



MICGP Examination regulations 2024/2025

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1.0 Purpose

This document outlines the regulations governing the Membership examination of the Irish College of GPs (MICGP).

2.0 Scope

These regulations apply to all MICGP candidates, to the Exams and Assessment Department of the Irish College of GPs and its constituent bodies.

3.0 Policy Statement

This policy has been drafted to establish the regulations governing the Membership examinations of the Irish College of GPs (MICGP).

3.1 Note to candidates

Candidates must read this handbook in its entirety prior to applying to take part in any examinations. Candidates will be asked to confirm that they have read and understand this document in full as part of the examination registration process. Where an update to the regulations is published after the registration process for an exam has begun, this document will be circulated directly to those candidates and they will be asked to agree to same before sitting the exam.

It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that they fully understand the terms and conditions under which they sit the MICGP Examinations. The College accepts no responsibility where candidates ignore or do not fully comply with the terms/criteria for Membership, having sat or passed the MICGP Examination.

MICGP Examinations are benchmarked to the Core Curriculum for General Practice Specialist Training. Candidates are strongly advised to use the Curriculum as part of their examination preparation.

3.2 Entry requirements

MICGP Examinations can only be taken by doctors registered on an Irish College of GPs Board-approved, structured Irish College of GPs programme. These are:

- The National Specialist Training Programme in General Practice
- The Faculty of Military Medicine
- The International Medical Graduate Rural GP Programme
- The Malaysia Ireland Training Programme for Family Medicine

3.3 Overall aims and objectives of the MICGP examination

3.3.1 Aims

To assess the performance of the candidate in the field of general family practice by assessing in three domains: cognitive, psychomotor and affective.

Candidates who pass the MICGP examination and who successfully complete their Irish College of GPs Programme are judged to be competent to work independently in general practice.

3.3.2 Objectives

To measure competence in general practice. The examination will assess competence in the following areas:

- Understanding and willingness to accept the many responsibilities of a general practitioner/family doctor
- Understanding the individual, the family and the community, and the legal framework underlying medical practice
- Defining, analysing and managing health problems integrating the physical, psychological and social factors in all age groups in health and disease
- Adopting a preventive approach to health care
- Cooperating appropriately with colleagues, primary care workers and other healthcare agencies
- Practice management

3.4 MICGP examination modules

The MICGP examination modules required to be passed by any given candidate is determined by their year of entry to the relevant Irish College of GPs programme.

3.4.1 Three module requirement

For candidates who started their programme before 12 July 2021, the MICGP examination consists of the following **three** modules:

- Core Knowledge Test Module (CKT)
- Modified Essay Question Module (MEQ)
- Clinical Competency Test (CCT)

3.4.2 Two module requirement

For candidates who started their programme on or after 12 July 2021, the MICGP examination consists of the following **two** modules:



- Core Knowledge Test Module (CKT)
- Clinical Competency Test (CCT)

3.4.3 Core Knowledge Test (CKT)

This module is open to candidates in the following years who have not yet passed the module:

- National Specialist Training Programme in General Practice: Years 2/3/4
- Malaysia Ireland Training Programme for Family Medicine: Years 2/3/4
- Faculty of Military Medicine: Year 2/3/4/5
- International Medical Graduate Rural GP Programme: Year 1/2

It is also open to eligible candidates who have not yet passed the module and who are not more than two years post-completion of their Irish College of GPs programme.

The CKT module currently consists of 200 single best answer questions for a duration of 3 hours. This module tests the application of knowledge within the context of current best general practice.

There is no negative marking in this module.

Marks are awarded as follows:

- +1 = Correct answer
- 0 = Incorrect answer/more than one answer recorded

3.3.4 Modified Essay Question (MEQ)

This module is entering retirement and is **only** open to candidates who previously sat the exam and who commenced one of the two programmes below, prior to 12 July 2021:

- National Specialist Training Programme in General Practice: Years 3/4
- Faculty of Military Medicine: Year 3/4/5

Candidates must also have accrued a minimum of **6 months GP Registrar experience** in order to be eligible to sit this exam.

This module is also open to candidates who meet the above criteria, who have not yet passed the module and who are not more than two years post-completion of their Irish College of GPs structured programme.

The final run-off sitting of this module will take place in July 2025.

