

## **Royal College of Pathologists**

### **Examination regulations - 2010**

#### **TOXICOLOGY**

**These regulations must be read in conjunction with the *Regulations and Guidelines – College examinations for Membership and Diplomas.***

#### **ENTRY & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

There is no specific timing for entry to the examination. Candidates should obtain guidance from their training supervisor as to when to sit the examination. Some general guidance is given below, but apart from the sequence in which the examinations can be sat is not intended to be prescriptive.

##### **Part 1**

Part 1 examination will normally be taken only after a minimum of three years study. The College may accept six months of training in other appropriate specialties as a contribution to the period of training for the Part 1 examination (e.g. relevant MSc courses at recognised Universities).

Candidates may sit the Part 1 practical examination at the next examinations session after they are successful in the written examination. Candidates should therefore note that there is a minimum six month gap between sitting the Part 1 written and practical examinations.

##### **Part 2**

Part 2 examination will usually be taken at least two years after successfully completing the Part 1 Examination.

#### **STRUCTURE AND FORMAT OF THE EXAMINATION**

##### **Part 1**

Part 1 Toxicology examination is offered in 8 different subspecialty areas of toxicology in addition to the core programme:

1. Analytical Toxicology
2. Biochemical Toxicology
3. Environmental/Occupational Toxicology
4. Genotoxicology
5. Medical Toxicology
6. Immunotoxicology
7. Reproductive/Developmental Toxicology
8. Toxicological Pathology

The Part 1 examination comprises written, practical, and oral components.

## **Written examination**

The written component consists of two 3-hour papers.

Paper 1 is a general paper dedicated to the toxicology core training programme. The paper is designed to test factual knowledge across the range of the Curriculum. It contains 60 compulsory short answer questions (SAQs) to be completed in three hours. Questions will be subdivided in 15 separate groups that together cover the breadth of the Curriculum in Toxicology.

Paper 2 is devoted to the candidate's chosen sub-speciality. It will continue to be an essay paper requiring compulsory answering of four questions out of a choice of five, which will continue to be marked using the College closed marking system.

Candidates will have to pass both papers for success although a marginal failure in one paper may be compensated for by a good pass in the other paper.

## **The practical examination**

The practical and oral examination takes place over one day. It consists of an interpretative exercise based upon the examination of case reports, raw data, photographs, gross pathology specimens and/or glass slides of histopathological lesions of toxicological relevance, depending on the specialty studied. A necropsy may or may not be included in the practical session depending on the chosen subspecialty. Those selecting the Toxicological Pathology subspecialty will be required to undertake a necropsy.

## **Part 2**

The Part 2 examination will comprise a written component and an oral examination.

### **Written component**

The written component of Part 2 will be one of the following options:

- A thesis resulting from study for a higher degree such as MD or PhD.
- A dissertation on a subject to be agreed beforehand by the College Specialty
- A detailed case book
- A series of peer-reviewed published papers on an experimental theme with a critical commentary.

Prior to embarking on the chosen option the candidate should seek the College's approval of their choice by contacting the Specialty Advisor. The completed written option must be submitted to the College **at least four months before the entry closing date of the Part 2 examination for which the candidate wishes to enter.**

For further guidance, please see the section on 'Guidance for candidates undertaking written options for the Part 2 examination' in the ***Regulations and Guidelines – College examinations for Membership and Diplomas.***

### **The oral examination**

Candidates will not be allowed to sit the oral examination until the written option has been awarded a pass mark by the examiners. The oral examination will be based upon the areas chosen by the candidate at the time of application and may include an additional test of practical competence.

During the conduct of the examination candidates will be required to furnish evidence of competency to a level such that the candidate is able to (i) provide guidance to junior staff as regards all of the topics listed in this section AND (ii) to provide consultant level opinion and leadership on all topics immediately relevant to their practice in their chosen subspecialty.

### **TIMING OF THE EXAMINATIONS**

The Part 1 Written examination will be offered once a year in Spring. The Part 1 Practical and oral examination will be offered once a year in Autumn.

The Part 2 oral examination will be offered once a year in Spring.

Examinations Department  
The Royal College of Pathologists  
November 2009