

# License in Dental Surgery (LDS) Examination

## Candidate Guidance

(Applicable to any LDS Exam being sat after May 2026)

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# Introduction

The General Dental Council requires all education and assessment providers to transition their assessments to align with its new *Safe Practitioner Framework*.

In agreement with the GDC, Licence in Dental Surgery will therefore transition from assessing the learning outcomes set out in *Preparing for Practice* to assessing the learning outcomes in the *Safe Practitioner Framework* from **May 2026**.

Please note; if you are due to sit any component of the LDS examination prior to May 2026, you should refer to the current Candidate Guidance material available on the LDS website.

This document is designed to assist candidates who are preparing to take the LDS examination. It is mandatory to read this document thoroughly before starting your LDS journey. This document should be read alongside the LDS Regulations.

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they understand both the Candidate Guidance and Examination Regulations before applying for the LDS examination.

The LDS examination is a qualification that, once successfully completed, allows dentists who qualified outside of the UK and EEA to apply for registration with the General Dental Council (GDC), and so practise unsupervised in the UK.

In addition to GDC registration, the LDS qualification shows that you are licensed by the Faculty of Dental Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. This gives you the status associated with the Royal College and its reputation for high standards. Once you are a licentiate of this College, you are also eligible to become an Enrolled Member if you so wish.

# LDS Part 1 Application Guidance

## Guidance on completing the LDS Part 1 online application

*Applicants for the LDS Part 1 examination are advised to read this guidance carefully before making your online application.*

Please ensure that when you apply for your examination online (via the LDS examination webpages on the RCS England website), you have all the required supporting documentation ready to send to the College as these documents must be completed and submitted in full within one week of your online application.

Please do not apply online if you have any documentation missing or incomplete. It is expected that candidates will be ready to email copies of their documentation as soon as they apply online. Where supporting documents are not received within a week of applying, your place on the examination will be withdrawn and a refund of your examination fee, less a 20% admin charge, will be return to you.

The name you give on your online application must be the name on your passport and degree certificate. If it is not, please see the section on Name Change in this guidance. You may not put your title as Doctor (dr) unless you hold a doctorate in addition to your primary dental qualification.

You must include your most up to date contact address, a working email address and at least one contact telephone number.

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

Please note that when applying for the LDS Part 1 online you will be required to enter your payment for the examination fee at the time of booking.

## Documents to be submitted when applying for your exam

All documentation should be scanned and emailed to [DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk) within one week of your application. If you do not have your supporting eligibility documents ready to send within one week of your application, please do not apply as you may forfeit your exam fee.

Postal copies **will not** be accepted so please DO NOT send any documents by post.

## Final degree certificate

We require a scanned original copy of your final degree certificate. A provisional certificate will not be accepted in the place of a final degree certificate or diploma. If you are not able to provide a final degree certificate please contact the office prior to application.

## NARIC certificate

If your final degree certificate is not from a UK dental school or EEA university or licensing body accepted by the GDC for purposes of full registration in the UK, evidence of your primary dental qualification must be supported by a NARIC Statement of Comparability. For information on how to obtain this, see <http://www.ecctis.co.uk/naric/Individuals>. A NARIC certificate is required unless temporary registration with the GDC is current and can be verified.

Please note, for NARIC certificates, it can take time to obtain these so ensure you have your NARIC prior to applying online.

## Passport

You must send in a scanned copy of your current, valid passport. The copy must show your photograph and the expiry date of your passport. Only passports that have not expired will be accepted. If you are not able to provide a copy of your passport, please contact the examinations office prior to application.

Translations – any required documents which are not in English must be accompanied by an exact translation. You must send us a certified copy of the original document and correctly certified translation.

The translation must either be a certified translation by a qualified translator or for degree certificates and diplomas, an official translation by the relevant university with the official stamp of the university and the signature and name of the dean.

## Name Change

If the name on your application differs from that on any other documents which you send once you have applied online, you must give us evidence of the legality of your name change, for example a marriage certificate. You can provide a copy verified by an appropriate individual. The individual must verify and sign the application form stating that a photocopy you have supplied is a copy of the original or you can provide a copy.

## Resits

You do not need to provide original attested documents if you have already sat the LDS Part 1 examination before.

## Scanned original copies

All supporting documents should be sent by email as scanned original copies. We do not accept posted copies. All original documentation should be scanned and emailed to [DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk).

## Contacting the Royal College

For any queries regarding the application process please contact the Examinations and Assessment Department at:

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

Telephone: +44 (0)207 405 3474 (option 3)  
Email: [dentalexams@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:dentalexams@rcseng.ac.uk)  
Website [www.rcseng.ac.uk](http://www.rcseng.ac.uk)

# LDS Part 1 – online written examination (Surpass & Proctor Exam Systems)

## Introduction

The LDS Part 1 examination comprises of two 3-hour papers. Each paper consists of 150 single-best answer (SBA) questions and is delivered online via the use of the Surpass examination software which candidates download in advance to their own personal computer or laptop. The information below provides full guidance on the hardware requirements, what to expect prior to and on the exam day plus what is and what is not permitted during the exam.

