

## **Restructure of the Final FRCR Part A examination – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Why is the format of the Final FRCR Part A (CR2A) exam changing?**

In December 2015 the College announced its intention to revert from the CR2A six-module structure to a single exam, and this was approved by the GMC in spring 2016. As detailed in previous communications, the College had been concerned that the modular structure meant that UK trainees were effectively studying for their FRCR exams constantly for three or four years to the detriment of other aspects of training.

Under the new structure UK trainees will be expected to attempt the exam during ST3, after a minimum of two years of training.

#### **1.2 When is the new format exam being introduced?**

The first sitting of the single CR2A will run on **6 December 2017**, with the second exam running in June 2018 (exact date to be confirmed in autumn 17). Following this, the exam will continue to run every December and June, which is a departure from the current modular timings of March and September.

#### **1.3 How will the single exam be structured?**

- Two papers taken on the same day
- 120 single-best answer questions per paper
- Three hours per paper
- Each paper to cover a broad range of the core curriculum

#### **1.4 When will the last modular exam be offered?**

The last modular exam that all (eligible) candidates will be able to access will be in September 2017. Following that, UK trainees *may* be able to continue to attempt the modular exam if they meet the published criteria (see 2.1 below).

#### **1.5 Why have the timings of the sittings of the single exam changed from the modular exam?**

Our initial thinking had been to introduce the single exam at the same time in 2018 as the current modular offering. After consultation with trainees and heads of training we decided to change the times in the year when the new CR2A exam will be run in order to make it easier for trainees to have two attempts prior to their first opportunity to enter the Final FRCR Part B exam.

Introducing the single exam in December 2017 gives candidates who require it the opportunity of a second attempt at the exam later in their ST3 year. This model also fits more naturally into the ARCP cycle.

#### **1.6 Who will this change affect?**

UK trainees who started in ST1 in or around September 2015 were advised that they would not start down the modular path but would instead take the new single CR2A exam from its introduction. Trainees who, at that time, had already completed the First FRCR and had started on the modular pathway, were advised of a transition route that would be available to UK trainees that met certain criteria (see 2.1 below).

## **2 Candidates part-way through the modular exam in 2017**

### **2.1 What are the arrangements for candidates part-way through the modular exam?**

In May 2016 candidates who had already completed the First FRCR and had started down the modular pathway were advised that three automatic opportunities to take modular CR2A exams (September 2016 plus March & September 2017) would be available to them before the new format exam was introduced. The GMC-approved plan for how to accommodate candidates who had not acquired all six modules at the time of the changeover, which we have previously advised all candidates of, is:

- UK trainees who, at the point of transition (i.e. following the last standard modular exam in September 2017), had not passed at least three CR2A modules would be required to cease attempting the modular format and move to the single exam at its introduction
- UK trainees who, at the point of transition (i.e. following the last standard modular exam in September 2017), had passed at least three CR2A modules would be allowed to continue to complete the CR2A exam by acquiring the remaining modules over a maximum period of one year (two sittings).

### **2.2 I plan to continue attempting modular exams throughout 2017, but what if I have not achieved three modules following the September 2017 sitting?**

Trainees not meeting the eligibility criteria for staying on the modular route will need to transfer to the new exam. Candidates will receive their results from the September 2017 modular exam in time to apply for the first single exam in December 2017, if necessary.

### **2.3 I hope to meet the requirements for staying on the modular pathway in 2018. Can I have more information about that route?**

UK trainees eligible to continue attempting modular exams in 2018 will be assessed using past, modular papers that they have not attempted before. The questions will go through the usual quality and currency reviews prior to each sitting. The modular exams in 2018 may not be offered in all usual CR2A venues depending on numbers of candidates and further information about venues will be provided when the application window opens. Applications should be made in the usual way – online – and specific date and fee information will be published in December 2017.

### **2.4 If I am eligible to stay on the modular pathway in 2018, can I attempt both the exam formats during the transition period (i.e. the December 2017 single exam and all three CR2A exams in 2018)?**

Once a candidate moves onto the new format they may no longer return to the modular pathway, even if they were previously eligible for that route. After the September 2017 modular sitting results are issued, but prior to the first single exam's application closing date, candidates who have gained three or more modules will need to decide whether to continue on the modular pathway in 2018 or switch to the new exam.

### **2.5 What if I am eligible to stay on the modular pathway in 2018 but do not manage to attempt the exam for any reason, or don't pass any or all of the remaining modules?**

The last modular exam will run in September 2018. Following this, all candidates will need to move to the single exam. Candidates will receive their results from the September 2018 modular exam in time to apply for the December 2018 single exam, if necessary.

### **2.6 I am an overseas candidate part-way through the modular exam – what if I do not complete all modules by September 2017?**

As previously advised, overseas candidates who have not been able to complete the modular examination and attain CR2A in or before September 2017 will be required to attempt the single examination from December 2017.

### **3      Candidates moving to the new single exam**

#### **3.1      I plan to enter for the December 2017 single exam. How can I do that?**

Applications should be made in the usual way – online – and the application opening date for the exam is Friday 1 September 2017. Further information shows in the [dates and fees](#) document.

#### **3.2      How much will the single exam cost?**

The fee for the first single exam will be £330.

#### **3.3      Where will the new format exam take place?**

We anticipate offering the exam in existing CR2A locations – Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Hong Kong, London, Manchester and Singapore. Following feedback the College is also investigating a venue in Belfast. Specific address information will be published on our website a few weeks after the application closing date and in good time for the exam.

#### **3.4      What are the entry requirements?**

Candidates will be expected to have acquired 24 months in a formal clinical radiology training post before applying to sit the CR2A single exam.

#### **3.5      What are the single exam timings?**

As per 1.3, the exam will consist of two papers. Timings are likely to be as follows:

Paper one      9.15am – 12.15am

Paper two      1.30pm – 4.30pm

#### **3.5      Must both papers be passed?**

The exam is separated into two parts purely to allow candidates to take a break during the six hour assessment. The papers comprise one exam and there is no concept of passing one paper – the passing standard (pass mark) and results issued relate to the one single CR2A exam.

#### **3.6      Will the questions come from the same question bank as the modular exam?**

The questions will be selected from the current question bank, however the bank is continuously updated and improved.

#### **3.7      When can I expect my results from the first single exam?**

Candidates will be informed of the exact publication date on their exam timetable, however it is worth noting that the College will not be able to release results before the end of 2017 and that these are likely to be issued in early/mid January 2018.

#### **3.8      If I am successful at the first new format exam, can I move immediately on to the Final FRCR Part B?**

The Final FRCR Part B exam runs in April and October. However, successful candidates from the December 2017 single exam will only be permitted to enter the April 2018 Part B exam if they meet the published entry requirements i.e. upon completion of 34 months in a formal clinical radiology training post. Therefore we expect candidates who started training in or around August 2015, who did not start down the modular pathway, to enter Part B from the October 2018 exam. Candidates will receive their results from the June 2018 CR2A exam in time to apply for the October Part B exam.