



CAI
SALUS DUM VIGILAMUS

College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland

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Regulations for Examination Candidates

December 2022

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Glossary of Terms

“the College”	College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland
“Examination Calendar”	Calendar showing Examination timetables, published on the College’s website
“Examinations Committee”	Examinations Committee of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland
“Council”	Council of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland
“FPMCAI”	Faculty of Pain Medicine CAI
“JFICMI”	Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine of Ireland
“MCAI”	Membership of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland
“MCAI MCQ”	MCAI MCQ Examination
“MCAI OSCE / SOE”	MCAI Objective Structured Clinical Examination / Structured Oral Examination
“FCAI”	Fellowship of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland
“Medical Council”	Medical Council of Ireland
“the Regulations”	CAI Regulations for Examination Candidates

Introduction

The Examinations Committee (the “Examinations Committee”) of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland (the “College”) has overall responsibility for examinations held by the College leading to the award of Membership and Fellowship of the College and its Faculties. The Examinations Committee is governed by the Terms of Reference as stipulated by the Council of the College (the “**Council**”).

This document outlines the Regulations for Examination Candidates (the “**Regulations**”) as they apply to all examinations approved by the Examinations Committee and Council for administration by the College. These Regulations should be read in conjunction with the Candidate Guides for each examination - the MCAI Candidate Guide, the FCAI Candidate Guide, the JFICMI Candidate Guide and the FPMCAI Candidate Guide, which set out the eligibility criteria and the format for those examinations. See Section 1 below.

The College reserves the right to amend or replace these Regulations at its sole discretion and/or in line with best practice. Interpretation of any aspect of the document and subsequent changes will be determined by the College through its Examinations Committee and Council and will be notified to candidates via the website (or for trainees of the College, via the Examinations Committee).

1. Eligibility

Membership College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland (“MCAI MCQ”)

An individual who fulfils all of the following criteria is eligible to sit the MCAI MCQ exam:

- Is a medical practitioner with a primary medical qualification acceptable to the Medical Council;
- Is fully registered with the Medical Council or other recognised national medical registration bodies in other jurisdictions (a valid certificate of registration is to be provided to evidence this);
- Has been employed as an anaesthesiologist for 6 months, prior to the date of the relevant examination;
- Has not failed the examination 6 times. In other words, any candidate who has previously attempted and failed the MCAI MCQ 6 times will not be eligible to re-sit the examination; and
- If a candidate passes the MCQ paper, it will be held valid for three years, after which time if the MCAI OSCE/SOE has not been passed, the MCQ must be re-taken.

- CAI trainees with the Primary of the Royal College of Anaesthetists (UK) are not exempt from sitting the Membership Examination;

Membership College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland (MCAI OSCE/SOE)

An individual who fulfils the following criteria is eligible to sit the MCAI OSCE/ SOE exam:

- Is a medical practitioner with a primary medical qualification acceptable to the Medical Council;
- Is fully registered with the Medical Council or other national medical registration body;
- Has been employed as an anaesthesiologist for 12 months, prior to the date of the relevant examination applied for;
- Has been successful in the MCAI MCQ within 3 years prior to the exam; and
- Has not failed the examination 6 times. In other words, any candidate who has previously attempted and failed the MCAI OSCE/SOE 6 times will not be eligible to re-sit the examination.

Fellowship College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland - Exemption

A candidate for the Final Fellowship Examination shall be exempt from passing the Membership Examination, who within the 7 years preceding the date of application, has obtained one of the following qualifications:

- The Primary or Final Fellowship of the Royal College of Anaesthetists UK (**Non CAI Trainees only**)
- The Fellowship of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists;
- The Fellowship of the College of Anaesthetists of South Africa;
- The Fellowship in Anaesthesia of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada;
- The Diplomate Certificate of the American Board of Anesthesiology;
- European Diploma in Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care;
- The Fellowship in Anaesthesiology of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan;
- Doctor of Medicine (Anaesthetics) University of West Indies;
- The Fellowship Examination of the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists; or
- Any other qualification which is submitted to and approved by the Council.

