



# Regulations and Information for Candidates

## Membership of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine

March 2026 Edition

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# 1. Introduction

Membership of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (MFOM) is governed by the By-Laws of the College (RCPI). The following Regulations apply to all candidates entering the MFOM examinations. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure compliance with the Regulations. Any decision on the interpretation of these Regulations made by the College is binding. The acceptance of any application is at the sole discretion of the College.

There are three 'Parts' to the MFOM Examination:

MFOM Written Examination

MFOM Portfolio Examination – which includes a viva voce examination (VIVA) which is currently ran alongside the OSPE on Day two in 2024 and will be delivered online from 2025 onwards

MFOM Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE) – consists of three components and split into two days: Report Writing and Critical Appraisal examinations held on day one, OSPE examination on day two.

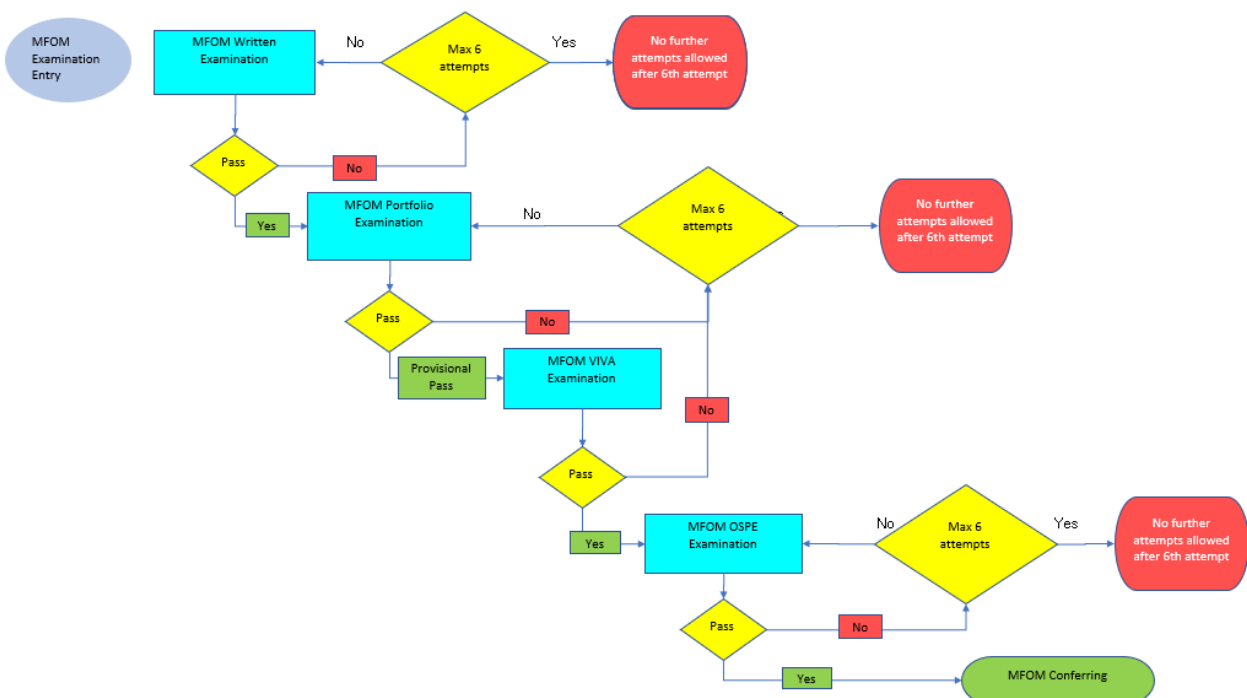
Each part is taken separately and must be passed before candidates can progress to the next stage.

All MFOM examinations are conducted in the English language.

# 2. MFOM Qualification

Membership of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (MFOM) is an internationally recognised qualification achieved through examination. MFOM is a fundamental component of the Higher Specialist Training Programme in Occupational Medicine. It is a key knowledge-based assessment for occupational medicine in Ireland. The MFOM qualification recognised by the General Medical Council in the UK.

## 2.1 Qualification Map



### 3. Applications

Candidates sitting the MFOM examination will be allowed a maximum six attempts for each component i.e., 18 attempts in total when the examination has three parts.

Examination:	Maximum Number of Attempts:	Time limit to pass:
MFOM Written Examination	6	6 years from 1st examination attempt
MFOM Portfolio Examination (including VIVA)	6	
MFOM OSPE	6	

Following the change to limit the number of attempts to complete the MFOM examinations candidates can “bank” their past results for a total of 6 years. For example, a candidate who passed the MFOM Written Exam in 2020 can carry this result forward until 2026.

#### 3.1. Entry requirements

Candidates must have completed the Licentiate of Faculty of Occupational Medicine (LFOM) or at a minimum:

- passed the LFOM Written exam within the last six years
- taking the LFOM Written exam concurrently with the MFOM Written

Candidates must hold a medical qualification. They must be registered and authorised to practice medicine by an appropriate national medical council/body.

Candidates must have completed four years professional training comprising of

- two years full time or equivalent experience following full registration with an appropriate medical council
- two years’ experience in Occupational Medicine

Evidence of this is part of the application process and must be included in the form of a detailed curriculum vitae.

If additional information regarding candidate’s occupational experience is required a candidate will be asked to submit a letter from their employer which provides details of the candidate’s duties and occupational medicine experience, acceptance of this letter is at the discretion of the Chief Examiner.