## Pre-examination Guidance and Set-up

Before you begin the exam process, please read the minimum system requirements very carefully to ensure that the software is compatible with the devices that you are using to sit the examination. Any issues must be identified prior to the examination day so that you may find an alternative device if necessary.

For full information relating to Remote Online Dental Exams delivered via Surpass please go to the information and videos located on the Surpass candidate guidance website [here](#). This information includes:

- How to carry out your system check
- How to set up your exam
- Electronic system requirements (laptop/desktop computer, mobile phone)

For a demonstration of the functionality of Surpass please watch the video [here](#).

***\*\*It is essential that you read and watch the information in the links above carefully to ensure you do not encounter problems on the exam day\*\****

These documents **are essential** in order to familiarise yourself with the online platform through which the exam will be delivered. They will explain how you can prepare for the online exam; help reduce any possible confusion on the exam day and explain what behaviour and actions are, and are not, permitted during the exam.

***We recommend that you read and watch the guidance in the blue links above multiple times in advance of the examination day to be fully prepared.***



## System Check

The email you receive approximately 5 days before the exam will request that you carry out a system check. Instructions will be provided how to do this.

The System Check must be completed as soon as possible once you receive the System Check email.

## Exam Day

- i. A day or two prior to your examination date, you will receive another email providing you with a link to your examination.
- ii. Keep this email safe and please **check your Junk Folder** regularly if you do not receive this email in advance of the exam day.
- iii. On the exam day you will be required to have two applications open during the exam:
  - ProctorExam – which monitors you through your mobile phone and webcam;
  - Surpass exam system – where you will answer your examination questions.
- iv. On the exam day your **mobile phone will be used as a secondary device to record your examination room. Please check the System Requirements section for the permitted types of mobile phones that can be used.**

If you are experiencing an unstable internet connection which is disconnecting your phone or webcam, please try to:

  - sit as close to the router as possible or, even better, use a wired connection.
  - make sure your mobile phone is **plugged in to the power and set to airplane mode.**

**IMPORTANT:** It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they are sitting the exam in a location with a strong and stable internet connection. A weak or intermittent internet connection will result in loss of video recordings and RCS England are unable to issue results to candidates who have not been monitored through their video recordings during the exam.
- v. The **exam start time** will be provided to you within your confirmation email that was sent approximately 4 weeks in advance of the exam date. It is the time you should begin the examination. However, please note:
- vi. You should aim to be ready for your exam 15 minutes before the exam start time. However, the exam link will not go live until the exam start time;
- vii. The assessment time will only begin once you have completed your registration and camera set-up. The set-up time is NOT part of your assessment, so you do not need to rush through the registration and camera-set-up process;
- viii. Your assessment time will only begin once you have registered and set-up your camera and have pressed the blue 'Start Exam' button;

- ix. Once you have pressed 'Start Exam' button you will be reminded to keep the web page open at all times during the examination;
- x. You will then be brought to a page where you are provided with an **8-character keycode and 'Launch Test' link**;
- xi. You will then need to press 'Launch Test' to open the Surpass Exam System;
- xii. Enter the 8-character keycode to access the Exam and click 'OK';
- xiii. You will then be asked to confirm your details are correct – click 'Confirm';
- xiv. Then, accept the 'RCS England Code of Conduct Terms' and click 'Continue';
- xv. You'll then be required to read the Candidate Instructions/Introductory page;
- xvi. Your assessment time will only begin once Question 1 has appeared on your screen after pressing **'Start the Test'**;
- xvii. Regardless of the start time specified in your confirmation email, if you have been through the registration and camera set-up process, and have pressed 'Start the Test', that is when your assessment time will begin, even if you are a few minutes later than the specified start time;
- xviii. There is no official announcement that your examination will begin;
- xix. Please ensure you have been to the toilet before commencing your registration process. Once the exam has begun you are not permitted to leave the examination screen.

**Please note** you should make every effort to begin at the specified start time. The exam is only active within Surpass Exam System for a limited amount of time. Any candidate who does not access the exam at the specified start time may no longer have access to the exam.

**Before you press the blue 'Start the Test' button** please ensure you have:

- Been to the toilet;
- Your exam room is well lit;
- You are alone and will not be disturbed.

## During the Examination and Halfway Break

The examination is split into two papers. Each paper has two sections (four sections in total).

***All questions are in the 'single best answer' format.***

Please check your confirmation email for the start time of Paper A and Paper B.

This will be provided in your confirmation email sent approximately 4 weeks before the exam. The start time will be provided as UK time and you will need to factor this in if you are sitting the exam in a location outside of the United Kingdom.

