The Membership Examination of Hong Kong Intercollegiate Board of Surgical Colleges (MHKICBSC Examination) -- Regulations

This MHKICBSC Examination (the "**Examination**") is organized by the Hong Kong Intercollegiate Board of Surgical Colleges ("**HKICBSC**"), including Hong Kong College of Emergency Medicine, Hong Kong College of Orthopaedic Surgeons, Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists and the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong (the "**Colleges**"). Passing the Examination is one of the requirements for completion of Basic Surgical Training ("**BST**") and admission to higher surgical training. Upon completion of all parts of the Examination and 2 years of BST and subject to these Regulations, candidates will also be eligible for election as Member of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and Member of one of the constituent Colleges of HKICBSC.

1. Entry to the Examination

1.1 In order to enter the Examination, all candidates must possess a primary medical qualification from The University of Hong Kong or The Chinese University of Hong Kong as prescribed by HKICBSC or pass the Licensing Examination of the Medical Council of Hong Kong. Mainland China trainees from Mainland China training centres accredited by the constituent Colleges of HKICBSC (provided that they undergo such training at the time of or after the relevant accreditation) are also eligible to enter the Examination.

1.2 Candidates may enter Part 1 Examination any time after gaining their primary medical qualification. However, they are strongly recommended to be in BST before sitting for the Part 2 Examination.

1.3 Candidates sitting for the Part 3 Examination are required to meet the following requirements:

1.3.1 have successfully passed Part 1 and Part 2 of the Examination;

1.3.2 have started BST within a period of 3 years (the "Threshold Period") immediately after the date of publication of the result of having passed the Part 1 or Part 2 (whichever is taken later in time) of the Examination (so that candidates who have not started BST within the Threshold Period have to sit and pass again Part 1 and Part 2 of the Examination and have started BST within the Threshold Period applicable thereto to comply with such requirement).

1.3.3 being trainees undergoing BST in Hong Kong or undergoing BST in the training program accredited by the constituent Colleges of HKICBSC; and

1.3.4 having undergone BST for no less than 6 months counting up to the day immediately preceding the first day of the Part 3 Examination.

1.3.5 training should not be suspended within 6 months prior to the examination.

2. Completion of the Examination

2.1 A candidate shall be allowed a maximum period of 4 years to complete all Parts of the Examination counting from the first day of BST subject to extenuating circumstances as provided in Paragraph 4.2.

2.2 From 1st January 2011 onwards and for the purposes of the Examination, any candidate failing to complete all Parts of the Examination in the designated maximum period provided in these Regulations shall not be allowed to start and undergo BST again or to re-sit any Part of the Examination.

3. The Examination

The Examination consists of three Parts :-

Part 1 - Applied Basic Sciences Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) paper

Part 2 - Clinical Problem Solving Extended Matching Question (EMQ) paper

Part 3 - Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).

(Format of the Examination may change from time to time)

All Parts of the Examination will be conducted in English.

3.1 Part 1 and 2

3.1.1 Part 1 and 2 of the Examination each consists of one MCQ and EMQ paper respectively:

Part I - Applied Basic Sciences (ABS):

- This part consists of 180 One Best Answer questions on Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology.
- Each question will have 5 options and only one will be the best answer.
- No mark will be deducted for wrong answers. Equally, no mark will be given if more than 1 answer are marked per question.

Part 2 - Clinical Problem Solving (CPS):

- This part consists of 150 extended matching items on different themes in surgery.
- Questions consist of a theme, a list of options (labelled alphabetically), an instruction and a variable number of clinical situations.
- For each of the clinical situations, the candidates should choose the single most likely option according to the instruction.
- It is possible for one option to be the answer to more than one of the clinical situations.
- Marks will not be deducted for a wrong answer. Equally, no mark will be given if more than one option is marked.

