



ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS AND
SURGEONS OF GLASGOW

**Regulations relating to the Surgical Fellowship Examination
in Ophthalmology Parts 1, 2 and 3**

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Contents

	Page
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Admission as a Fellow.....	1
3. Role of the Examination.....	1
4. Format of the Examination.....	1-2
5. Entry to the Examination - Eligibility and Exemptions.....	3-4
6. Limitation on the Number of Attempts.....	4
7. Admission to the Examination.....	4-5
8. Withdrawal from the Examination.....	5
9. Proof of Identity.....	5
10. Appeals Mechanism.....	5
11. Improper Conduct by Examination Candidates.....	5-6
12. Syllabus.....	6-9
Appendix 1 - Application for election and award of Diploma.....	10
Appendix 2 - College Directory.....	11

Any update to regulations or other information will be announced on the College website – www.rcpsg.ac.uk

1. Introduction

This document contains the examination regulations and outlines the scope and format of the Surgical Fellowship examination in Ophthalmology.

Success in this examination will provide the main route to Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (Glasgow).

2. Admission as a Fellow

Candidates who are successful in the Part 3 Examination will be admitted to the College as Fellows qua Surgeon in Ophthalmology subject to:

- Election as a Fellow qua Surgeon in Ophthalmology
- Payment of the current joining fee
- Completion and return of the signed Declaration Form

Further information is available in Appendix 1.

3. The Role of the Examination

The role of the examination is to set standards of ophthalmic care among ophthalmologists. The examination provides a quality marker to recognise best practice. Candidates achieving this standard are judged to have the skills of a General Ophthalmologist and to be able to manage patients and their ophthalmic conditions independently in a safe and professional manner. The examination syllabus draws upon sub-specialist expertise.

The award of Fellowship is considered to be the validation of an ophthalmologist's knowledge, experience and training. Fellowship is not intended to validate sub-specialist expertise. Entry to specialist training in the UK is governed by strict rules that would preclude automatic entry to specialist training of holders of the Fellowship. However, the Fellowship is recognised for the purpose of registration with the General Medical Council of the UK.

4. Format of the Examination

The examination is conducted in English and consists of three parts: each part must be passed before proceeding to the next. The syllabus outlines the areas of knowledge that may be examined.

4.1 Part 1 - Basic Sciences in Relation to Ophthalmology

The Part 1 examination takes the format of a multiple choice question paper of 2 hours' duration, normally comprising 160 questions in single best answer format.

4.2 Part 2

The Part 2 examination consists of two written papers. Candidates must sit and pass both sections of the examination at the same diet unless exemption has been granted.

- a) The first paper takes the format of a multiple choice question paper of 2 hours' duration, normally comprising 160 questions in single best answer format.
- b) The second paper takes the format of a problem-solving paper of 2 hours 15 minutes' duration. It comprises 4 questions, including a question on medical emergencies: achievement of a pass in this question is mandatory.

The multiple choice question paper encompasses the topics of ophthalmic medicine and surgery and general medicine and neurology with particular reference to ophthalmology.

The problem-solving paper presents candidates with brief descriptions of clinical problems.

4.3 Part 3

Part 3 consists of two sections and candidates must sit both parts of this examination at each attempt.

- a) **Structured oral examination** – consisting of 3 x 20-minute examinations covering the following subjects:
 - Lids, Oculoplastics and Anterior Segment
 - Posterior Segment
 - Neurology, Motility and General Medicine

The principal aims of the structured oral examinations are to assess:

- The application of knowledge to clinical situations
- Reasoning power and problem-solving ability
- Decision-making
- The ability to communicate information and ideas
- The ability to manage common acute medical emergencies

- b) **Clinical examination** – consisting of 4 x 12-minute examinations covering the following subjects:
 - Anterior Segment Disorders
 - Posterior Segment Disorders
 - Neuro-ophthalmic and Ocular Motility Disorders
 - Oculoplastic and Lid Disorders

Candidates are invited to examine patients using standard ophthalmology equipment and clinical examination methods. Each candidate will see two patients in each of the four stations in the clinical examination. The purpose of the clinical examination is to ensure that the candidate is able to demonstrate clinical findings and to appreciate and attach due significance to clinical symptoms and signs. The candidate is expected to communicate effectively with both the patient and the examiner and to discuss the clinical findings and the appropriate management for each case.