Fellowship College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland - Written

An individual is eligible to enter for the FCAI Written Examination who:

- Has passed within 7 years preceding the current examination date, or is exempt from, the Membership CAI;
- Has completed 36 months in the practice of anaesthesia / anaesthesiology. Additionally, where the applicant is on the Irish National Anaesthesiology Training Programme, they must have completed 36 months within the training programme;
- Has worked clinically within 12 months of the examination date;
- Where a candidate has previously attempted the FCAI and is subsequently accepted onto SAT, they will remain eligible for the FCAI; and
- Any candidate who has previously attempted and failed the FCAI 6 times will not be eligible to re-sit the FCAI (Written) exam.

If a candidate passes the FCAI (Written), it will be valid for three years, after which time, if the whole examination has not been passed, the FCAI (Written) must be re-taken.

Fellowship College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland - Clinical

An individual is eligible to enter for the FCAI Clinical Examination leading to the award of Fellowship of the College of Anaesthesiologists of Ireland who:

- has passed the FCAI written examination within 3 years of the examination; and
- has not failed the clinical examination 6 times. In other words, any candidate who has previously attempted and failed the FCAI clinical examination 6 times will not be eligible to re-sit the FCAI clinical examination.

Faculty Fellowship Examinations

The eligibility criteria for each of the following examinations is set out in the Candidate Guides available online:

- Fellowship Examinations for the Joint Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine of Ireland
- Fellowship Examinations for the Faculty of Pain Medicine CAI

2. Application Procedures

The Examination Calendar is published online together with details of the appropriate fees. Applications must be received by 17:00 on the published closing date for applications. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Applications will be vetted by the College. The acceptance of any application is at the sole discretion of the College. If the College accepts an application, the candidate

will be notified by email and requested to pay the appropriate fee. Registration for an examination is only completed upon receipt of the appropriate fee by the College. If payment is not received by the College within 7 days, the application will be cancelled and a candidate must re-apply for the examination before the published closing date.

Deferrals

In exceptional circumstances a deferral request may be granted at the discretion of the College. The rules governing deferrals are outlined below:

- Candidates must submit deferral requests and any supporting documentation to exams@coa.ie at least 2 weeks in advance of the relevant examination date;
- Deferral requests due to visa difficulties will not be accepted;
- If a deferral is granted, the administrative fee will be processed and the candidate will be withdrawn from the relevant examination date and automatically transferred to the next sitting. Candidates can only be transferred to the next sitting and cannot chose to be deferred to a later sitting. A candidate's eligibility for an examination will not be affected by a deferral as a result of the time delay;
- If the deferral is not granted, the candidate will be given the option of remaining on the schedule for the examination date previously applied for (and the fee will not be returned) or withdrawing from the examination.
- There is one deferral available per examination. After this time, a new examination application must be made;

Withdrawals

- If a candidate wishes to withdraw their application for an examination before the closing date of application, the fee will be returned less the administrative fee.
- A withdrawal request submitted after the closing date will not receive any refund.
- Withdrawal requests should be sent to exams@coa.ie.

Cancellation of Examinations

The College reserves the right to cancel, reschedule or change the location of an examination. In the event that an examination is rescheduled or cancelled by the College, the College will endeavour to inform all applicants at least 6 weeks prior to the examination date and will offer a refund of the registration fee or the option to defer to another date.

Cancellation of examinations by the College will not affect the eligibility of candidates for the rescheduled sittings.

3. Rules and Guidelines

A - Rules and Guidelines for On-site examinations

Registration

Candidates will be advised of their registration times for the day of the examination by the Examination Department at least one week in advance of the examination. Candidates must produce Photographic ID - passport / driver's licence. Late arrivals to written examinations will not receive extra time to complete the examination and will not be admitted after 30 minutes. Late arrivals to clinical examinations will not be admitted if the examination is underway.

Dress code

For clinical and oral examinations, candidates should dress in a smart and professional manner. If the clinical examination takes place in a hospital setting, then local infection protocols must be followed. There is no specific dress code for other on-site or online examinations.