Paper A	Time	No. of questions
Section 1	90 minutes	75 Single best answer
10-minute break		
Section 2	90 minutes	75 Single Best Answer

Paper B	Time	No. of questions
Section 1	90 minutes	75 Single best answer
10-minute break		
Section 2	90 minutes	75 Single Best Answer

- i. Candidates will receive two emails, one with a link to Launch Exam for Paper A and one for Paper B. Please ensure you are using the correct email/link for each of the exam papers.
- ii. Candidates are advised that each paper is divided into two sections to enable a ten-minute comfort break at the midpoint of each paper. **Candidates should note that they will not be able to return to any questions in the first part of the paper after this break; all flagged questions in the first part of the paper should be completed before the midpoint break.**
- iii. **Do not press 'Finish Test'** during the scheduled break for each paper.
- iv. On the left-hand side of your screen you will see two vertical bars that increasingly turn blue as you progress through the exam papers. The top bar is Section 1 and second bar Section 2. This helps you visually gauge, at a glance, how you are progressing through the exam papers.
- v. In addition, there is a **timer at the top of the screen**, which specifies the amount of time remaining to complete each section.
- vi. The timer at the top of the screen will give you a **reminder that there are 5 minutes remaining for all sections.**
- vii. Once you have completed all questions in Section 1, you can choose to 'Finish Section'. If you have pressed 'Finish Section' by mistake you will have another TWO opportunities to confirm you wish to finish or continue with the exam paper.
- viii. If you reach the maximum amount of time permitted for each paper, you will be REQUIRED to 'Finish Section'.
- ix. Once you have finished the section you will:

- a. NOT be able to return to any questions within that paper.
- b. See a page stating the amount of 'Scheduled break time you have remaining'. This time will countdown from 10 minutes
- c. See a 'Resume Test' button. If you do not wish to use some or all of your 10-minute break time you can choose to 'Resume Test' by clicking the button with the 'Play' Arrow.

## Finish Exam

- i. Once you have completed all questions in Section 2 and are happy to finish you can press 'Finish Test' in the top right-hand corner of the screen.
- ii. You will then be prompted twice more to confirm that you do wish to finish the exam.
- iii. If you reach the maximum time permitted you will be informed that the allocated time for the exam is complete.
- iv. Your answers are automatically uploaded as you take the exam.
- v. Once the exam is complete, you are required to press 'Finish Test' one further time to log out of the Surpass Exam system.

## Dos and Don'ts – Exam Infringements

It is important you know what behaviour IS and IS NOT permitted during your examination. It is your responsibility to be aware of this and to ensure you adhere to the exam regulations. Failure to do so may result in your examination result being withheld.

*Please note: the **use of pen and paper during the exam is not permitted** and may be deemed as misconduct.*

Do	DO NOT
Read all the Exams Guidance provided	Leave the view of the examination screen (unless it is during the scheduled break)
<b>Go to toilet before exam and during midpoint break ONLY</b>	<b>Wear ear/headphones – even if they are for noise cancelling purposes</b>
Have photo ID (passport or driver's license)	Use pen and paper (unless this has been agreed by the College in advance)
<b>Remain in the centre of your webcam screen</b>	<b>Use unauthorised material (textbooks, internet search engines etc.)</b>
-	Have other people in the room
-	<b>Read the questions aloud</b>

-	Use a second screen or device
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Full guidance on what is and is not permitted can be found at our [Guidance for the remote delivery of Dental Exams](#) webpage, under the instructional video.

To aid preparation for the exam, candidates are advised to read the [LDS Syllabus, Learning Outcomes and Suggested Reading document](#).

## Support

1. Technical Support (accessing the exam) – Please use the Chat function on the ProctorExam webpage.
2. All other queries should be emailed to [dentalsupport@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:dentalsupport@rcseng.ac.uk). This email inbox will be monitored before and throughout the exam.

## Feedback

Feedback will be provided to all candidates and will indicate the score achieved, the maximum possible score and the pass mark for both papers. No further feedback is available.

# LDS Part 2 – Application Guidance

## Guidance on completing the LDS Part 2 online application

*Please read this information carefully before completing the online application form.*

Please ensure that when you apply for your examination online (via the LDS examination webpages on the RCS England website), you have all the required supporting documentation ready to send to the College as these documents must be complete and submitted at the time of your online application.

All documentation should be scanned and emailed to [DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk). **We do not accept posted documents** so please DO NOT send any documents by post.

Please do not apply online if you have any documentation missing or incomplete. It is expected that candidates will be ready to email their supporting documents as soon as they apply online. Where supporting documents are not received, your place on the examination will be withdrawn and a refund of your examination fee, less a 20% admin charge, will be return to you.