3.1.2 Part 1 and Part 2 Examinations are three hours in length each, taken on the same day.

3.1.3 Part 1 and 2 Examinations are held up to twice a year in Hong Kong.

3.1.4 For each Part of the Examination standing alone, candidates would be awarded either a "pass" or a "fail".

3.1.5 Candidates must pass both Part 1 and Part 2 Examinations before proceeding to Part 3 of the Examination.

3.2 Part 3

<u>Part 3 of Examination changes its format from Viva and Clinical Examination to Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) starting from 2011.</u>

3.2.1 The OSCE will normally consist of 16 examined stations and 2 preparation stations, each of 8 minutes' duration. These stations will examine the following broad content areas

- Basic & Applied Anatomy

- Communication & Clinical

A number of rest stations may be added according to the number of candidates attending a particular examination.

3.2.2 Candidates will be awarded a mark in each station and an overall pass or fail mark for the whole OSCE Examination respectively. A candidate may fail the examination, despite an overall pass mark, because of inadequate performance in some clinical station (s) and/or component (s) of the examination.

3.2.3 The format of OSCE is significantly different from the old format (viva, clinical and communication skill components). Consequently there will be **no exemptions** from any aspect of the Part 3 (OSCE) for any candidate who has passed any component of the old Part 3 Examination (Viva, clinical and communication skills).

4. Timing

4.1 Candidates must pass Part 1 and 2 Examinations before proceeding to Part 3 Examination. Once the OSCE format of Part 3 Examination was introduced, candidates who fail the Part 3 Examination have to re-sit the whole Part 3 Examination again, and there is no exemption from any stations which were previously passed. In other words, candidates who fail the Part 3 (OSCE) are required to re-sit all stations of the Part 3 (OSCE) in order to meet the requirement of these regulations.

4.2 A candidate is allowed a maximum period of 4 years to complete all Parts of the Examination counting from the first day of BST. This time limit will not be extended unless there are extenuating circumstances (such as, for example, prolonged illness, maternity leave or armed forces service) which are acceptable to the Examination Committee of HKICBSC which, in case of such circumstances, is authorized to extend such time limit at its discretion. Candidates who believe that they have extenuating circumstances should apply for an extension as follows:

4.2.1 the Candidate should state the reasons and circumstances and duration of the extension and provide relevant supporting documents for approval by the Examination Committee of the HKICBSC. This should be done as soon as possible (before or after the above-mentioned maximum period), with a letter of support from the candidate's consultant or supervisor.

5. Recommendations and Advice

5.1 Candidates may enter Part 1 and Part 2 Examinations in any order. Part 1 Examination may be entered at any time after gaining an acceptable primary medical qualification (see paragraph 1.1 above). However, candidates are recommended to sit Part 1 before Part 2 Examination and have started BST before sitting for Part 2 Examination.

5.2 Candidates may re-sit Part 1 and 2 Examinations repeatedly. However, they should note that they only have a maximum of 4 years to complete all Parts of the Examination counting from the first day of their BST subject to and as provided in these Regulations.

5.3 It is strongly recommended that candidates seek the advice of their trainer, or any College trainer or Program Director, before deciding when to take any Part of the Examination.

5.4 It is also strongly recommended that candidates do not enter the Part 3 Examination before completing the Basic Surgical Skills course and Clinical Core Competency Course.

6. Admission to the Examination

Candidates should consult The College of Surgeons of Hong Kong's website or contact the Colleges for details of dates and venues for examination. Details of the Colleges correspondence addresses and details are set out at the end of this document or as may otherwise be announced from time to time. Written notice to candidates with examination details will also be sent to all eligible candidates by post approximately 3 weeks before the examination. **It is, however, the responsibility of the candidate to inform the Examination Secretariat if no notification is received 10 days before the examination.**

6.1 Application for entry to any Part of the Examination must:

6.1.1 be made on the appropriate application form (paper or electronic version) with all supporting documents as required on or before the date specified by HKICBSC;

6.1.2 be accompanied by the prescribed examination fee payment, which must be received in full before a candidate is admitted to the examination; and

6.1.3 reach the office of Examination Secretariat by the date specified in the relevant Examination announcement .

6.1.4 not be processed if it is received after the closing date.

6.2 If, exceptionally, a candidate is permitted to enter any Part of the Examination without first having paid the specified examination fee and fails thereafter to pay the fee on demand, the candidate shall not be permitted to apply to sit for or take any further Part of the Examination without payment of the outstanding fee or, if the unpaid fee relates to such a candidate's final Part of the Examination, the HKICBSC reserves the right not to mark or assess the candidate's performance in that Part of the Examination or not to allow the candidate to proceed to Membership of the Colleges in accordance with these Regulations.

