagnosis and investigation plan, treatment options, and potential complications. (Two Cases in 30 minutes).

The Short Cases - will test categories such as: Clinical knowledge; Diagnostic acumen (including differential & justification for it); Investigations and interpretation; Treatment options; Taking consent. (Four Cases in 30 minutes).

Generic assessment of information gathering and giving, professionalism and clinical conduct, structured approach and logical order, and clinical reasoning and judgement will also be assessed for Intermediate and Short Cases.

#### Oral examinations

Three 30 minute orals in each of the following:

- a) Operative Surgery and Surgical Anatomy (30 minutes).
- b) Investigation of the Neurosurgical patient including Neuro-Radiology (30 minutes).
- c) The Non-Operative Clinical Practice of Neurosurgery (30 minutes).

For further indication of the Examination Scope, candidates should consult the Curriculum as published by the SAC in Neurosurgery [[www.iscp.ac.uk](http://www.iscp.ac.uk)].

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

## **The Norman Dott Medal**

The above medal will be awarded annually by the Board to a candidate who achieves the highest mark in the 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.**

**January 2021**