3.3.5 Clinical Competency Test (CCT)

This module is open to candidates in the following years who have not yet passed the module:

- National Specialist Training Programme in General Practice: Years 3/4
- Malaysia Ireland Training Programme for Family Medicine: Years 3/4
- Faculty of Military Medicine: Year 3/4/5
- International Medical Graduate Rural GP Programme: Year 1/2

This module is also open to eligible candidates who have not yet passed the module and who are not more than two years post-completion of their Irish College of GPs programme.

The CCT aims to assess the competence of general practice candidates when dealing with situations that may arise in everyday general practice. In doing so, it seeks to examine the knowledge, clinical skills (assessment, treatment, diagnosis, management and communication) and attitudes displayed by candidates as they manage patients or their representatives presenting in a simulated surgery, home visit or telephone consultation. It examines how they deal with clinical challenges, how they communicate with patients, their carers and others and whether they understand the principles of practice management as applied to the consultation. Management decisions must be based on sound scientific evidence where possible.

Candidates must have also accrued a **minimum of 6 months GP experience** within their Irish College of GPs structured programme to be eligible to undertake this module.

Note: The number of questions, question format and duration of all exams may be subject to change in line with academic content and judgement.

3.5 Time limitations for completion of the MICGP examination

There are different regulations in place regarding the time period for completion of MICGP modules for those candidates that started their programme before 12 July 2021 and those who start on or after 12 July 2021.

3.5.1 Five-year period

Candidates who started their programme before 12th July 2021 must complete all modules of the MICGP examination within a **five-year period**, dating from the first year of sitting an MICGP examination module. In addition, candidates must successfully complete all modules of the MICGP examination **within two calendar years of completing their Irish College of GPs programme**. Exceptions to this rule will only be considered in conjunction with the applicable policies, such as those governing mitigating circumstances and appeals.

3.5.2 Five attempts

Candidates who started their programme on or after 12 July 2021 have a maximum of **five attempts** at passing each module of the MICGP examination. A candidate who has failed on four occasions will be required to seek the input of an educational supervisor to enhance the likelihood of success in their final attempt. Evidence of



this educational support will be required on application to sit a fifth attempt. If the final attempt is failed, the candidate is no longer eligible to earn the status of Membership of the Irish College of GPs.

In addition, candidates must successfully complete all modules of the MICGP **examination within two calendar years of completing their Irish College of GPs programme**. Exceptions to this rule will only be considered in conjunction with the applicable policies, such as those governing mitigating circumstances and appeals.

Note: There may be additional time limitations in place between sittings of the CCT module for candidates that have failed previously, to ensure equity of access for other candidates. The College reserves the right to refuse an MICGP Examination application.

These regulations are subject to change during ongoing programme delivery and come into effect for all MICGP candidates on the date of publication.

3.6 Passing the MICGP examination

In order to pass the overall MICGP examination, a candidate must achieve the passing standard in each module, demonstrating to the satisfaction of the examiners that they possess sufficient knowledge, clinical skills and the decision-making ability to ensure that they are capable of practicing safely and competently as a general practitioner in an unsupervised setting.

Note: There is no compensation between modules.

This exam is not currently open to non-Irish College of GPs candidates. Applicants should note that passing the MICGP Examination does not confer an automatic right of election to Membership of the College.

3.7 Standard setting

The passing standard for each module is set for each exam sitting using module appropriate, internationally recognised, standardisation procedures. All candidates who reach that standard will be awarded a pass.

3.8 Examination regulations and procedures

3.8.1 Regulations

Candidates must read these regulations carefully as failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to a candidate's examination being void and a zero-mark (fail) given. Candidates must provide photographic evidence of identity, such as a driver's licence or passport, when attending MICGP examinations.

3.8.2 Reasonable adjustments

The College is committed to equality of opportunity and to promoting diversity in all its practices, including the MICGP examination.



Candidates who feel they need a reasonable adjustment for their MICGP examination, i.e., candidates with a disability or a significant long term health condition, should declare this and request reasonable adjustments when making an online application for their examination. It is the candidate's responsibility to provide the necessary information and supporting documentation to the College so that requests for reasonable adjustments can be assessed.

Candidates who fail one or more sitting or module of the MICGP, and who do not have an identified specific learning difficulty, should consider review by an educational psychologist to determine whether this or another factor might be present and impacting on their exam performance. Where a specific learning difficulty is identified, an educational psychologist will make recommendations as to what, if any, adjustments should be considered within the context of summative assessment.

See the College Policy on MICGP Reasonable Adjustments for more information.

