

## DO-HNS Part 2 October 2020

Due to the challenges presented by COVID-19, the four Royal Surgical Colleges have applied to the GMC to make changes to the format of the DO-HNS Part 2 (OSCE) for October 2020. The GMC is currently reviewing the submission but the four Royal Surgical Colleges would like to keep candidates informed as much as possible.

The current format of the examination is summarised below:

- The DO-HNS Part 2 OSCE, in its usual format, is a 25-station circuit. The exam is run at only one of the four Surgical Royal Colleges of the United Kingdom and Ireland at each diet.
- Five of these stations are patient/actor ‘clinical’ stations. In these stations, examiners are in the station and assess candidates on a specific task, or set of tasks, involving an actor and/or a manikin.
- Twenty of these stations are non-patient/actor ‘written’ stations. In these stations, candidates enter the station and answer a set of questions on a specific theme, with reference to props available in the station. Candidates answer these questions on a sheet of paper, and carry these sheets of paper with them around the circuit and hand them in when the exam is complete. These answer sheets are then double-marked by examiners.

The proposed changes to the exam are summarised below:

- The written stations will be delivered online regardless of whether the clinical stations are delivered remotely or in a socially-distanced context.
- The ear examination station will be removed from the proposed circuit, reducing the examined clinical stations from five to four.
- The nasendoscopy station will be adapted to allow it to be delivered without the need for a patient.
- The structure of the exam will be split into two parts: the written stations will be delivered remotely as a written exam using the same questions; and the clinical stations will be delivered in a shortened six- or seven-station circuit (four examined stations and two or three prep stations), in either a socially distanced or remote context. The marks would be combined to a single pass mark, as at present. It will therefore be necessary for candidates to take the exam over two separate days rather than in a single day.
- If delivered in a face-to-face context, the exam will be delivered at all four Surgical Colleges, reducing travel by allowing candidates to take the exam at their most local College, irrespective of the College of application.

The plan of the four Surgical Royal Colleges is to run the ‘clinical’ aspect of the examination socially-distanced in-person. However, if this is not possible due to prevailing restrictions, it is planned for the ‘clinical’ stations detailed above to be delivered remotely using bespoke videoconferencing software. Candidates will be informed of the method of delivery when they receive their admission letters. The four Surgical Royal Colleges reserve the right to change the method of delivery at short notice if restrictions change.

If the examination is delivered remotely, candidates will need a computer or laptop with a camera, along with internet connectivity. More detailed equipment requirements, along with an overview of how online delivery will work, will be provided for candidates with their admission letters, which will be emailed to candidates no later than four weeks prior to the examination. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' document will also be prepared and published on College websites once it is available.

Candidates should check the College and ICBSE websites regularly for further information and confirmation of the temporary changes that will be made to the DO-HNS Part 2 examination.