

Royal College of Pathologists

Examination regulations - 2025

NEUROPATHOLOGY

These regulations must be read in conjunction with the *Regulations and Guidelines – College examinations for Fellowship and Diplomas.*

ENTRY & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

There is no specific timing for entry to the examination. Candidates should obtain guidance from their educational supervisor as to when to sit the examination. Planning should take into account planned CCT date (where applicable), but candidates should apply only when they are ready. Some general guidance is given below, but apart from the sequence in which the examinations can be sat is not intended to be prescriptive.

Part 1

Candidates will be admitted to an examination if they are in a recognised training programme or have fulfilled the recommended training requirements. The College generally recommends that candidates attempt the Part 1 examination after two years' specialist training.

Part 2

The College generally recommends that candidates attempt the Part 2 examination after four years' specialist training. Candidates may not sit the Part 2 Examination until 12 months after successfully completing the Part 1 Examination.

STRUCTURE AND FORMAT OF THE EXAMINATION

Part 1

Candidates will take the general histopathology Part 1 SBA/EMQ (see the Histopathology regulations for further details).

Part 2

The Part 2 examination will consist of two components examined over two separate days:

- **macroscopic component** (*one-day examination*) – full autopsy including clinicopathological correlation, fixed brain dissection and interpretation of macroscopic appearances, examination of brain slices, oral examination which may include autopsy scenarios and techniques, pathophysiological knowledge in relation to neurological disorders, any aspects of providing a neuropathology service such clinical advice, laboratory management, audit, health and safety, the legal and ethical framework of practice.
- **microscopic component** (*one-day examination*) - practical in neuropathology and neurocytology. This includes sections on surgical pathology (20 cases), intraoperative diagnosis (6 cases) and complex neuropathological cases, which may include macroscopic images, special stains, histochemistry, teased fibre preparations and electron microscopy (usually 2 postmortem cases and 1-2 muscle and nerve cases). Candidates must pass the surgical and intraoperative sections, in addition to passing overall, in order to pass the microscopic component.

Candidates must initially apply for both components in the same session. Both components will be held within the specified Spring or Autumn examination periods but will be at different centres and, where possible, will not take place on consecutive days.

If both components are failed, the candidate must apply to retake both in the same future session. If one component is passed and the other failed, the candidate will retain the pass and will need to re-sit only the failed component.

TIMING OF THE EXAMINATIONS

The Part 1 and Part 2 examinations will be offered twice a year in Spring and Autumn.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Slides for the smears used in microscopic component will be available in both haematoxylin and eosin and toluidine blue. Candidates should bring their own microscope to the examination.

Examinations Department
The Royal College of Pathologists
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