The name you give on your application must be the name on your passport and degree certificate. If it is not, please see the section on 'Name Change' below.

You must include your contact address, a working email address, and at least one contact telephone number.

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

Please note that when applying for the LDS Part 2 online you will be required to enter your payment of the examination fee at the time of booking.

## Documents to be submitted at same time as your online LDS Part 2 application

All documentation should be scanned and emailed to [DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk). Postal copies **will not** be accepted.

## Character Reference

Your character referee must sign the form after you have completed sections 1-4 and signed the form. The date the referee signs must not be earlier than the date you have signed. The referee must be a registered professional and must not be a relative.

## Clinical Experience Reference

You must provide one or more references to support the fact that you have completed at least 1600 hours of clinical experience prior to applying to sit the LDS examination. You must ask one or more referees to complete the form to verify that you have this experience.

The referee(s) should provide details of your clinical experience. They should use the application form and may continue on additional sheets if necessary.

If you are submitting evidence from your primary dental qualification as evidence of prior clinical experience, the dean of the dental school must be the referee.

If you are submitting evidence from post-qualification work experience, the person verifying the reference must be, or must have been, registered as a professional with the regulatory body in the country where you worked or studied and must be, or have been, your employer.

If you are submitting evidence of experience gained in the UK under temporary registration the referee must be the person who employed you for the purposes of temporary registration.

You may require several references to support the fact that you have completed at least 1600 hours of clinical experience. If this is the case, please print as many copies as you need of this part of the form and send each referee a separate copy.

If you are unable to submit evidence of your clinical experience because you are a refugee or asylum seeker, please contact us to discuss alternative methods of verification.

## Certificate or Letter of Good Standing

This is a certificate or letter issued by the dental authority of the country in which you were last working, which states that you are legally entitled to practise dentistry in that country and that you have not been suspended, disqualified or prohibited from working as a dentist. This document cannot be more than three months old at the time of your application. The original certificate or letter must be submitted.

You must also send us a Certificate or Letter of Good Standing from the dental authority in the country in which you qualified if this is different to the country in which you last worked or are currently working.

If you cannot obtain this document, an affidavit or affirmation witnessed by a solicitor or other legal professional can be submitted in its place. This is only acceptable if it is not possible to obtain a

Certificate or Letter of Good Standing. You must be prepared to swear under oath in the affidavit/affirmation that you cannot obtain the Certificate or Letter of Good Standing despite having tried to. In the affidavit/affirmation you must state that you have the right to practise dentistry in the relevant country and that you have not been suspended or prohibited from practising as a dentist. Reasons for being unable to obtain a Letter or Certificate of Good Standing must be included. The RCSEng may also seek confirmation from the relevant authority.

A registration certificate or an annual practising certificate or a reference from your university will not be accepted as a Letter or Certificate of Good Standing. The Letter or Certificate of Good Standing **must** be issued by the registration authority for dentists in that country.

## Language Test

You are required to submit an International English Testing System (IELTS) Test Report Form showing a minimum overall score of 7.0, with no individual sections lower than 6.5. The IELTS Test Report Form must be no more than two years old when you submit your application.

You must provide the original certificate for the IELTS Test Report Form.

Alternatively, you can submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) test result. The required TOEFL scores are below:

- Overall score minimum: 94 – 101
- Reading score minimum: 19 -23
- Listening score minimum: 20 – 23
- Speaking score minimum: 20 – 22
- Writing score minimum: 24 – 26

Exemptions only apply to those applicants who:

- have a recent primary dental qualification that has been taught and examined entirely in English; or
- have qualified in a country where English is the first language; or
- have recent and continuous experience of practising in a country where English is the first language.

By ‘recent’ we require evidence of English language competence that is less than two years old at point of submission. When we refer to a country where English is the first language, we refer to any country on the UK governments list that exempt applicants from proving knowledge of English when applying for British citizenship ([www.gov.uk/english-language/exemptions](http://www.gov.uk/english-language/exemptions)).

## Name Change

If the name on the LDS examination application differs from that on any of the other documents which you are sending, you must give us evidence of the legality of your name change, for example a marriage certificate. You can provide a copy verified by an “appropriate individual”. The individual must verify and sign the application form stating that a photocopy you have supplied is a copy of the original or you can provide a certified copy.



## Translations

Any required documents, which are not in English must be accompanied by an exact translation. You must send us (by email) a scanned copy of the original document and the correctly certified translation.

The translation must be certified translation by a qualified translator. Degree certificates and diplomas may be an official translation by the relevant university with the official stamp of the university and the signature and name of the dean.

## Scanned original copies

All supporting documents should be sent by email as scanned original copies. We do not accept posted copies. All documentation should be scanned and emailed to [DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:DentalEligibility@rcseng.ac.uk).