Candidates must have completed academic training in Occupational Medicine, acceptable to the Faculty as broadly covering the required syllabus. Certain courses may be deemed suitable at the Faculty’s discretion; applicants will be required to provide comprehensive details of the course including the curriculum/programme, the organising body and the total number of hours

Candidates who have completed academic training not listed in Appendix IV will be required to provide comprehensive details of the course including the curriculum/programme, the organising body and the total number of hours.

#### 3.2 Exemptions

There are no qualifying exemptions, all candidates must sit all parts of the MFOM examination.

### 3.3 Method of Application

All MFOM examination applications are submitted online through RCPI website, candidate will be prompted to include required documentation and make payment as required for the examination.

The College accepts payment by credit/debit card or PayPal only.

Applications after the published closing date will not be accepted.

Candidates must upload the following documentation when applying for the MFOM Written examination

- attested/certified copies of their original Primary Medical Qualification,
- registration to practice with the relevant body in your home country
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- passport style photo (colour, full-face, minimum 100x100 pixels, neutral background)

RCPI only accepts attestation/certification by one of the following:

- An Garda Siochana (Irish police force)
- The issuing University or Medical School
- A solicitor/ notary public/ lawyer
- A Commissioner for oaths
- An Irish or British Consulate

Diplomas in a language other than English must be accompanied by an official translation. Official translations will only be accepted if they have been prepared and/or authenticated by:

- the issuing University or Medical School
- Irish or British Consulate
- the candidate's own Embassy or High Commissioner

Candidates must upload the following documentation when applying for the MFOM Portfolio examination

- Scanned copy of the signed declaration form
- Ten portfolio cases, separate word or pdf documents – to be uploaded in Brightspace
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)

#### Registration for the Portfolio exam

From 2025, the College transitioned most of the MFOM Portfolio exam process to the Brightspace platform. All candidates wishing to sit the MFOM Portfolio examination should register by submitting an online application via the RCPI website. Candidates will be asked to upload supplementary documents and pay the examination fee via the RCPI online exam application. Once completed, candidates will be given a link to access Brightspace where candidates will directly upload their portfolio cases. The plagiarism checking process using Turnitin tool is also undertaken via the Brightspace platform.

The candidate's full name must be given at the time of application for the examination and must match with the name(s) given on medical qualification documentation. The name you provide will be used on all official correspondence (such as diplomas, qualifications and certificates) issued by RCPI. Candidates who change their name(s) by marriage or deed poll must upload documentary proof of this, if they wish to be admitted to the examination in their new name.

Candidates who are subject to any warning, interim orders, undertaking or conditions on their practice from the Irish Medical Council or equivalent body must submit a completed [Candidate Restrictions/Limitations Declaration Form](#) with each exam application.

Permission to enter any MRCPI Examination will be reviewed by the Institute of Medicine Director of Examinations and approved by the Examinations Committee.

Candidates completing an online application who declare any restriction on their license will be prompted to complete the form. The declaration form must be completed electronically and uploaded as part of the application process.

### 3.4 Examinations Locations

The MFOM Written examination is delivered by remote invigilation through our online exam provider TestReach. Remote invigilation allows a candidate to sit the computer-based exam from their own computer e.g., at home or at work.

Candidates are supervised remotely by invigilators/supervisors throughout the examination. Candidates are required to adhere to the following requirements to sit an examination by remote invigilation:

- A quiet, secure environment as set out below:
  - A room where candidate can take the examination without interruption.
  - A room to which you have exclusive access (single occupancy - not shared)
  - A room that does not have integrated security cameras, or any recording equipment, other than the webcam on PC or laptop
  - Candidate is confident he/she will not be disturbed during the examination, e.g. by traffic, construction work, or people
- A PC or laptop computer with a reliable internet connection, webcam and microphone. Must have permissions to install software and meet the system requirements as set out by the exam provider. Multiple screens are not permitted.
- After conducting the validation checks with the supervisor, candidates must switch their mobile phone off and put it out of reach. In the unlikely event of encountering technical difficulties during the examination, you may use your mobile phone to call TestReach technical support, if you don't have a landline. This is the only time you are permitted to use your phone during the exam.
- Candidates should read the TestReach candidate FAQ section for further information on system requirements available on the TestReach website
- For more information about remote invigilation visit our website; [remote invigilation link](#).

The MFOM Portfolio VIVA examination takes place online via Zoom. Candidates are required to adhere to the following requirements to sit the VIVA examination:

- A quiet, secure environment as set out below:
  - A room where candidate can take the examination without interruption.
  - A room to which you have exclusive access (single occupancy - not shared)
  - A room that does not have integrated security cameras, or any recording equipment, other than the webcam on PC or laptop
  - Candidate is confident he/she will not be disturbed during the examination, e.g. by traffic, construction work, or people
- A PC or laptop computer with a reliable internet connection, webcam and microphone.

The MFOM OSPE examinations are delivered in person in Dublin, Ireland.

### 3.5 Visa

If a candidate requires a visa to sit a centre-based examination, it is the responsibility of the individual to ensure the visa application is made in sufficient time before the examination date for which it has been sought. The College has no influence in granting or refusing visas. A refund will not be given if a candidate is unable to attend the examination as a result of a visa related problem.

### 3.6 Examination Fees

The fees payable on application for the LFOM Examinations are published annually. Please refer to the website <https://www.rcpi.ie/Learn-and-Develop/Examinations/Examinations-Calendar> which is updated regularly.

Candidates will be permitted to take the examination only when all fees are paid in full.

### 3.7 Withdrawal from the Examination

Notice of withdrawal from an examination must be given in writing to the College. A refund of less than 10% will be made if written notice of withdrawal is received by the College on or before the closing date of application to the examination. Refunds will not be made where candidates submit their withdrawal request after the application closing date.

