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These Regulations are also available on the College website
<http://www.anaesthesia.ie>

Application Forms for examinations can be obtained from
Examinations Office, College of Anaesthetists of Ireland
22 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Examinations Telephone: 00 353 1 661 4412
Examinations Fax: 00 353 1 265 0699
Examinations Email: exams@coa.ie

INTRODUCTION

The College of Anaesthetists of Ireland Examination Regulations governs the content and conduct of the examination leading to the award of the Fellowship of the College of Anaesthetists of Ireland. They specify the requirement, which must be satisfied before a candidate is eligible to apply to take the examination. They also specify the procedure to be followed in order to apply, limit the number of attempts and provide for guidance in the event of failure. They describe the procedure to making representations and provide sanctions for infringements.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. These regulations updated 2008.

EXAMINATIONS

2.
 - (a) The Examination for the Fellowship of the College of Anaesthetists will be in two parts, namely the Primary and Final Examinations.
 - (b) Normally there will be two sittings of each part of the Examination in each academic year starting on 1st January 2008. The Council may at any time decide subject to adequate notice, to adjust the number of sittings of either or both parts of the examination in any year.
3.
 - (a) The Primary Examinations will consist of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ's), Oral and Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE). Details of these are attached in Appendix 1.
 - (b) The Final Examination will consist of Written, (multiple choice, essays and short answer questions), Oral and Clinical sections. Details of these are found in Appendix 2.

ELIGIBILITY

4. Primary Examination

An individual is eligible to enter for the Primary Examination who:

- (a) Has, or is eligible for, full or limited registration with the Irish Medical Council or the General Medical Council (UK).
- (b) Is registered with the College of Anaesthetists, or the Royal College of Anaesthetists, as a postgraduate trainee in Anaesthetics (approved post). Registration number will be requested on application form.
- (c) Complies with the requirements of these regulations in respect of application procedures and other matters.

5. Final Examination

An individual is eligible to enter for the Final Examination leading to the Fellowship of the College of Anaesthetists who:

- (a) Has passed, or is exempt from, the Primary Fellowship Examination (see regulation 6).
- (b) Has, by a date not earlier than 5 years before the date of application to enter the examination, completed 30 months of training in the specialty of anaesthesia. The specified period of training shall have been completed in posts approved by the College of Anaesthetists of

Ireland or the Royal College of Anaesthetists, United Kingdom. A period of up to 12 months may have been completed as an anaesthetic trainee in a recognised training programme overseas, to the satisfaction of the Examination Committee of the College of Anaesthetists of Ireland.

- (c)** Is registered with the College of Anaesthetists of Ireland or the Royal College of Anaesthetists as a postgraduate trainee in Anaesthesia. Registration numbers will be requested on the application form.
- (d)** Complies with the requirements of these regulations in respect of application procedures and other matters.

6. Exemption

A candidate for the Final Fellowship examination shall be exempt from passing the Primary Examination and from such of the period of training prescribed in regulation 5 (b) who, within the 10 years preceeding the date of application:

- (a)** Has passed the Part II Examination of the College of Anaesthetists of Ireland or the Part II of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.
- (b)** Has obtained one of the following qualifications, any one of which shall also exempt the holder from the first 12 months of the 30 months training required by regulation 5 (b) provided that no candidate shall be entitled to more than one such exemption:
 - (i)** The Fellowship of the Royal College of Anaesthetists.
 - (ii)** The Fellowship of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists.
 - (iii)** The Fellowship of the College of Anaesthetists of South Africa.
 - (iv)** The Fellowship in Anaesthesia of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.
 - (v)** The Diplomate Certificate of the American Board of Anesthesiology.
 - (vi)** The Diploma in Anaesthesiology of the European Society.
 - (vii)** The Fellowship in Anaesthesiology of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan since April 1998.
 - (viii)** Overseas Qualifying Examination.

- (c) Has obtained other degrees or qualifications as may be from time to time approved by the Council of the College.

