

**CONJOINT BOARD OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND
AND THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND**

**DIPLOMA IN CLINICAL PSYCHIATRY
D.C.P., R.C.P. & S.Irel.**

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

PROSPECTUS

The purpose of this examination is to give the recognition for competence in psychiatric care to doctors working in general practice. The examination is also suitable for vocational trainees, who are interested in taking the M.R.C. Psych. at a later stage. The level of knowledge and skill is that required for good primary care. The emphasis will be placed on a candidate's ability to consider the relevant information and to arrive at judgements on relevant investigations, diagnosis and management. Particular attention will be paid to those psychiatric conditions which are common in primary care.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN WRITING TO:

**DCP Administrator,
Royal College of Physicians of Ireland,
2nd Floor, Frederick House, 19 South Frederick Street , Dublin 2**

TELEPHONE: 01 8639700

FAX: 01 6724707

EXAMINATION DATES & FEES

For current timetable and fees see separate download from DCP webpage.

EXAMINATION PROTOCOL & SECURITY

The examination protocol and security notice can be accessed via a separate download from the DCP webpage.

EXAMINATION FORMAT

Wednesday Written - Essay Paper and MCQ

Friday Oral/Clinical Examination

The written papers will be held in the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and the Clinical Examination will be held in a hospital within Ireland.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR APPLICATION

For entry to the Examination send:

1. Application form
2. Proof of qualification - certified copy of original diploma of medical qualification
3. Consultant's letter attesting candidates approved training post
4. An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae
5. Two passport size photographs
6. Exam Fee

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY ONE OF THE REGULATIONS WILL RESULT IN THE APPLICATION BEING RETURNED FORTHWITH. FAXED APPLICATIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE

As this examination has a limited capacity candidates are advised to apply as early as possible within the published opening and closing dates. Any applications received after the maximum number has been reached will be placed on a waiting list. Examination fees are processed only when an application has been accepted.

REGULATIONS

ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates must possess a medical qualification. Please note that it is necessary to forward a certified copy of your original diploma of medical qualification.

Candidates are eligible to sit the examination if they have both:-

- (a) Held an approved training post in a department or hospital specialising in psychiatry for not less than four months (evidence of this must be obtained from the Consultant in charge).
- (b) Been qualified 18 months at least at the end of the four month training post.

ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION

1. Applications for permission to enter must be made on the official entry form in block capitals together with all necessary documentation.
2. The candidate's full name must be given at the time of entry to the Examination and must agree with the names given on the diploma of medical qualification. The last name will be taken as the surname.
3. Candidates must submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae together with a letter from their consultant attesting their approved training post.
4. Candidates who fail to satisfy the Examiners on four occasions are not eligible to re-enter.
5. Two passport size photographs must accompany the application form for the preparation of an identity card which will be issued to each candidate for the Examination. This card must be taken to the Examination and presented at all parts of each Examination. Candidates who fail to present their identity card will not be permitted to sit the Examination until their identity is established.
6. Photographs need to be sent only once. It will not be necessary to send them with each subsequent entry.
7. Completed application forms together with the necessary documentation should be sent to the Examinations Secretary, The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, 2nd Floor, Frederick House, 19 South Frederick Street, Dublin 2, before the closing date.
8. Applications will not be accepted before the published opening date or after the published closing date, but candidates are advised to send in their applications as early as possible after the opening date because the number of entries is limited. Applications which are not complete in every detail and/or arrive after the published closing date will be returned. No allowance can be made for postal or other delays.
9. Any representation which candidates may desire to make with regard to the conduct of the Examination must be addressed to the Director of Examinations, and not to the Examiners.
10. The College may refuse to admit to the Examination or to proceed with the Examination of any candidate who infringes any regulation, or who is considered by the Examiners to have been guilty of behaviour prejudicial to the proper management of the Examination.
11. Candidates will receive their results by post and under no circumstances may results be given over the telephone.
12. The maximum intake of candidates for any one Examination will be limited. Candidates should ensure that their application reaches the College as soon as possible before the closing date as shown on the examination calendar.

EXAMINATION FORMAT

There will be four components to the examination:- the M.C.Q., the essay paper, the oral and the clinical.

The essay and M.C.Q. sections of the examination will be held in the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland on Wednesdays. The oral/clinical examination will be held at psychiatric hospitals within Ireland on Fridays. Candidates will sit all four components of the examination.