For Written examinations candidates may request a deferral of their application to the next diet. Examination deferral requests must be submitted from the closing date of applications to no later than seven working days before the examination date. A non-refundable administrative fee of €100 applies. By submitting a deferral request and paying the fee, candidates will be removed from the registration list for the current examination. The administrative fee must be paid within seven working days of submitting the deferral request. If you need to request a late deferral and/or a deferral fee waiver based on extenuating circumstances, you must do so in writing to the Examinations Operations Manager to [exams@rcpi.ie](mailto:exams@rcpi.ie). Please see the [RCPI Cancellation Policy](#).

### 3.8 Cancellation of Examination

RCPI reserves the right to cancel, reschedule the date, or change the location of an examination. In the event of a reschedule or cancellation by RCPI, the College will endeavour to inform all applicants at least six weeks prior to the examination date. If an examination is cancelled or rescheduled by RCPI, candidates will be offered a full refund or option to transfer to another date if applicable. For further details, please see the [RCPI Cancellation Policy](#).

### 3.9 Examination Registration

#### **Written Examinations:**

All candidates taking the examination via remote invigilation will be emailed by our online exam provider, TestReach approximately 10 days in advance of the examination date. This email will contain the candidate's login credentials and instructions to download the Exam Application on the device the candidate will use to take their examination.

Candidates will receive a second email notifying them that they have been assigned to the examination. The email contains instructions for the candidate to login to the application and test their device, webcam,

microphone, and speakers. The candidate is also instructed to book a time slot to start their examination. The start time of the examination is based on the candidate's location and time settings on their device. **This step must be completed at least 72 hours before the examination**, or the candidate will not be able to start the examination.

On the day of the examination candidates are instructed to login into the Exam Application at least 15 minutes before their examination start time. This is to allow time to connect with the invigilator/supervisor and to complete the pre-validation process (including proof of identity check), before beginning the examination.

Any candidates who arrive or login after their allocated registration time, **will not be permitted to take the examination**.

### **MFOM VIVA / OSPE Examinations:**

Candidates taking the oral (VIVA) and/or OSPE examinations are required to prove their identity as part of the examination registration, by providing their portfolio provisional pass result letter and government issued photo id passport, driver's license, etc.).

For the purposes of visual identification, any candidate sitting the examination will 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 and, in specific circumstances, privacy in the visual identification of candidates.

### **3.10 Limited Attempts Policy**

Candidates sitting the MFOM examination will be allowed a maximum six attempts for each component i.e., 18 attempts in total when the examination consists of three parts.

Candidates who reach six attempts at any examination will be allowed to apply for one final additional attempt. To allow for sufficient additional training and education there must be a minimum of six months or one examination diet between the sixth and the additional (seventh) attempt. Only one additional attempt will be permitted.

The number of attempts is counted from a candidate's first sitting of an MFOM examination, not from the effective date of this policy.

<b>Examination:</b>	<b>Maximum Number of Attempts:</b>	<b>Time limit to pass:</b>
MFOM Written Examination	6	6 years from 1st examination attempt
MFOM Portfolio Examination (including VIVA)	6	
MFOM OSPE	6	

The above requirements and time limits apply for progressing through the different parts of the examination.

Candidates must pass the MFOM Written Examination before they submit a MFOM Portfolio application.

Candidates must receive a provisional 'pass' for their Portfolio cases before they take part in the VIVA Examination.

Where a candidate receives a provisional 'pass' for their MFOM Portfolio submission, but fails the VIVA Examination, the candidate can resit the VIVA part only of the MFOM Portfolio at the next diet of the examination.

Candidates must pass the MFOM Portfolio before they take part in the OSPE Examination.

## 4. Preparation for MFOM Examination

MFOM is an internationally recognised benchmark of excellence, valued by healthcare employers worldwide. It is an essential component of Higher Specialist Training in Occupational Medicine and recognised by the General Medical Council in the UK.

There is a guideline syllabus to assist with the preparation for the MFOM which is listed in point 5.4 below. The guidelines present a framework of topics which should be covered, but it is not intended to be exhaustive, and candidates should not limit their studies solely to these topics.

There are no past papers available for this examination.

## 5. MFOM Written Examination

### 5.1 Examination Overview

The MFOM Written examination is held once a year and consists of one paper with 100 Single Best Answer questions. Candidates have three hours to complete the examination.

Single Best Answer questions consists of a 'vignette' (clinical scenario) followed by five possible answers. You must select the single best answer.

This paper is intended to test knowledge in occupational medicine and will therefore cover the content of the syllabus laid down by the faculty. Questions covering clinical medicine and the management of occupational health problems may be included.

### 5.2 Occupational Medicine Syllabus

This is a guideline syllabus to assist with the preparation for the MFOM written examination. The guidelines present a framework of topics which should be covered, but it is not intended to be exhaustive, and candidates should not limit their studies solely to these topics.

The occupational medicine syllabus for the MFOM is as follows:

#### **Occupational Health Hazards and Diseases**

- Clinical Diagnosis and Case Management
- Health Surveillance
- Hazard Identification
- Risk Assessment
- Risk Management
- Planning Control Measures
- Implementation of Control Measures
- Monitoring Control Measures
- Safety Statements
- Workplace Environmental Control Measures
- Carcinogens
- Occupational Allergic Diseases
- Dusts and Pneumoconiosis

#### **Prevention of Disability and Assessment of Fitness for Work**

- Evaluation of Fitness for Work

- Disability Evaluation and Rehabilitation
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Non-Availability for Work

### **Management and Communication**

- Managerial Skills (Personal, Non-Clinical, Running a Department etc.)
- Organisational Management
- Records/Budgets/Marketing
- Audit
- Communication Skills

### **Occupational Health Law**

International development of Safety Law and Guidelines (W.H.O., I.L.O., E.U.)

