

Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations

30 November 2021

Statement by Mr John R McGregor, Chair JCIE and JSCFE

Dear Candidate

Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examinations (JSCFE) Update

First and foremost, on behalf of everyone at the Joint Committee on Intercollegiate Examinations (JCIE) and the four Surgical Royal Colleges of the United Kingdom and Ireland, I express my sincere apologies that the Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examinations have largely remained on hold since February 2020. No-one will need any explanation as to the reasons but please be assured that in conjunction with the JCIE Secretariat and the four College Presidents, I have been anxious to recommence the JSCFE at the earliest opportunity. Safety and wellbeing are, however, of paramount importance and the global impact of the coronavirus pandemic has been such that the international travel and multinational gatherings that are required for Section 2 examinations have not been possible since early last year. Although Section 1 examinations, delivered in Pearson VUE test centres, are generally less complex to organise, it has not been appropriate to hold Section 1 examinations for large numbers of candidates at a time when Section 2 entry cannot be offered to candidates who gain eligibility to proceed. That is the reason that entry to the recent Section 1 diets was restricted to candidates who had experienced a cancelled examination between March and June 2021.

Although the course of the pandemic remains unpredictable, especially with the emergence of the Omicron variant of the virus over the past few days, the following summarises the JCIE's provisional planning for 2022. It must be stressed, however, that we are at the mercy of many factors that the JCIE cannot control (for example travel restrictions and quarantine requirements), and sadly therefore things may change. Please do not make any plans based on the information contained in this communication but I hope it provides an indication of what the JCIE aims to deliver. The relevant Specialty Manager for your surgical discipline will be in touch at the earliest opportunity with more detailed information, and in some instances, this is likely to be within a matter of days.

Section 2

General Surgery - If possible, the intention is to hold a Section 2 examination in General Surgery in Dubai in late March 2022. A communication from Mrs Elaine McDaid, JSCFE Specialty Manager, will be sent to all eligible candidates this week to invite applications. The JCIE appreciates that travel may not be possible for all candidates hence the first step is to determine the number of possible attendees. As is always the case, the JCIE will only commit to staging an examination when it believes there will be enough candidates able to attend to make it a viable proposition. Mrs McDaid's first communication will therefore ask all candidates willing and able to attend to submit their application within a short timescale. **Please do not make any travel or accommodation arrangements until the examination and your place are confirmed in a follow up communication.**

Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery - The plan is to hold a Section 2 examination in this Specialty in Dubai in June 2022. The procedure for inviting applications will follow the same format as described above for General Surgery with the initial email communication being sent out very soon. **Please do not make any travel or accommodation arrangements until you have received a further emailed communication that confirms that the examination is going ahead and that you have a place.**

Cardiothoracic Surgery, Neurosurgery, and Urology - The JCIE will be in contact with all candidates eligible to proceed to Section 2 in each of these specialties early in 2022. The intention is to stage Section 2 examinations in the second half of 2022.

Otolaryngology - At present, the number of candidates eligible to proceed is too few to permit a Section 2 examination but all relevant individuals will be updated as soon as possible.

Section 1

Section 1 examinations for all specialties sadly must remain on hold until such time that the JCIE can confirm that the Section 2 examinations can proceed. Once the Section 2 examinations are confirmed, we will write to everyone again with a further update. I appreciate that this will be frustrating to many of you but clearly there is no point in adding to the queue of candidates eligible to enter Section 2 until it is confirmed that the Section 2 examinations can take place.

On behalf of the four Surgical Royal Colleges of the United Kingdom and Ireland, the JCIE apologises for the ongoing uncertainty and disruption, but is confident that everyone will appreciate that the pandemic is beyond the JCIE's control.

As always, I thank you for your understanding and I hope that you and your families remain safe and well.

Yours sincerely



JOHN R MCGREGOR

CHAIR – JOINT COMMITTEE ON INTERCOLLEGIATE EXAMINATIONS