In order to pass the Part 3 examination, candidates are required to achieve a pass in the clinical component – see 'Candidate Guidance and Information' for further details.

5. Entry to the Examination – Eligibility and Exemptions

5.1 Eligibility

To apply for the examination a candidate must have achieved the following, by the closing date for applications:

5.1.1 Part 1

- A primary medical qualification that is acceptable to the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom;
- Post-qualification experience of not less than 2 years, of which at least 1 year should be in pre-registration training.

5.1.2 Part 2

- A primary medical qualification that is acceptable to the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom;
- Successful completion of Part 1, or possession of an exempting qualification (see Exemptions in section 5.2);
- Post-qualification experience of not less than 6 years, of which at least 1 year must have been spent in pre-registration training and 4.5 years in clinical Ophthalmology posts.

5.1.3 Part 3

- Successful completion of Part 1, or its equivalent, *and* Part 2.

5.2 Exemptions

5.2.1 Part 1

Exemption from the Part 1 examination may be granted to candidates who have achieved one of the following by the closing date for applications:

- Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh:
 - FRCSEd Part A (or MRCSEd Part 1 or FRCSEd Part 1)
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland:
 - FRCSI (Ophthalmology) Part 1 (or MRCSI (Ophthalmology) Part 1)
- Royal College of Ophthalmologists:
 - FRCOphth Part 1 (or MRCOphth Part 1)
- International Council of Ophthalmologists:
 - Basic Sciences and Optics and Refraction (or Full Basic Sciences or Basic Sciences including Optics and Refraction)
- Colleges of Medicine of South Africa:
 - FC Ophth (SA)
 - Diploma in Ophthalmology
- National University of Singapore
 - M.Med (Ophthalmology)
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan:
 - Fellowship in Ophthalmology
- University of Colombo:
 - MD (Ophthalmology) Module IV (or M.Med (Ophthalmology) or MD (Ophthalmology) Part II)

5.2.2 Part 2

Exemption from the Part 2 multiple choice question paper examination may be granted to candidates who have achieved the following by the closing date for applications:

- International Council of Ophthalmologists:
 - Clinical Sciences Examination

6. Limitation on the Number of Attempts

With effect from January 2014, candidates are permitted a maximum of six attempts for each part of the examination. Candidates who have had the maximum number of attempts will not be eligible to enter the examination again unless evidence of additional educational experience is provided. Following the final unsuccessful attempt, and before any further attempt is allowed, the candidate's Educational Supervisor, or equivalent, will be required to confirm that the candidate has demonstrated an improvement in knowledge and skill so that a pass result is highly likely at the next attempt.

7. Admission to the Examination

Part 1 and Part 2 examinations

All applications are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications accompanied by the full amount of the examination fee must reach the College no later than the published closing date. Any applications received after the closing date will not be accepted and will be returned.

Part 3 examination

Candidates can apply online between the published opening and closing dates. Candidates who do not wish to apply online can submit a paper application. Only one form per candidate can be submitted. Due to demand for places, all applications received between the published opening and closing dates are included in a randomised selection process. Any applications received either prior to the opening date or after the closing date will not be accepted. Candidates are no longer required to submit fee payment at the time of application. Fees must only be submitted if confirmation of a place on the exam is received from the Examinations Unit. Candidates are then required to submit the exam fee within 2 weeks and no later than the date provided in the email. If payment is not received by this date, the offer of a place will be cancelled and the place allocated to a candidate on the waiting list. Once all available places on the examination and waiting list have been allocated, application forms from those who have not been allocated a place will be destroyed.

The fee payable for each examination is determined by the Council: the College website shows current fees.

A candidate applying for the first time must submit supporting documentation including his/her diploma of graduation and exempting qualification as applicable. A checklist of required documentation can be found on the application form. All documents submitted should be in English and should be an attested copy of the original: unattested photocopies will not be accepted. Photocopies of attested copies will not be accepted.

Advice on attesting documents can be found in the 'Conditions Governing the Submission of Applications, Payment of Fees, and Refunds' document is available via the link 'Fees and Refund Policy' in the 'Information for Candidates' section on our website (<http://rcp.sg/applicationguide>).

