



Royal College
of Surgeons

FACULTY OF DENTAL SURGERY

CANDIDATE GUIDANCE

Diploma of Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of England



Royal College of Surgeons

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1. Introduction

The FDS at the Royal College of Surgeons of England provides a well-established, modern, educationally sound assessment in the Diploma of Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery (MFDS RCS Eng).

The aim of the MFDS examination is to assess knowledge, application of knowledge and graduates' understanding of the structures and processes required to provide quality-assured dental healthcare after completion of the Dental Foundation Training programme, whether they are pursuing a career in general or specialist practice, in either primary or secondary care.

The UK Dental Foundation Training Curriculum (published by COPDEND) defines the competences, curriculum, educational content, training requirements, and expected outcomes for all dental graduates who complete dental foundation training. Successful completion clearly demonstrates a level of achievement beyond undergraduate training and a commitment to professional development which may be useful to future employers.

Although not essential, it may be a desirable requirement for entry into specialist training.

The MFDS provides a modern, fit-for-purpose, innovative assessment for today's young dentist. It also removes the reliance on traditional tests of knowledge and, together with the structured professional skills assessment, allows for triangulation of methods to assess the areas set out in the foundation training curriculum.

All parts of the examination are conducted in English.

This document contains background information and guidance for candidates preparing for the MFDS and highlights further sources of help.

2. How to use this document

This document should be read alongside the MFDS Regulations, available to view on the [RCS England website](#).

This document contains important guidance which is supplementary to the MFDS Regulations. Any candidate preparing for the MFDS assessment should therefore read both the MFDS Regulations and this document in full.

3. Eligibility Requirements

The Diploma of Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery at The Royal College of Surgeons of England may be granted to those who:

Possess a primary dental qualification acceptable to the Boards of the FDS at The Royal College of Surgeons of England, and should normally be registered to practise dentistry in their country of residence;

Have completed 18 months' full-time postgraduate experience in dentistry. Normally, equivalent part-time experience will be acceptable if gained over a period of three-and-a-half years;

4. Curriculum & syllabus

The publication [Dental Foundation Training Curriculum](#) and the [Dental Core Training Curriculum](#) are at the basis for the MFDS assessment.

The syllabus can be found on the [RCS England website](#).

5. Format of the MFDS

Part 1 examination

The Part 1 examination consists of one paper, based on the foundation training curriculum, assessing knowledge and applied knowledge. This includes 150 Single Best Answer (SBA) questions within a single three-hour paper. The questions carry equal marks. The examination is not negatively marked and there are no trick questions.

Example question

A 40-year-old woman undergoes a lateral cephalogram for orthognathic planning. On review, well-defined, rounded lucent lesions are seen throughout the skull. What is the most likely diagnosis?

- a. Hypoparathyroidism*
- b. Langerhans' cell histiocytosis*
- c. Leukaemia*
- d. Multiple myeloma ✓*
- e. Pituitary adenoma*

Part 2 examination

The Part 2 examination consists of a structured professional skills assessment, comprising 14 stations within a single circuit.

The assessment will test candidates' on the following domains:

- Applied clinical knowledge
- Patient communication
- Peer communication
- Information gathering
- Information imparting
- Diagnosis
- Management

Candidates are reminded that once the part 1 examination has been completed, the part 2 examination must be completed within a 5-year timeframe.

6. Training, education and preparation for the MFDS

The Dental Foundation Training Curriculum sets out the competencies (that is, the knowledge, skills and attributes) that dentists should acquire following two years' postgraduate experience.

It should be stressed that the MFDS assessment is open to, and will have value for, all dentists wishing to obtain a first-level postgraduate diploma, and is not restricted to recent graduates.

Preparatory Courses

Examination preparation courses will be developed by FDS Education to assist candidates with preparation for the MFDS. Please visit the FDS pages of the RCS England website for details and dates of courses <https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/education-and-exams/courses/>, or contact FDSEducation@rcseng.ac.uk.

Non UK-based candidates

MFDS Part 1 is delivered online using a secure exam delivery platform (Surpass). For more information, please visit [the Guidance for Remote Delivery of Dental Exams](#). Candidates should ensure they can meet the hardware requirements of the Surpass exam delivery system before applying.

MFDS Part 2 is delivered face-to-face.

Candidates who wish to attend the MFDS examination should ensure that they can access sufficient study support to satisfy the requirements of the foundation training curriculum.

7. Exam day arrangements

No electronic devices, including smartphones or smartwatches are permitted in to the MFDS examination. Candidates will be required to bring official photographic identification with them on the day (passport or driver's license).



8. Results & feedback

Results will be posted on the secure [RCS England website](#) and distributed by post. Unsuccessful Part 2 candidates will be given feedback on their performance by domain.

9. Candidates with special circumstances

Tailored examination and other assessment arrangements will be made for individual candidates with additional needs due to learning differences (such as dyslexia) or due to permanent or temporary disability through reasonable adjustments. These arrangements are intended to ensure that candidates are able to perform to the best of their ability and that they are not discriminated against because of learning differences or because of permanent or temporary disability.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to notify the College when they submit their application of any additional needs they have, the reason for them, and any reasonable adjustments that have been helpful in the past.

Applications for reasonable adjustments to meet additional needs are normally required to be supported by written evidence. For example, in the form of a medical report from their general medical practitioner for medical conditions, or an educational psychologist's report for a learning difference such as dyslexia.

10. Diploma and membership

The candidate, after having passed all parts of the examination Diploma in Membership of the Faculty of Dental Surgery will be invited to join the Faculty of Dental Surgery via application and payment of a membership fee. The annual membership fee entitles candidates to use the post nominal letters (MFDS RCS Eng) after their name.

11. Application Process

To apply for an examination candidates must complete the online booking form, found on the relevant exams page of our website. For more information on application opening and closing dates, please visit the [RCS England Website](#).

Note that all applications must be submitted by 5pm on the application closing date.

Following completion of the application form candidates must:

Email an original or an attested copy of your primary dental qualification within 10 working days of application to the RCS England. This should be emailed to DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk. Attestation can be completed by one of the following:

- The awarding body of the degree;
- Lawyer;
- Solicitor;
- Notary Public;
- UK GDC registrant;



We strongly advise that candidates **do not** post or courier their original documentation. We **do not** accept documentation via post or courier.

or

Add your UK GDC registration number to your RCS online account – this can be completed during or after your application.

Please do not apply online if you have any documentation missing or incomplete. It is expected that candidates will be ready to email documents as soon as they apply. Where an application is incomplete or supporting documents are not received within 10 working days, your application for an examination place may be rejected.

Candidates without an RCS online account will be required to create an account as part of the application process. You must include your current contact address, a working email address and at least one contact telephone number. If you already have an RCS online account, please ensure your details are up to date before applying.

The name you give on your application must be the name on your passport and degree certificate. If it is not, you will be required to provide sufficient attested evidence of your name change. For further advice on what documentation is suitable, please contact the exams department directly.

If you have applied for an MJDF or MFDS examination with the Royal College of Surgeons of England previously you do not need to send in your primary dental qualification.

Please ensure that your details are correct and accurately completed online before you submit your documents.

10. Contacting the Royal College of Surgeons

For any queries regarding the application process or to submit your documentation please contact the Examinations department at:

Examinations Department
The Royal College of Surgeons of England
38-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London WC2A 3PE

Telephone: +44 (0)207 405 3474 (Option 3)

Email: mfdsexam@rcseng.ac.uk

Website: www.rcseng.ac.uk