6.3 All first-time applications for Part 1 and/or 2 of the Examination must be accompanied (as the case may be) by a certificate of The University of Hong Kong or The Chinese University of Hong Kong, or License of Medical Council of Hong Kong or Mainland China applicants must provide certificate endorsed by the Mainland China training centres accredited by the constituent Colleges of HKICBSC ; in order to verify eligibility to enter the Examination as provided in Paragraph 1.1.

6.4 Candidates must bring proof of identity to sit for each Examination. Proof of identity must be an official document which is acceptable to HKICBSC, such as a current passport or Hong Kong Identity Card that includes the candidate's full name, date of birth and a photograph.

6.5 The HKICBSC reserves the right, regardless of eligibility to take the Examination, to review application to sit for the Examination on an individual basis in exceptional circumstances.

6.6 The HKICBSC reserves the right to accept or refuse any application to sit for the Examination as it deems appropriate or in the public interest. In case of any dispute on this issue or the exercise of such right, the decision of the HKICBSC shall be final.

7. Withdrawal from the Examination

7.1 A candidate who withdraws in writing an application for admission to any Part of the Examination may be refunded the fee paid (less an administrative fee of 20%) provided that notice of the intention to withdraw is received by the Examination Secretariat before the closing date by which applications must be submitted, as shown in the Examination Announcement. No refunds will be made to candidates who withdraw after the closing date.

7.2 Applications for consideration of a refund or deferral on medical grounds must be accompanied by a medical certificate in support. Applications for consideration of a refund or deferral on compassionate grounds should be supported by a letter from the candidate's consultant or supervisor responsible for training. All such applications must be submitted to the Examination Secretariat within 14 days before or after the commencement of the Examination. All supporting documents must also reach the Examination Secretariat within 28 days after the commencement of the Examination.

7.3 For information on pregnancy and deferral please refer to Paragraph 11.

7.4 Candidates with special needs should advise the Examination Secretariat at the time of application of the nature of their needs and any assistance that they require. Requests on medical grounds should be supported by medical evidence (an educational psychologist's report is required for requests for extra time because of dyslexia).

8. Results

Examinations results will be sent out by post by the Examination Secretariat to the address given by the candidate.

It is the responsibility of candidates to provide a valid and accurate address in the examination application.

9. Appeal Mechanism

Candidates who wish to have their marks re-checked must send the request and reach the Examination Secretariat within 14 days after the publication of results of the relevant Part of the Examination upon payment of a processing fee determined by the HKICBSC, which is non-refundable. Candidates who wish to make an appeal about the conduct of the Examination must address it to the Examination Secretariat within 14 days upon the publication of results with payment of a processing fee. Appeals will be considered which allege maladministration or bias or impropriety of some kind in the conduct of the Examination. Appeals disputing the academic judgment of the Examination made in good faith will not be considered. For the purpose of these Regulations, the date of the publication of results is deemed to be the issue date of the result letters, unless HKICBSC from time to time otherwise directs and announces.

For the details of examination complaints and appeal procedures, please refer to the document "Examination Complaints and Appeals Procedures for the MHKICSBC Examinations" posted on the website of The College of Surgeons of Hong Kong.

10. Improper Conduct by Examination Candidates

In the case of improper conduct in relation to an examination of a candidate as defined below, the HKICBSC may impose a penalty relating to the candidate's eligibility for the relevant or future Examination. Improper conduct in relation to an examination is defined as:

10.1 Dishonestly obtaining or attempting to obtain entry to the Examination by making false claims on eligibility or providing false credentials for the Examination or falsifying any aspects or items of the entry documentation.

10.2 Obtaining or seeking to obtain unfair advantage during or in relation with an examination, or inciting other candidates to do the same. Examples of unfair advantage are:

- having on the person any material that would give advantage in an examination once the examination has commenced (this includes electronic communication devices),

- communicating or attempting to communicate with another candidate once the examination has commenced,

- refusing to follow the instructions given by examiners or examination staff concerning the conduct of and procedure for the examination.