Toilet Breaks

Candidates must raise their hand and get the attention of an invigilator and must be accompanied to the toilet by the invigilator. Two candidates cannot leave the examination hall at the same time.

Electronic equipment

No electronic equipment is allowed at either in person or online examinations. This includes calculators, mobile phones, smart watches, headphones or any kind of recording equipment. For online examinations browser extensions / applications, such as Grammarly, are not allowed without prior consent from the Examinations Department.

Note taking

No candidate shall bring into the examination hall or have in their possession while in an examination hall any materials/documentation other than those explicitly permitted for that examination. No note taking is allowed at either written or clinical examinations unless it forms part of the examination.

Fire Alarm

If a fire alarm is activated, invigilators will instruct candidates to leave the hall and to leave examination papers and answer books on their desks and to remain silent at all times. When it is safe to do so, candidates will be allowed back into the hall to complete their examinations. Additional time will be allowed for the disruption and for completing the examination. An incident report will be completed for the Examinations Committee and the College's Chief Operations Officer, a copy of which will be presented at Examination Committee.

B - Rules and Guidelines for Online examinations

Devices

Candidates must use their own device to sit a College examination. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that they have a reliable internet connection and that their device is functioning correctly. It is also each candidate's responsibility to ensure that their device is prepared for an online examination. In order to do so, candidates should refer to the College's Technical Guides which are available online. The maximum permissible size of a candidate's monitor is 30". Browser extensions such as grammarly are not allowed without prior permission from the examination department.

No other devices are permitted to be used by candidates during examinations this includes calculators, phones or headphones. Candidates are not permitted to record or copy (in any form) any exam or examination materials.

Candidates must use only one screen throughout and maintain eye contact with the monitor/camera throughout the examination. A wide screen monitor is not permitted. Candidates will use a mirror to demonstrate there is nothing of note behind the laptop / desktop as well as survey the remainder of the room with the camera/monitor on their computer. Candidates are not allowed to read out the text of the examination audibly and must act as if they are in an in-person examination setting. Hats cannot be worn during an examination, if a candidate wears a headscarf their ears must be visible at all times. Candidates must show blank paper at the start of the examination and all written work and notes at the end of the examination to the camera/monitor. Candidates must not refer to any written material, books or other devices during the examination.

Software

Risr - The College uses the Risr software for online examinations. Candidates will be provided with instructions via email by the Examinations Department on how to login to this software in advance of

the examination. If a candidate does not receive this email, they should contact the Examinations Department. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure they have this software downloaded.

Proctor - The College uses the Proctor software for the monitoring of online examinations. Candidates will be provided with instructions via email by the Examinations Department on how to login to this software in advance of the examination. If a candidate does not receive this email, they should contact the Examinations Department. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure they have this software downloaded.

System Check and Trial Examination

To ensure candidates feel comfortable and confident going into an online examination with their device and software, a trial examination will be held one week in advance of the official examination. Candidates are strongly advised to take part in the trial examination to ensure they can access the examination system. The Examinations Department should be contacted if details of the trial examination are not received.

Trial Examination System Check

One week before the trial examination candidates will receive a system check email from **exams@proctorexam.com**. This email will contain the link to complete the system checks that candidates are required to take, to ensure their device is compatible to support the online examination.

Upon completion, candidates will receive a second email entitled **“You are now ready to take your exam”** which contains the link to access the scheduled trial examination. Candidates should retain this second email safely, as they will be required to access it on the morning of the trial examination.

Trial Examination

Candidates should follow the link in the **“You are now ready to take your exam”** email on the day of the trial examination, 15 minutes before the specified start time.

In order to authenticate identity, we will require that candidates produce photographic ID for this trial examination. This is a mandatory step to sit the examination.

Official Examination System Check

Two days before the official exam, candidates will receive two emails to repeat the system check process.

Pre-registration – official examination

Candidates will be required to sign and submit an Honour Pledge and Consent Form prior to sitting an online examination. These will be emailed to candidates in advance of the examination and the email will include instructions for submission and a deadline within which to submit the documentation to the Examinations Department (exams@coa.ie).

