

Tri-Collegiate Diploma of Membership in Special Care Dentistry (M SPEC CARE DENT)

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GUIDANCE TO CANDIDATES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document contains the Guidance to Candidates and Supervisors for the Tri-Collegiate Diploma of Membership in Special Care Dentistry (M Spec Care Dent).

Further information can be obtained from:

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1.2 The entrance requirements, eligibilities and details regarding application for admission to the examination are to be found in the Regulations.

2. SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION

2.1 The examination of the Diploma of Membership in Special Care Dentistry includes Applied Sciences relevant to Special Care Dentistry and the Principles and Practice of Special Care Dentistry.

2.2 The aims of the examination are to test the range of knowledge of Special Care Dentistry at a level expected of a specialist practitioner and to test the attainment of competence in the planning and execution of Special Care Dentistry requisite for specialist practice.

2.3 All parts of the examination are conducted in English.

2.4 The examination will be held in the UK according to demand.

3 ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 To be eligible to enter for the Diploma examination all candidates **must** provide certified evidence of possession of a primary dental qualification that is acceptable to the Colleges.
- 3.2 Candidates may apply for entry to the examination having completed 30 months of full-time or equivalent part-time training (**i.e. not less than half-time over a maximum of six continuous years.**) acceptable to the Colleges by the date of the examination. The training should preferably be continuous but in some cases breaks in training may be permitted. The total training period should not normally exceed six years.
- 3.3 To be eligible for the examination, prospective candidates must fulfil one or more of the following criteria:
- A. Have satisfactorily completed, by the time of the examination, a minimum of 30 months of a full-time 3 year training appointment (or part-time equivalent i.e. not less than half-time over a maximum of six continuous years.) in a UK training programme as a stipendiary StR who has been awarded a training number.**
- B. A university Masters or Clinical Doctorate degree programme which parallels the training programme completed by an StR i.e. have satisfactorily completed, by the time of the examination, a minimum of 30 months of a full-time 3 year training appointment (or part-time equivalent i.e. not less than half-time over a maximum of six continuous years). It is necessary that candidates be able to provide evidence that they have completed the learning outcomes described for their specialty when applying to complete the Membership examination. This evidence should be in the form of a portfolio which should include the course curriculum, the training programme, the clinical and academic timetable for the training period, work-based assessments (incorporating evaluations carried out during chairside teaching) and a logbook.**
- C. Have satisfactorily completed, by the time of the examination, a minimum of 30 months of a full-time 3 year specialist training appointment (or part-time equivalent i.e. not less than half-time over a maximum of six continuous years) overseas or in the EEA which has been considered and found to be acceptable to the Colleges.**
- D. Be registered as a Specialist in Paediatric Dentistry in the UK.**

If candidates wish to apply under 3.3 (b) or (c) for entry to the examination they should submit their portfolio of evidence. Candidates are advised to check their eligibility after 30 months of training and if it is agreed they are eligible, can apply for the next diet of the examination. The administering College together with the Tricollegiate Examination Board will then assess their eligibility to take the examination. If the submitted evidence is incomplete candidates may not be granted eligibility for that diet. No evidence will be accepted beyond the submission period for those wishing to apply under 3.3(b) or (c)

3.4 Clinical Training

Time of Training

1. It is normally expected that the candidate will have completed at least two years of general professional training following graduation from dental school prior to entry to specialty training.

2. The Specialty training period must be at least 3 years (4500 hours) full-time (or equivalent part-time). Part-time training is allowed and is not disadvantaged but it is expected that training should be no less than 0.6 whole time equivalents (this equates to 6 clinical sessions¹ per week of training).
3. Any training programme content should be apportioned as 60% clinical, 25% academic and 15% research.

Curriculum

1. The learning outcomes² for each specialty have been published by the General Dental Council, on the recommendation of, and development by, various specialty authorities.
2. These outcomes include attainment of knowledge and decision making at specialty level, and development of technical, management, audit, behavioural and clinical skills.

