



# **The Royal College of Emergency Medicine**

**Regulations and Information Pack**

**FRCEM Final Examinations**

**Applicable from 1 August 2021**

**July 2021**

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## **Introduction to the MRCEM and FRCEM Examination Structure – applicable from August 2021**

In August 2021 the College will introduce the 2021 curriculum and the associated examinations which are mapped to the curriculum.

From August 2021, the Membership examination consists of the following components:

- MRCEM Primary examination
- MRCEM Intermediate SBA examination
- MRCEM OSCE

From August 2021, the Fellowship examination consists of the following components:

- FRCEM SBA examination
- FRCEM OSCE

The FRCEM Critical Appraisal and FRCEM QIP have been withdrawn as formal examination components contributing to the award of Fellowship. The skills and knowledge tested in each of these components will be assessed within the wider programme of assessment as defined in the 2021 curriculum.

For further information regarding the MRCEM Primary, MRCEM Intermediate SBA or MRCEM OSCE, please refer to the relevant Information and Application Pack, available on the [Exams Section](#) of our website.

## Examination Regulations

1. Applications for each component of the MRCEM and FRCEM examination should be submitted via the online application system, available via the [Examinations Section](#) of the College Website.
2. Applications may only be submitted during a specified time period ('the application window'). The date on which the application window opens (opening date) and closes for receipt of applications (the closing date) is published on the Examinations Section of the College Website.
3. Candidates must be on the General Medical Council's Register with a license to practice, or registered with the statutory regulator in the country in which they practice, without limitation on their practice. Candidates must declare if they have had at any time (or have pending) any investigations, suspensions, limitations or removal of medical registration in any country.
4. Completed applications must be submitted by 17:00 (GMT) on the published closing date after which time the system automatically closes. Partially completed or late applications will not be accepted.
5. It is a candidate's responsibility to ensure they have all the information required to complete the entire application form prior to the application window closing on the advertised date at 17:00 (GMT).
6. Upon submission of a completed application, candidates will receive an automated email confirming receipt of the application. Once the application has been approved candidates will receive an automated email to confirm this. Candidates will be sent a further email confirming details of their examination registration and instructions for booking their test appointment with Pearson VUE or details of their OSCE examination registration and timetable.
7. Candidates wishing to withdraw or transfer their examination entry must notify the Examinations Department in writing by 17:00 (GMT) on the closing date. Fees cannot be transferred or refunded after this time.
8. Candidates must apply for any required entry visas in good time prior to the date of the examination. In exceptional circumstances, subject to receipt of written documentation confirming the refusal of a visa, the Head of Examinations will consider requests for candidates to transfer their examination entry.
9. Candidates who do not attend an examination will forfeit their examination fee. In exceptional circumstances, for matters beyond the candidate's control, the Head of Examinations will consider requests to refund a candidate's examination fee, subject to receipt of written documentation (e.g. a detailed medical certificate, a death certificate for a direct family member) within 20 working days from the date of the examination. Please note that insufficient preparation is not considered a sufficient reason to refund an examination entry.
10. Candidates will be informed of the date on which examination results will be published at the time their examination entry is confirmed. In very exceptional circumstances this may be amended by the College and due notice will be published on the College website.
11. Results will be published to candidates' College website accounts and result letters can be downloaded on demand. Examination results will not be issued or confirmed by telephone or email.

## Introduction to the FRCCEM Examinations

The FRCCEM examinations are mapped to the Emergency Medicine 2021 Curriculum, in its entirety, which is available on the [curriculum website](#). All applicants for the FRCCEM Final examinations are strongly advised to familiarise themselves with the 2021 Curriculum in preparation for sitting the FRCCEM examinations.

Candidates who are registered with the GMC should include their registration number in the appropriate place on the application form.

Candidates registered with the Irish Medical Council (IMC) or an international medical council are required to upload a copy of their current medical registration document at the time of application.

Candidates are advised that IELTS Level 7 is the expected standard for completion of the MRCEM and FRCCEM examinations.

## FRCCEM – Format of Examination

Candidates are required to have passed the qualifying examinations detailed further below in order to be eligible to sit the FRCCEM components. From 1 August 2021, the FRCCEM consists of the following components:

- FRCCEM SBA Paper comprising of 180 MCQ questions, presented as two 90 question papers with two hours per paper
- FRCCEM OSCE consisting of 16, 8 minute stations. An additional one minute of reading time is provided for candidates between each OSCE station (1 minute reading time + 8 minutes in each station).