- National Law in Occupational Health and Safety
- Legal and Judicial Systems
- Other legislation relevant to Occupational Health (Road Transport, Manual Handling, Pregnancy, Shift Work etc.)

### **Ethics**

- Conflict of loyalty between Employer/Employee
- Confidentiality
- Testing for drugs/alcohol in the workplace
- Record keeping

### **Epidemiology and Statistics**

- Statistics (data gathering, quality of data, statistical tests etc.)
- Epidemiology (study designs, questionnaire designs etc.)
- Interpretation (quality of studies, action to be taken etc.)
- Normal Values and Normal Population Distribution etc.

### **Occupational Hygiene and Toxicology**

- Occupational Hygiene Surveys
- Occupational Hygiene Sampling and Monitoring
- Hygiene Control Methods
- Personal Protection Equipment
- Human Toxicology
- Descriptive Toxicology
- Toxic effects of Organic Chemicals
- Toxicology of Heavy Metals
- Chemical Hazards
- Physical Hazards
  - Radiation
  - Vibration
  - Noise
  - Atmospheric Pressure
  - Temperature
- Biological Monitoring
- Surveillance of Workers exposed to Chemical/Toxic/Physical Hazards

### **Work Organisation and Psychology**

- The Nature of Organisations (Size, Structure, Public and Private Sector)
- Management Programming (Objectives, Strategies, Targets, etc.)

- Trade Unions
- Employer Organisations
- Health and Safety Committees
- Psychosocial Environment
- Occupational Psychology
- New Technologies (changing patterns of employment)
- Psychological Testing
- Shiftwork

### **Ergonomics**

- Principles of Ergonomics
- Lighting and Vision Standards
- Working Environment (ventilation, working temperature, sick building syndrome)
- Manual Handling
- Prevention of Cumulative Trauma Disorders
- Visual Display Units and Computer Systems

### **Environmental Issues Related to Work Practice**

- Relationships of Occupational Health Services to General Environmental Agencies
- Stack Emissions
- Waste Disposal
- Ecotoxicology
- General Population Effects of Toxic Hazards
- Disaster Control and Emergency Planning
- Dangerous Substances (storage, packaging, labelling and conveyance)

### **Workplace Health Promotion**

- Assessing needs for Health Promotion
- Provision of Health Promotion Programmes
- Group Communications

## **5.3 Marking**

Data files containing candidates' answers are automatically verified and scored against an answer key in the system. Mathematical performance indicators are then calculated and scrutinised by the Board, to confirm the fairness of every question. The pass mark is approved by the Board of Examiners for each examination.

## **6. MFOM Portfolio Examination**

### **6.1. Examination Format**

The second component of the MFOM is the Portfolio examination which includes the viva voce (VIVA) examination, in which candidates who have passed the Portfolio successfully are called forward to defend one of their ten submitted Portfolios.

Candidates are required to submit ten Portfolios

- Five clinical cases
  - Three relating to occupation AND disease
  - Two relating to occupational injury
- Five workplace projects
  - Two workplace assessments

- Three in relation to policy development, audits and projects concerning improvement in occupational health matters

Your two clinical injury cases should be clearly labelled as your Clinical Case 4 and 5, “RCPI ID – Clinical Case 4 Injury case”.

Your workplace-based assessments / walk-through surveys should be clearly labelled as your Workplace Project 1 and 2, “RCPI ID – Project 1 Workplace-based assessment/ walk-through survey”.

Your three projects relating to policy development, audits, or improvements in occupational health matters should be clearly labelled as your Project 3, 4 and 5, “RCPI ID - Project 4 policy development”.

The case studies must consist of cases that the candidate has managed, and this should be clearly indicated in how the case description is written. Each case should involve a different clinical condition and be drawn from as wide a spectrum of clinical encounters as possible.

Cases can be drawn from a general medical clinical workload but must involve work-related disease or an occupational injury. Work-related disease is defined by the WHO as “*a disease caused by, associated with or loosely related to work and the work environment*”. Any case therefore in which work is an important factor either in causation or management is acceptable.

- Display screen equipment assessments are not allowed
- Workplace assessments must not be related to a medical facility.

Candidates will need to look outside the clinical and associated administrative environment and concentrate on basic nonmedical work processes.

## 6.2. Writing your Portfolio

Each portfolio must be written in Plain English, using the active voice whenever possible. The word count should not exceed 1,500 words. Each portfolio must have its own word count, not including references or appendices. Incorrectly formatted portfolios will be rejected.

Each Clinical portfolio must be numbered 1 to 5 and should contain:

- A title, for example, Occupational Asthma
- Patient history – including occupational history
- Clinical examination
- Investigation and results
- Diagnosis and treatment
- Case management, emphasising occupational health management and prevention
  - should consider aspects of rehabilitation, legal context, task analysis, communication to the employer, and their response
- Follow up
- Discussion
  - should include an appraisal covering the association between the clinical condition and its occupational context
  - also issues such as causation and options for management should be discussed
- References
  - must include a relevant literature review regarding the case and all citations should be referenced according to the Vancouver Convention

Each Workplace portfolio must be numbered 6 to 10 and should contain:

- Two walk-through surveys of the workplace
  - Each should include a detailed hazard survey or risk assessment
  - Relevant interpretation with recommendations
- Three projects relating to policy development, audits or improvements in occupational health matters
  - Candidates must demonstrate considerable personal involvement in the projects
    - Copying an existing occupational health department document or using a PowerPoint presentation will not be acceptable

Examples of acceptable projects are as follows:

- Formal audits of some aspect of your occupational health practice
- An example of how your practice influenced change in an organisation
- An example of your development of a policy, guidelines, or operational procedures in your occupational health department
- Your own choice of topic relevant to current occupational health practice, excluding project listed above e.g.,
  - impact of pandemic influenza in an organisation
  - introduction of computer system into an occupational health department
  - the role of occupational health in managing sickness absence

Relevant literature should be cited, and all citations should be referenced according to the Vancouver convention.