Clinical Supervision

1. Evidence must be provided that there has been a named clinical supervisor for each stage of their training. Each supervisor must understand their responsibility for patient safety and have a clear understanding of the curriculum and clinical competence required for specialty training. The trainer must be fully trained in the clinical specialty for which specialty training is being provided; this may include inclusion of the country's specialist list if one exists.
2. Evidence of clinical competence must be demonstrated through work-based assessments to ensure clinical progression. The assessments can take various forms and should include directly observed procedures (DOPs), case note reviews, case based discussion (CbD), multi-source feedback (MSF) and clinical examinations (mini CEX)³
3. Evidence must be presented to demonstrate satisfactory progression. Where failure to progress is evident, evidence must be included to demonstrate remedial training has taken place. This would normally take the form of a portfolio or annual progression assessment. In the UK, this is currently referred to as the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP).
4. It is an essential characteristic of the clinical training that it is directly supervised by a specialist or consultant in the appropriate discipline.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that these criteria have been fulfilled prior to application to sit the examination and that their application to sit the examination is approved in writing by the person responsible for oversight of their training (i.e. Training Programme Director or University Programme Director).

3.5 All applications to assess eligibility should be presented in the following format:

- (i) An online submission of typed and scanned documentation in the form of a Portfolio of evidence.
- (ii) The materials should be presented in the portfolio under the headings listed below:
 - **Declaration form**
 - **Personal details**
 - **Curriculum vitae** relevant to the application

¹ A session is defined as a minimum of 3.5 hours

² The learning outcomes are delivered in many forms and may be referred to in the totality as the curriculum but can also be identified as the Blueprint on the College website.

³ The website which explains the different workplace based procedures is:

<http://www.jrcptb.org.uk/assessment/Pages/Workplace-Based-Assessment.aspx>

- **Training programme:** a full copy of the training programme and the curriculum should be included.
- **Timetable:** the timetable for the candidate's clinical and non-clinical activities during the period of training should be attached. A list of the names of the supervisors for each component should be included.
- **Work based assessments** of clinical activity during the period of clinical training
- **Log book:** the log record of clinical experience should follow the format recommended at the following address: <https://www.elogbook.org/>.
- Candidates should indicate whether they have performed the clinical work undertaken, have assisted or observed. Clinical activity should cover the required breadth of the curriculum. No work undertaken more than 6 years preceding the application is acceptable. The log book should be verified by the person supervising the training who should be on the specialist list and responsible for the activity described.
- **Letter of support from Programme Director**
- Supervisor/s who have given their signature to confirm their role in the candidate's training should also state their designation, qualifications, specialty and registration status.

4. STRUCTURE OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination consists of five components. At their first sitting, candidates must attempt all five components of the examination. Each component must be passed independently. At any subsequent sitting, candidates must attempt all outstanding elements of the examination. (See Regulation 14.1)

4.1 The examination will consist of:

Component 1 – A written examination of 2.5 hours' duration. This will consist of Single Best Answer Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs). Candidates will be awarded one mark for each correct answer and will not be penalised for incorrect answers.

Component 2 – A 20-minute structured oral problem-solving examination. Candidates will have 20 minutes of preparation time and will then be examined for 20 minutes.

Component 3 – A 40-minute structured oral examination, based on two simulated cases on the clinical aspects of human disease and disability of relevance to Special Care Dentistry, the practice of Special Care Dentistry and organisational and management issues relevant to Special Care Dentistry. Candidates will be presented with two simulated cases and will have 30 minutes of preparation time for both cases. They will then be examined on both cases for 40 minutes (20 minutes for each case).

In this component candidates will be presented with two simulated cases and relevant materials, which may include radiographs, photographs, study casts and/or test results as deemed appropriate. Candidates will be expected to answer questions and/or to demonstrate clinical skills in a simulated situation relating to the materials provided. Questions may, for example, include making a diagnosis and formulating a treatment or management plan. Candidates will have 30 minutes of preparation time to scrutinise the two simulated cases.

