



**The Royal College of
Emergency Medicine**

Regulations and Information Pack

FRCEM Primary Examination

Applicable from 1 August 2016

Updated November 2018

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Introduction to the FRCEM Examination Structure – applicable from August 2016

In August 2016 the College introduced the current suite of examinations, mapped to the Emergency Medicine 2015 Curriculum. Success in all components leads to the award of Fellowship by Examination (FRCEM).

From August 2018, the Fellowship examination consists of the following components:

- FRCEM Primary Examination
- FRCEM Intermediate Certificate:
 - Short Answer Question Paper
 - Situational Judgement Paper
- FRCEM Final Examination:
 - Critical Appraisal (Short Answer Question Paper)
 - Quality Improvement Project (QIP)
 - Clinical Short Answer Question Paper
 - Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

The College continues to offer **Membership by Examination** (MRCEM) for candidates who have passed all of the following examinations:

- FRCEM Primary (or MRCEM Part A between 1 August 2012 and 1 August 2016 or granted exemption)
- FRCEM Intermediate SAQ (or MRCEM Part B between 1 August 2012 and 1 August 2016)

MRCEM OSCE (previously called Part C. Passed after 1 August 2012)

For further information regarding the FRCEM Intermediate Certificate, the FRCEM Final examinations or the MRCEM OSCE, please refer to the relevant Information and Application Pack, available on the [Exams Section](#) of our website.

Examination Regulations

1. Applications for each component of the FRC EM examination should be submitted via the online application system, available via the [Examinations Section](#) of the College Website.
2. Applications may only be submitted during a specified time period ('the application window'). The date on which the application window opens (opening date) and closes for receipt of applications (the closing date) is published on the Examinations Section of the College Website.
3. Completed applications must be submitted by 17:00 (GMT) on the published closing date after which time the system automatically closes. Partially completed or late applications will not be accepted.
4. Candidates in a GMC approved, UK training programme, must be registered or enrolled with the College and have paid the appropriate trainee administration fee/s.
5. It is a candidate's responsibility to ensure they have all the information required to complete the entire application form prior to the application window closing on the advertised date at 17:00 (GMT).
6. Upon submission of a completed application, candidates will receive an automated email confirming receipt of the application. Detailed written instructions confirming the exact date, timetable for, and location of the examination will be emailed individually to all candidates once the final allocation of examination spaces is confirmed, approximately four weeks prior to the examination.
7. Candidates wishing to withdraw or transfer their examination entry must notify the Examinations Department in writing by 17:00 (GMT) on the closing date. Fees cannot be transferred or refunded after this time.
8. Candidates must apply for any required entry visas in good time prior to the date of the examination. In exceptional circumstances, subject to receipt of written documentation confirming the refusal of a visa, the Examinations Manager or Director of Education will consider requests for candidates to transfer their examination entry.
9. Candidates who do not attend an examination will forfeit their examination fee. In exceptional circumstances, for matters beyond the candidate's control, the Director of Education will consider requests to transfer a candidate's entry to the next diet, subject to receipt of written documentation (e.g a detailed medical certificate, a death certificate for a direct family member). Please note that insufficient preparation is not considered a sufficient reason to transfer an examination entry.
10. Candidates will be informed of the date on which examination results will be published at the time their examination entry is confirmed. In very exceptional circumstances this may be amended by the College and due notice will be published on the College website.
11. Results will be published on the College website by 17:00 on the day of release. Result letters and feedback will be posted to candidates within four weeks of the publication of results. Examination results will not be issued or confirmed by telephone or email.

Introduction to the FRC EM Primary

The FRC EM Primary examination is mapped to the Emergency Medicine 2015 Curriculum with more detailed information provided in the **RCEM Basic Sciences Curriculum (June 2010)** which is available on the [2015 Curriculum page](#) of our website. All applicants for the FRC EM Primary examination are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with the Basic Sciences Curriculum in preparation for sitting the FRC EM Primary examination.

Candidates in the UK Foundation Programme may choose to sit the FRC EM Primary examination during Foundation Year 1. However, candidates sitting the FRC EM Primary examination before entry to a GMC approved Emergency Medicine training programme should note that a pass in this examination will not count towards CCT if it is taken out of training unless the candidate enters or re-enters the training programme within 7 years of passing the examination.

