

ANNOUNCEMENTS TO CANDIDATES: April 2008

Intercollegiate Membership Examination of the Surgical Royal Colleges of Great Britain

(September 2007 to August 2008)

1. Changes to the format of the Intercollegiate MRCS

As stated in the regulations for the Intercollegiate MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008) this examination was agreed for a transitional period with the first examination in September 2007 and ending in August 2008.

The Royal Colleges are developing a new format of the MRCS examination to replace the MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008 Regulations) with effect from September 2008. This format has yet to be approved by the UK Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB) and therefore no statement can yet be made about its proposed format and content other than that it will consist of a Part A (MCQ) and a Part B (OSCE-based). Structured interview, clinical, and communication skills components will NOT be assessed as separate components in the new format Part B.

There will be a new set of regulations published for this new format of the MRCS.

All **NEW** candidates for the MRCS will be required to enter the new format of the examination with effect from September 2008.

PMETB has agreed, exceptionally, that any candidate who has **PASSED** any component of Part B of the MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008 Regulations) i.e. structured interview, clinical, communication skills may continue with this format of Part B until and including the diet commencing March 2009 (clinical and communication skills). Thereafter all such candidates who have not yet completed the MRCS **MUST** transfer to the new format MRCS in order to complete the examination.

All other candidates for the current MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008 Regulations) will be required to transfer to the new format MRCS examination with effect from September 2008.

Part A of the existing and the proposed new format MRCS will be very similar and therefore full exemption will be given from the new format MRCS Part A for any candidate who has passed Part A of the MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008 Regulations).

Part B of the proposed new format MRCS is significantly different from the existing MRCS Part B (structured interview, clinical, communication skills). Consequently, there will be no exemptions from any aspect of the new format Part B for any candidate who has passed any component of the Part B (structured interview, clinical, communication skills).

2. The Intercollegiate MRCS examination (2006 Regulations Revised April 2008)

The Intercollegiate MRCS examination (2006 Regulations revised April 2008) will continue in the UK as advertised until 2010. The regulations for the new format MRCS will permit candidates who have passed Parts 1 and 2 and who are not “time-expired”, to transfer to the new Part B (OSCE-based). There will be no exemptions from any aspect of Part B for anyone who has passed components of Part 3 (oral, clinical, and communication skills).

3. Intercollegiate MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008) New Regulation 5.4

Please note that with effect from the September 2008 diet, the regulations for the Intercollegiate MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008) have been amended to include the following new regulation as 5.4:

To facilitate the assessment of non-verbal communication skills and interaction with the examiner, the Colleges reserve the right to require candidates for the structured interview, the clinical and the communication skills components to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all, or part of, the candidate's face.

4. Intercollegiate MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008) New Regulation 2.1.5

Please note that with effect from the September 2008 diet, the regulations for the Intercollegiate MRCS (September 2007 to August 2008) have been amended to include the following new regulation as 2.1.5:

To achieve a pass in Part A the candidate will be required to demonstrate a minimum level of competence in each of the two papers in addition to achieving or exceeding the pass mark set for the combined total mark for Part A.