Registration – official examination

Candidates should log-on to the Proctor system 15 minutes before the scheduled start time of the examination. Candidates should refer back to the link in the **“You are now ready to take your exam”** email. Late arrivals to online examinations will not receive extra time to complete the examination. Late arrivals will be prevented from accessing the examination after 30 minutes.

Candidates must produce Photographic ID - passport / driver’s licence to the camera on a device in order to authenticate their identity. If wearing headscarves or hats, a candidate’s ears must be visible at all times.

Toilet Breaks

Toilet breaks are not allowed without prior permission from the Examinations Department and with medical documentation submitted in advance.

Note taking

There is a blank note taking section at the end of each examination paper. For calculations, candidates may make these on paper but must show the blank page to the camera beforehand and hold up the page afterwards to the webcam. There is also note taking capability within the software for any calculations the candidate may make.

Technical issues

In the case of connectivity being lost, screen share will cease and the candidate will be prompted to re-share their screen. Do so by clicking the “share screen” button that appears.

If any other technical issues arise, candidates should use the Proctor Techbot on screen or contact the Examinations Department by emailing exams@coa.ie.

Fire Alarm/ emergency

In the event of fire or any form of emergency, candidates should contact the Examinations Department by emailing exams@coa.ie

4. Code of Conduct

Candidates should note that by applying to sit an examination, they are deemed to have understood and agreed to comply with all policies and regulations of the College. Candidates are also obliged to be aware of their obligations with respect to Professional and Ethical behaviour as outlined in the Irish Medical Council Guidelines or a candidate's applicable national medical registration body. Any allegations or evidence of misconduct or suspicious activity either online or in-person will be investigated by the College and a report written by the Examinations Manager and escalated to the Chair of the relevant examination (the "**Examination Chair**") and the Chair of the Examinations Committee.

Investigation of infringements

The College reserves the right to call any candidate to interview because of suspicious activity identified subsequent to any examination either in person or after review of proctored recording.

Reporting and investigation of alleged misconduct will be kept confidential as much as practicable.

- The candidate will be informed in writing of the allegation(s) of misconduct and will be invited to provide a response in writing within 3 days of receipt of the notification.
- The Examination Chair will review the allegation of the alleged case of misconduct, and the response of the candidate (if any), and will determine whether there is sufficient evidence after consulting with the Committee Chair. If the candidate is a trainee of the College, the Directors of Training of the College will be informed.
- If the candidate denies the allegation, the Chair Examination Committee will request the Chair of the relevant examination, an External expert from another College and the CEO to review the case in detail. The College will offer an interview to the candidate with this group. On full review of the case by the Examinations Committee, the Council or College Executive will make a final decision, together with a recommendation of appropriate penalty. The candidate will receive written notification of the decision. In addition, if the allegation is deemed proven,

details may be forwarded to the Medical Council or to the candidate's applicable national medical registration body.

- If the candidate does not deny the allegation, the matter will be referred directly to the Council, which will recommend an appropriate penalty.
- During an investigative process, the candidate's examination will be marked but the result will be withheld pending the outcome of the process.

Penalties

Where misconduct is proven whether through admission by the candidate or as the outcome of the Examination Committee's findings, a penalty is agreed based on the severity of the infringement.

The following standard penalties or a more specific penalty as deemed appropriate by the Examinations Committee will be applied:

- No further action;
- A written warning;
- Result of an examination or part of an examination declared void;
- Barred from future examinations permanently or for a specified period;
- Notification to Medical Council may be made; and/or
- Further penalties may apply to trainees pursuant to the Trainee Regulations.

5. Viewing Examination Scripts

A candidate may request to view SAQ scripts by appointment on a day scheduled with the Examinations Department. Requests should be made to exams@coa.ie. A notification will be made on the website of the scheduled viewing day. For in person examinations, the viewing will take place in the College. For online examinations, the viewing will take place over video sharing platform. The following will apply to each candidate:

- One hour allowed to view the questions, their own answers, their marks and the pass mark for each question and parts of questions;
- No notetaking or photographing allowed; and
- Invigilator present.

