

MRCPUK Examinations

Global credentials for medical excellence

MRCPUK

Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

Welcome from the Medical Director



Professor Andrew Elder
Medical Director, MRCP(UK)



We live in an era of great change in medicine and medical education. There are many more medical graduates around the world and a rapidly escalating demand to train them to the level that high quality patient care demands. However, the structure and capacity of postgraduate training programmes vary greatly around the world and some doctors find it difficult to secure accredited training positions. As a consequence, medical migration is now an established feature of global medicine. Against this background, and irrespective of country of training, patients, employers and regulators need to be assured that doctors have the knowledge and skills to deliver the best patient care, and doctors need to be able to stand out in a competitive and international field.

The MRCP(UK) portfolio of postgraduate medical examinations tests the knowledge and skills that all patients want their doctors to have: making a correct diagnosis, planning effective and appropriate treatment, communicating with respect and sensitivity, and maintaining a constant awareness of patient safety.

Knowing that the essential qualities that make a good doctor are the same in any country, we have worked with medical colleagues over many years to develop qualifications that provide an international benchmark of attainment in medical knowledge, clinical judgement and bedside clinical skills. Physicians who pass MRCP(UK) examinations benefit from enhanced career prospects, and their patients can be assured of excellent care.

As a result, thousands of international physicians each year choose to acquire the MRCP(UK) and Specialty Certificate Examination (SCE) qualifications provided by the Federation of Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom to demonstrate their standards of medical practice.

Our goal is to work with our international partners to extend these opportunities as widely as possible, for the benefit of the profession, local and national healthcare systems, hospitals, doctors and patients. We are always looking for new ways to collaborate with, learn from and support our international colleagues.

I hope this guide provides useful information, and inspires your interest in our examinations and the many ways in which we can collaborate.

Professor Andrew Elder
Medical Director, MRCP(UK)

About MRCP(UK) and the Federation of Royal Colleges of Physicians of the UK

The Federation of Royal Colleges of Physicians of the UK is a partnership between the:

- Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, established in 1681
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, established in 1599
- Royal College of Physicians of London, established in 1512.

The colleges work together to support the development of physicians throughout their postgraduate careers. Collectively, they represent over 54,000 physicians worldwide and provide an invaluable professional network, opportunities to share best practice and high quality continuing medical education.

MRCP(UK) coordinates the development and delivery of medical examinations for the Federation and is led by highly qualified clinicians – hundreds of whom work on the examinations, generating the content, debating each question and scenario through analysis of the evidence and detailed peer review, and overseeing the quality and conduct of every clinical bedside assessment.

MRCP(UK) is supported by more than 70 non-clinical staff with expertise in assessment methodology, medical editing and data analysis, who also provide an efficient service to physicians and candidates involved in the examinations, wherever in the world they are based.



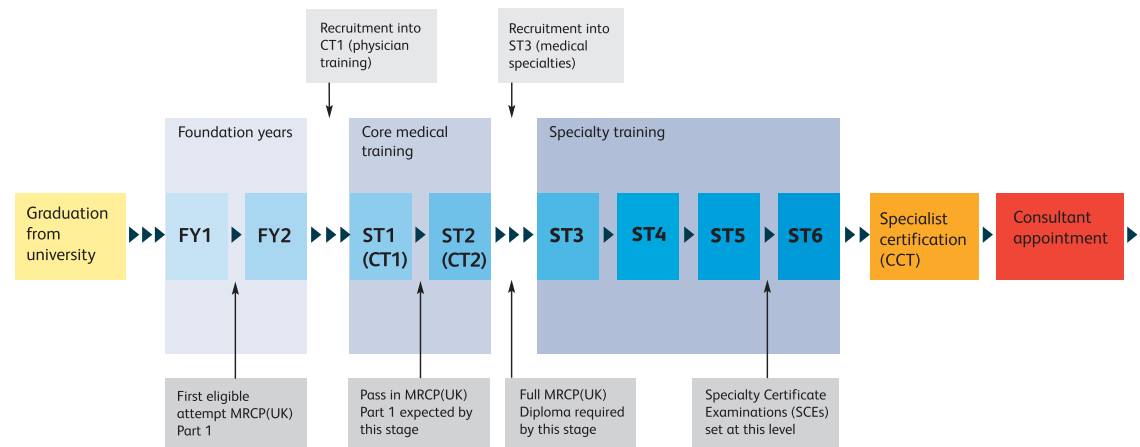
MRCP(UK) examinations

Over 25,000 candidates sit MRCP(UK) examinations every year. Passing each is a significant milestone, providing confirmation of a physician's progress at key stages of their training, and is an achievement in which successful candidates take great pride.

All our examinations are:

- mandatory for progression through core or specialty training in the UK
- mapped to the UK curricula for core medical and specialist medical training
- conducted in English
- produced with a high level of academic rigour
- recognised and valued as an international benchmark for physicians.

This diagram shows the training timeline of a UK physician in training and where the examinations fit.