## Contacting the Royal College of Surgeons of England

For any queries regarding the application process please contact the Examinations and Assessment Department at:

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

Email: [dentalexams@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:dentalexams@rcseng.ac.uk)

Website [www.rcseng.ac.uk](http://www.rcseng.ac.uk)

If applying for a reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, please refer to the information included at the bottom of this document.

# LDS Part 2 Examination Guidance

## Who is this examination for?

The LDS 2 examination is the second of three parts of the Licence in Dental Surgery (LDS). To sit the Part 2, you must have already passed the LDS Part 1. If you pass the Part 2, you will be eligible to sit the Part 3.

## What is the structure of the examination?

The Part 2 will continue to have a 2-part structure made up of the following elements:

- A 12-station OSCE assessing communication and clinical skills
- A 6-case Structured Clinical Reasoning examination assessing diagnosis and treatment planning.

The Structured Clinical Reasoning examination will be assessed through direct candidate / examiner interaction. This will replace the four patient-facing unseen cases that are currently assessed through examiner observation.

This structure separates out the assessment aims into two broad categories

- those skills that are best assessed observing candidates in a patient-facing scenario
- those that are best assessed through a 1-1 interaction with an examiner.

The former will be assessed in the OSCE, with the latter being assessed in the new Structured Clinical Reasoning Case exam.

This delineation will allow the Part 2 to cover a wider range of skills and learning outcomes, particularly candidates' reasoning skills, particularly the domains of 'Professionalism' and 'Self-management'.

It is made up of two components:

- a 12-station Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) and
- a 6 x 20-minute Structured Clinical Reasoning Cases (SCR) examination.
- 

You usually sit the OSCE and Unseen Case examinations on two separate days, sometimes with a 'rest day' in between.

To progress to Part 3 of the LDS, both Part 2 components must be passed at one sitting. If you fail either of the components, you must resit both.

Component	Format	Weighting	Timing
OSCE	12 x 7-minute OSCE stations	Pass / fail	1 hour 36 mins
SCR	6 x 20-minute Structured Clinical Reasoning Cases (SCR)	Pass / fail	2 hours

## What can I be expected to be tested on in the LDS Part 2?

### OSCE

The OSCE assesses your abilities in the following areas:

#### **‘Communication and Clinical Skills’**

- Applied clinical knowledge
- Clinical skills (radiograph interpretation, prescription writing, obtaining consent etc)
- Patient communication
- History taking
- Diagnosis
- Spoken medical emergency response
- Principles of safe practice

### SCR

The SCR examination assesses candidates’ abilities in the following areas:

#### **‘Diagnosis & treatment planning’**

- Selecting and interpreting investigations
- Diagnosis
- Treatment planning
- Clinical reasoning and judgement
- Peer communication
- Demonstration of knowledge and understanding of:
  - Oral health/population-based healthcare
  - Ethical and legal principles
  - Principles of safe practice

Both examinations assess your knowledge, skills and behaviours through the use of simulated clinical scenarios. This will usually involve interacting with a patient, or the parent / guardian / carer of a patient, who will be played by a role-player.

The standard expected is of a just-competent UK dental graduate, who meets the standard required by the GDC’s *Safe Practitioner Framework*.

The LDS blueprint document shows which learning outcomes you can be assessed on in each part of the Part 2 examination. The examination aims to assess a wide range of these outcomes, but may not assess every outcome.

Candidates are advised to read the [GDCs Safe Practitioner Framework](#)

## What does the Part 2 LDS examination look like on the day?

The OSCE and SCR element of the Part 2 examination take place over two separate days. These days will either be consecutive or there may be a rest day in between. The OSCE will take place on the first day, with the SCR on the second day.

You will be asked to arrive at the venue approximately one hour before the start of the examination on each day, which will either be in the morning or the afternoon.

You will be given a briefing by one of the examiners before the examination begins.

The examination takes place in the RCS England examination suite or other suitable examination venue, which are usually custom-built for face-to-face clinical examinations. Each station or case takes place in a room with a door. A photo of the examination venue is below:

### OSCE

You will sit **12** 7-minute stations covering a range of different clinical scenarios. There will be a one-minute gap in between each station to allow you to move to the next station. College staff will guide you where you need to go. Instructions will be displayed outside and inside the station and will tell you what they need to do inside the station.

Each station comprises a series of questions/tasks, each of which is allocated marks with regard to its difficulty. The questions / tasks will assess a range and combination of the following skills:

#### **‘Communication and Clinical Skills’**

- Applied clinical knowledge
- Clinical skills (radiograph interpretation, prescription writing, obtaining consent etc)
- Patient communication
- History taking
- Diagnosis
- Spoken medical emergency response
- Principles of safe practice

Each station has been designed as an element of a clinical scenario. This may involve communicating with a patient, interpreting data, making a diagnosis, writing a prescription, taking a brief history etc.

A public address system will announce the timing and tell you when to start and finish stations and when half the time has elapsed.

