



The Royal College of **Pathologists**

Pathology: the science behind the cure

Virology examination regulations

2026

These regulations must be read in conjunction with the 'Regulations and guidelines – College examinations for membership and diplomas'.



Examinations team

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V6

Final

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Entry and training requirements

There is no specific timing for entry to the examination. Candidates should obtain guidance from their educational supervisor as to when to sit the examination. Planning should take into account planned certificate of completion of training (CCT) date (where applicable), but candidates should apply only when they are ready. Some general guidance is given below, but apart from the sequence in which the examinations can be sat, it is not intended to be prescriptive.

Part 1

Medically qualified candidates are required to have trained in a recognised Regional Specialist Training Programme in microbiology or virology for a period of normally not less than 12 months.

Non-medically qualified candidates are required to have trained in a recognised training programme in microbiology for a period of normally not less than 12 months. In addition, they must be state registered, or the equivalent of state registered in another country.

Part 2

Medically qualified candidates are required to have trained in a recognised Regional Higher Specialist Training Programme in virology for a period of normally not less than 3 years.

Non-medically qualified candidates must be state registered and normally have at least 4 years' experience in a clinical virology laboratory recognised for higher specialist training.

Structure and format of the examination

Part 1

For medically qualified candidates in a UK training programme, information regarding the Part 1 infection examination is available in the [Infection regulations and guidelines](#) document.



For overseas based and scientifically qualified candidates, the Part 1 examination consists of 125 multiple choice questions (MCQ). The 3-hour examination is designed to test both knowledge and understanding.

Part 2

The Part 2 examination consists of a written Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE), a Complex Clinical Scenarios paper and an oral examination. All components will be held together, and candidates must apply for and attempt both components in the same session.

The examination will take place over 1 day.

- **OSPE** (135 mins): 15 stations on data interpretation, correct use of statistics, research methodology, statistics and evaluation of new diagnostic virology tests, and one station on a business case scenario.
- **Complex Clinical Scenarios** (90 minutes): 3 long cases that will assess the candidate's ability to understand complex clinical and laboratory scenarios in virology and infection prevention.
- **Oral** (60 minutes): 4 stations that will have the objectives to assess within a clinical virology situation, clinical leadership, laboratory support and Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) skills combined with business 'sense'.

Clinical virology cases in the oral stations will have questions on laboratory safety, clinical management and prevention, working within a multidisciplinary team and problem solving.

Timing of the examinations

The Part 1 and Part 2 examinations will be offered twice a year in spring and autumn.

