

## **Guidance for Candidates sitting MRCP(UK) examinations from 1 September 2020**

Several changes to existing processes have been introduced to support the restart of MRCP(UK) and Specialty Certificate examinations from September 2020. The regulations governing the examinations are being amended to accommodate these changes. This document should be considered as an addendum to the existing [MRCP\(UK\)](#) and [SCE regulations](#), the [Candidate Code of Conduct](#) and [Misconduct Regulations](#), and the [Appeals Regulations](#).

### **Introduction**

Candidates are required to adhere to the existing rules, regulations and standards of behaviour outlined in the above documents.

### **MRCP(UK) Part 1 and Part 2 Written Examinations – pencil and paper delivery**

#### *Infection Control measures*

Candidates will be required to comply with the infection control procedures in place at centres to support delivery of the examination in accordance with government guidance:

- All candidates must complete the health questionnaire distributed before the examination and submit this online before the examination day. Candidates will be required to provide a contact number on the questionnaire.
- Temperature checks will be conducted at each examination centre. Candidates whose temperature is equal to or above 37.8 degrees will not be permitted entry. A record will be kept of candidate temperatures at the centre and kept in accordance with our data protection policies.
- Candidates must wear masks at all times (unless they are exempt from doing so). Candidates who are exempt from wearing masks for medical reasons must inform MRCP(UK) in advance of sitting and request this as a reasonable adjustment using the process outlined on the [MRCP\(UK\) website](#).
- Candidates must follow all instructions from invigilators and venue staff.

Candidates are advised not to travel to the examination venue if they feel unwell on the day of the examination or if their circumstances have changed since completing the health questionnaire; the normal process for requesting a withdrawal should be followed. Candidates who do not comply with these rules will be denied entry to the examination. Candidates who knowingly travel to examination venues while suffering from coronavirus symptoms may be subject to misconduct proceedings. Chief Invigilators will have discretion over whether candidates will be permitted to sit. Their decision will be final.

There will be limited space to leave belongings, so candidates should minimise the amount that they bring with them. Candidates will be required to bring their own stationery with them – this should include an eraser, a pencil sharpener and **2B** pencils.

#### *Social distancing*

Candidates will be required to observe social distancing at all times in examination venues. Spacing between desks has been increased to two metres to facilitate this.

Candidates will be required to stay in the hall for the full length of the examination in accordance with existing MRCP(UK) regulations.

These measures will result in changes to timings for the day; exact information will be provided to candidates in admission documents.

**Candidates should note that the above provides a general outline of the rules being introduced and that the exact measures in place may vary between venues depending on the policies they have implemented in accordance with government guidance.**

### **MRCP(UK) Part 1 and Part 2 Written Examinations – online delivery**

Full guidance will be provided on the MRCP(UK) website for candidates who are sitting the remote online version of the examination. Candidates must familiarise themselves with this prior to sitting the examination so they are aware of the requirements and technical specifications.

The following rules have been introduced to ensure the experience of candidates sitting the online examination is as consistent as possible with that for candidates sitting the pencil and paper format.

The online version of the examination will be delivered on the same date as the pencil and paper version. Exact details of timings will be provided on admission documents; candidates are expected to report for registration at the stated time. Candidates will not be permitted to start the examination more than 30 minutes after the advertised start time, unless in exceptional circumstances with the express permission of the invigilator(s). If a candidate is not permitted to enter the examination because they arrive late, the candidate will be considered absent.

#### *ProctorExam app (MRCP(UK) Part 1 Examination)*

The guidance from the examination provider for the online version of the MRCP(UK) Part 1 Examination, BTL Surpass, explains the procedure used for monitoring candidates. This includes downloading an app on to phones or other mobile devices, which will provide an additional view of the candidate during the examination. Candidates are expected to use this facility for the MRCP(UK) Part 1 Examination. As explained in the online guidance, they should test this facility prior to sitting, and should make MRCP(UK) aware of any problems encountered as soon as possible.

#### *Candidate conduct*

The current rules governing candidate behaviour remain in force:

- Candidates will still be required to prove their identification at the start of each paper as outlined in paragraph 6.1 of the MRCP(UK) regulations. The exact process for registering will be explained on the MRCP(UK) website.
- Candidates should not attempt to copy any or record any examination content. Candidates will be permitted to make notes on blank scrap paper during the examination (a maximum of six pages), but these must be destroyed (i.e. ripped up) at the end of the examination and candidates must verify to the invigilator that this has been done.
- Candidates must comply with instructions from the remote invigilator.
- Any technical difficulties with the examination should be reported to the invigilator or using the help facility in the examination system as soon as possible. Candidates who have been unable to complete the examination due to technical problems should submit an appeal and will be entitled to an automatic free resit if this is upheld.
- Candidates are not permitted to leave the examination early, even if they have finished.