Advice on suitability or otherwise of candidate selected projects can be sought from the Chief Examiner by emailing [exams@rcpi.ie](mailto:exams@rcpi.ie). See Appendix II for Portfolio templates.

### 6.3. Finalising your Portfolio

In addition to a table of contents, each portfolio must include a brief curriculum vitae including details of the candidate's current occupational health commitments. This information is not to be included in the total word count.

Each portfolio must be formatted as follows:

1. The margins should be 2.5cm
2. Line spacing can be either 1.5 or double line spacing

Marks are awarded for presentation, candidates are strongly advised to review and proofread their work prior to submission.

The normal rules of citation practice must be respected and the below declaration confirming the submitted work is entirely your own must be included in each portfolio.

Each portfolio name should be in the format "RCPI ID – Case Number"; this text should also be included as a header in the document.

#### **Declaration:**

You must include the MFOM declaration form when you submit your portfolio cases. A copy of the declaration form can be found on our [website](#):

**DECLARATION FORM**

I..... hereby apply for admission to the Membership examination to be held on.....(date) at .....(name of centre).

I declare that I have read and understood the Faculty's regulations governing the examination.

I understand that I may be refused admission, or have permission to complete the examination rescinded if I infringe any regulation or I am considered by the examiners to have been guilty of behaviour prejudicial to the proper conduct of the examination.

I understand too that I may be subject to sanctions up to and including being excluded from any further examinations conducted by the Faculty or College for life. Any such misconduct may be reported to the appropriate licensing body

**ORIGINAL FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO GUARANTEE ACCEPTANCE.**

Royal College of Physicians of Ireland uses third party tool Turnitin to check for instances of plagiarism in portfolio submissions by comparing portfolios against database of electronic materials and the internet. RCPI also has an Institution paper repository function, which allows for candidate's portfolios to be checked against previously submitted portfolios.

Cases previously submitted in an LFOM portfolio are not acceptable as part of a MFOM portfolio application. Any type of attempt to do so will be regarded as a breach of these regulations and treated accordingly.

Candidates' portfolio cases with a similarity report percentage of 50% or above is considered potential plagiarism and will be investigated accordingly.

Plagiarism is considered a form of misconduct, please see section 11 Examinations Code of Conduct below and [Plagiarism Policy Occupational Medicine Exams](#).

#### 6.4. Submitting your portfolio

Electronic copies of portfolios are submitted during the online application process for the examination. The electronic copy should be in Microsoft Word document or PDF file format without password protection.

Each portfolio must be uploaded as an individual document.

Applications will not be accepted until files in this format have been submitted.

#### 6.5. Marking

The portfolio is subject to marking by two or more examiners and an approved marking scheme will be used for this purpose. All examination results are subject to examination board review and approval.

### 7. VIVA Examination Format

The viva voce (VIVA) examination takes place online.

Candidates who have received a provisional 'pass' result for their Portfolio cases will be called forward to defend by a viva voce examination (VIVA) two out of their ten submitted portfolio cases. The Occupational Medicine Chief Examiner will select the cases the candidate will be examined on. Candidates will be examined by two examiners.

On the day of the VIVA Exam, candidates will be asked to speak on each portfolio case for 10 minutes with two examiners. Ten minutes before the examination the candidate will be told which of the two portfolios they will be examined on.

The VIVA component must be passed in its own right, regardless of the previous provisional 'pass' result obtained in the marking of portfolio submissions.

### 7.1. Marking

The VIVA component is subject to marking by 2 examiners and an approved marking scheme will be used for this purpose. The marking of VIVA cases is subject to examination board review and approval.

## 8. Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE) Format

The OSPE examination is the final examination which must be completed to be eligible to be conferred as a member of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (MFOM). The exam has three components and is split into two days,

- Day One
  - Report Writing
  - Critical Appraisal
- Day Two
  - OSPE

### Report Writing

This is a 30-minute written examination that takes place on day one of the OSPE.

Candidates are asked to write a report to management or a letter to a patient (clients), GP or hospital specialist based on a scenario given on the day of the examination.

### Critical Appraisal

This is a 90-minute written examination that takes place on day one of the OSPE.

The critical appraisal paper assesses a candidate's ability to read, interpret and apply the key points from a scientific journal article. Candidates will be given several journal articles to read and they are required to write a critical appraisal of the articles.

### OSPE

The OSPE assesses a candidate's clinical skills. The OSPE consists of eight stations lasting ten minutes. Many of the stations will involve taking directed specific histories from patients or performing physical examinations of particular systems. There will be stations where practical assessments will be undertaken such as interpretation of audiometric or spirometry tracings, results of biological monitoring etc.

Candidates will be expected to answer relevant questions at the end of the station.

Candidates are expected to bring the following equipment as it will not be provided at the exam centre.

- Stethoscope
- Measuring tape
- Tendon hammer
- Clinical torch
- Ophthalmoscope
- Auriscope

## 8.1. Marking

To pass the OSPE a candidate must pass five or more of the stations.

Candidates must pass all six of the examination components – Portfolio, Written, VIVA, OSPE, Report Writing and Critical Appraisal. There will be no compensation between these components.

