

RCOphth Online Proctored Written Examinations



The ROYAL COLLEGE of
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations cover the online proctored delivery of the FRCOphth Part 1 and FRCOphth Part 2 Written examinations

This document is to inform you of what to expect with online examination delivery and the rules and regulations of the examination.

Adjustments:

If the RCOphth has already agreed to a reasonable adjustment under the Disabilities Act you must let us know immediately upon your enrolment for the examination.

IMPORTANT – Please read fully and carefully all of the following including the web-links:

Please see the following document and video links which detail the examination process along with the infrastructure and hardware requirements.

Online Invigilation Candidate Quick Guide

<https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Online-Invigilation-Candidate-Quick-Guide.pdf>

How to prepare for your Exam - Video link

<https://youtu.be/xsi0an49ISM>

Online Proctored Exam RCOphth Privacy Policy

<https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/RCOphth-OPE-Privacy-Policy-FINAL.pdf>

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the process and system requirements as soon as possible to ensure that all processes work reliably.

System Testing

One week prior to the examination, you will receive an e-mail from exams@rcophth.ac.uk with a link to complete a computer system check, as well as to re-iterate the information from this confirmation e-mail. The system check link will ensure a candidate's audio and video work properly, as well as making sure that their computer is suitable to run the software. **If you do not appear to have received the e-mail please check your "junk folder".**

72 hours before the examination, candidates will be sent another email with the links for launching the exam. These links will not activate until the start of the actual examination. The keycodes to start the exam when then be displayed to the candidate when they are just about to start the exam.

PLEASE NOTE: YOU DO NOT NEED TO E-MAIL THE COLLEGE TO INFORM US THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR SYSTEM CHECK. AS LONG AS YOUR SYSTEM CHECK IS SUCCESSFUL, YOU WILL BE READY FOR THE EXAM.

The examination will be available to the candidate, for the whole examination duration specified.

Rules and Regulations

1. Candidate will be required to log in at their computer 30 minutes before the start of the examination start time to run through ID checks and web camera/microphone set-up with the live proctor.
2. Photographic identification (a passport or photographic driver's licence ONLY) will be checked by the live proctor through the candidate's web camera before candidates can start the examination.
3. Candidates will be monitored at all times by a live proctor during the examination. The live proctor will be able to see the candidate through their web camera and hear them through their microphone. The live proctor will also ask the candidate to show the whole room via their web camera or their smartphone which must also be connected as a second camera for the examination (the live proctor will demonstrate how to do this).
4. All examinations are timed by the computer and will end automatically once the examination time has expired. Once the timing for the examination has begun, it cannot be paused. Candidates will be able to skip questions and come back to them at the end.
5. A candidate cannot be late for their examination. If they are late, their examination will be cancelled and their examination fee forfeited.
6. If a candidate wishes to raise a query during the examination, they can communicate with the live proctor via a chat facility.
7. The candidate's computer screen will be locked into the examination during the duration of the examination and access to any other websites or applications will not be possible.
8. Candidates are **not permitted** to use calculators in any section of the examinations.
9. Candidates are **not permitted** to use notebooks, books or any other form of written material during the examination.
10. Candidates are **not permitted** to wear any form of earplugs or headphones.
11. Candidates are **permitted** one sheet of white paper and a pencil for rough use/calculations, which must be destroyed at the end of the examination in front of the webcam by tearing into small pieces and then screwed up.
12. Candidates **must not**, at any point during the examination, look at their hands, wrists or arms, or at any mobile phone or tablet.
13. Candidates are **not permitted** to leave the room during the examination except for the designated one-hour break between examination papers.