10.3 Removing or attempting to remove from the examination any confidential material relating to the conduct of or the content of the examination.

10.4 Obtaining or attempting to obtain confidential information concerning the examination from an examiner or examination official.

10.5 Passing confidential information on the conduct or the content of the examination to a third party.

10.6 If a candidate is found to have committed improper conduct in relation to an examination :-

10.6.1 he may not be allowed to sit for the Examination; and/or

10.6.2 his name may be reported to the regulatory authority or body of the Hong Kong SAR or their national regulatory authority or body as considered appropriate by the HKICBSC.

10.7 HKICBSC may also decide on an individual basis that a candidate should not be allowed to proceed further with the Examination or, having passed the Examination, may not be admitted to be a Member of any one of the constituent Colleges of HKICBSC or the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburg, subject to and according to their own statutes and regulations in case (a) improper conduct in relation to an examination by the candidate or (b) where serious misconduct of the candidate not related to the Examination is in each case judged by HKICBSC to make the person unfit to become such a Member.

11. Notification of Pregnancy and Deferral

11.1 A deferral of examination may be permitted to candidates making such application before the commencement of the examination and supplying an appropriate medical report which indicates that:

11.1.1 the candidate has any pregnancy related problems or illness; and/or

11.1.2 the candidate's confinement is due shortly before or around the date of the examination; and/or

11.1.3 the candidate has sufficient discomfort during the pregnancy for her to believe that it will have a detrimental effect on her performance in the examination.

11.2 In such circumstances, a deferral will be permitted and no further fee will be required.

11.3 Any candidate who does not inform the Examination Secretariat of her pregnancy before the commencement of the examination and is consequently unable to sit for that examination due to pregnancy will not normally be allowed to defer this examination without payment of another fee.

12. Amendment to the Regulations

12.1 HKICBSC shall have the right to amend or supplement these Regulations.

12.2 Candidates should keep in regular contact with the Examination Secretariat to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information on these Regulations and the Examination.

12.3 Any amendments or supplements to these Regulations will be announced on The College of Surgeons of Hong Kong's website.

13. Interpretation

13.1 In these Regulations, unless the content otherwise requires :-

13.1.1 words importing the singular number shall include the plural number and vice versa;

13.1.2 the masculine gender shall include the feminine gender and the neuter gender and vice versa;

13.1.3 any reference to a numbered Paragraph is to that Paragraph as numbered in these Regulations;

13.1.4 The expression "Part" means, in relation to the Examination, any Part of the Examination.

13.2 These Regulations shall be cited as the "MHKICBSC Examination Regulations".

13.3 HKICBSC shall be the sole authority for the interpretation of these Regulations whose decision upon any question of interpretation shall be final and binding. These Regulations shall be interpreted, administered and enforced by HKICBSC which may if it consider appropriate issue practice notes and guidance notes, from time to time, in relation to the interpretation, administration and enforcement of these Regulations.

Details of Colleges

The College of Surgeons of Hong Kong ***(Examination Secretariat)***
Room 601, 6/F
HKAM Jockey Club Building
99 Wong Chuk Hang Road
Aberdeen, Hong Kong
Tel: +(852) 2871 8799
Fax: +(852) 2515 3198
Website: http://www.cshk.org
E-mail: info@cshk.org

Hong Kong College of Emergency Medicine
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HKAM Jockey Club Building
99 Wong Chuk Hang Road
Aberdeen, Hong Kong
Tel: +(852) 2871 8877
Fax: +(852) 2554 2913
Website: http://www.hkcem.com
E-mail: hkcem@hkam.org.hk

The Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists
Room 806, 8/F
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99 Wong Chuk Hang Road
Aberdeen, Hong Kong
Tel: +(852) 2871 8733
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Website: http://www.hkcorl.org.hk/main.php
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January 2008

Revised and endorsed by Examination Committee on 15 Dec 2010, 9 March 2011, 7 Nov 2011, 27 March 2014, 9 March 2017, 19 Oct 2018

Approved by Council of HKICBSC on 17 Dec 2010, 11 March 2011, 17 August 2011, 3 July 2018