In addition, candidates should:

- ensure that they are in an appropriate environment for sitting the examination and this must be demonstrated to the invigilator prior to starting. The procedure for this is explained in the guidance for candidates available on the MRCP(UK) website.
- be aware that the remote invigilator may speak to them during the examination; this is normal practice for online examinations.

Candidates will be required to accept the NDA declaration before they can start their examination.

Candidates are permitted to take breaks during the examination. They should indicate to the invigilator that they wish to do so. A record of any breaks taken will be kept by the invigilator. No additional time will be added to the allotted examination time to compensate for breaks taken.

Candidates will be permitted to have water or drinks bottles on their desks, but these should have the labels removed.

Specific rules have been introduced for candidates sitting the online examination. Any of the following list of violations of these rules will be recorded by invigilators and reported to MRCP(UK). To avoid being interrupted by invigilators candidates should sit the examination in a suitable environment where they will be no disruption:

- Looking at a mobile phone or tablet
- Wearing earplugs or headphones (this will be checked by invigilators during the registration process)
- Wearing any clothing with the ability to hide materials, i.e. hooded jumper (this will also be checked during the registration)
- Wearing sunglasses (unless permitted for medical reasons) or smart glasses
- Wearing a watch
- Continuously looking around in any direction
- Leaving the room without permission from the invigilator
- Looking at hands or wrists
- Accessing web pages
- Accessing other applications, such as Word/Excel or their folders/windows explorer
- Taking screenshots of examination content
- Other people entering the room
- Talking to anyone outside the room
- Using multiple screens
- Text books or notes in examination environment (blank paper for note taking is permitted but must be destroyed at the end of the examination)
- Using a calculator
- Room is too dark
- Web cam on laptop angled up or having face obscured
- Vaping or smoking

Candidates are reminded that in all MRCP(UK) examinations statistical methods are used to detect anomalous candidate behaviours which may be regarded as academic dishonesty. In the online version of examinations these will be supplemented by the detailed analysis of 'click streams' so that candidates' progress through the examination can be monitored and assessed and can be compared with video and other records of candidate behaviour. Further information can be found on the [MRCP\(UK\) website](#).

## Specialty Certificate Examinations

Candidates sitting SCEs should familiarise themselves with the current [Pearson Vue rules](#) for examinations prior to attending the centre.

### MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (PACES)

#### *Infection Control measures*

Candidates will be required to comply with the infection control procedures in place at centres to support delivery of the examination in accordance with government guidance:

- All candidates must complete the health questionnaire distributed before the examination and submit this online ahead of the examination day.
- Temperature checks will be conducted at each examination centre. Candidates whose temperature is equal to or above 37.8 degrees will not be permitted entry.
- Candidates must use the provided PPE at each encounter in stations 1, 3 and 5.
- Candidates must wear masks at all other times, except in Stations 2 and 4. Candidates are permitted to remove their masks once they have entered the Station 2 and 4 rooms.
- Candidates who are exempt from wearing masks for medical reasons must inform MRCP(UK) in advance of sitting and request this as a reasonable adjustment using the process outlined on the [MRCP\(UK\) website](#).
- Candidates must follow all instructions from examiners and venue staff.

Candidates are advised not to travel to the examination venue if they feel unwell on the day of the examination or if their circumstances have changed since completing the health questionnaire; the normal process for requesting a withdrawal should be followed. Candidates who do not comply with these rules will be denied entry to the examination. The Chair of Examiners will have discretion over whether candidates will be permitted to sit.

There will be limited space to leave belongings, so candidates should minimise the amount that they bring with them.

#### *Social distancing*

Candidates will be required to observe social distancing at all times in examination venues, except when examining patients.

This may result in changes to timings for the day; exact information will be provided to candidates in admission documents.

### Conduct of Station 2 and 4

Candidates may be allocated to undertake the Physical examination (Stations 1/3/5 mini-cycle) and the Communication mini-cycle (Stations 2/4/rest) in either order.

Candidates who have the rest station as their final station are required to remain for the whole duration of this station and are not permitted to leave the examination early.

If an unresolvable technical issue should prevent candidates from completing Station 2 and /or Station 4, candidates will be offered the opportunity to make up the affected station(s) on a later date. Candidates may need to attend a different examination centre for this.

Candidates undertaking the Communication mini-cycle first, who experience an unresolvable technical issue can decide either to

- abandon the examination at this point. In this instance the attempt will be annulled, and a full refund issued. Every effort will be made to ensure that the candidate can be accommodated in the next diet. OR
- proceed with the Physical Examination cycle (Stations 1, 3 and 5). In this instance the candidate will be offered the chance to make up the missing Station 2 and/or 4 as described above. In such cases no appeal will be considered relating to stations 1, 3 or 5 on the basis that their performance was hindered by the stress of their experience at 2 or 4.

### **Appeals**

If candidates encounter technical difficulties with sitting the examination, they should inform MRCP(UK) as soon as possible after it finishes. Candidates who encounter technical difficulties, which they believe have negatively impacted on their results can submit an appeal (subject to the exemption outlined above) which will be investigated using the existing regulations.