Component 4 – A 20-minute communication skills test, based on two scenarios testing aspects of communication relevant to Special Care Dentistry. For each scenario, candidates will have 5 minutes of preparation time and will then be examined for 10 minutes. This test will include communication with a role-player/actor.

Component 5 – A 45-minute structured oral examination based on the candidate's two fully documented clinical case histories contained in the candidate's Portfolio of Experience of Special Care Dentistry. This will cover the candidate's a) two fully documented clinical case histories, each describing a patient personally treated by the candidate (15 minutes per case), and b) learning outcomes relating to the Log Book (15 minutes). Candidates will be examined by a different team of examiners for each element of this component.

Candidates should be aware that the components may not necessarily be examined in the order in which they appear above.

5. PORTFOLIO OF EXPERIENCE IN SPECIAL CARE DENTISTRY

5.1 The Portfolio of Experience must comprise two parts:

- a) Two fully documented clinical case histories, each describing a patient **personally** treated by the candidate and;
- b) A Log Book of clinical experience.

5.2 Two Fully Documented Clinical Case Histories

a) Guidance on the format for presentation of the case histories can be accessed in Appendix D. Candidates must comply with this guidance. Presentations should not exceed 1500 words and there is a limit of 20 photographs. Candidates should ensure only good quality photographs are included. One hard copy of each complete case history is required to be brought to the examination and another three hard copies submitted to the Examinations Section along with one copy in PDF format on a CD Rom or USB stick as part of the Portfolio of Experience.

b) The cases should have been treated by the candidate him/herself during the period of acceptable training and should demonstrate the degree of complexity expected of a practitioner operating at the level of a specialist. The candidate must present a signed statement from the appropriate supervisor confirming the candidate's substantial involvement in both cases (Appendix B).

c) Cases that were started more than 6 years before the examination date will not normally be accepted. Each case should be representative of a different patient group as stated in Section 4.3 (c) under categories 1-5 and 'Other' for the requirements of the Log Book.

d) The texts relating to each case must be neatly presented, single-sided, with adequate margins and spacing, of A4 page size and in an Arial 11 font. Each case history must be clearly labelled Case A (patient's initials) and Case B (patient's initials). The category of each patient should be stated, in accordance with the guidance in Section 4.3 (c) for completion of the Log Book

e) The case label (Case A or Case B) and the patient's initials should be clearly shown on each item of the relevant materials submitted.

f) The patient must not be identifiable in any form (e.g. hospital number or address) on any of the materials submitted and a College declaration signed by the patient giving permission to present patient information must be included (Appendix C).

g) Each case history should include:

- up to 20 **clear** photographs of relevant clinical work, clinical tests, radiographs and models;
- a brief summary of the case (maximum 100 words);
- a summary of the medical, dental and social histories;
- a clear statement of the aims, objectives and rationale for the treatment(s) chosen and undertaken;
- a chronologic description of clinical work undertaken, giving clear attribution to the work of others if appropriate (e.g. where multidisciplinary care has been required);
- a reflective account of the problems/difficulties encountered during treatment and of the outcomes;
- the needs of the patient for ongoing, future or maintenance care.

h) Candidates presenting for this examination will be subject to the respective plagiarism regulations of the College. The statement: 'I confirm that I have not plagiarised from any other source' must be included as a cover sheet for all clinical case materials contained in the Portfolio.

i) A declaration form (Appendix B) must be completed for each case history presentation and submitted to the Examinations Section of the administering College in a sealed envelope.

j) A consent form (Appendix D) must be completed for each case history presentation and submitted to the Examinations Section of the administering College in a sealed envelope.

k) Cases which have been presented for another examination may be presented for the Tri-Collegiate Membership in Special Care Dentistry.

Candidates must submit their two fully documented case histories not less than 6 weeks prior to the date of the Examination. Submissions received after this date may not normally be accepted.

The case presentations cannot be returned to candidates after they have been submitted for the examination.