Failure in any of the components will be deemed a failure of the examination.

All examination results are subject to examination board review and approval.

## 9. Examinations Rules and Guidelines

These Regulations apply to all examination candidates of the College. Candidates should note that by applying to sit an examination, they are deemed to have understood and agreed to comply by these Regulations. Any suspected or actual breach of the examination rules and regulations, or a failure to comply with the written and/or verbal instructions of the College, its staff and any service providers (e.g. online exam proctoring) will result in the candidate's behaviour and performance being subject to an enhanced review. This includes but is not limited to review of, exam incident reports, clinical marksheets and/or obtaining proctoring record and analysis of the candidate's keystroke/clickstream data for remote invigilation examination.

- Candidates will not be permitted to take the Written examination if they do not register their start time in advance or if they login to the exam after their allocated start time. Candidates will not be permitted to take the OSPE/Clinical examination if they arrive after their allocated registration time.
- Candidates must have a government issued photo id (e.g., passport or driver's licence), as proof of identity, the candidate's name must be stated in the same manner as on their examination application. Candidates will not be admitted to take the examination unless they produce photographic identification.
- Candidates should note that drugs will almost always be referred to by their UK approved names (National Formulary) rather than their trade names. Biochemical and other measurements will be expressed in SI units.
- Candidates are not permitted to have in the exam environment where they are sitting the remote exam, smart technology, additional laptop computers, headsets, tablets, calculators, textbooks, documents, any recording equipment or personal items of any kind other than those specifically allowed for that particular examination and previously notified to them. The use of 3rd party software is not permitted and candidates must ensure that all applications are close prior to starting the examination. Any candidate found to be in possession of any of above during the examination will receive an infringement warning from the exam invigilator/supervisor.

- Candidates may not carry or look at any device that can store or record information or be used for communication (e.g., mobile phones, tablets or smart watches), headsets, calculators, textbooks, documents or personal items of any kind, other than those specifically allowed for that particular examination while in the examination. Candidates taking an OSPE/Clinical examination will be required to hand over their phone and/or smart devices to the Examination Coordinator for the duration of the exam. Any candidate found to be in possession of or attempting to access any of the above during the examination will have their exam suspended and will automatically fail the examination.
- Candidates will be required to comply with the infection control procedures in place at examination centres to support delivery of the OSPE/clinical examination in accordance with local and government guidance. Please note that procedures may vary according to the centre
- It is strictly forbidden for candidates to talk or attempt in any way to communicate with anyone other than the examiner/invigilator/supervisor while the written and/or OSPE/clinical examination is in progress.
- Candidates taking written examinations are not permitted to switch the webcam off, lean out of the webcam view, block the webcam, commence hand movement that could be interpreted as sign language, glance at other areas of the room that the invigilator cannot see, look away from their screens repeatedly or look at their hands or wrists, behave in an unsuitable or inappropriate manner to the invigilator/supervisor. If invigilators identify any of the above behaviour, they will make a record of this, and it will be reported to RCPI.
- Smoking or vaping is not permitted during the written and/or VIVA examinations.
- One brief (<5 minutes) comfort break is permitted during the written examination. No additional time will be added to the examination to compensate for breaks. Candidates who require to take an additional break for medical reasons should request this through reasonable adjustments process. Supporting evidence will be required for such requests. Candidates should note that extended periods of time away from their desk during any such breaks will be recorded by invigilators and may be subject to further investigation.
- Dress and appearance are an important aspect of professionalism. For the VIVA component of the MFOM Portfolio Examination, you should be dressed smartly.
- To facilitate the assessment of non-verbal communication skills and interaction with patients, examiners, and invigilators, RCPI will require exam candidates, for the duration of the examination, to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all, or part of, their face.
- Candidates will be prevented from proceeding with the VIVA examination if the examiners believe that they are too unwell to continue.

## **10. Emergency and Fire Evacuation**

- Candidates taking written examinations via remote invigilation: if there is an emergency at the location where you are taking the exam, notify the invigilator/supervisor and follow the evacuation guidelines for the location. The invigilator/supervisor will submit your examination and notify the

RCPI Examination Department of the incident. Each incident will be reviewed by the RCPI Examination Department on a case-by-case basis.

- Candidates taking VIVA examinations: if there is an emergency when you are taking the exam, notify the examiner and follow the evacuation guidelines for the location.
- In the event that it is not possible to resume the VIVA examination within a reasonable time period, the examination will be re-scheduled. In this case, candidates will be contacted by the Examinations Department regarding alternative examination arrangements.
- Candidates taking OSPE examinations: if there is an emergency follow the emergency policy for the centre location.
- The College staff member and Invigilators should collect the exam register and evacuate to the assembly point using the emergency exits.
- At the assembly point(s) the College staff member and invigilators will check the candidates against the examinations register.
- If it is possible to resume the OSPE examination, candidates will return to their station and time will be resumed from when the alarm was raised. Candidates will be informed of the revised finishing time for the examination.
- A written report of the evacuation will be filed by the College.
- In the event that it is not possible to resume the exam within a reasonable time period, the examination will be re-scheduled. In this case, candidates will be contacted by the Examinations

## **11. Examinations Code of Conduct**

This code applies to all examinations candidates and includes behaviour and all contact with Examiners, Invigilators, Patients and RCPI Staff, before during and after the examination. By submitting an application for an MRCPI examination, candidates are confirming that they have read, understood and will abide by these regulations, the candidate code of conduct, and the supporting regulations and guidance on the RCPI website. Misconduct includes, but is not restricted to:

- Any attempt to communicate with another candidate or any person other than an invigilator/supervisor during the examination.
- Any attempt to gain access to or plagiarise the work of another candidate.
- Any attempt to gain or pass on information with regard to the content of the examination in advance of, during or after the examination.
- Any attempt to remove materials or content from an examination other than those specifically permitted.
- Any form of cheating or conduct likely to give an unfair advantage to the candidate or others.
- Bribery of another candidate or examination official.
- Bringing in or removing any materials or audio or communication devices (including mobile phones and 'smart' watches), other than those specifically permitted into any examination.
- Failure to act with respect for fellow candidates at all times.
- Failure to abide by the instructions of an invigilator/supervisor or other examination official.
- Failure to ensure patient, surrogate or actor comfort and safety at all times during OSPE/clinical exam interaction.