Key
 FY Foundation years
 CT (CMT) Core Medical Training
 ST Specialty Training
 CCT Certification of Completion of Training

Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians (UK) Diploma

This examination is known generally as “MRCP(UK)” or more simply, “The Membership”.

The aim of the three-part MRCP(UK) Diploma is to identify physicians who have acquired the necessary professional knowledge, skills and attitudes to benefit from a programme of higher specialist training. In the UK it is the only high-stakes assessment of internal medicine knowledge and skills that a trainee must pass before achieving consultant status.

Doctors can first attempt the examination 12 months following award of their primary medical qualification. Importantly, they do not need to be enrolled in an accredited training programme to enter. Part 1 must be attempted first, and the remaining two parts sat in either order.

Trainees who pass all three parts fulfil the requirements for the MRCP(UK) Diploma and are permitted to use the letters MRCP(UK) as a postnominal.



MRCP(UK) Part 1 Examination

The MRCP(UK) Part 1 examination is designed to assess a candidate's knowledge and understanding of the clinical sciences underpinning medical practice and of core diseases and presentations. This knowledge is an essential base for clinical reasoning and for further learning during postgraduate training.

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Written Examination

The Part 2 written examination tests a candidate's ability to apply clinical reasoning and demonstrate sound judgement in relation to the selection of investigations, the interpretation of clinical information including test results, the plans for acute and longer term management, and the assessment of prognosis across a broad range of medical conditions.

This examination may be attempted by physicians who have passed MRCP(UK) Part 1 within the previous seven years. It may be taken before or after the Part 2 clinical examination.

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination Practical Assessment of Clinical Examination Skills (PACES)

While it is vital to test a physician's basic and applied medical knowledge, it is equally important to assess bedside skills in a rigorous, objective and reproducible manner, as these are fundamental to high quality patient care.

The MRCP(UK) Part 2 clinical examination (PACES) allows candidates to demonstrate their ability to assess a patient through talk and touch, to think on their feet and to communicate effectively and sensibly with their patients and colleagues. Crucially, real patients with real physical findings participate in the examination and each candidate is assessed by 10 senior physicians – features that make PACES the most robust assessment of bedside skills in postgraduate medical training available anywhere in the world.

Specialty Certificate Examinations

In collaboration with specialist societies in the UK, the Federation offers 12 Specialty Certificate Examinations (SCEs) for physicians who are about to complete their training and take up practice as independent specialists.

The examinations and our specialist society partners are:

SCEs	Specialist societies
Acute medicine	Society for Acute Medicine
Dermatology	British Association of Dermatologists
Endocrinology and diabetes	Association of British Clinical Diabetologists Society for Endocrinology
Gastroenterology	British Society of Gastroenterology
Geriatric medicine	British Geriatrics Society
Infectious diseases	British Infection Association
Medical oncology	The Association of Cancer Physicians
Nephrology	The Renal Association
Neurology	Association of British Neurologists
Palliative medicine	Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland
Respiratory medicine	British Thoracic Society
Rheumatology	The British Society for Rheumatology

These qualifications are mandatory for specialty trainees in the UK and demonstrate to patients, employers and regulators that the physician has the necessary knowledge to practise unsupervised as a consultant.

There are no specific eligibility requirements for candidates not in UK training, but only candidates who possess MRCP(UK) and complete a UK-based training programme in the same specialty are permitted to use the postnominal of MRCP(UK) (Specialty).



Our international profile

MRCP(UK) examinations are now offered in more than 100 locations around the world and over 25,000 doctors take the examinations each year.

In some countries, for example Hong Kong, our examinations are a mandatory part of training and assessment. In those where they are not mandatory, they are recognised by regulators and employers as indicating high level knowledge and skills, particularly when passed in conjunction with a period of supervised or accredited training. Whether mandatory or not, successful candidates recognise them as a valued qualification and key driver to their learning.

We have developed extensive understanding of the training requirements for doctors in many countries and work closely with local employers and regulators to refine the support we can provide.

What can the Federation of Royal Colleges of Physicians of the UK offer?

MRCP(UK) and our partner organisation, the Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board (JRCPTB), work together to build comprehensive packages of training, assessment and curricula, which can be delivered anywhere in the world.

Our examinations are valuable, either as stand-alone benchmarks of knowledge and skills or when taken as part of a fully accredited training programme. We are therefore actively seeking international partners to collaborate in the delivery of the examinations, and the creation of tailored structures for accreditation of programmes, institutions and individuals.



Our partnership activities include:

- development of joint curricula and assessment packages for core and specialty trainees
- help with integrating MRCP(UK) examinations in national training systems
- opportunities for international trainees to spend time in the UK, through the Medical Training Initiative (MTI) programme
- support with faculty development, such as Training the Trainer courses
- the opportunity to work with global education partners to deliver joint examinations
- access to a network of global examination delivery centres
- support in the planning and delivery of MRCP(UK) Diploma and Specialty Certificate Examinations
- support for candidates preparing for MRCP(UK) examinations.



