

Apr. 27, 2020 - Royal College statement on fall 2020 subspecialty exams

The Royal College has been monitoring progress of COVID-19 and making logistical adjustments to deliver exams equitably, safely and in the most responsible and valid way possible. With regard to the fall 2020 subspecialty exams, we have been concerned that delivery of an applied (oral/OSCE/practical) examination before December 31, 2020 may not be feasible nor safe.

For candidates in disciplines that have a written-only format, there are no changes to exam format or fees. We have set a goal of September 2020 for the exams, and will be in a position to give you firm dates once we have confirmed the sites where these exams will be held.

For candidates in disciplines with a comprehensive exam (a written component and applied component), I would like to announce that the Royal College will extend the four-point plan from spring examinations to the fall 2020 subspecialty exams in response to the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in.

1. Applied exams will not be required for fall 2020 candidates who are in disciplines with a comprehensive exam. You will be required to take only the written component.

For the candidates who are impacted by this decision, we will require:

- Signed re-affirmation from your program director (or supervisors of practice eligibility candidates) that you have met the required competencies to attempt the written exam will be needed. This will be organized between the Royal College and Canadian universities for the fall 2020 candidates.
- If you are a repeat exam taker, international medical graduate or U.S. graduate, you will have to provide the necessary documentation for re-affirmation from an appropriate supervisor.
- This attestation must be returned to the Royal College by **August 1, 2020**, to maintain eligibility for the fall 2020 written exam.

Write the written exam: You will then take a written exam. Written exams for the 11 affected subspecialties will be modified to augment essential content that was originally blueprinted to the applied components. If you pass the written exam you will be immediately certified.

For those who fail the written exam: If you do not pass the written exam, you will not be eligible for certification this year and will need to apply again next year; however, you will not exhaust an attempt in sitting this exam. We have extended everyone who was exam eligible for fall 2020 an extra year of eligibility (including those subspecialties that do not traditionally have two components).

For the candidates with a written-only component, there are no changes to the exam format or fees.

2. We will inform you of the dates for the exams. We have set a goal of September 2020 for the exams, and will be in a position to give you firm dates once we have confirmed the sites where these exams will be held. We commit to providing a minimum of 6 weeks' notice. We will be monitoring progress on COVID-19 and making the necessary logistical adjustments, if needed.

3. Test sites will be expanded so you can take the exam closer to home. We previously had 14 test sites across the country. Together with our academic and health partners, we are expanding the number of test sites to allow candidates to take the exam as close to their homes or work places as possible. Test sites will adhere to ongoing physical distancing protocols. We will provide more information on test locations once we have confirmed them with our partners.

4. **Fees for the oral exam will be refunded.** For those who have already registered and paid, we will reimburse your oral exam fee as quickly as possible. We will expedite these refunds to get the \$2,215 fee back to you within the next 60 days, which will be refunded to your credit card. For those who have not yet registered, the equivalent reduced fee for written only exams will be applied.

This decision applies to all candidates in the 11 affected subspecialties who are eligible for the fall 2020 exams, regardless of training (i.e. international medical graduates and U.S. graduates for the subspecialty examination affiliate program (SEAP) designation) or previous number of examination attempts.

Registration for the subspecialty fall examinations is currently open. Candidates who are eligible for both the primary and subspecialty examinations of 2020 may register for both. Registration for the fall exams has been extended to **June 15, 2020**.

Please know that the Royal College is committed to delivering your cohort's exam with your safety and future success in mind. Please see the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our website for more details.

On behalf of the Royal College, I would like to thank you for your work on the front lines during this health care crisis.

Please stay well,

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