6. Re-check of result

Examination marks are generated following rigorous processes with multiple safeguards and are reviewed by the Examinations Department and at the Examination Board, which is held before results are released. Candidates may request a recheck of their examination where they believe they may have been treated unfairly or an error may have occurred.

A recheck is a re-calculation and check of potential errors. A second internal examiner ensures that all elements submitted for assessment were considered and assessed and that no errors occurred in the recording, collating, or combining of marks. A recheck is not a remarking process. The College does not remark examinations and this process does not override the academic judgement of the Examiners.

Rechecks will be entertained only under the following circumstances:

- There may have been an error in collation of marks e.g., failure to count marks awarded;
- There may have been an irregularity in the conduct of the examination e.g., incorrect documentation;
- The College may have failed to take into account extenuating circumstances of which it had been informed prior to the examination;
- Malpractice in the marking of the examination may have occurred; or
- The College may have failed to make allowances for unusual examination conditions.

A recheck request must be submitted in writing within one month of the release of results to exams@coa.ie. The Examinations Manager will acknowledge the recheck request and inform the Examination Chair. Payment of the recheck fee of €50.00 must be made in advance.

The Examination Chair will decide if the recheck is admissible. If there are inaccuracies in the candidate's request, the Examinations Manager will inform the candidate who may or may not wish to continue to pursue the matter. The Examination Chair may decide that it is more appropriately a request for guidance, a complaint or an appeal and redirect as necessary.

If the recheck proceeds, the Examination Chair may conclude that the matter does or does not provide proof of error and will decide if any corrective action needs to be taken. The candidate will be informed of the outcome in writing. If a candidate chooses, they can pursue a formal appeal regarding the recheck decision.

7. Appeals Procedure

The College is responsible for ensuring that a mechanism is in place to enable candidates to appeal results or decisions relating to examinations. Formal requests for appeal must be submitted in writing to exams@coa.ie by the candidate to the Examinations Department within one month of the release date of the result of the examination or the result of the re-check as set out in Part 6 above, whichever is the later. Applicants must set out their grounds for appeal.

An appeal is not allowed if there is lack of understanding or awareness of the Examination Regulations or guidance issued or if the candidate is questioning the professional or academic judgement of the examiners.

- Supporting documentation which the candidate wishes to rely on in the appeal should be enclosed along with the appeals fee. Guidance on the appeal fee can be found online.
- The Examinations Manager will acknowledge receipt of the appeal. On receipt of an appeal, the Chair of the Examinations Committee or their nominee will investigate and collate all relevant information to ascertain the validity of the appeal.
- The Chair of the Examinations Committee will be informed of the request.

The College recognises the importance of confidentiality when handling appeals and will maintain an appellant's anonymity as far as is possible during any appeal. However, it is sometimes necessary to disclose an appellant's identity in order to progress an investigation and will be necessary should a hearing by an Examination Appeals Committee be necessary.

If validity of the appeal is confirmed, the Chair of the Examinations Committee will form an Examination Appeals Committee to adjudicate on the appeal.

The Examination Appeals Committee will be made up as follows:

- A Chairperson (Chair of the Examinations Committee or the relevant Examination Chair).
- Two examiners who were not involved in examining the appellant in the examination.
- A nominated nonmedical person e.g. CEO or lay member of the Examinations Committee or Council or a lay person with a legal background.
- An Examinations Appeals Committee Secretary who records minutes of the meeting.

The Examinations Appeals Committee secretary will exclusively minute the proceedings. The

Examinations Appeals Committee will deliberate in private and will consult as appropriate with the examiners involved in marking the candidate for additional summary or comment. This does not entail a remarking of the questions. The Examination Appeals Committee may, at its discretion, choose to carry out an appeal hearing or proceed on the basis of written submissions only.

The Examinations Appeals Committee's decision will be communicated to the Examinations Committee and subsequently to Council.