FRC EM Primary Eligibility Criteria

A candidate will be eligible to enter the FRC EM Primary examination provided he/she holds a medical qualification approved by the General Medical Council (GMC) for the purposes of registration.

Candidates who are registered with the GMC should include their registration number in the appropriate place on the application form. If you are registered or anticipate being registered with the GMC then your personal data, including your examination results, will be passed to the GMC for quality assurance and research purposes and to facilitate the awarding of certificates for completion of training (CCTs).

Candidates registered with the Irish Medical Council (IMC) or an international medical council are required to upload a copy of their current medical registration document at the time of application.

Oversubscription Criteria

There is normally no restriction on the number of places available for the FRC EM Primary examination but candidates may not always be allocated their first choice of venue.

Exemptions and equivalent examinations

MRCEM Part A

MRCEM Part A passes obtained prior to August 2012 are deemed time expired. Candidates who sat the MRCEM Part A prior to August 2012 are therefore required to pass the FRCEM Primary examination in order to sit further FRCEM examinations.

Candidates who passed the MRCEM Part A examination after 1 August 2012 are deemed to have passed an equivalent examination to the FRCEM Primary examination.

MRCS or MRCSI

Trainees who are enrolled on the Defined Route of Entry into Emergency Medicine (DRE-EM) programme and obtained MRCS or MRCSI after 1 January 2012 are exempt from the FRCEM Primary examination. Such trainees are required to submit the FRCEM Primary Exemption form, available on the website, and a copy of their MRCS or MRCSI certificate to the Examination Department at least 6 weeks prior to applying for the FRCEM Intermediate Certificate examinations in order to obtain exemption from the FRCEM Primary.

Number of attempts and currency

Candidates are permitted a maximum of six attempts in which to pass the FRCEM Primary Examination. Previous attempts at the MRCEM Part A examination prior to August 2016 do not count towards the number of available attempts. In exceptional circumstances candidates may apply for approval for an additional examination attempt. Such cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Dean, whose decision is final.

A pass in the FRCEM Primary examination will remain current. If at some future date it becomes necessary to replace it, holders of the FRCEM Primary examination will be given a minimum of 24 months' notice of the date from which it will be deemed time expired.

Structure and Content of the FRCEM Primary

The FRCEM Primary examination will consist of a 3 hour, multiple choice question (MCQ) paper of 180, single best answer questions (SBAQ). The examination is conducted in English and candidates are advised that IELTS Level 7 is the expected standard for completion of the FRCEM examinations.

The blueprint for the FRCEM Primary Examination is as follows:

Category	Sub-Category	Questions
Anatomy	Upper limb Lower limb Thorax Abdomen Head and Neck Central Nervous System Cranial Nerve Lesions	60
Physiology	Basic cellular physiology Respiratory physiology Cardiovascular physiology Gastrointestinal physiology Renal physiology Endocrine physiology	60
Pharmacology	Gastrointestinal pharmacology Cardiovascular system Respiratory system Central Nervous System Infections Endocrine system Fluids and electrolytes Musculoskeletal system Immunological products and vaccines Anaesthesia	27
Microbiology	Principles of microbiology Pathogen groups	18
Pathology	Inflammatory responses Immune responses Infection Wound healing Haematology	9
Evidence Based Medicine	Statistics Study methodology Principles of critical appraisal	6
TOTAL		180

Standard Setting and Examination Results

The FRCEM Primary examination is standard set using the Angoff Method. The FRCEM Primary examination results will be published on a pre-advised day by 17:00, approximately five weeks after the date of the examination. Result letters and feedback will be posted to candidates within four weeks of the publication of results. Examination results will not be issued or confirmed by telephone or email.

Guidance for Candidates with Additional Requirements

The College recognises that some candidates may require reasonable adjustments when undertaking examinations. The responsibility for requesting reasonable adjustments lies with the candidate. Any candidate who wishes to request reasonable adjustments **must** indicate the requirements at the time of application. Candidates **must** provide a report from a relevant professional outlining their specific needs and the adjustments required.

Each request will be assessed by the College on its own merit. Candidates will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application for reasonable adjustments and of the arrangements that will be made to meet their needs.