The Essay and M.C.Q. Paper

The Essay Paper consists of 4 essay questions, 2 in Section A and 2 in Section B, and one question from each section must be answered. One question in each section will be in the form of a clinical vignette, with a psychiatric problem to be assessed and managed. Time allowed for the paper will be 90 minutes.

The MCQ Paper will follow on immediately.

The MCQ will consist of 20 questions with five stems in each question, making 100 questions in all. Time allocated for the MCQ will be 60 minutes.

The Oral/Clinical Examination

The Oral and Clinical examinations will be held on a Friday morning. Two examiners will examine each candidate. The Clinical will consist of a long case and will be followed by the Oral. The candidate will be permitted 50 minutes to examine a patient for the long case with a further 10 minutes alone before a discussion of the case with the two examiners. Ten minutes will be allocated to the presentation of the case to the examiners followed by 10 minutes during which the candidate will interview the patient in the presence of the examiners. Finally, 10 minutes will be spent on the Oral examination. The total time spent with the examiners will therefore be 30 minutes. It is necessary to pass the Clinical to pass the exam.

FEES

Fees must be paid in Euro by cheque, cash, bank draft or bank transfer to the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, Frederick House, 19 South Frederick Street, Dublin 2. Payment can also be made by Credit Card. Please complete the credit card details on the application form. A diploma fee will be payable by the successful candidates before the diploma is awarded. Examination and diploma fees are payable in Euro only. Applications that are not accompanied by the Examination fee will not be accepted.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EXAMINATION

Notice of withdrawal from the Examination must be given in writing to the College. A refund less 10% will be made if written notice of withdrawal is received by the College on or before the closing date of entry to the Examination. In no circumstances will any refund be made after the closing date. Fees will not be carried over to a future Examination.

GENERAL NOTES

You are advised to allow for any transport delays when planning your time of arrival at the Examination centre, as under no circumstances will you be permitted to go into the Examination Room later than half an hour after the start of the Examination.

It is advisable for candidates to ascertain if they require a visa and to apply for this at least eight weeks before the date of the Examination to allow time for the visa to be processed. Please see the note on Travel Visas at the following area of the website:

Examinations/About Examinations/General Enquiries

For information regarding hotels and guest houses apply to:

Bord Failte Eireann, Baggot Street, Dublin 2, telephone (01) 676 5871.

OUTLINE SYLLABUS

Intending candidates are expected to have a knowledge of the main aspects of psychiatry, as they relate to Primary Care.

This will include familiarity with the following points:-

1. The method of taking a psychiatric history, and conducting a mental state examination.
2. The nature and prevalence occurring in primary care of psychoneuroses, including anxiety disorders and mood disorders. This should include an awareness of the many presentations including somatic presentations of these disorders in the Primary Care setting.
3. The manifestations of the major functional psychoses, especially Schizophrenia and the Affective Psychoses.
4. The main features of Substance-related disorders. Special emphasis is placed on the recognition of hidden alcoholism in general practice together with strategies for successful intervention and the main treatment methods used.
5. The management of psychiatric emergencies as they present in the community.
6. The assessment of suicidal risk and the management of the suicidal patient.
7. The psychiatric disorders of pregnancy and the puerperium.
8. The diagnosis and management of normal and abnormal grief reactions.
9. The assessment of sexual dysfunction and its appropriate management.
10. The principal manifestations and management of psychological dysfunction in children and adolescents. Knowledge of the procedures to be adopted relating to sexual abuse. Knowledge of eating disorders.

11. The main manifestations of acute and chronic confusional states, particularly in the elderly. The recognition and treatment of functional disorders in the elderly. Familiarity with the management approaches to dementia in Primary Care.
12. Some knowledge of Forensic Psychiatry especially as it pertains to committal of patients to hospital.
13. The development of personality and its disorders.
14. The therapeutic potential of the doctor-patient relationship and the main elements of psychotherapy including psychodynamic psychotherapy, behaviour therapy and cognitive therapy.
15. The appropriate referral of patients for specialist psychiatric opinion and their appropriate referral to counselling and support groups, voluntary organisations and statutory agencies in the community.
16. The psychopharmacology of those psychotropic agents commonly used in Primary Care.