Application Procedures

7. Dates of Examinations shall be published in the Examinations Calendar of the *College of Anaesthetists of Ireland* and copies may be obtained from the Examination Office, *College of Anaesthetists of Ireland, 22 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2, Ireland*.
8. Application forms for admission to the Examinations may be obtained from the Examinations Office. Applications must reach the Examinations Office not before the conclusion of the previous examination and not after the published closing date for the relevant sitting.
9. Application for admission must be accompanied by the appropriate fee and include any certificates required, with the registration number given on the application form.
10. Fees payable for admission to each part shall be those fixed by College Council and published in the Examinations Calendar. Fees may be paid in the form of Sterling or Euro personal cheque, made payable to the *College of Anaesthetists of Ireland* and drawn on an Irish clearing bank; or alternatively paid by a Euro banker's draft, or credit card.

Referrals and Guidance

11. A candidate who is unsuccessful in an examination may, subject to the provisions of the regulations below, enter for the next or any subsequent sitting of that Examination.

For the purpose of this Regulation, guidance may consist of:

- (i) Written communication with the candidate in which details of his/her performance may be divulged and discussed.
- (ii) Attendance at an interview arranged by the Chairman of the Examinations Committee.

Representation and Appeals

- 12.** A candidate, or any person on behalf of that candidate, wishing to make representations in respect of the conduct of an examination or to appeal against any result, must address such representation or appeal to the Chairman of the Examination Committee, in writing, before the closing date of the next sitting in that part. In no circumstances may such representations be addressed to an individual examiner. The College's Examination Committee will consider representations and appeals. See Appendix 4.

Infringements

- 13. (a)** Candidates are not permitted to bring *any materials or information which may assist them* (e.g. electronic recording devices, computers, mobile telephones) into the examinations. Failure to comply with these examination regulations may result in disqualification from the whole of that examination sitting.
- (b)** The College Council may refuse to admit to an examination or proceed with the examination of any candidate who infringes any of the regulations, or who is considered by presiding examiner to be guilty of behaviour which prejudices the proper conduct and management for the examination or who has previously been found guilty of such behaviour. If, in the opinion of the Council, any examination result has been secured by cheating, deception or fraud of any kind whatsoever, the Council may nullify the result of any qualifications resulting from it and withdraw any Diploma, Certificate or other award so obtained.

APPENDIX 1

Structure of the Primary Fellowship Examination

There are 4 sections:

- (a) Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)** - 90 questions, 3 hours
This consists of approximately 30 questions in pharmacology, 30 questions in physiology and biochemistry, 20 questions in physics, clinical measurement, and 10 questions in clinical anaesthesia.
- (b) Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)** - This consists of 15 stations (with 1 rest stations) in approximately 2 hours. This may consist of stations in resuscitation, practical skills, anatomy including surface anatomy, history taking, physical examination, communication skills, interpretation of ECG, X-ray, biochemistry/haematology results, photographs, scans, charts, anaesthetic equipment, SimMan Simulation, monitoring equipment, measuring equipment, clinical anaesthesia and statistics.
- (c) Viva examination in Physiology** - 25 minutes
- (d) Viva examination in Pharmacology** - 25 minutes

The viva's will be structured. They will be conducted over a 25 minutes period with two examiners in each subject. Each viva will consist of 5 x 5 minute sections.

- **A candidate in the Primary Examination who does not attain the required standard in the MCQ section will not be permitted to proceed with the remaining elements of the examination.**

Changes to the Primary FCA from June 2008

1. MCQ to become a stand alone examination from June 2008
2. Candidates with a Pass mark in MCQ are eligible to apply for OSCE/Viva section of Primary
3. Results to hold for 3 years Max
4. No negative marking in MCQ's from September 2008
5. Candidates can apply to sit the MCQ part of the examination once he/she is in an approved training post in anaesthesia.

Appendix 1b

Marking System for the Primary Fellowship Examination

A new close marking system is used.

- A** - Outstanding, potential medal winner
- B** - Pass
- C** - Marginal Fail
- D** - Veto Fail

The minimum grades necessary to pass the examination are:

B, B, B, C

Any candidate who obtains a D in any part of the examination will be an outright fail.