3.8.3 IT requirements

There are specific IT requirements for the CKT and MEQ examinations. It is the candidate's responsibility to engage with the information provided by the College regarding IT requirements and to ensure that these are in place for themselves in advance of exam day and in line with the deadlines stipulated.

The College cannot guarantee access to an online exam to candidates who do not put the stated IT requirements into place for themselves within the specified timeframes.

Likewise, IT challenges faced by candidates related to non-compliance with IT requirements and/or inadequate satisfaction of IT requirements will not constitute grounds for appeal.

3.8.4 Time keeping

For written examinations, candidates should be at the written examination location (physical or virtual) no less than 15 minutes prior to the start time of their exam. It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure that they are on time for the examination. Candidates who present late for written papers will only be admitted to the examination at the discretion of the examination supervisor, subject to exam integrity considerations.

Candidates who are not permitted to sit the examination due to their late arrival will NOT receive a refund of their examination fee.

Candidates who present late for the CCT examination will not be granted automatic entry and will only be admitted to the examination at the discretion of the clinical examination supervisor. Late admission will not be accommodated where it may cause disruption to other candidates present, where the candidate in question misses the candidate briefing, and never after the pre-exam reading of the case booklet has begun.

3.8.5 Exam Day protocol

All candidates will be required to sign an attendance sheet and a “Declaration of Fitness to Sit” upon arrival. Candidates will not be permitted to proceed to assessment if this declaration is not signed. Appeals on the basis that candidate was not fit to sit, having declared themselves fit on the day, will not be considered.

Candidates attending the CKT must have a suitable environment, as detailed in section 3.11, and must not have prohibited items present, also detailed within section 3.11.

Candidates attending the CCT must not bring paper, notes, books, bags or items other than the specified equipment into the examination room.

3.8.6 Remote invigilation

Candidates undertaking an online written module of the MICGP will be subject to remote invigilation.

Candidates must have access to the following:

- A quiet, secure room where they can take the exam without interruption
- A PC or laptop computer with a reliable internet connection, webcam and microphone
- They must have permissions to install software required for remote assessment

The following is considered a suitable environment for the CKT and MEQ:

- A room to which the candidate has exclusive access – candidates must be on their own for the duration of the examination and should not be disturbed or interrupted for the duration of the assessment
- A room that does not have integrated security cameras, or any recording equipment, other than the webcam on the PC or laptop
- A room with good lighting and strong, reliable internet connection

Note:

- Multiple screens, additional devices and headphones are not permitted
- Candidates must switch off their mobile phone before their exam commences
- **In the event of an emergency** immediately before or within the exam – such as any kind of IT disconnection or failure – candidates are permitted to switch back on their mobile phone to call the emergency number provided ONLY where they remain in view of the camera through which remote invigilation is being conducted. In such circumstances, candidates are permitted to call only the emergency number/s and are not permitted to access other pages, applications or resources on their device.
 - If a candidate does experience an IT issue that impacts on their exam, it is likely that their exam would be deemed void for exam integrity reasons. However, candidates are strongly encouraged to contact the emergency number provided immediately upon experiencing an issue to maximise the potential for a timely solution.

3.9 Electronic devices

Candidates are not permitted to have any additional electronic device including, but not limited to calculators, mobile phones that are powered on, headphones, smart phones, smart watches, pagers, personal digital assistants, data storage devices, etc., on their person at any time during any module of the MICGP examination.

For online written exams, the computer a candidate uses for that exam is the only device permitted, in addition to a powered off mobile phone for emergency contact with the Exam Team/other support services. Candidates should not under any circumstances use an external monitor or any other plugin device with a laptop. The proctoring software and proctoring professionals utilised for remote invigilation will monitor contravention of these regulations.

Candidates who are found to be in possession of any such a device, even if switched off, after the commencement of the examination, will be subject to disciplinary action and may be awarded a fail grade in the module or be subject to other disciplinary measures as determined by the Disciplinary Panel.

The College accepts no responsibility for the loss of candidates' personal property in or around the examination centre for in-person exams.

It is recommended that candidates do not bring any electronic devices or valuables to the CCT or other exam centres.

3.10 Bag inspections

Examination supervisors may inspect anything that a candidate brings into the examination centre for the CCT exam or for an in-person written exam. Failure to allow a bag inspection to occur will result in an automatic failure of the module in which the infringement occurred.