14. Candidates are **not permitted** to wear any form of sunglasses or smart glasses.
15. Candidates are **not permitted** to wear any kind of watch or smart watch.
16. Candidates are **not permitted** to smoke or vape during the examination.
17. Candidates are **not permitted** to consult any other materials during the examination. This includes notes and textbooks.
18. Candidate are **not permitted** to eat any food during the examination. For drinks, the candidate may have one transparent tumbler of clear liquid drink that must be present at the start of the examination and not replenished at any time except for during the designated one-hour break between examination papers.
19. No other person will be permitted to be present in the room in which the candidate sits the examination.
20. Candidates are **not permitted** to communicate in any way with or seek assistance from anyone else except from the live proctor during the examination.
21. Candidates are advised to read in advance the RCOphth Online Proctored Examinations Privacy Policy and the RCOphth Policy on Allegations of Cheating and Misconduct in Examinations.
22. Candidates will **not be permitted** to visit the toilet during the examination. Toilet visits will only be permitted in the one-hour break between the examination papers. The only exceptions are for candidates who have medical conditions or pregnancy. These candidates must request the need for toilet breaks upon applying for the exam and must provide a medical letter explaining the reasons why.
23. Other than as a second camera linked to the proctoring system (as in point 3 above) candidates are **not permitted** to use mobile phones.
24. Candidates are **not permitted** to have or use any other electronic equipment or device during the examination.
25. Candidates are **not permitted** to interfere with, e.g. turn on / off, their internet connection without the permission of the online proctor.

The RCOphth will treat any breach of the above rules as cheating and does not expect to have to deal with any impropriety or issues of probity. Any transgressions of the above Rules and Regulations brought to the attention of the RCOphth will be investigated. Outcomes of such investigations may include, but are not limited to; voiding the examination result, exclusion from future examinations and referral to the regulator.

However, we are obliged to ensure that such safeguards are in place in order that such issues cannot occur unnoticed. As such BTL provide three live and recorded streams of feedback whilst the examination is in progress online.

These three sources are:

1. the candidate's computer screen
2. the candidate's computer web camera view
3. a separate side view video-stream via a phone camera

The role of the live proctor invigilator

There will be one online proctor per 6-8 candidates.

It is the proctor's role to check candidates into the examination and monitor the candidates throughout for "unusual behaviours" (see rules and regulations and below). Such behaviours will be recorded on a time-line, which will then be brought to the attention of a senior RCOphth examiner after the examination to decide whether any action is required. Behaviours that will generate concern include, but are not limited to, talking / reading questions out loud, looking repeatedly in a particular direction, prolonged / repeated episodes of inactivity etc.

Please note, unless there is incontrovertible serious evidence of impropriety, your examination will proceed uninterrupted to be reviewed after the event.

Internet connectivity issues

The testing processes that the candidate will have undertaken will ensure that the likelihood of a problem with the internet connection is minimised. If a candidate's internet connection does drop during the examination, no examination time will be lost as the timer will automatically pause. As the system updates every 3 seconds data loss is also likely to be minimal.

In the event of an interruption to the internet connection we recommend that the candidate tries to reconnect to the internet as soon as possible, if possible without leaving their chair or the room.

Once the internet connection is re-established the examination can proceed from where the candidate left off. The candidate will not lose any time to the interruption however, as answers are uploaded to the server every 3 seconds, it would be advisable to quickly check the answer to the question last answered.

If the internet connection is lost entirely for the duration of the whole exam, the candidate will have to reschedule for the next examination.

If there happens to be an unforeseen event that prevents the candidate completing the examination, only with written evidence from an appropriate authority (e.g. ISP, electricity power provider) we will consider an examination fee refund and a removal of the examination attempt from the candidate's record.

The online proctor has been instructed to report unusual behaviour in relation to the candidate's internet connection. Repeatedly dropping off-line unexpectedly in the presence of a previously tested and good connection will be regarded as a suspicious behaviour, as will excessive reconnection times. Each case of lost connection will be dealt with using the data that the proctor provides to us.

Results

Results will be released once verified by the Senior Examiner. All results will be sent to candidates via email as well as appearing on the College website identifiable by candidate number only. Candidates are not permitted to telephone the College for examination results.