

ANNOUNCEMENT TO CANDIDATES

Changes to the Intercollegiate MRCS Part B OSCE with effect from February 2013.

The GMC has approved the following changes which will be effective from February 2013. Additionally, from the same date, the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland will replace the Part 3 MRCS with the Part B OSCE in the same format as the three Surgical Colleges of Great Britain.

This announcement is an outline only of the changes. More detail, and amended regulations, will follow in due course.

1. The specialty choice element will be removed from the examination, re-designating specialty-specific stations as generic stations.
2. The content will change by adding one surgical pathology/medical microbiology station and removing one history-taking station.
3. The examination will now be divided into two Broad Content Areas (BCAs): knowledge and its application ('applied knowledge'); and communication, clinical and procedural skills ('skills'). Candidates must pass both BCA's and there will be no overall pass mark. A failure in one BCA only will mean that a candidate must repeat the whole examination.
4. The candidate feedback form will be revised to show the results in the two BCAs as pass or fail with the relevant overall mark for each BCA.
5. The number of examiners will be reduced from two to one in one surgical science and critical care station. The history taking stations will be examined by a Clinician and a Lay Examiner.
6. To help achieve the retention of real patients in the examination, generic physical examination stations will be developed, with specific questioning of candidates dependent on the actual case under consideration.