APPENDIX 2

Structure of the Final Fellowship Examination

There are 5 sections:

- (a) **Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)** - 40 MCQ's in 90 minutes, comprising of questions on Anaesthesia, Pain Management, Intensive Care Medicine, General Medicine, Surgery and Anatomy related to Anaesthesia Practice.
 - (b) **Essay and Short Answer Question (E&SAQ)** paper (all are compulsory) - 3 hours on the principles and practice of Clinical Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Pain Medicine.
 - (c) **Clinical Case Viva** (case study / viva exam). Case study to be read by the candidate. Followed by 30 minutes of examination discussing the case including relevant investigations.
 - (d) **Viva 1** - Clinical Anaesthesia and Pain Management - 25 minutes. A structured viva examination is held relating to the clinical material provided, and also on Clinical Anaesthesia and Pain Management unrelated to the clinical material.
 - (e) **Viva 2** - Intensive Care and Clinical Science - 25 minutes. A structured viva examination is held relating to Intensive Care topics followed by application of Basic Sciences to Anaesthesia.
- **A candidate in the Final examination who does not attain the required standard in one or both of the written sections will not be permitted to proceed with the remaining elements of the examination.**

Appendix 2b

Marking System for the Final Fellowship Examination

The College uses a five-point close-marking system, the marks being:

- 7 Outstanding Performance
- 6 Pass
- 5 Fail (Borderline)
- 4 Fail
- V Veto (if a candidate fails to answer a compulsory question in the E&SAQ Paper; or attains an unacceptable standard in either the Clinical section or Viva section)

Candidates with a mark = 4 in either the MCQ section or the Essay & Short Answer Questions section will not be invited to attend the Clinical or Viva elements.

The following marks are required to pass the Final FCA RCSI Examination

6, 6, 6, 6, 5

All examiners review performance of vetoed candidates before the final marks are awarded.

No Negative marking in the MCQ.

Essay and Short Answer Question paper – ALL 6 questions must be attempted. A mark of V will be given for each whole question not attempted.

APPENDIX 3

COA Overseas Qualifying Exam (OQE) *Exemption Exam for the FCARCSI*

Introduction

The College of Anaesthetists of Ireland wishes to offer an opportunity to candidates abroad to complete the FCARCSI and to avail of training opportunities in Anaesthesia in Ireland. To that end the College will conduct examinations abroad in locations that will be decided from time to time by College Council.

- 1. The examination conducted abroad shall be named the COA Overseas Qualifying Exam.*
- 2. A candidate for this exam shall be a doctor in anaesthetic practice outside the EU who is in an approved training post. (Overseas training posts inspected and approved by the COA).*
- 4. The examination shall be conducted in whole or in part in centres abroad. College Council and Examinations Committee shall approve its timing, format and location.*
- 5. The exam shall consist of written MCQs in physiology pharmacology and clinical anaesthesia physics and clinical measurement.*
- 6. There shall be a viva and OSCE component to the examination.*

Candidates who are successful at the COA Overseas Qualifying exam and having completed the necessary registration educational and training requirements for the final FCARCSI examination, as specified from time to time in the registration and examination regulations may be exempted from the Primary FCA Examination and permitted to sit the Final FCARCSI Examination.

Conduct of the OQE

Applications for the OQE will be on the approved application form which can be obtained from the Examinations Office, College of Anaesthetists, 22 Merrion Square North, Dublin 2, Ireland. All specified supporting documentation should accompany an application. Regulations regarding the conduct of the examinations and penalties incurred are the same as for the Primary and Final Fellowship examinations.

Appendix 3b

Structure of the Overseas Qualifying Examination

There are 4 sections:

- (a) *Multiple choice questions (MCQ) - 90 questions, 3 hours*
This consists of approximately 30 questions in pharmacology, 30 questions in physiology and biochemistry, 20 questions in physics, clinical measurement, and 10 questions in clinical anaesthesia.
- (b) *Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) - This consists of 14 stations (with 2 rest stations) in approximately 2 hours. This may consist of stations in resuscitation, practical skills, anatomy including surface anatomy, history taking, physical examination, communication skills, interpretation of ECG, X-ray, biochemistry/haematology results, photographs, scans, charts, anaesthetic equipment, monitoring equipment, measuring equipment, clinical anaesthesia and statistics.*
- (c) *Viva 1 Examination in Physiology - 25 minutes*
- (d) *Viva 2 Examination in Pharmacology - 25 minutes*

The vivas will be structured. They will be conducted over a 25 minutes period with two examiners in each subject. Each viva will consist of 5 x 5 minute sections.