- Failure of a candidate to inform RCPI if any limitations on medical practice are placed on them by the Irish Medical Council or the equivalent regulatory body in the country in which they practice.
- Failure to maintain strict confidentiality regarding patient identity or details, before during or after the examination.
- Failure to respect patient, surrogate or actor dignity and modesty at all times.
- Falsification or alteration of any results document or qualification.
- Impersonation of a candidate.
- The use of any recording equipment (including all photographic, video and audio recording equipment).
- Unacceptable, inappropriate or disruptive behaviour at all times, including but not limited to harassing and/or bullying RCPI staff, invigilators, examiners, patients, surrogates and actors.
- Aiding or abetting any of the above.

Any candidate acting in breach of any of the above Regulations, or of any further rules and regulations communicated to them by RCPI or an Exam Provider, or misbehaving in any way, may be suspended from the examination, or be deemed to have failed the examination. If an infringement of the College Regulations is deemed to be particularly severe, the candidate concerned may be permanently barred from entering any future College examinations.

### 11.1. Reporting Procedure of Examinations Misconduct

Suspected misconduct may be reported to the College by examiners, invigilators/supervisors, candidates, patients and any other person who becomes aware of suspected misconduct.

RCPI reserves the right to conduct retrospective investigations. This may lead to results being amended or annulled after they have been confirmed, and to withdraw membership status after it has been awarded.

Where an invigilator/supervisor suspects a candidate of violation of examination rules and guidelines, they will:

- Confiscate any unauthorised material in the possession of the candidate.
- Make a note of the time when the alleged infringement was discovered.
- Allow the candidate(s) to continue the examination.
- For a remote invigilation exam, the invigilator may terminate the candidate's exam session in the case of major violations of the exam rules, such as leaving the room without authorisation, attempting to use unauthorised equipment or material, or communicating with unauthorised persons.
- Inform the candidate(s) at the end of the examination that a written report of the incident will be submitted to the Chief Examiner and the Deputy Chief Examiner.
- Submit a written report of the alleged infringement within one working day for OSPE/clinical examinations and within three working days for remote invigilation examinations.

### 11.2. Investigation Procedure of Examinations Misconduct

RCPI will endeavour to ensure that investigations will be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible and candidates will be kept informed of progress.

The Examinations Manager will review the report of the alleged case of misconduct within three working days of the OSPE/clinical examination, and prior to the results being issued for the written remote invigilation examinations. The Examinations Manager will determine whether there is sufficient evidence of a case to be answered after consulting with other members of College staff where necessary. In cases

deemed to be of a very minor or technical nature, a letter of reprimand will be issued to the candidate, and no further action is taken.

In all other cases the Examinations Manager will review the report with the Occupational Medicine Chief Examiner. Following the review, the candidate will be informed of the allegations in writing within 10 working days of the OSPE/clinical examination, and prior to the results being issued for the remote invigilation examinations.

The candidate will be invited to reply to the allegation of misconduct, within 10 working days from receipt of the email/letter. If the candidate does not respond to the letter within the specified time frame, the College will consider this as an acknowledgment of the allegation and will proceed to the next phase of the misconduct investigation procedure.

Following a response from the candidate, the College will acknowledge the receipt of the response.

The Occupational Medicine Chief Examiner will prepare a file which includes the candidate's response if one has been received and send the file to RCPI Examinations Committee for a final decision along with a recommendation of an appropriate penalty.

The candidate will be notified of the final decision within 30 days of the OSPE/clinical examination date and within 30 days of the results meeting for the remote invigilation examinations.

A candidate who believes that there was an error in the conduct of the investigation may, within 10 working days of receiving the Committee's decision, request a review of the investigation by the College Censors.

The College Censors shall review all information provided by the candidate, to determine if the correct procedure was followed in the conduct of the investigation, and if the investigation was fairly treated. The purpose of this review is solely to determine if such a procedural irregularity has occurred and is not to relitigate the decision.

If the review concludes the investigation to be fair the candidate will be notified within 10 working days from receipt of their request.

If the College Censors determine that there was an error in the conduct of the investigation, they may refer the matter back to RCPI Examinations Committee for further consideration. The candidate will be notified of the status of their review request and provided with an estimated timeline for the final decision. The Censors shall then refer the matter to the College Executive, which shall decide on any appropriate further action. The decision of the Censors and/or College Executive shall be final.

## **12. Reasonable Adjustment Arrangements**

Any candidate who has a physical disability, learning disability or any other special need that they believe could affect their performance in an examination, may be entitled to adapted examination arrangements. The purpose of any specific arrangement is to compensate for any restrictions imposed by a disability without impairing the validity of the examination. All such candidates should inform the Examinations Department at the time of application of their circumstances in writing, together with a consultant's report to support their application. Failure to include this information at the time of application may affect the arrangements that can be put in place in time for the examination. The information provided is treated strictly confidentially. For further details, see Reasonable Adjustments Policy: [Examinations Policies and Procedures](#).

