

Statement for all FRCPATH candidates attempting their examinations in person during the autumn session

The RCPATH Autumn examinations are in progress as planned. There were a number of FRCPATH candidates whose examinations were delayed as a result of the national lockdown in the Spring. The College is doing everything it can to give all candidates the opportunity to attempt their examination in the Autumn, including providing an additional sitting of the FRCPATH Part 2 examinations for histopathology and haematology in January 2021. We have been able to accommodate *everyone* who has applied for an examination in this extended Autumn session. This is important on a personal and professional level for each candidate. It also matters for the specialties concerned, as delays to training could affect future recruitment that will have long term ramifications for our specialties that already have shortages.

There were announcements on Tuesday 22 September by the UK government and devolved administrations about tightening some restrictions across the UK due to rising infection rates of Covid-19. We would like to reassure those candidates who are attempting their examinations 'in person' about the measures and contingencies that have been put in place. As always, the College's primary concern in the running of the examinations is to ensure the safety of candidates, examiners and staff. This remains at the forefront of our plans which are kept under constant review.

For those candidates sitting the Autumn examinations in person, the following has been put in place:

- Guidance for all examination centres to ensure that the examinations are conducted safely and in line with measures intended to prevent the spread of infection.
- Wherever possible, candidates are being examined as close as possible to their home to reduce travelling time.
- Contingency plans include provision of an existing alternative centre should an examination centre become suddenly unavailable due to increased restrictions (although this may require additional travel) or candidates may be able to delay their attempt to the January sitting for histopathology and haematology.
- Where possible, additional examiners are on standby should they be required to examine at short notice.

We are in close contact with all other medical Royal Colleges, many of whom are delivering similar examinations under very challenging circumstances. Medical trainees and Clinical Scientists hold essential roles as providers of patient care. In order to maintain the workforce, it is equally essential that progression through training is enabled safely, while maintaining standards for the future of patient care. We are therefore proceeding with planned examinations, albeit within the latest guidelines.

We would reiterate the following [NHS guidance](#) and request candidates withdraw from the examination if they:

- receive a positive Covid-19 test result and/or are displaying symptoms within 10 days of the start of their examination.
- are living with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 and/or is displaying symptoms within 14 days of the start of their examination.
- have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised to self-isolate within 14 days of the start of their examination.

We wish all of our candidates the very best of luck.