Subject to eligibility criteria, candidates will be able to apply and sit each component independently, but candidates are required to pass both components, no cross compensation is permitted.

## Eligibility Criteria for the FRCCEM: Single Best Answer examination (SBA) and the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

A candidate will be eligible to enter the SBA and OSCE components provided they:

- a) Hold a medical qualification approved by the GMC for the purposes of registration **and**
- b) Has obtained Membership by Examination (MRCEM) after August 2012 **or**
- c) Has passed the FRCCEM Primary (or granted exemption) and FRCCEM Intermediate Certificate (SAQ & SJP) examinations after 1 August 2016 **or**
- d) Has passed the FRCCEM Primary (or MRCEM Part A after August 2012) and MRCEM Intermediate SBA (or MRCEM Part B after August 2012) and FRCCEM Intermediate SJP examinations **and**

- e) For trainees in an approved UK or Irish training programme: has completed 12 months (or full-time equivalent) of training in Emergency Medicine\* at ST4/ST5 or equivalent **or**
- f) For non-trainees: has completed 6 years of training post-qualification; 4 years (or full-time equivalent) of which must be in Emergency Medicine, and 1 year (or full-time equivalent) of which must be at a level above ST3/SHO.

\*Subspecialty training in Paediatric Emergency Medicine or Pre-Hospital Emergency Medicine is not counted.

## **Equivalent Examinations and Currency**

Candidates who were previously granted approval by the Dean for direct application to the FRCEM Final examinations without obtaining MRCEM, were required to pass all components of the FRCEM Final Examination by 31 July 2018. Candidates who were on this route and have not obtained FRCEM by 31 July 2018 will be required to complete the full suite of FRCEM examinations, starting with the MRCEM Primary and including the MRCEM Intermediate SBA and current FRCEM examinations.

Candidates who have had previous success in some FRCEM Final components retain their pass in those components, in line with the respective currencies detailed below. However, they must pass the MRCEM Primary and MRCEM Intermediate SBA before being eligible to attempt their remaining FRCEM components and on the condition that they have not previously met or exceed the number of permitted attempts for the relevant FRCEM component.

### **FRCEM SBA**

From August 2016 candidates are required to pass the FRCEM OSCE within seven calendar years of the date they pass the FRCEM SBA (or FRCEM Final SAQ). Candidates who do not successfully complete the FRCEM OSCE within seven calendar years of the original award will be required to resit the FRCEM SBA, subject to at least one attempt remaining. Candidates who have exhausted all of their available four attempts at the SBA are not usually permitted to resit. In exceptional circumstances candidates may apply for approval for an additional examination attempt. Such cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Dean, whose decision is final.

### **FRCEM OSCE**

From August 2016 candidates are required to pass the FRCEM SBA (or FRCEM Final SAQ) within seven calendar years of the date they pass the FRCEM OSCE. Candidates who do not successfully complete the FRCEM SBA (or FRCEM Final SAQ) within seven calendar years will be required to resit the FRCEM OSCE, subject to at least one attempt remaining. Candidates who have exhausted all of their available four attempts at the OSCE are not usually permitted to resit. In exceptional circumstances candidates may apply for approval for an additional examination attempt. Such cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Dean, whose decision is final.

## **FRCEM Final Clinical SAQ and OSCE**

Candidates who have previously passed **both** clinical components of the FRCEM (the Clinical SAQ & OSCE) **in the same diet** prior to 1 August 2016 are deemed to have passed equivalent examinations to the FRCEM SBA and FRCEM OSCE introduced from 1 August 2021. These candidates will be required to achieve FRCEM within seven years of the date they passed the FRCEM Clinical SAQ and OSCE. Candidates who do not successfully obtain FRCEM within seven calendar years will be required to pass the current FRCEM SBA and FRCEM OSCE components, subject to at least one attempt remaining.

Candidates who have passed only one clinical component of the FRCEM (the Clinical SAQ or the OSCE) prior to 1 August 2016 are not deemed to have passed equivalent examinations to the FRCEM SBA and FRCEM OSCE and are therefore required to have passed the FRCEM Final SAQ and FRCEM Final OSCE before August 2021 or pass the FRCEM SBA and the FRCEM OSCE after 1 August 2021.