## 13. Examination Results

The College processes the marking of MFOM examinations as quickly as possible, consistent with ensuring accuracy and fairness

For Written examinations, data files containing candidates' answers are automatically verified and scored against an answer key in the system. Mathematical performance indicators are then calculated and scrutinised by the Board, to confirm the fairness of every question. The pass mark is approved by the Board of Examiners for each examination.

Candidate Portfolio cases are subject to marking by 2 or more examiners and an approved marking scheme will be used for this purpose. The marking of Portfolio cases are subject to examination board review and approval.

The VIVA component is subject to marking by 2 examiners and an approved marking scheme will be used or this purpose. The marking of VIVA cases is subject to examination board review and approval.

For all components of MFOM examinations results will be emailed to candidates approximately three weeks after the date of the examination. All examination results are issued to candidates once overall results have been approved by the Occupational Medicine Chief Examiner and Deputy Chief Examiners or two other committee members. Under no circumstances will examination results be given over the telephone, by fax or by visiting the College in person.

Please refrain from telephoning or emailing the College regarding your result during this period, as this will delay the process.

### 13.1. Recheck Procedure and Appeals Policy

Candidates can request a recheck of their examination results in the MFOM Written examination. A fee of €150 applies for this procedure. The fee will be refunded if a recheck changes the overall examination result to a pass mark. Examination marks are generated by a rigorous process with multiple safeguards and are also reviewed by the Examinations Board before the results are released. Given the nature of single best answer questions, the quality assurance measures undertaken by the Board, and the examination being conducted via computer-based testing, the margin for error is negligible and therefore it is highly unlikely that a recheck will result in a change to an examination result.

Candidates wishing to request a recheck of their examination results, must submit their request in writing to the Examinations Department [exams@rcpi.ie](mailto:exams@rcpi.ie). The candidate will be required to complete the recheck application form and pay the applicable fee within four weeks of the results release date.

As the VIVA and OSPE examinations are 'live' oral examination there is no facility for re-checking results/grading. However, should a candidate wish to get feedback on their detailed results letter they should contact the examinations department directly by email ([exams@rcpi.ie](mailto:exams@rcpi.ie)) within 10 working days of result letter issue.

An 'appeal' is defined as a request for a review of a decision made by or on behalf of an Examinations Board about the performance in an examination of a candidate subject to the grounds of appeal as set out in the in the appeals policy.

The only accepted grounds for an appeal are if there is clear evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct of the examination or there were exceptional circumstances which adversely affected a candidate's performance.

Candidates are expected to notify Examinations staff of any irregularity regarding their examination during the examination or within 48 hours of the examination or at the earliest opportunity.

Please refer to our appeals policy for more details: [Examinations Policies and Procedures](#).

## **14. Admission to the Faculty**

In order to be admitted as a Member of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, all candidates must pass all sections of the examination. No compensation is allowed.

The results will be emailed to candidates as soon as possible after completion of the examination.

Prior to admission, each successful candidate must pay the appropriate admission fee, the first year's subscription and a declaration that they will continue to pay their annual subscription in the future

## Appendix I

The following are courses recommended:

- The two-year LFOM Occupational Medicine course organised by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and the Irish College of General Practitioners (Run by the ICGP)
- The Diploma/MSc courses in Occupational Medicine run by the University of Manchester
- The Diploma courses in Occupational Medicine run by the Royal Society of Public Medicine (RSPH) in London.
- The MSc/Graduate Diploma in Occupational Health for medical practitioners run by University College Dublin
- The course in Occupational Medicine run jointly by ADNOC and the Faculty of Occupational Medicine RCPI, Abu Dhabi, UAE
- The DipOccMed and MOccMed courses run by the Dept of Occupational and Aviation Medicine, University of Otago

## Appendix II

### *Portfolio Templates*

#### *Clinical Template (Occupation AND Disease & Injury Cases)*

<i>Section</i>	<i>Suggested Proportion of Total Document</i>
Current Occupational Role	5%
Occupational History of Patient	5%
Clinical History	10%
Clinical Assessment & Relevant Investigation Findings	15%
Possibility of Occupational Aetiology of diagnosed condition	10%
Basic Outline of Treatment provided to date by GP or Hospital	5%
Functional limitations of working capacity	10%
Precis of report to employer	10%
Ethical and legal considerations	5%
Describe any monitoring, rehabilitation or permanent workplace adjustments	10%
Long term prognosis	5%
Global assessment including references/ appendix, diagrams / photographs	10%

**Template (Workplace Assessment)**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Suggested Proportion of Total Document</b>
Description of Site & Work Process	10%
Perceived Hazards	15%
Risk Assessment	15%
Observations & Investigation Results	10%
Significance of Observations	10%
Legislation	5%
Risk Reduction	10%
Presentation of Findings	15%
Professional References	10%
Global Assessment of Portfolio	

## **Appendix III**

### **Headings for Workplace Portfolios**

#### Policy Development

Policy Aim noting changes required  
Occupational Medicine procedures involved  
Actions to be taken  
Documentation & Policy  
Follow-Up and Assessment of Change  
References

#### Audit

Introduction & Background  
Aim  
Current Standards (if any)  
Process description  
Criteria  
Standards  
Method (data collection etc.) Inclusion criteria  
Results  
Conclusions & Recommendations  
Discussion  
References  
Appendix for data & analysis

#### Project (concerning improvements in occupational health matters)

Introduction  
Reason for Project  
Actions  
Post-Intervention Results  
Discussion  
References  
Appendix for data & analysis