Outcome of the appeal

The appeal may be dismissed or upheld by the Examination Appeals Committee and the appellant notified accordingly in writing:

- If the appeal is dismissed and the appellant feels that the appeal was conducted unfairly, they have the right to appeal the outcome to the Appeals committee of the Council within 10 working days of the date of the decision of the Examination Appeals Committee. The Chair of the Examinations Committee will then write to the Secretary of Council informing them that an appeal has been lodged. This letter will include a summary of the decision and grounds for appeal. The appeal then falls within the remit of the Appeals committee appointed by Council.
- If the appeal is upheld, the candidate will be offered a place on the next available examination free of charge and the appeal fee will be returned or the result will be upgraded, if deemed appropriate by the Examinations Appeals Committee.

8. Complaints

On occasion, candidates may wish to express dissatisfaction with the way in which something has been done and feel confident that such a complaint is handled in a fair and consistent way.

Complaints should be brought to the attention of a College officer, if possible, at the time of the examination. All complaints made orally at the time of an examination will be logged by the College officer. Immediate action to resolve issues as they arise will be taken wherever possible. The majority of complaints will be resolved in this way. If not, the complainant should write to the Examinations Manager setting out in full the nature of the complaint.

An informal and flexible approach to resolution of complaints will be adopted. Where a complaint more closely fits a request for a recheck or an appeal it will be reclassified and proceed along those lines. Following discussion with the Examinations Committee, a conclusion will be reached and a course of action planned. Reasons will be given for the decision reached. The decision is final and following dispatch of the letter the complaints procedure will be at an end.

9. Guidance for Candidates in Difficulty

- Candidates are advised to meet with their local tutor on failing any examination component.
- College trainees must meet with their local College tutor after failing any examination component.
- All candidates can avail of a guidance meeting on their third unsuccessful attempt at any examination with the Examination Chair and the Director of Training or their nominee.
- Guidance will be strongly recommended to candidates before the sixth and final attempt at any examination.
- College staff will be present to minute the meeting.
- Requests for guidance should be made by email to exams@coa.ie within one month of the failed examination.

10. Special Accommodations

The College is committed to ensuring that all candidates have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability in all types of examination settings, in so far as is reasonably practicable.

Disability

All requests from candidates with a disability must include a written statement of support from the employer's Occupational Health Department (OHD) and/or College Tutor confirming that the candidate's difficulties warrant special examination arrangements.

- The written statement of support should detail specifically what special accommodations the candidate is seeking. Appropriate tailored accommodations will be made by the College, where appropriate and reasonably practicable.
 - Dyslexia – if a candidate is seeking special arrangements for Dyslexia, the written statement should be from an educational psychologist and they may also arrange to have an Educational Needs Assessment submitted in addition to the educational psychologist's report.

- These should be submitted to the Examinations Department **on the date of application** for an examination. Applications submitted after the date of application may not be accepted.
- If the disability arises after the date of application, candidates should contact the Examinations Department by emailing exams@coa.ie without delay and will be required to submit supporting documentation. Each request will be considered individually.
- If the Examination Department does not have reasonable notice of the disability, they may not be in a position to arrange the special accommodations requested. In this case, candidate will have the option to sit the examination or to defer and receive a full refund of the fees.

Unaccredited Leave

For the avoidance of doubt, if a trainee is on unaccredited leave from the scheme they will remain eligible to sit the CAI examinations provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

Medical conditions

Any prospective candidate with a medical condition that could affect their ability to take an examination should notify the Examinations Department **on the date of application for the relevant examination** and submit any supporting medical documentation. If the condition arises after the application has already been made, candidates should contact the Examinations Department by emailing exams@coa.ie without delay and will be required to submit supporting documentation.

In such circumstances, should such a candidate be unable to sit the examination, withdrawal will be permitted and the examination fee will be refunded (subject to deduction of an administrative fee). Failure to notify the Examinations Department may result in no refund being granted.

For any other reason, than those listed above, that affects a candidate's ability to sit an examination, candidates should email the Examinations Department at exams@coa.ie. The Examination Department cannot guarantee a refund of any examination fee.