

17 December 2025

Transition considerations

The following considerations will be in place for a temporary period of transition to assist candidates impacted by the change in curricula and as a result, new exam arrangements. The points below reference the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations Eligibility Criteria published on 17 July 2025.

1. Requirement 3.2 will be applicable to those who start specialty training, (4.1) after 1 January 2026.
2. Requirement 3.2 will be applicable to those who start a UK or Ireland university clinical masters or clinical doctoral degree programme which parallels the training programme, (4.2) after 1 January 2026.
3. MJDF will be considered an acceptable alternative to MFDS.
4. A reciprocity agreement is in place for those candidates who have passed the knowledge component of the specialty membership examinations. These candidates will only be required to pass the clinical section of the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations to receive the fellowship qualification. Candidates will receive reciprocity for the knowledge component for 1 year after the last diet of the existing membership specialty examinations.
5. A reciprocity agreement is in place for those candidates who have passed the critical appraisal component of the specialty membership examinations. These candidates will only be required to pass the clinical section of the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations to receive the fellowship qualification. Candidates will receive reciprocity for the knowledge component for 1 year after the last diet of the existing membership specialty examinations.
6. A reciprocity agreement is in place for those candidates who achieve a pass in Part A in Dental Public Health in the ISFE examinations. Candidates who achieve a pass in Part A in Dental Public Health but do not attain a pass in Part B by the time of discontinuation of the ISFE examinations will be required to undertake the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations. Candidates will be awarded a certificate of completion for Part A, which may be submitted to receive an exemption from the Short Answer Questions (SAQ) element of the new examination. This exemption will be valid for examinations held before May 2029, irrespective of when ISFE Part A was achieved. Candidates who have not achieved a pass at the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examination before May 2029 will not be eligible for exemption and will require to take the new Short Answer Questions (SAQ) examination.

Candidates should note that this exemption is unique to Dental Public Health. An exemption may be granted in the specialty of Dental Public Health, as both the previous and revised examination formats include a comparable component. For the other dental specialties, the revised examination structure does not assess Critical Appraisal in this manner.

Consequently, exemptions cannot be applied in those cases.

There are no reciprocal arrangements in place for Part B Dental Public Health ISFE examinations. Candidates should refer to guidance above.

7. The bi-collegiate MFDS certification offered by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, and the MFDS certification offered by the Royal College of Surgeons of England, will be accepted for applications for the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations part 1 made before 1 May 2031. Please also refer to clause 9.
8. RCSI MFD will be considered an acceptable alternative to MFDS if the candidate has passed the examination before May 2027, at which point the new tri-collegiate MFDS examination arrangements will take effect. The RCSI MFD, completed before May 2027 will be accepted for applications for the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations part 1 made before 1 May 2031. Please also refer to clause 9.
9. Where a candidate who holds the certificates noted in clause 7 and clause 8 is not ready to apply for part 1 of the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations before 1 May 2031, and has completed the exam after September 2024, candidates will be considered on a case by case basis by the Dental Specialty Fellowship Examinations Executive Committee until 1 May 2040.

Version control

Date	Changes made
17 July 2025	Document released
13 September 2025	Paragraph 4 – clarification for MFD. The MFD exam will need to be passed before May 2027 to be considered an alternative. Paragraph 7 has been added for DPH reciprocity for Part A ISFE to May 2029
18 December 2025	Clause 4, now clause 7 – Amendment to the clause, previously, 4, now number 7 for the addition on the validity period for the RCSI MFD Clause 8 and 9 added. Clause numbers amended 5 to 4, 6 to 5 and 7 to 6.