3.11 Conduct during the examination

- For all written examinations, candidates must show their ears and wrists to the camera or exam supervisor, to demonstrate that no electronic devices are present
- Candidates must obey all instructions given by the examination supervisor
- Candidates must not communicate with, or attempt to communicate with, or provide assistance to, any other candidate during the examination
- Candidates must not speak aloud during online examinations
- Candidates' faces must remain in full view of the relevant webcam for the duration of online exams
- Candidates must not seek or accept assistance from any other candidates during the examination
- Candidates must not disturb any other candidate during the examination
- Candidates must cease the exam when instructed to do so
- Candidates are not permitted to remove any materials from the online or in-person exam centre, including physical and digital copies of exam material (e.g., screen shots or recordings)



- Candidates must remain in the exam area until they are instructed that they may leave the examination centre. For online written exams, once candidates have submitted the exam and completed the upload of the answer and/or video file, they may leave their device
- Candidates who leave the examination centre during the examination without invigilator supervision will NOT be permitted to re-enter the examination centre for any reason
- Candidates who have an issue at the time of the examination must raise that issue with College Staff when it occurs and before they depart the venue, so that it can be addressed and resolved

Issues raised after the exam cannot be considered under the appeals procedure.

3.12 Exam cancellation or deferral on behalf of candidate

Candidates that have registered for an exam can withdraw from the exam with no financial penalty if cancelling more than 30 days prior to the exam.

Candidates who withdraw from an exam 30 days or less prior to the exam will be charged 25% of the total exam fee.

For candidates who feel they are unable to present for their exam, by reason of ill health, access to technology, family responsibilities or any other reasonable concerns, and who notify the College less than 30 days before the exam, the option of deferral is available to them via the mitigating circumstances process. Candidates will be required to submit documentary evidence, as appropriate, and a decision will be made by the MICGP Exams Subcommittee as to whether a financial penalty applies.

3.13 Exam cancellation or deferral on behalf of the College

The College reserves the right to cancel an MICGP examination at any time, while striving to give candidates as much advance notice as possible. This may be due, but is not limited, to:

- So called 'acts of god', such as extreme weather
- Partial or complete failure of IT infrastructure required for exam delivery
- Other matters arising that prevents exam delivery, puts candidates or College staff/representatives at risk, and/or puts exam integrity at risk, including public health risks

Under such circumstances, the College is responsible for making reasonable efforts to provide an assessment solution to meet the requirements of the particular module that has been cancelled. However, the College does not bear any responsibility for the impact or knock-on impact of same on individual candidates.

3.14 Academic misconduct and/or unprofessional behaviour

Any behaviour or action which contravenes academic integrity and breaches its fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and courage is considered to constitute academic misconduct. Academic misconduct is any attempt to seek unfair advantage in relation to any academic activity, including examinations. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating in any forum or form, purchase of



examination material, breaches of the Examination Regulations, impersonation, and any other act which dishonestly uses information to gain academic credit.

Unprofessional verbal, physical or other behaviour towards MICGP exam stakeholders may also give rise to disciplinary and other appropriate action. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate behaviour towards fellow candidates, examiners, Exam Subcommittee members, College staff, role players, invigilators, or any other professional services staff members involved in exam preparation and delivery.

Any breach of the Examination Regulations will constitute examination malpractice and may result in disciplinary action being taken. This may include (but is not limited to) the candidate's exam being void and a zero mark being awarded and/or a complaint being submitted to the Medical Council.

A team member who has reason to believe that a candidate may have committed examination malpractice will inform the candidate that they will be referred for review under the Disciplinary Process. The candidate may be permitted to complete the examination and the relevant team member will note the time and mark on the Invigilator Report the point at which the malpractice was suspected.

A candidate who is found to have unauthorised materials in their possession in any assessment, including written or clinical examinations, or whose behaviour is prejudicial to the proper conduct of the examination, or who introduces books, notes, or electronic devices into the examination, will be considered to have breached these examination regulations, may forfeit the examination, and will be referred for review by the Exam Subcommittee and this may be escalated via the Disciplinary Process and/or reported to the relevant authorities.

Any attempt to memorise or share examination materials, during or after an examination is considered prejudicial to the proper conduct of the examination. Candidates may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Process.

In the event of a suspected examination breach, a candidate must inform a member of the invigilation team or the College Exams team as soon as possible, either in-person or via micgpexam@icgp.ie. If the breach becomes evident after an examination, then the candidate must alert the Exams team by emailing micgpexam@icgp.ie immediately after the examination has concluded.

Any candidate who knowingly seeks to gain an advantage by behaviour which is considered prejudicial to the proper conduct of examinations may forfeit the examination and may be reviewed under the Disciplinary Process.