At least one station will require you to respond to a medical emergency. You will not be required to carry out any practical emergency response but instead will be asked to explain what you would do in accordance with British Resuscitation Council guidelines.

Most stations will involve interacting with a role-player who will be simulating a patient or a parent / guardian / carer of a patient. If a station involves a child, you will be asked to interact with the parent, and the child will not be present. You should treat the role-players as if they are real-life patients. This will be testing your ability to:

- discuss treatment options

- obtain informed consent
- give oral health education advice
- interpret radiographic evidence
- prioritise treatment
- take a history/histories
- give advice.

In most stations, the examiner will be observing you and will not interact with you. If an examiner does interact with a candidate, this will be to ask pre-set questions. Candidates will not be viva-ed by examiners.

All materials and paperwork required for each station will be provided in the station itself.

The mark scheme for each station is unique, with marks awarded for completing actions and tasks. No marks are deducted for failure to complete actions and tasks. Role players may be able to allocate some of the marks for communication skills and you may be asked specific questions by the role player in their role as the patient.

In addition to the 12 stations, there will be between 2 and 4 'rest stations'. These stations will be evenly spread throughout the circuit, and will give you an opportunity to have a short break, go to the toilet and have a drink of water. Other than to go to the toilet (you will be accompanied) you are not allowed to leave the circuit or communicate with anyone else during the rest station.

### Structured Clinical Reasoning (SCR) Cases

You will sit six 20-minute SCR cases. Each case has time for preparation before a discussion with the examiner.

#### 1. Preparation phase (10 minutes):

In the preparation phase, you will have 10 minutes to make notes on a particular case and will be provided with tasks and material to study.

#### 2. Examiner Discussion phase (10 minutes):

In the examiner discussion, you will have a 10-minute structured clinical discussion with the examiner on the case you have just studied in the preparation phase. You will be able to take any notes made during the preparation phase with you into the examiner discussion.

## How can I prepare for the Part 2 examination?

Candidates are expected to show a full range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours as set out by the outcomes for dentists in the GDC's *Safe Practitioner Framework*. You should make sure you are familiar with the specific outcomes that are assessed in the Part 2 examination, as shown by the LDS Blueprint.

The Part 2 examination aims to be a simulation of the non-practical elements of clinical practice. Here are some suggestions about how you might go about preparing for the Part 2

- You may choose to continue practising dentistry where you hold a valid registration.
- Some candidates find preparatory courses useful, but we are not able to recommend any specific courses
- Candidates have also been known to observe clinical practitioners to learn and adopt contemporary practices within the UK
- Practise communication, history taking, diagnosis and clinical decision-making skills with peers and colleagues.
- For the OSCE examination, you may wish to practise describing how you would respond to a medical emergency in accordance with British Resuscitation Council guidelines.

Above all, you should practise communicating in a comprehensive, systematic way, avoiding jargon.

You will need to make sure you are familiar with UK clinical guidelines and standards to inform your clinical choices and practices. You will be required to have knowledge of UK regulations and clinical guidelines relevant to safe clinical practice. The LDS Reading List, available on our website, will be helpful in doing this.

## What should I wear on the day of the examination?

Candidates should either wear clinical attire or other professional dress. If PPE is required (facemasks, gloves and aprons), it will be provided.

Candidates do not need to bring anything with them to the examination.

## When will I receive my results notification?

Results will usually be released **four weeks** after the examination. This is so that the results determination process can be completed and quality assured.

## What feedback will I receive?

As well as an overall pass / fail result, you will be notified whether you met the standard or did not meet the standard in each of the 12 OSCE stations and each of the 6 SCR cases. The results letter will also show you which learning outcomes were assessed in each OSCE station and SCR case. No further feedback is provided.

# LDS Part 3 Exam (Practical Clinical Skills) – Application Guidance

Due to the documentation candidates are required to submit when applying for LDS Part 1 and LDS Part 2, no further documentary evidence is required when applying for LDS Part 3.

If applying for a reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, please refer to the information included in section 8 below.

## LDS Part 3 Exam (Practical Clinical Skills) – Examination Guidance

### Who is this examination for?

The LDS Part 3 Practical Clinical Skills (PCS) examination is the final part of the Licence in Dental Surgery (LDS).

In order to sit the Part 3, you must have already passed the LDS Part 1 and LDS Part 2.

The LDS is an examination that, once passed, allows dentists who qualified outside of the UK and EEA to apply for registration with the GDC, and so practise unsupervised in the UK.

In addition to GDC registration, the LDS qualification shows that you are licensed by the Faculty of Dental Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. This gives you the status associated with the Royal College and its reputation for high standards. Once you are a licentiate of this College, you are also eligible to become an Enrolled Member if you so wish.