Integrating MRCP(UK) qualifications into your training system

In the UK, MRCP(UK) qualifications are part of the core training and assessment process for all internal medicine trainees. The standard of knowledge and skills required to pass our qualifications is such that they are often seen as an international benchmark, and a number of international bodies adopt both the MRCP(UK) Diploma and SCEs as their official clinical standards. This is achieved by integrating MRCP(UK) examinations into national training schemes, either alone, or in association with local assessments, in a conjoint qualification.

We support international partners by identifying how MRCP(UK) qualifications alone or in combination with structured training can support the provision of high quality care in each local environment. We recognise the diverse nature of regulatory and employment structures around the world and can tailor our input to match local requirements. Working collaboratively, we provide a means of ensuring that doctors recruited to public or private health facilities achieve their true potential and meet the highest international standards of knowledge and clinical skills.

Getting involved with delivery – could you host the PACES examination?

We work in partnership with many hospitals around the world to deliver the PACES bedside clinical skills examination. At MRCP(UK) we provide a high level of logistical and administrative support for all our international partners delivering these examinations. Our academic team works to ensure that the content and assessment of our examinations are relevant to the needs of different national trainee profiles, while maintaining the high standards we set in the UK and internationally. Experienced international administrators, and our large team of senior international examiners, provide support in patient selection and the creation of content to test communication skills that are relevant to your own locality.

Many major hospitals around the world regard the opportunity to host PACES as an important sign of their commitment to excellence in assessment. Should your hospital wish to do so, we will guide you carefully through the planning and set-up processes and provide the necessary financial support. Our input will continue thereafter with the ongoing work of our operational teams, who carry out key tasks and help to ensure that everything runs smoothly from the point of candidates' initial application right through to the processing of examination results.

If you are already delivering our examinations and would like to learn more about how to integrate them into your national training system, or are interested in setting up a new PACES centre, please contact us at policy.officer@mrcpuk.org

"It has been a very fulfilling experience to work with MRCP(UK) in setting up the MRCP(UK) PACES centre at Kolkata. This has provided an opportunity for medical graduates from this region to complete this prestigious postgraduate medical diploma locally without the need to go overseas. The support of the hospital management team is essential. It has enabled us to attract better medical graduates to join the hospital and upgrade the postgraduate training of our Institute."

**Dr Debasis Ghosh, MD, FRCP, Federation
Lead PACES, Kolkata, India**

"I am honoured to have been a part of the Federation's PACES examinations for the last 13 years at two centres in Cairo. I have learned from the continuous development and improvement inputs the Federation has made to the evaluation process, ensuring competency and justice. Myself and the attending Egyptian examiners, as well as young doctors, have achieved tremendous benefits through the transfer of knowledge, discipline and ethics. We have benefitted considerably and value the diversity of candidates, knowledgeable UK examiners and the visionary Federation. We are proud to be a respected outreach centre for the Federation to help spread its mission on advancement of medical education."

**Professor Madiha Khattab, FRCP, MD, Chairman of
Cairo PACES Centres, Professor of Internal Medicine,
Cairo University, Egypt**

Case studies

The Federation, through MRCP(UK) and JRCPTB, works with a number of international organisations including universities, hospitals, colleges and governmental bodies. Together we promote the highest academic and professional standards, excellent patient care and public health.

Get in touch

If you are interested in developing a combined package of training and assessment, or would just like to learn more about opportunities for working with MRCP(UK), we would be delighted to hear from you.

Contact

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Singapore

MRCP(UK) has worked with the Singaporean national authorities to allow many of those enrolled in the Master of Medicine Programme MMed (Internal Medicine) to sit joint MMed/MRCP(UK) Diploma examinations as part of core training in Internal Medicine. Many candidates also undertake a preparatory course for a Joint Final Master of Medicine (Internal Medicine)/MRCP(UK) PACES examination annually.

The SCE in Acute Medicine has also been made a formal part of the advanced internal medical residency programme.

Hong Kong

The Hong Kong College of Physicians (HKCP) has been responsible for examinations and training since 1992. It wanted to develop a nationally led system that was still linked to the internationally recognised standards supported by overseas examinations.

To achieve this aim, in 1994, the HKCP worked with MRCP(UK) to develop a system of joint examinations. Within this programme, a pass in the joint MRCP(UK)–HKCP examination and three years of accredited basic physician training became the requirements for admission as a Member of the HKCP. This is now the recognised higher qualification for entry to Higher Physician Training in the medical specialities.

Iceland

The Federation has agreed with Landspítali, University Hospital of Iceland, to integrate UK training and assessment into their core training and qualifications for physicians. This involves:

- incorporating the MRCP(UK) Diploma as the associated assessment package, Parts 1 and 2 written examinations taking place in Iceland and PACES being delivered in the UK
- adopting curricula for Core Medical Training in the UK, the first stage of specialty training for most doctors training in physician specialities
- access to the ePortfolio, which is a web-based tool that supports trainees in the learning process (also delivered through smartphones and tablets)
- access to workplace-based assessment tools which offer either formative or summative assessment of different competencies in the curriculum.