If necessary, the original copy may be submitted: Original certificates will be returned to the applicant.

8. Withdrawal from the Examination

A candidate who withdraws in writing from any part of the examination may be refunded the fee paid less an administrative fee, provided that notice of an intention to withdraw is received by the Examinations Unit before the closing date by which applications are due, as shown on the College website.

Refunds are not normally made to candidates who withdraw after the closing date. Where extenuating circumstances prevent a candidate from sitting an examination, supporting documentary evidence must be provided detailing the nature of those circumstances before any request for a refund may be considered. All such applications must be submitted to the Examinations Unit within 30 days of the commencement of the examination.

9. Proof of Identity

Candidates must bring proof of identity to each examination. Proof of identity must be an official document, such as a current passport or driver's licence that includes the candidate's name, signature and photograph.

For the purposes of visual identification, any candidate sitting any examination may be required to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all or part of the candidate's face. The College will observe sensitivity in the visual identification of candidates.

10. Appeals Mechanism

Any candidate who wishes to make an appeal about the conduct of his/her examination must address it to the Examinations Unit within 30 days of the publication of results. Appeals will be considered which allege maladministration or bias or impropriety of some kind, whether in the conduct or in the determination of the result of the examination. Appeals disputing the academic judgement of the examiners will not be considered.

Details of the appeals process may be obtained from the 'Information for Candidates' section of our website.

11. Improper Conduct by Examination Candidates

In the case of improper conduct of an examination candidate, the College may impose a penalty relating to the candidate's eligibility for the relevant or future examinations.

If a candidate is found to have acted improperly, their name may be reported to their national authority. The College may also decide that a candidate should not be allowed to proceed further with the examination or, having passed the examination, may not be admitted to Fellowship according to their own statutes and regulations in cases where serious misconduct not related to the examination is judged to make the person unfit to become a Fellow of the College.

12. Syllabus

The syllabus outlines the areas of knowledge that may be examined.

Part 1

1. Anatomy

- Central nervous system relevant to ophthalmology
- Detailed anatomy of the eye, orbit and adnexae, and the visual pathways
- Head and neck anatomy
- The respiratory and cardiovascular systems

2. Embryology

Ophthalmic embryology and its relevance to congenital anomalies of the visual system

3. Physiology

General Physiology including:

- Cardiovascular system
- Respiratory system
- Haematological system
- Nervous system
- Endocrinology
- Homeostasis

Nutrition

Ophthalmic Physiology including:

- Ocular physiology
- Physiology of vision in relation to ophthalmology

4. Pathology

Principles of general and ocular pathology including:

- Inflammation
- Immunological mechanisms and hypersensitivity reactions
- Vascular pathology
- Degenerative disorders and aging
- Shock
- Neoplasia and the effects of treatment
- Microbiology
- Sterilisation, disinfection and asepsis

5. Pharmacology

General pharmacological principles

- Mode of action of drugs on receptors
- Drug toxicity

Ophthalmic pharmacology

- All drugs commonly used in ophthalmic practice
- Ophthalmic complications of drugs
- Systemic complications of ophthalmic drugs

6. Cell Biology and Biochemistry

- Cell structures and their biochemical functions
- Normal cell functions and interactions
- Connective tissue and extracellular matrix

7. Genetics

- Principles of genetics
- Modes of inheritance

8. Optics

Physical and Geometric optics

- Properties of light
- Reflection and refraction
- Prisms
- Lenses
- Lasers

Clinical optics

- Optics of the eye
- Refractive errors and their correction
- Optical principles of refractive surgery
- Low visual aids
- Biometry
- Optical principles and clinical use of ophthalmic and optical instruments

Part 2 (Written examinations) and Part 3 (Structured Oral and Clinical examinations)

Knowledge is required of the subject areas listed. Clinical problem-solving skills will be examined in written form and during the structured oral and clinical examinations. The candidate's ability to communicate with patients and colleagues and knowledge of basic medical practice will be assessed during the structured oral and clinical examinations. Candidate knowledge of ethics and the medico-legal aspects of ophthalmology and the concepts of evidence-based ophthalmology will also be assessed. Candidates are expected to read current medical journals and to be aware of important new developments in the subject of ophthalmology. Knowledge of the management of acute medical emergencies is mandatory and will be assessed in the Part 2 problem-solving examination.

