

Including:

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Dr D Felix  
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**By e-mail**

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## **Proposed Changes to the Window in which Specialty Trainees May Sit Surgical Royal College Examinations Undertaken as Part of the Training Programme**

The Joint Meeting of Dental Faculties has agreed to extend the window in which dental specialty trainees can sit surgical Royal College examinations as part of the training programme. Currently, trainees are not able to sit these examinations until six months before they are due to complete training. In future, they will be able to sit up to twelve months before they are due to complete training, provided they have the support of their Training Programme Director.

As there is no detriment to trainees and the expansion of the access window involves no change to the content or structure of the specialty Membership and Fellowship examinations, JMDF does not believe that there is any requirement to provide the usual period of notice for this change which can thus take effect immediately. However, JMDF appreciates that there are some practical considerations that will affect implementation.

1. College examination departments will need to amend examination regulations to allow applications from trainees within the extended window. They will endeavour to do this as quickly as possible.
2. Closing dates for autumn diets for some examinations are imminent or have passed and some examinations are fully booked already. Capacity for each examination is finite, and given the challenges posed by COVID-19, it is not possible to alter capacity at this time and priority will need to be given to those who have already had their examinations postponed due to COVID-19 and those closest to the end of training. Thus, potential applicants from the extended window may not be able to take advantage of the change for autumn 2020 examination diets.
3. Trainees within six and twelve months of completing training will not have had the opportunity to prepare to sit examinations this autumn. However, the effects of COVID-19 may have affected opportunities for preparation anyway

and trainees may not wish to take advantage of the extended window this autumn.

Given the practical constraints above, it may not be possible to accommodate the change immediately in all specialties but JMDF believes that the change is desirable for the future. Allowing trainees to sit examinations up to a year before they are due to complete training, should enable those who pass to spend the remaining time in training concentrating on specialist clinical activity. It will also allow trainees to make two attempts at passing the examination before there is any delay to their progression to satisfactory completion of training.

Colleges will ensure that from January 2021 trainees will be able to enter dental specialty examinations in all specialties up to twelve months before they are due to complete training.

I hope this is helpful

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fraser McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Yours sincerely  
Professor Fraser McDonald  
Chair, JMDF

*cc .Heads of Examination Departments.*