## **Oversubscription Criteria**

### **FRCEM SBA**

There is normally no restriction on the number of places available but candidates may not always be allocated their first choice of venue.

### **FRCEM OSCE**

Places at the FRCEM OSCE are limited. In the event that an examination is oversubscribed, candidates will be allocated a place to sit the examination in the following order:

- Candidates in approved ST6 UK training post
- Candidates in Year 7 of approved Irish training programme
- Candidates holding an employment contract with the NHS (which covers the examination date)
- Candidates who were not allocated a place at the most recent sitting (on a first come, first served basis, if required)
- All other candidates on a first come, first served basis

## **Number of attempts**

Candidates are permitted a maximum of four attempts each in which to pass the two components of the FRCEM examination (i.e. FRCEM SBA: 4 attempts, FRCEM OSCE: 4 attempts). Attempts at the FRCEM Final SAQ after August 2016 will count towards maximum attempts at the FRCEM SBA. Attempts at the FRCEM Final OSCE after August 2016 will count towards maximum attempts at the FRCEM OSCE.

In exceptional circumstances candidates may apply for approval for an additional examination attempt. Such cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Dean, whose decision is final.

Candidates with a late diagnosis of a neurodiverse condition (such as dyslexia, ADD, ASD) and who have previously sat an examination component without agreed reasonable adjustments may apply to the Dean to expunge such attempts. Such cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Dean, whose decision is final.

Attempts at the FRCEM Final examinations prior to August 2016 do not count towards the number of available attempts after August 2016 on the condition that candidates have not previously exceeded the maximum number of attempts available and been disbarred from any further attempts.

### **Required Examinations for the Completion of Training**

Trainees in a GMC approved, UK training programme are required to complete the full suite of the FRCEM examinations (or approved equivalents) prior to the completion of the training programme.

Candidates exiting the training programme without having obtained FRCEM cannot be recommended for a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) and will be required to successfully complete a CESR application for entry onto the Specialist Register.

### **Data sharing**

If you are registered or anticipate being registered with the GMC then your personal data, including your examination results, will be passed to the GMC for quality assurance and research purposes and to facilitate the awarding of certificates for completion of training (CCTs).

If you are a trainee in UK Emergency Medicine training programme, your personal data, including your examination results will be shared with your local Health Education England (HEE) office and/or your Head of School or Programme director.



## Structure and Content of the FRCM Final Examinations

The FRCM Examinations are conducted in English and candidates are advised that IELTS Level 7 is the expected standard for completion of the MRCEM and FRCM examinations.

The FRCM SBA examination is blueprinted against the 2021 Emergency Medicine curriculum. Candidates should refer to the key capabilities and descriptors for each SLO assessed in the examination. The clinical syllabus will be sampled across the examination and syllabus categories and descriptor highlights are indicated against each SLO as a revision aide.

The blueprint for the FRCM SBA is as follows:

Curriculum Category	Syllabus categories/highlighted descriptors	Questions
<p><b>SLO1 - Care for physiologically stable patients attending the ED across the full range of complexity</b></p> <p><a href="#">SLO1 Key capabilities</a></p> <p><a href="#">SLO1 Descriptors</a></p>	<p>Allergy</p> <p>Cardiology</p> <p>Dermatology</p> <p>ENT</p> <p>Elderly care</p> <p>Endocrinology</p> <p>Environmental emergencies</p> <p>Gastroenterology &amp; hepatology</p> <p>Haematology</p> <p>Infectious diseases</p> <p>Maxillofacial/dental</p> <p>Mental health</p> <p>Musculoskeletal (non-traumatic)</p> <p>Nephrology</p> <p>Neurology</p> <p>Obstetrics &amp; Gynaecology</p> <p>Oncological emergencies</p> <p>Ophthalmology</p> <p>Pai &amp; sedation</p> <p>Palliative &amp; end of life care</p> <p>Pharmacology &amp; poisoning</p> <p>Respiratory</p> <p>Sexual health</p> <p>Surgical emergencies</p> <p>Urology</p> <p>Vascular</p>	35