Appendix 3c

Marking System for the Overseas Qualifying Exam

A new close marking system is used.

- A** - *Outstanding, potential medal winner*
- B** - *Pass*

- C** - Marginal Fail
D - Veto Fail

The minimum grades necessary to pass the examination are:

B, B, B, C

Any candidate who obtains a D in any part of the examination will be an outright fail.

APPENDIX 4

Regulations for requests for counselling and conduct of appeals

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The College of Anaesthetists of Ireland will have a formal procedure in place to deal with an examination candidate's requests for counselling or appeal against examination results as outlined hereunder.
- 1.2 A committee (The Examinations Appeals Committee) consisting of the Chairman of the Examination Committee, the Chairman of the appropriate examination and the Examinations Officer will consider every request for counselling, or request for appeal formally made.
- 1.3 The process cannot be invoked if the examination candidate has initiated legal proceedings.
- 1.4 A fee will apply to requests for appeal. No fee applies to requests for counselling.
- 1.5 Requests for counselling or appeal will be conducted under these regulations.

2. Regulations for requests for counseling

- 2.1 Requests for counselling must be submitted on the appropriate form by the candidate to whom the request relates within thirty calendar days of the publication of results of the examination in question. Forms are available from, and should be submitted to, the Examinations Officer, College of Anaesthetists RCSI, 22 Merrion Square North, Dublin.
- 2.2 The Examinations Officer or deputy will inform the chairman of the Examination Committee and the chairman of the appropriate examination of the request within ten working days of receipt of the formal request.

- 2.3 The Appeals Committee will arrange a meeting between the candidate and an experienced examiner (the counsellor) to discuss the candidate's results.
- 2.4 The candidate must supply the counsellor with full information.
- 2.5 The candidate will travel to the counsellor at a mutually agreed time and date.
- 2.6 A record of the meeting will be maintained by the college.
- 2.7 The college counsellor may communicate with the candidate's trainers any advice/recommendations discussed.

3. Regulations for the conduct of appeals

- 3.1 Candidates may not appeal against the academic judgment of the examiners. However, appeals will be considered where a candidate has reason to believe that:
 - 3.1.1 There may have been an error in the collation of marks.
 - 3.1.2 There may have been an irregularity in the conduct of the examination.
 - 3.1.3 The College may have failed to take into account extenuating circumstances of which it had been informed prior to the examination.
 - 3.1.4 The College may have failed to make allowance for unusual examination conditions.
 - 3.1.5 Unlawful discrimination against the candidate may have occurred.
 - 3.1.6 Malpractice in the marking of the candidate's examination may have occurred.
- 3.2 The appeal process will proceed in three stages:
 - 3.2.1 Submission of request for appeal.
 - 3.2.2 Decision on admissibility of the appeal.
 - 3.2.3 Formal hearing of the appeal, if admissible.
- 3.3 Submission of request for appeal
 - 3.3.1 Formal requests for appeal must be submitted on the appropriate form by the candidate to whom the request relates within thirty calendar days of the publication of results of the examination in question. Forms are available from, and should be submitted to, the Examinations Officer, College of Anaesthetists of Ireland. All supporting evidence, which the candidate wishes to rely upon in the appeal, should be enclosed.

- 3.3.2 On receipt of a request for appeal, the Examinations Officer or deputy will acknowledge receipt of the form, and inform the chairman of the Examination Committee and the chairman of the appropriate examination of the request within ten working days of receipt of the formal request. The chairman of the Examination Committee will call a meeting of the Appeals Committee.
- 3.3.3 The Appeals Committee will consult and consider the admissibility of the appeal. If the appeal is considered inadmissible, the candidate will be informed immediately, setting out the reasons for rejecting the appeal (see clause 3.1).
- 3.3.4 If a candidate identifies valid reasons that his/her rejected appeal (under clause 3.3.3.) may be legitimate, he/she should send full details to the College Council within 30 days of the date of issue of the rejection letter. College Council will review the case and may either direct the Examinations Committee to allow the appeal to proceed or confirm that the appeal is inadmissible. College Council's decision in this regard is final.