- 1. Clinical History and Investigation in Adults and Children**
 - Visual function - acuity, colour vision, contrast sensitivity, stereopsis, and visual field examination and interpretation
 - Pupil reactions and pharmacological tests
 - Eyelid examination
 - Ophthalmoscopy: direct and indirect
 - Eye movements
 - Globe dystopia - exophthalmos, vertical and horizontal globe displacement
 - Retinoscopy
 - Slit lamp - component parts and examination methods
 - Cranial nerves
 - Interpretation of investigations relevant to ophthalmology

- 2. Ophthalmic Surgery**
 - Sterilisation and disinfection
 - Surgical instrumentation
 - Sutures and their uses
 - Common ophthalmic surgical procedures in relation to:
 - Oculoplastics
 - Cornea
 - Glaucoma
 - Strabismus
 - Vitreoretinal
 - Orbital
 - Cataract and refractive
 - Lacrimal
 - Paediatric ophthalmology
 - Trauma and its management

- 3. Ophthalmic Pathology**

The pathology of common ophthalmic conditions in relation to:

 - Oculoplastics
 - Cornea
 - Glaucoma
 - Strabismus
 - Vitreoretinal
 - Orbital
 - Cataract and refractive
 - Lacrimal
 - Uveitis
 - Macular disease
 - Medical vasculopathies
 - Ocular tumours

- 4. Ophthalmic Medicine**

Ophthalmic medical conditions and their management including:

 - Acquired macular diseases
 - Hereditary fundal dystrophies
 - Uveitis

- Vasculopathies

5. Paediatric Ophthalmology

The diagnosis and management of paediatric ophthalmic and neuro-ophthalmic conditions

6. Neuro-Ophthalmology

- Disorders of the visual pathways
- Neuro-ophthalmic disorders of ocular motility

7. Medicine and Neurology in Relation to Ophthalmology

Two categories of knowledge are required:

Category A – Medical Emergencies: Part 2 – Problem-solving Paper

Emergency situations and their management

- The unconscious patient (including cardiac arrest)
- The shocked patient
- The management of anaphylaxis
- Chest pain
- The breathless patient
- Hypoglycaemia

Candidates must demonstrate the ability to assess the situation, establish a preliminary diagnosis and initiate measures to stabilise the patient's condition pending the arrival of specialised assistance. The ability to recognise the normal and the abnormal ECG and to recognise obvious features of myocardial infarction and arrhythmia is required.

Category B – General Medicine and Neurology: Part 2 – Multiple Choice Question Paper and Part 3 – Structured Oral Examination

- Medical and neurological conditions which have associated ophthalmological signs and symptoms.
- The medical features of these conditions and the investigations undertaken prior to medical referral.
- The ophthalmic sequelae of treatment of medical conditions. (e.g. diabetes and thyrotoxicosis)
- The ability to deal with acute medical emergencies

Appendix 1

Application for election to Fellowship and award of Diploma

On passing the examination requirements you are not entitled to use the designation FRCS(Glasg) until after your formal admission to the Fellowship. The information below describes the election process and how to maintain your Fellowship status.

1. The list of successful candidates for the Surgical Fellowship in Ophthalmology will be confirmed by the Head of Examinations, on behalf of the President, the date of signature on the list being the date of election to the College.
2. The successful candidates will be invited to proceed to admission to the College and will be sent the appropriate documentation.
3. Each candidate for admission must pay a joining fee, the amount to be determined from time to time by the Council.
4. Upon receipt of the completed admission documentation and payment of a joining fee, a Diploma of Fellowship and Welcome Pack will be issued to each new Fellow. All Diplomas of Fellowship are dispatched on a monthly basis by recorded post.
5. All new Fellows will be given the opportunity to attend an Admission Ceremony – details of this will be sent at the time of admission.
6. In order to retain Fellowship and the use of the postnominals, each Fellow must pay the appropriate annual subscription fee, the amount to be determined from time to time by the Council.

Appendix 2

College Directory

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow
232-242 Vincent Street
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Examinations Unit

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Library

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