### What is the structure of the examination?

The LDS Part 3 is a practical clinical skills (PCS) examination that assesses your practical operative skills in a controlled, simulated context, including on a dental manikin.

The examination lasts **180 minutes** and is made up of **three cases**, as follows:

Case	Elements	Weighting	Timing
A	Adult scenario-based restorative procedure on a dental manikin	40%	70 minutes
B	Adult / paediatric scenario-based procedure on a dental manikin	40%	70 minutes
C	Allied dental / medical planning and management	20%	40 minutes

Each of the three case scenarios may include multiple clinical tasks ('exercises') relating to the scenario, all of which are compulsory.

Cases A and B will usually consist of two exercises each.

Case C will usually consist of 4 or 5 exercises.

## What can I be expected to be tested on in the LDS Part 3?

The Part 3 PCS examination is designed to assess a combination of clinical skills that would be needed to manage one treatment session for three dental patients. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Practical dental procedures including management of complications that may be of a medical or dental nature. The practical dental procedures may include, but are not limited to: tooth preparation for indirect restorations, provisional restorations, direct restorations, endodontic procedures, minimally invasive techniques, clinical procedures during removable partial denture provision, non-surgical periodontal treatment, minor oral surgery procedures etc.
- Interpretation of data
- Clinical judgement and decision making
- Communication with laboratories
- Professionalism
- Health and safety, including occupational health
- Manual dexterity

The Part 3 PCS examination is a simulated clinical examination, not a mechanistic test of practical ability. The test requires you to make clinical decisions based on the information provided, then carry out appropriate clinical procedures.

In addition, all rules and regulations applicable to a live patient being treated in a dental surgery apply. Therefore, you must pay attention to health and safety, infection control, working posture, etc. These areas are assessed in addition to the practical exercises that must be completed.

The standard expected is of a just-competent UK dental graduate, who meets the standard required by the GDC's *Preparing for practice* learning outcomes for dentists.

The LDS Blueprint shows which learning outcomes candidates can be assessed on in the Part 3 PCS examination. The examination aims to assess a range of these outcomes but may not assess every outcome.

Candidates are advised to read the [LDS Syllabus, Learning Outcomes and Suggested Reading document](#).



## What does the Part 3 PCS examination look like on the day?

The examination takes place at the Clinical Skills Laboratory at the QMUL Institute of Dentistry in London. You will be sent full directions and instructions on where to register once your place on the examination has been confirmed.

You will be asked to arrive at the venue approximately one hour before the start of the examination. You will be sent a candidate briefing ahead of the exam day, and one of the examiners will go through this with all candidates before the examination begins.

The examination takes place in a clinical skills laboratory like the one in the photograph below. You will have up to 20 minutes before the examination begins to familiarise yourself with the equipment and setup of the laboratory.



The examination will take place in a laboratory like this one

The examination lasts a total of 180 minutes. You will be provided with a booklet that provides all the information required to complete the cases. You will have 10 minutes to read the booklet before the examination begins.

You will have 140 minutes to complete Cases A and B, and your work (artefacts) will be marked by expert examiners after the examination has ended. You may use the time allotted for Case A and Case B flexibly i.e., it is up to you how to manage your time between the cases and their exercises.

Case C is observed and marked by an expert examiner as you are carrying out the tasks. It lasts 40 minutes and you will either complete it before or after attempting Cases A and B. You will be told on the morning of the examination whether you will sit Case C before or after Cases A and B.

You will not be able to go back to Cases A/B once the 140 allocated minutes have elapsed; likewise, you will not be able to go back to Case C once the 40 allocated minutes have elapsed.

An example of the examination timetable is below:

Time	Candidates 1-15	Candidates 16-30
08:30	Familiarisation with dental manikin station	Familiarisation with dental manikin station
08:50	Read candidate booklet and tasks	Read candidate booklet and tasks
09:00	Cases A and B (140 mins)	Case C (Observed, 40 mins / 4-5 exercises)
09:40		Cases A and B (140 mins)
11:20	Case C (Observed, 40 mins / 4-5 exercises)	
12:00	End of examination	End of examination

## What materials will be available for the examination?

All instruments and materials required for the PCS examination will be provided for you. You will not be able to bring your own instruments or materials, and you will not be able to request supplementary instruments in addition to those provided. This is to ensure that all candidates complete the examination using the same equipment and materials.

Instruments provided may include, but are not limited to the following. You should make sure that you are familiar with these.

- A selection of dental instruments
- A restorative kit including slow and fast hand pieces
- A selection of burs appropriate for the task e.g. diamond and steel burs of suitable sizes and shapes both fast and slow
- A selection of endodontic instruments and materials
- Impression materials, e.g. silicones (light, medium, heavy body and putty)
- Impression trays and adhesives
- Temporary crown fabrication materials
- Curing light
- Rubber dam kit
- Waxes
- Writing utensils.
- 

The examination will be completed in examination conditions – that is, candidates are not able to talk or discuss their work with any other candidates.

