



**Regulations relating to the Joint Specialty
Fellowship Examination in Vascular Surgery – FRCSEd (Vasc)**

2026

**ALL APPLICANTS MUST BE AWARE THAT THE REGULATIONS ARE UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW
AND IT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE
EXAMINATIONS SECTION.**

OVERVIEW

This is a Conjoint Exit Examination in Vascular Surgery for the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong (CSHK), and the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd).

CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

The examinations are conducted in Hong Kong with joint participation of examiners from the two parties.

The Secretariat of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong will be responsible for the conduct of the examinations in Hong Kong.

The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh will provide external validation and quality assurance for the conduct of the examinations.

ELIGIBILITY

The examination is open to applicants who are in the certified vascular surgical training programmes in Hong Kong as recognised by the CSHK.

Applicants must hold a medical qualification recognised for registration by the Medical Council of Hong Kong.

Applicants must have completed 42 months of Higher Surgical Training in Vascular Surgery with satisfactory training performance and fulfilment of training requirements as prescribed in the Higher Surgical Training Curriculum.

Applicants must have completed all the mandatory courses before the start date of examination as prescribed by the Vascular Surgery Board.

Applicants must have completed at least 2 research projects approved by the Research Committee and must have presented at least once at the Annual Scientific Congress of the CSHK.

All applicants must provide certified evidence of satisfactory completion of the various posts in their higher surgical rotation and must provide certification that their performance in the posts has been satisfactory.

All applicants must keep a prospective logbook of all their practical and academic activities during their training programme. This logbook may be assessed during the course of the examination and must be signed off by each trainer. A consolidation summary of all operative experience must be submitted as outlined.

Applicants must declare any pre-existing medical conditions at the time of application. Applicants with special needs should advise the 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 a qualified relevant medical specialist. Any need for adjustment of the examinations will be determined by the College.

NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY AND DEFERRAL

An applicant applying for an examination who is pregnant at the time of application must inform the College of their condition and their Estimated Week of Confinement (EWC).

Any applicant who becomes pregnant after applying and before sitting the examination must inform the College of their EWC as soon as pregnancy is confirmed.

A deferral may be permitted to applicants supplying an appropriate medical report which satisfies the College indicating:

- i) the applicant has any pregnancy related problems or illness;
- ii) the applicant's confinement is due shortly before or around the date of the Examination;
- iii) the applicant has sufficient discomfort for them to consider that it will have a detrimental effect on their performance. In such circumstances, should any such applicant be unable to sit for the examination, a deferral will be permitted and no further fee will be required. Any applicant who does not inform the College of their pregnancy and submits their application fee and application to sit for any examination will not normally be allowed to defer this examination without submission of another fee.

Applicants withdrawing from an examination must do so in writing. The entrance fee may be returned, less 20% administrative charge, or transferred to the NEXT examination where written notice is received by the College prior to the closing date for receipt of applications. Half of the entrance fee may be returned or transferred to the NEXT examination where written notice is received not less than 21 days before the commencement of the examination. After that date no refund or transfer of entrance fee will normally be made to candidates who withdraw from examinations or fail to attend for any reason whatsoever, except under the circumstances specified under the section relating to pregnancy. **NO ALLOWANCE WILL BE MADE FOR POSTAL OR OTHER DELAYS.** Candidates who submit an application form but are subsequently found to be ineligible to enter for the examination will have their fees returned less 20% administrative charges.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

No candidate may appeal on the basis of the results of the examination, however they may complain regarding the conduct of the examination. Candidates must submit a complaint within thirty days of the examination to the Dean of Examinations. A copy of the procedural document may be obtained from the Examinations Section.

Candidates must not have their training interrupted within 6 months prior to examination.

The CSHK 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 CSHK shall be final.

FORMAT OF EXAMINATION

Section 1 is a written test composed of two Single Best Answer papers. These papers are carefully prepared to cover the curriculum content which can be best assessed in this way. A process of standard setting is performed by trained and experienced examiners to set the eligibility to proceed mark.

Section 1 examinations are delivered via computer-based testing at a dedicated examination centre in Hong Kong.

Candidates must meet the required standard in Section 1 to gain eligibility to proceed to Section 2.

Paper 1 100 Single Best Answer [SBA] (2 hours)

Paper 2 100 Single Best Answer [SBA] (2 hours)

Section 2 is the clinical component of the examination. It will consist of a series of carefully designed and structured interviews on clinical topics – some being scenario based and some being centred around real patients. Such patients will be past or present patients relevant to the specialty and recruited by the host examiners. The Section 2 examinations will be held in pre-selected training hospital in Hong Kong.

The format will consist of clinical and oral examinations in all aspects of Vascular Surgery. This will include the relevant aspects of anatomy, physiology and pathology.

Examination format

Clinical examinations

Long Cases (x1 40-minute clinical during which 2 patients will be seen)

Short Cases (x1 40-minute clinical during which 4 patients will be seen)

Oral examinations

4 x 30-minute oral examinations as follows:

1. Case-Based Discussion - Aneurysm & Lower Limb - 2 cases will be covered
2. Case-Based Discussion - Endovascular & Miscellaneous - 2 cases will be covered
3. Emergency Vascular Surgery Oral comprising:
 - Trauma - 2 themes will be covered
 - Peri-operative management / critical care - 4 themes will be covered
4. Elective Vascular Surgery Oral comprising:
 - Basic Principles and Interventional Radiology - 4 themes will be covered

Academic Foundation* - covering understanding & methodology analysis, critical appraisal & interpretation

*Academic Foundation: candidates may be tested on any one of the key published Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and important vascular papers as determined by the SAC in Vascular Surgery. The list of top RCTs and important vascular papers is available via the Vascular Surgery Curriculum <https://www.iscp.ac.uk/> and also will be uploaded to examination website in CSHK.

Please note that the Vascular Surgery Board reserves the right to modify the format of the examination.