



Junior doctor industrial action and FRCPath examinations

Following the announcement of industrial action by junior doctors in England as a result of the British Medical Association (BMA) ballot, the College has been considering the potential impact should industrial action coincide with the FRCPath examinations.

The [advice from the BMA](#) for junior doctors who have an examination on the day of industrial action is as follows:

“You are able to do the exam on the day of action and take part in the industrial action activities around that. It is possible for your employer to cancel your leave, with any required notice under your contract. If your leave is cancelled, you will still be able to take industrial action and use the time to attend the exam.

You will likely lose a day of pay but you will still be able to take the day for industrial action and take your exam.”

The dates for industrial action announced so far are Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 March.

The [dates for the Spring examination session](#) are as follows:

- FRCPath Part 1: Tuesday 21 – Friday 24 March 2023
- FRCPath Part 2: Monday 3 April – Friday 28 April 2023 (please see the examination calendar for specific examination dates)

Should additional subsequent industrial action be announced which coincides with the FRCPath examinations, the College position is as follows:

1. All examinations for the spring session are being planned as normal and the College will try to minimise disruption for all candidates.
2. FRCPath Part 1 examinations are online and do not require examiners to be present. Therefore, in line with BMA advice that junior doctors in England are able to undertake examinations if they coincide with industrial action, and due to the



proximity of the industrial action the previous week, we do not anticipate disruption for these examinations.

3. Industrial action that coincides with a face-to-face FRCPATH Part 2 examination may affect the availability of medically qualified examiners if they are required to provide cover for junior doctors at their hospital or Trust. Depending on the size, location(s) and number of examiners required for any affected examination, it may not be possible to move the examinations at short notice. When dates for industrial action are announced, the College will review the impact of those dates on any relevant examinations and advise affected candidates accordingly.

The College administers examinations for candidates who are qualified as doctors, clinical scientists, biomedical scientists, dentists, and veterinary pathologists and we accept candidates from throughout the UK, the Republic of Ireland as well as internationally. We therefore recognise that not all candidates or examinations will be affected by the junior doctor industrial action, although it is possible that there may be a direct or indirect impact for some candidates if industrial action coincides with some FRCPATH Part 2 examinations (e.g. examinations for both junior doctors and clinical scientists).

In addition, the College is aware of the potential for further train strikes during the examination period. Again, these would most affect the FRCPATH Part 2 examinations, and any dates announced will be reviewed for potential impact and affected candidates will be advised accordingly.

For candidate enquiries related the College FRCPATH examinations, please email the College: examinations@rcpath.org.

For enquiries relating to junior doctor industrial action, please email the British Medical Association: support@bma.org.uk.

28 February 2023