You will not receive any results or feedback on the day of the examination itself (see below – ‘When will I receive my results notification?’)

## How can I prepare for the Part 3 PCS examination?

The part 3 PCS examination aims to be a simulation of clinical practice. You may choose to continue practising clinical dentistry where you hold a valid registration. Some candidates find preparatory

courses useful. Candidates have also been known to observe clinical practitioners to learn and adopt contemporary practices within the UK.

You will need to make sure you are familiar with UK clinical guidelines and standards to inform your clinical choices and practices. You will be required to have knowledge of UK regulations and clinical guidelines relevant to safe clinical practice.

Candidates are advised to read the [LDS Syllabus, Learning Outcomes and Suggested Reading document](#).

## What should I wear on the day of the examination?

You should wear **clinical attire**.

You should bring your own safety goggles and magnification devices if required.

PPE (facemasks, gloves and aprons) will be provided, and you do not need to bring these with you.

## When will I receive my results notification?

Results will be released **approximately four weeks** after the examination.

This is so that we can carry out and quality assure the results determination processes thoroughly.

## What feedback will I receive?

As well as an overall pass / fail result, you will be informed whether you met the passing standard required for each of the three cases.

The results letter will also show you which learning outcomes were assessed in each case.

No further feedback is provided.

## What happens after passing LDS Part 3?

Once you have successfully completed LDS Part 3, you will be contacted by RCS Examinations staff in order to:

1. Pay the completion fee (£230)
2. Provide a Basic Life Support (BLS) certificate (if not provided already) from a recognised centre in the UK.

Once the two requirements above have been met, your details will be sent to:

1. the General Dental Council (GDC) to confirm that you have been successful in the LDS Examination and are eligible for registration. Please note, this process can take several weeks.
2. the Membership and Events teams at RCS England to produce your Diploma Certificate and invite you to a Diplomates Ceremony. Again, the process of producing certificates and arranging the Diplomates ceremony can take several months. If you are unable to attend the Diplomates Ceremony, your certificate will be posted to you.

# Applying for a Reasonable Adjustment or Access Arrangement

Candidates wishing to apply for a reasonable adjustment or access arrangement should do so at the point of applying and paying for their exam or immediately at the point of diagnosis, if this comes after the application date. RCS England may not be able to accommodate a reasonable adjustment or access request if there is insufficient time between receiving the medical documentation and the examination date.

All reasonable adjustments or access requests must be accompanied by supporting medical documentation and include information relating to the specific adjustment or arrangement being requested.

A reasonable adjustment for a particular person may be unique and how reasonable the adjustment is will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled candidate. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment. RCS England will consider any request for a reasonable adjustment on a case-by-case basis. The format of the examination will also have a bearing on whether a requested reasonable adjustment is permissible. The competence level of the examination cannot be altered.

The process is as follows:

- a. Candidates wishing to apply for special consideration must notify the examinations department via email to [dentalexams@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:dentalexams@rcseng.ac.uk) upon application or as soon as possible following the commencement of the disability e.g. sudden accident/illness.
- b. All requests must be accompanied by scanned original medical documentation. In the case of dyslexia, a full Educational Psychologist report is required.
- c. The submission of a reasonable adjustment or access request is required for each examination and supporting evidence is required for each exam application.
- d. It is the candidate's responsibility to specify which of the recommended adjustments within their documentary evidence they require for decision by the College in each application.

This reasonable adjustment and access arrangement policy is also applicable all components of the LDS examination.

# Withdrawing from an examination

Candidates wishing to withdraw an application for admission to an examination must do so by email to [examwithdrawal@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:examwithdrawal@rcseng.ac.uk) and will be refunded the fee less a 20% administrative charge provided that the withdrawal request is received before the closing date of the examination.

Candidates who withdraw from the examination after the closing date, or who fail to attend the examination, for which the candidate has been accepted, will not normally be entitled to any refund of fee. The transfer of examination fees to future diets will only be granted under exceptional circumstances, such as on medical or compassionate grounds or other similar event beyond the candidate's control. Request for transfer of fees must be sent to [examwithdrawal@rcseng.ac.uk](mailto:examwithdrawal@rcseng.ac.uk) accompanied by a supporting letter from the candidate's general medical practitioner, postgraduate dental dean or a local tutor in order to be considered.

Requests for a refund under exceptional circumstances, such as medical or compassionate grounds or other similar events beyond the candidate's control must be accompanied by a supporting letter from the candidate's general medical practitioner, postgraduate dental dean or local tutor in order to be considered.

Failure to comply with the condition of the regulations, or failure to meet the eligibility requirements, will not be sufficient grounds for a refund.

The Examination and Assessment Office reserve the right to review admission to the examination on an individual basis in exceptional circumstances.