<p><b>SLO3 - Resuscitate and stabilise patients in the ED, knowing when it is appropriate to stop</b> (Excluding major trauma) <a href="#">SLO3 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO3 Descriptors</a></p>	<p>Resuscitation Palliative and end of life care Trauma <i>including other clinical presentations</i></p>	<p>40</p>
<p><b>SLO 4 - Care for injured patients across the full range of complexity</b> <a href="#">SLO4 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO4 Descriptors</a></p>	<p>Pain and sedation Major trauma <i>including other clinical presentations</i></p>	<p>35</p>
<p><b>SLO 5 - Care for children of all ages in the ED, at all stages of development and children with complex needs</b> <a href="#">SLO5 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO5 Descriptors</a></p>	<p>Dermatology ENT  Gastroenterology and hepatology Infectious diseases Musculoskeletal (non traumatic) Neonatal emergencies Neurology Ophthalmology Respiratory Resus (BRUE, SUDIC protocol) Safeguarding and psycho-social emergencies in children Surgical emergencies</p>	<p>30</p>
<p><b>SLO6 - Proficiently deliver key procedural skills needed in Emergency Medicine</b> <a href="#">SLO6 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO6 Descriptors</a></p>	<p>Adult sedation Paediatric sedation Pericardiocentesis Non-invasive ventilation Escharotomy Lumbar puncture</p>	<p>13</p>
<p><b>SLO7 - Deal with complex or challenging situations in the workplace</b> <a href="#">SLO7 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO7 Descriptors</a></p>	<p>Medicolegal Legislation organ/tissue donation Information governance</p>	<p>10</p>

	safeguarding	
<b>SLO8 - Lead the ED shift</b> <a href="#">SLO8 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO8 Descriptors</a>	Patient flow management Risk management Clinical governance	7
<b>SLO12 - Manage, administer and lead</b> <a href="#">SLO12 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO12 Descriptors</a>	Serious adverse event investigation tools (RCA/5 whys/Fishbone analysis) Complaint management	
<b>SLO10 - Participate in research and manage data appropriately</b> <a href="#">SLO10 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO10 Descriptors</a>	Diagnostic methodology Randomised control trials Systematic review Statistical techniques	10
<b>SLO11 - Participate in and promote activity to improve the quality and safety of patient care</b> <a href="#">SLO11 Key capabilities</a> <a href="#">SLO11 Descriptors</a>	QI theories and methodologies Principles of measurement for improvement, judgement, and research Measures and methods of assessing variation	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>180</b>

The curriculum areas assessed within the FRCEM OSCE are as follows:

Station		Specialty Learning Outcome
1	Complex stable patient	SLO1
2	Complex stable patient	SLO1
3	Complex stable patient	SLO1
4	EPIC	SLO 7/8
5	EPIC	SLO 7/8
6	Supervision and teaching	SLO9
7	Resus	SLO3
8	Resus	SLO3
9	Resus	SLO3
10	Injured patient	SLO4
11	Injured patient	SLO4
12	PEM	SLO5
13	Management	SLO12
14	Management	SLO12

15	Management or Research	SLO12/SLO10
16	Management or Research	SLO12/SLO10

## **Standard Setting**

### **FRCEM SBA**

The FRCEM SBA is standard set using a modified Angoff method. One standard error of measurement (SEM) will be added to the cut score identified using the Angoff method to calculate the final pass mark.

### **FRCEM OSCE**

The FRCEM OSCE will be standard set in a conjunctive manner using the Borderline Regression Method and the requirement to pass at least one resuscitation station. One standard error of measurement will be added to the cut score identified using the Borderline Regression Method to calculate the final pass mark. In addition to achieving the pass mark, candidates will be required to pass at least one of the resuscitation stations in order to achieve a pass overall.

## **Examination Results**

The results for the both the FRCEM SBA and FRCEM OSCE will be published by 17:00 on a pre-advised day, approximately five weeks after the date of the examination. Results will be released to candidates' College website accounts where results letters can be downloaded on demand. Examination results will not be issued or confirmed by telephone or email.

## **Guidance for Candidates with Additional Requirements**

The College is committed to supporting candidates by providing fair opportunities when undertaking examinations. Candidates may submit a request for reasonable adjustments and should note that the responsibility for requesting adjustments lies with them.

Please refer to more detailed guidance [here](#).