



Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery (MFDS) Regulations

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Document Revision History		
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V1.0	16 th March 2026	Approved for publication
V1.1	7 th April 2026	<p>1.1 Branding update – logos and reference to Secretariat amended to Executive.</p> <p>1.2 Amendment to section 9.1 from ‘9.1 Candidates are allowed four attempts for Part 1 and four attempts for Part 2. All parts must be passed within 4 years of the first attempt.’ to ‘Candidates are allowed four attempts at Part 1 and four attempts for Part 2. Part 2 must be passed within four years of passing Part 1.’</p>

1. Introduction

1.1 This document outlines the regulations for the Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery Examinations.

1.2 The examination is delivered by the Dental Examinations Executive (“the Executive”) and has been developed by the tri-Collegiate collaboration between Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Royal College of Surgeons of England and Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. These regulations cover the Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery (MFDS) examination, supporting trainees to demonstrate the knowledge, skills and capabilities required for progression.

1.3 The new examination will start in 2026. Regulations will be published and/or amended with sufficient notice (expected to be one year) before the change takes effect. All candidates must adhere to these regulations throughout the examination process. The regulations are subject to periodic review, and candidates should check for updates.

1.4 Further information can be obtained from the Dental Examinations Executive website. All candidates will be required to apply for their examinations through the Executive. International candidates sitting exams outside the UK will be required to apply for examinations through their College of choice.

1.5 All parts of the examination are conducted in English. The examination will be held in the UK and international locations according to demand.

2. Purpose and Aim of the Examination

2.1 Eligibility criteria are defined to ensure that those completing the examination have sufficient training and experience to complete the examination. Candidates should ensure that their knowledge would meet the minimum requirements laid out in the COPDEND Dental Core Training curricula.

2.2 Successful completion of the examination is one factor that the GDC and/or UK and International employers may consider within job application criteria.

2.3 The examination will provide a fair and inclusive way for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and competencies, regardless of whether they followed a training programme, or another route based on experience and knowledge. This approach recognises that the same outcomes can be achieved by different routes.

3. Structure of the Examination

3.1 The MFDS has two parts (Part 1 and Part 2), which will each comprise a different examination format to assess the content of its syllabus: Part 1 is a written component that will use single best answer (SBA) questions. Candidates will be required to pass Part 1 before being eligible to sit Part 2.

3.2 Part 2 uses an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) format to assess candidates in two broad content areas:

- a. communication/history taking
- b. clinical judgement/professional practice

Candidates must achieve a pass in both broad content areas in order to be successful in Part 2.

3.3 Single Best Answer (SBA) Questions

A total of 180 Single Best Answer questions will be used to assess basic and clinical sciences pertinent to clinical decision making and professional practice. They may also assess application of peripheral knowledge, that whilst not strictly clinical, is relevant to clinical decision making and treatment planning.

Part 1 will be delivered as two discrete 2-hour papers each consisting of 90 SBA questions.

3.4 Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

Part 2 will consist of a 14 station OSCE, each station being approximately 10 minutes duration. Candidates will rotate around the circuit of stations each of which will be overseen by at least one examiner. Some stations may have actors playing the role of patients or members of the dental team. Each station may assess one or both broad content areas across a range of different skill areas.

For further information on the examination assessment strategy, candidates should refer to the [website](#).

4. Entrance Requirements

4.1 Candidates must review and comply with the relevant eligibility criteria for their examination.

5. Eligibility for the Award of the Diploma

5.1 To be eligible for award of the Diploma candidates must have complied with all parts of the Regulations and Eligibility criteria and passed all parts of the examination.

6. Application for Admission to the Examination

6.1 Applications for admission to the examination must be fully completed and accompanied by the required certified evidence. Once the application has been received and logged, you



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will then receive a request for payment. Each UK diet of the examination will be advertised by all three Colleges, for international candidates please refer to information issued by your College of affiliation.

6.2 Applications must be made using the appropriate application process and must reach the administering Executive by the specified closing date. Those received after the closing date will not be processed.

7. Results

7.1 Results will be published through the Executive.

8. Feedback

8.1 Unsuccessful candidates will be provided with written feedback on their performance within one month of the publication of the results. Feedback is also available for successful candidates.

9. Examination Attempt Limit

Candidates are allowed four attempts at Part 1 and four attempts for Part 2. Part 2 must be passed within four years of passing Part 1.