If, for any reason, the integrity of an assessment is perceived to be compromised after the fact, the Executive Director of Training and Assessment may, in consultation with the Examination Subcommittee, require all candidates who took part in that exam, to complete a new exam.

Where a suspected incidence of academic misconduct by a candidate occurs during an examination, it will be addressed in accordance with these Regulations.



Failure to adhere to all aspects of the Examination Regulations may result in disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include (but is not limited to):

- Award of an automatic fail grade/zero mark
- Bar from presenting for any further assessments with the Irish College of GPs
- Notification to the relevant programme director and/or educational supervisor
- Reportable to the relevant authorities

Where unprofessional behaviour contravenes national legislation, a report may be made to the relevant authorities.

3.15 Quality control

The Examination Subcommittee places marked emphasis on quality control of the MICGP Examination. In particular, every effort is made to maintain its fairness, validity and reliability. To this end, the following measures are taken:

- MICGP examiners are experienced general practitioners
- The questions used in all exams reflect current practice and are mapped to the Irish College of GPs Core Curriculum for General Practice Training, or to the Malaysia Ireland Training Programme for Family Medicine, as applicable. Examiners participate in regular examination development and assessment workshops
- All exams are electronically marked
- CCT examiners are observed through a Quality Assurance process
- The results of all modules are subjected to detailed statistical analysis
- The MICGP External Examiner provides objective, unbiased reporting on the examination process

3.16 Examiner commentary and feedback

Module-specific feedback will be provided to candidates where possible, to assist in their learning and preparation for repeat sittings of the exam, as applicable.

3.17 Examination results

Results will be issued to all candidates via electronic means.

Where outstanding examination fees apply, results shall be withheld by the College until all outstanding balances are paid.

As well as issuing the results to each candidate, results will also be issued to the director of the relevant current or former programme for their respective candidates.



3.18 Candidate performance in the examination

Where a candidate's performance in the examination is markedly below expectations, the Examination Subcommittee may communicate directly with the candidate's programme director and/or educational supervisor in relation to performance in any or all modules of the examination. Appropriate recommendations may be made regarding additional education and training.

Where a candidate's performance is deemed to raise substantial concerns regarding patient safety or their professionalism as a medical doctor, the Examinations Subcommittee may communicate this concern directly to the relevant programme director, other relevant parties supporting programme delivery, and/or the relevant Medical Council. In circumstances where such behaviour is suspected of breaking national law, a report may be made to the relevant authority.

Where a candidate's performance in the examination is markedly below expectations and/or gives rise to serious concerns and where a candidate is out of programme, the Examinations Subcommittee may contact the relevant authority.

3.19 Appealing the decision of an examination board

Once an examination result has been published, it cannot be amended for any reason without the approval of the Examinations Subcommittee.

Candidates should note that it is not permissible to appeal against the academic judgement of examiners (see the College Appeals Policy for more information).

Candidates who believe they have grounds for appeal should follow the College Appeals Policy available on the Moodle Prep Course for the MICGP.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

- MICGP candidates will adhere to the regulations outlined in this document
- College staff members engaged in governance, management and delivery of the MICGP exams will monitor candidate adherence to these regulations and take appropriate action as required
- College staff members will also share information regarding same with the Examinations Subcommittee, who in turn may notify the director of the relevant Irish College of GPs programme and/or other relevant parties, as appropriate

5.0 Definitions

MICGP

Membership of the Irish College of GPs.



MICGP Exams

Any individual module or combined examinations that must be achieved to qualify for Membership of the Irish College of GPs.

MICGP Candidate

Any person registered to take part, who is taking part, or who has taken part, in the MICGP examinations.

6.0 Relating and supporting documentation

Candidates who apply to take the MICGP exams are subject to the relevant policies and procedures in place for same. The related documentation extends beyond the Exam Regulations to cover all relevant areas, such as appeals, mitigating circumstances, reasonable accommodations, grievance and disciplinary matters, etc. Policies and procedures may be updated during ongoing candidate programmes and such updates will apply to MICGP candidates at the point of publication. For more information, please contact micgpexam@icgp.ie.

- College Policy on MICGP Examination Appeals
- College Policy on MICGP Reasonable Adjustments
- College Policy on Mitigating Circumstances (under development)

7. Contact

The MICGP Exam Regulations 2024/2025 have been drafted and approved by the MICGP Examination Subcommittee.

For questions, please contact micgpexam@icgp.ie.