5.3 The Log Book

a) Candidates will be required to submit a Log Book. The purpose of the Log Book is to indicate to the examiners the candidate's breadth of experience in all aspects of Special Care Dentistry including evidence of dental skills. It is expected that the Log Book will demonstrate a wide range of clinical experience in a variety of settings. One hard copy of the Log Book is to be brought to the examination and another three hard copies submitted to the Examinations Section along with one copy in PDF format on a CD Rom or USB stick as part of the Portfolio of Experience.

b) Log Books for each diet should reflect a continuing record of experience in Special Care Dentistry.

c) The Log Book must be completed according to the College instructions and cases should be grouped under the following headings to denote patient categories:

1. Medically Compromised
2. Learning and Physical Disability
3. Mental Health

- 4. Care of Older Persons
- 5. Dental Anxiety or Behavioural Management

A sixth category entitled 'Other' may be used to record cases that do not fall into the above categories.

d) Individual cases must not be entered under more than one heading and for reasons of data protection patients must not be identifiable. It is the intention that the number of individual cases should not be prescriptive. The clinical experience presented should be in accordance with that expected of a candidate trained to become a specialist practitioner. The emphasis should be on quality and diversity as defined by evidence-based outcomes.

e) Each case recorded in the Log Book must carry a unique identifier in the form of a number so that examiners may be able to identify a case for the purposes of examining and in order that information may be retrieved by the candidate should verification be required.

f) The Log Book should enumerate the various cases managed in which the candidate was directly involved. For each case candidates should indicate whether they performed the procedures described (P), or assisted with the treatment (A), or observed the treatment undertaken (O). The log book should be completed in no less than an Arial 11 font. Each entry sheet of the Log Book must be signed by the candidate's trainer/clinical line manager/supervisor or other approved person as confirmation of completion of the cases recorded. All parts of the Log Book should normally be verified as they are compiled. The Log Book should be presented in a semi-stiff folder of 30 x 21 cm size (A4). Candidates should follow the format attached to this guidance and to be found on the College website for the layout of the Log Book.

g) Candidates should also provide a graphical summary (e.g. in the form of a pie chart) of the number of patients treated within each category of the Log Book. All summary charts should appear at the beginning of the log record.

h) It is required that candidates will have undertaken treatment/management of patients within the scope of each of the five major categories included in the Log Book.

i) Candidates are required to submit their Log Book to the Examinations Section of the appropriate College not less than 6 weeks prior to the examination.

j) Candidates applying for special consideration of their experience for eligibility (4.4 of the Regulations) should submit their Log Book with this application.

k) An example Log Book page is available in Appendix E. You can request a copy of this page in word format by contacting the Examinations Section of the administering College.

The Log Book cannot be returned to candidates after it has been submitted for the examination.

6. INFRINGEMENT OF REGULATIONS

6.1 Candidates shall not give or receive any assistance or communicate by any means with one another or any other person, other than the invigilator(s), at any time while an examination is in progress. Any candidate acting in breach of this Regulation or

who is considered by the examiners to be guilty of behaviour prejudicial to the proper management and conduct of the examination may be suspended from the examination.

- 6.2** Candidates should not remove from the examination venue, or make copies of, any papers or examination materials.
- 6.3** Candidates should not attempt to obtain confidential information relating to the examination from an examiner or examination officials, or pass confidential information on the content of the examination to a third party.
- 6.4** Any candidate who infringes any of the Regulations may be refused admission to, or may face expulsion from, the examination. All instances of misconduct are reported to the Chair of the Examination Board.
- 6.5** All allegations of misconduct will be investigated in accordance with the procedures published on the Colleges' websites: any penalties will also be in accordance with the published procedures.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 7.1** In each component of the examination candidates are examined by two or more examiners.
- 7.2** Candidates should note that no practical clinical dentistry work will be required during the examination.

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Blueprint

APPENDIX B – Declaration Form

APPENDIX C – Patient Consent Form

APPENDIX D – Case History Template

APPENDIX E – Special Care Dentistry Log Book Page