

Medical microbiology examination regulations

2026

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



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 the intended 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 higher specialist training (HST) programme in microbiology 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.

Part 2

Medically qualified candidates must have passed the Part 1 examination and are required to have trained in a recognised regional HST programme, including Combined Infection Training (CIT), in microbiology for a period of normally not less than 2 and a half years.

Non-medically qualified candidates must have passed the Part 1 examination and have at least 4 years' experience in a 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 takes place over 1 day within the examination period and consists of written and practical components. Candidates must apply for and attempt both components in the same session.

The examination consists of two 3-hour papers:

- paper 1A – Short answer questions
- paper 1B – Complex scenarios (paper 1a and paper 1b = 3 hours)
- OSPE (3 hours).

Timing of the examinations

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

