

Proposed timetable for implementation of the examinations reviews

In setting out our proposed timetable for the implementation of changes resulting from the examinations reviews, we are mindful of the fact that, in addition to protecting patients and setting standards, examinations drive teaching and learning. We will therefore consider carefully any change to an exam in terms of its impact on training and on candidates.

Our timetable is designed to allow the time necessary to consult with stakeholders to develop and create new format examinations which, after careful piloting across a number of exam diets, will need approval from the General Medical Council. Once this is completed, we will ensure that we provide candidates and trainers with sufficient time and support to make necessary adjustments to their examination preparation. Throughout this period of development, we will keep the membership of the College/Faculties informed of progress, allowing for input into the proposed changes.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES – in the academic year 22/23, we propose to -

- Review the purpose of the exams by examining the high-level curriculum requirements and including consideration of any patient safety issues, and ways to reduce the assessment burden described in the independent review.
- Start the process of outlining the frameworks for the new examination formats.
- Appoint to the new Examinations Development and Assurance Group (EDAG), which will oversee the implementation of the examinations reviews, including the appointment of an independent chair.
- Identify an external medical educationalist to help advise on proposed changes to the exam.
- Introduce a secondary standard setting method alongside existing standard setting methods across all exams as an additional way of reviewing performance where required and conduct appropriate examiner training.
- Recruit additional staff to the examinations team.
- Develop and agree a 'business as usual' plan to ensure the current exam systems remain fully supported during this period of change.

MEDIUM TERM OBJECTIVES – in the academic years 2023 to 2026, we propose to -

2023/2024

- Agree common standard setting methods as appropriate across RCoA-delivered exams.
- Seek approval from the General Medical Council on revised formats and standard setting methods.
- Conduct examiner training in new standard setting and marking schemes.
- Create new question templates, materials and formats as appropriate.
- Deliver pilots of new question forms.
- Develop new questions after successful piloting.

2024/2026

- Continue to develop new questions across new exam components.
- Establish and populate new question banks for the revised formats of the exams.
- Pilot new examination formats.
- Update College and Faculty revision courses.
- Provide supporting resources to examination candidates in advance of the launch of the new format exam components.
- Communicate changes to stakeholder groups (2026).

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES – during 2027, we propose to -

- Commence new exam formats ensuring we have given at least 12 months' notice to candidates and trainers.