

MRCSI/FRCSI (Ophthalmology)

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MRCSI/FRCOI

- New format to be introduced in 2010
- Why is a new examination needed?
 - Loss of reciprocity with RCOphth
 - Development of formal BST and HST in Ireland
 - Diverging training paths in Ireland and UK
 - Advances in medical education and methods of assessment
- Aim:
 - To assess competence in applied basic sciences relevant to ophthalmology and clinical ophthalmology

Clinical competence

- Integrates:
 - Knowledge
 - Clinical skills
 - Clinical reasoning ability
 - Communication
 - Professionalism

The examination

- Part 1 – applied basic science and theoretical optics
- Part 2 written examination – clinical ophthalmology
- Part 2 clinical examination – clinical ophthalmology, clinical refraction and ophthalmic pathology. This is held on a separate date to the part 2 written examination.
- Fellowship examination – an assessment of clinical ophthalmology and generic issues pertinent to an independent specialist in ophthalmic surgery

Timing of the examinations

➤ Basic Specialist Training (yr 1 – 3)

- Part 1
- Part 2 written  MRCSI
- Part 2 clinical

➤ Higher Specialist Training (yrs 4 – 7)

- Exit viva examination &
- Satisfactory completion of HST  FRCSI

Part 1 examination

This consists of:

- Two multiple choice question papers, each 2.5 hours, with a single best answer style of questions
- Content: applied basic sciences relevant to ophthalmology and theoretical optics
- There is no negative marking
- The marks in the two MCQs will be combined to provide an overall score which will determine a “pass” or “fail”
- Candidates with an overall fail but who pass one of the MCQ papers will be required to re-take the whole examination
- The examination will be held three times per year in centres worldwide
- Candidates must pass part 1 before proceeding to part 2
- There are no limits to the number of attempts at Part 1 MRCSI

Part 2 written examination

This consists of:

- A three hour-MCQ with single best answer (type A) style of questions
- A two-hour data Objective Structured Examination (OSE) examination with clinical scenarios and investigations followed by a series of questions
- The Part 2 Written examination must be passed before a candidate is eligible to take the Part 2 Clinical examination
- The part 2 written examination must be passed within five years of success in the part 1 MRCSI. However, if more than five years have lapsed since passing part 1, that part can be re-taken.
- The examination will be held three times per year in centres worldwide

Part 2 Clinical examination

This consists of:

- A ten station short case Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) examination with the following stations:
 - Cornea and external eye disease
 - Glaucoma
 - Cataract
 - Paediatric ophthalmology and strabismus
 - Oculoplastics and orbital disease
 - Retina
 - Uveitis and ocular oncology
 - Neurology
 - Medicine
 - Pathology viva
- Clinical refraction examination lasting 30 minutes

Part 2 Clinical examination

- At each of the OSCE stations, between one and three short cases will be examined for a total duration of 12 minutes. There will be a three minute period between stations allowed for marking
- The overall mark in the OSCE will determine a “pass” or “fail”
- Compensation between OSCE stations is allowed. If the combined score from all of the OSCE stations reaches the pass mark an overall pass will be awarded for the OSCE.
- Both the OSCE and clinical refraction components must be passed to achieve an overall pass in the part 2 clinical examination
- Candidates failing either the OSCE or clinical refraction components will be required to re-sit that component alone at subsequent attempts
- The part 2 clinical examination must be passed within three years of success in the part 2 written examination. However, if more than three years have lapsed since passing part 2 written, that part can be re-taken
- The examination will be held in Dublin twice annually

Fellowship examination (FRCSI)

- One-hour viva examination with set questions
- Taken in last two years of HST
- Questions will cover the breadth of clinical ophthalmology and will deal with the types of problems that are encountered in clinical practice
- Candidate will need to demonstrate that he/she is competent to practice independently as a general ophthalmic surgeon by possessing the requisite knowledge, clinical skills, communication skills, clinical reasoning ability and professional values