10. Applicant and Candidate Policies and Procedures

10.1 When applicants and candidates agree to the terms and conditions, they agree to all policies and procedures, including but not restricted to those related to the candidate code of conduct, appeals, complaints, and misconduct. All applicants and candidates are advised to review the policies that apply to them on the Executive's website.

10.2 Applicants and candidates must read the Terms and Conditions for the examinations and confirm their understanding of the agreement with these each time they apply to take an examination with us.

10.3 Applicants and candidates should also ensure that they review the Guide to Candidates prior to each examination diet.

10.4 The Executive may refuse to admit a candidate to any examination, or may require a candidate to stop an examination, if they breach any regulation or if the examiners consider the candidate's behaviour to be prejudicial to the proper management and conduct of the examination. Any such action may be taken pending a full investigation under the relevant misconduct policy and procedure.



11. Withdrawal from the Examination

11.1 Any candidate who wishes to withdraw an application for admission to the examination must notify the Executive by withdrawing their application on risr/apply during the application window or in writing after this. A refund of the fee paid may be made (less an administrative fee of 20%), provided that notice of an intention to withdraw is received by the Executive before the closing date by which applications are due, as shown in the examinations calendar. Refunds are not normally made to any candidate who withdraws after the closing date.

11.2 All refunds will be calculated in UK Sterling. The Executive will not refund any shortfalls due to exchange rate fluctuations or offer any compensation for any bank or other charges involved.

11.3 Any candidate who wishes to withdraw an application for admission to the examination on medical grounds and requests a refund of fee must submit a request in writing to the administering Executive, accompanied by a medical certificate. An application for consideration of a refund of fee on compassionate grounds should be supported by full details, including a supporting letter from an appropriate professional. Each such application must be submitted to the administering Executive within 28 days following the date of the commencement date of the examination.

11.4 The Executive reserves the right to review admission to the examination on an individual basis in exceptional circumstances.

11.5 A candidate who becomes ill or has an accident during the examination must inform the Lead Examiner for that diet as soon as possible. On the advice of the Lead Examiner, the candidate may withdraw from the examination, or the Lead Examiner may agree with the candidate how the candidate should proceed to complete the examination

12. Candidates with Special Circumstances

12.1 Tailored examination and other assessment arrangements will be made for individual candidates with additional needs due to learning differences (such as dyslexia) or due to permanent or temporary disability, through reasonable adjustments considered and arranged in line with the Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Procedure. These arrangements are intended to ensure that candidates can perform to the best of their ability and that they are not discriminated against because of learning differences or because of permanent or temporary disability.

12.2 Whilst it is the responsibility of the Executive to ask candidates if they have any additional requirements, it is the responsibility of the candidate to notify the Executive when



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they submit their application of any additional requirements they have, the reason for them, and any reasonable adjustments or access arrangements that have been helpful in the past.

12.3 Applications for reasonable adjustments or access arrangements to meet additional needs are required to be supported by written evidence. For example, in the form of a medical report from their general medical practitioner for medical conditions, or an educational psychologist's report for a learning difference such as dyslexia. Application for an adjustment or arrangements does not guarantee that this will be granted.

13. Proof of Identity at the Examination

13.1 Candidates must bring their passport to each part of the examination. Exceptionally, candidates who are not in a position to provide a passport must produce an official document that includes their name, signature and a current photograph e.g. current photographic driving license.

13.2 For the purpose of visual identification, any candidate sitting any examination may be required to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all, or part of, the candidate's face. The Executive will observe sensitivity in the visual identification of candidates.

13.3 To facilitate the assessment of non-verbal communication skills and interaction with the examiner, the Executive reserves the right to require candidates to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all, or part of, the candidate's face.

14. Award of Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery

14.1 Candidates who pass the examination held jointly by Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Royal College of Surgeons of England and Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow who have met the eligibility criteria, shall be entitled to the designation of Member of the Faculty of Dental Surgery (MFDS).

14.2 Successful candidates will be granted Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery of the relevant College on payment of such election fee and annual subscription as may be determined from time to time by the Council of the relevant College. Members of the Faculty of Dental Surgery may participate in Faculty and College educational, professional and social activities.





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15. Curriculum and Learning Outcomes

15.1 The curriculum is determined by the learning outcomes with the competencies outlined for in the exam syllabus. The exam syllabus is provided to guide candidates in their preparation.

15.2 Learning outcomes are available on the COPDEND website.

