

Dear colleagues,

With 2021 only a few months away, I wanted to provide you with an update on plans for the 2021 exams. This year presented extraordinary challenges to us all and we still face uncertainty in how the pandemic will unfold next year. To that end, our goal is to ensure safety, flexibility and some reliability into our plans for delivering next year's exams.

Building on our recent success of delivering the written MCQ exams online, today we would like to inform you of the following:

- A plan to offer the option of sitting all our 2021 written exams online
- Re-institution of the applied/oral component to our comprehensive exam strategy to be delivered virtually
- Exam dates for spring 2021 exams candidates

Please share this communication with your 2021 candidates

Since registration for the spring 2021 exams has not yet closed, we don't have complete contact information for all candidates yet, so we are sharing the following exam 2021 information with you, as a valued exam stakeholder. We encourage you to share with your 2021 candidates.

WHAT: These important changes apply to all of the 2021 exams, including primary and subspecialties, as well as Surgical Foundations.

HOW: Accelerate the option of exam delivery to an online format for written and applied/oral exams

During the 2020 exam period, we were able to accelerate our virtual exam plan to deliver exams online to 60 per cent of the candidates. The Royal College has learned a great deal from the 2020 exam experience and appreciates the feedback we have received from candidates and exam stakeholders to make the process better. There are two key changes from the 2020 exam experience:

- We are now moving to offer the option of online written exams to all 2021 candidates for both MCQ and SAQ formats.
- Applied/oral exams will be offered in a virtual format.

WHEN: 2021 spring exams will take place between March 9 and June 18

Specific dates for spring 2021 exams for each specialty will be posted [here](#), under "Update on spring 2021 Exams." Our aim is to have exams completed and marked before the end of the academic year and the start of practice. Specific dates for the fall 2021 exams will be announced at a later date.

NEW DATE: Registration deadline for 2021 primary exams

Upon receiving their ruling letter, candidates must register by **Dec. 4, 2020** for 2021 primary exams.

WHERE: 2021 candidates have two options for the written exam, one virtual option for applied/oral

Written exams

For all 2021 written exams, candidates have two options: to write online **or** in-person at one of our 17 Canadian exam centres. The decision to write online or in-person will have to be made in advance of the exam delivery.

Applied/oral exams

All applied/oral exams will be delivered virtually. The candidate and examiner will interact on a virtual platform. More information on virtual applied exams will be shared via email and on our website in early November 2020.

Questions?

We very much appreciate these are unprecedented times and we are committed to working with you all as we evolve in our exam delivery. If you have any questions, please contact us at exams2021@royalcollege.ca.

Sincerely,

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