Eligibility

- Candidates must hold a medical qualification from a medical school or university whose degree is recognised by the Irish Medical Council or General Medical Council as being acceptable for Full or Temporary/Limited registration in Ireland or the United Kingdom
- Candidates must have completed a satisfactory pre-registration year or equivalent internship, which provides eligibility to work under Full or Temporary/Limited Registration in Ireland or the United Kingdom

Standard of the examinations

- Will be consistent, fair and objective
- Standard of MRCSI is that of a BST trainee
- Standard of FRCSI is that required of a consultant ophthalmic surgeon

Preparing for the exams

- Reading list
- Curriculum is not all inclusive
- Courses
- Formal and informal teaching sessions
- Experience
- Keep focussed on developing the five components of clinical competence:
 - Knowledge
 - Clinical skills
 - Clinical reasoning ability
 - Communication
 - Professionalism

Limit on attempts

- None
- The part 2 written examination must be passed within five years of success in the part 1 MRCSI
- The Part 2 Clinical examination must be passed within three years of success in the Part 2 Written

Suggested plan

- Part 1 – year 1 of BST
- Part 2 written – year 2 of BST
- Part 2 clinical – year 2/3 of BST
- Aim to achieve MRCSI during 3 years of BST
- FRCSI in year 4 of SpR training
 - Attachments in each subspecialty will be needed to gain the required experience

Exemptions

- Candidates who have passed part 1 of the old MRCSI are eligible to proceed to part 2 of the new examination
- Candidates who have passed part of the old part 1 examination will have one further opportunity to pass the examination in May 2010 and will be exempted from passed components of the examination, as per previous regulations.
- Candidates who have passed the old part 2 examination (refraction and clinical methods) are eligible to proceed to the new part 2 and will be exempted from the clinical refraction component of the examination only.
- Candidates who have passed part 1 of FRCOphth or FRCSEd (Ophthalmology) before January 1st 2010 will be eligible to proceed to part 2 MRCSI. Reciprocity between the examinations will cease after this date.

Examination options and career paths

To become eligible for specialist registration

Ophthalmic surgery:

- SpR rotation in Ireland
 - Satisfactory annual assessments plus pass exit assessment
- Ophthalmic specialist training programme in UK
 - Satisfactory annual assessments plus FRCOphth part 2
- Train elsewhere (USA, Australia, Europe)
 - Consult IMC website for requirements to return to Ireland as specialist

Medical ophthalmology:

- 3 years of BST plus 1 further year of training
- MRCSI or equivalent

Ophthalmology examinations

Requirements for HST (SpR) rotation in Ireland:

- MRCSI or equivalent
 - Includes MRCOphth, FRCS(Ed), new FRCOphth
 - Those entering BST after January 1st 2010 will be required to take the MRCSI
 - Those in BST before January 1st 2010 may continue to use FRCOphth or FRCS(Ed) to apply for HST
- Microsurgical skills course
- Surgical experience
 - 50 phacos, 50 lasers, 50 miscellaneous
- Research
- Publications x 2
- 2 1/2 years (min) in training posts in ophthalmology

Ophthalmology examinations

Requirements for entry into year 3 specialist training in UK:

- 2 years experience in ophthalmic training posts
- Part 1 FRCOphth; Refraction certificate is an advantage
- Should be able to demonstrate that you have achieved year 1 and 2 ST competencies (see RCOphth website)

Recommendations

➤ MRCSI

- For those entering BST after January 1st 2010 MRCSI will be needed for entry into HST in ophthalmic surgery and medical ophthalmology
- Those who entered BST before January 1st 2010 will be eligible to apply for HST with FRCOphth or FRCS(Ed)

➤ FRCOphth

- For those planning on applying for ST3 posts in UK and obtaining CCT there
- A good back up plan for those who would prefer to complete higher specialist training in Ireland

Questions?