3.4 Formal hearing of appeal

- 3.4.1 If the appeal is considered admissible, the Examinations Officer will inform the appellant that the appeal is to progress, and request payment of €750.00 to convene an Appeals Panel. College Council will also be informed that the appeal is admissible.
- 3.4.2 The Appeals Committee will set up an Appeals Panel to conduct the appeal.
- 3.4.3 The appeal will not be referred to the Appeals Panel until the appropriate fee has been received.
- 3.4.3 The appellant must submit any additional further evidence that the appellant may rely on and the fee of €750.00 to the CAI within 30 calendar days of the date of issue of the confirmation letter. No evidence will be accepted after this 30-day period.
- 3.4.4 On receipt of the appropriate fee, the chairman of the examinations committee will activate the appeals panel which will be made up as follows:
- A Chairperson
 - Three examiners who were not involved in the examining the appellant in the examination under appeal
 - An extern examiner
 - Legal adviser
 - An Appeals Panel Secretary, to minute the meeting but not to participate in the decision

- 3.4.6 The Appeals Panel Secretary will inform the appellant of the names of the panel and date, time and location of the hearing, giving at least four weeks notice to the appellant.
- 3.4.7 The Appeals Panel will consider all admissible documentation and written statements from all those involved, and may call witnesses if appropriate. The appellant will have an opportunity to present his or her case, in person or through a representative.

3.5 Outcome of the appeal

- 3.5.1 The Appeals Panel will deliberate in private and may make findings as follows:
- The appeal is dismissed
 - The appeal is upheld
- 3.5.2 In the event of the appeal being dismissed, if the appellant has evidence that the appeal was conducted unfairly, they may make representations to the College Council, who will review the case. The College Council may rule that the hearing was fair or order a second panel, with a different membership, to hear the case afresh. The Council's decision in this regard will be final.
- 3.5.3 If the appeal is upheld the grounds on which the appeal is successful will be defined and the Appeals Panel will make recommendations based on these grounds. The Council of the College will consider these recommendations. College Council will instigate appropriate action in response to the recommendations.
- 3.5.4 If it can be proven that the candidate scored the marks required to pass but was not credited with them through administrative or other error, the result may be declared void and the candidate awarded a pass.
- 3.5.5 For the avoidance of doubt, it is open to the Appeals Panel to make recommendations, under regulation 3.5.3 above, which do not include the altering of the mark given to the candidate in respect of the result under appeal.
- 3.5.6 The Appeals Panel Secretary will inform the appellant of the outcome of the hearing.
- 3.5.6 In all cases of a successful appeal altering the result of an examination the appeal fee shall be refunded.

Form 1

Request for Exam Counselling

- 1) Requests for counselling, review or appeal must be lodged with the examination office on the appropriate form with the appropriate fee within thirty calendar days of the call over of the examination in question. Only in very exceptional circumstances may this time limit be extended.
- 2) The process cannot be invoked if legal proceedings have been initiated.

Please type or print in black biro:

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone Number: _____

College Trainee No.: _____

Exam Number: _____

Examination: _____

Examination Date: _____

Reason for request (*please tick as appropriate*):

Hopeless Fail: Yes No

Persistent Fails: Yes No

Date of Appeal Application: _____

Signature: _____

Form 2

Exam Appeal

- 1) Requests for appeal must be lodged with the examination office on the appropriate form with the appropriate fee within thirty calendar days of the call over of the examination in question. Only in very exceptional circumstances may this time limit be extended.
- 2) The process cannot be invoked if legal proceedings have been initiated.

3) Appeals shall be conducted according to the process as laid down in the appeals document.

Please type or print in black biro:

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone Number: _____

College ID.: _____

Exam Number: _____

Examination: _____

Examination Date: _____

Fee Included? Yes No

Reasons for appeal must be provided on Page 2 overleaf.

Date of Appeal Application: _____

Signature: _____

Reason for appeal:

