

An insight into the Membership of Orthodontics examination

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Feeling prepared and understanding what to expect can go a long way in alleviating exam nerves and ensuring a successful performance. The format of the MOrth examinations (Edinburgh and bicollegiate England and Glasgow) taken by UK trainees and international postgraduate students can be compared (Table 1). Given the recent uncertainty with the COVID-19 pandemic, trainees will also be made aware of any changes by the colleges.

Presently both RCS exams include a written and clinical aspect. In Edinburgh, part A is now composed of two written two-hour single best answer (SBA) papers, compulsory for all. The whole of the curriculum is tested including basic dental science, cross infection control and medical complications.^{1,2} The bicollegiate England and Glasgow MOrth follows a different format composed of part 1 (applied science in relation to orthodontic practice) which is a single three-hour multiple choice question (MCQ) paper. Those holding the MJDF/MFDS/FDS or the RCS Edinburgh MOrth part 1 are exempt.³ Most candidates will sit part 2 which has a written and clinical component. The written part 2 exam is a single three-hour paper with MCQ/short answer questions relating to any aspect of the orthodontic syllabus.⁴ Candidates who have successfully passed the written paper of an approved master's degree are exempt.⁴ For both colleges the question papers are taken from across the curriculum, available on both college websites.^{1,2,4} Trainees must have an understanding of all aspects of the syllabus and prepare thoroughly for the written component regardless of the chosen college.

The Edinburgh RCS MOrth part B clinical examination consists of four oral aspects:

clinical case histories, diagnostic tests, an oral examination and a communication station.⁵ For the bicollegiate England and Glasgow MOrth part 2, the oral examination (or general viva) is replaced by an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) consisting of 16 stations, which includes four communication stations.⁴ A new shortened seen (presented) case template was introduced in Edinburgh in 2019 where four cases are submitted online.⁵ For England, three cases are submitted with the write ups in the traditional hard copy format and the current template available on their website.⁴

In the clinical case histories (seen/presented cases) trainees should select cases that are ideally finished and with plenty of

Table 1 Comparing the usual structure of the MOrth examinations

	RCS Edinburgh	RCS England and RCPS Glasgow
	May and September (UK)	May (UK)
Written	Part A	Part 1
		Single 3 hour MCQ paper (exemptions)
		Part 2
	Two 2 hour SBA papers (Compulsory)	Single 3 hour MCQ/multiple short answer paper (Exemptions)
Clinical	Part B	Part 2
		Oral and OSCE
		Clinical case histories Diagnostic tests OSCE
Presented/seen cases	4 cases (short template) 4 cases examined 15 minutes per case: 60 minutes overall Online submission	3 cases (traditional template) 2 cases examined 15 minutes per case: 30 minutes overall Hard copy submission
Unseen cases	4 cases over 2 days 2 cases: successive 15 minutes preparation time per case 15 minutes exam per case	
General viva/OSCE	General viva 30 minutes in total 6 topics: 5 mins per topic	OSCE 16 stations in total with rest stations Includes communication (4), diagnostic and practical
Communication station	1 station 10 minutes (5 minutes preparation)	(In the OSCE)

photos they feel comfortable discussing. A range of cases is suggested to allow greater discussion. The examiners will have scrutinised the cases beforehand and need to confirm a trainee's understanding of

cephalogram.

Overall, both MOrth examinations are a challenging time for orthodontic trainees. Given the impact of COVID-19 on specialty training in dentistry, it is important for

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the mechanics, what can be improved and awareness of the treatment options.

The diagnostic tests or structured clinical reasoning (unseen cases) are often the part trainees are most concerned about. Examiners are looking to see if candidates can provide an accurate diagnosis and a workable plan, not an answer to every question. It is important to read the case booklet carefully, and look vigilantly at the photographs, study models and radiographs. One examiner asks about the diagnosis aspect, whilst the other about a treatment plan (7.5 minutes each). Trainees should demonstrate an understanding of treatment mechanics, awareness of the limitations of a specialist and when multidisciplinary care is required. They should aim to provide a preferred and alternative plan and be able to justify decisions with reference to current research. Preparation is key, so aiming to seek advice from as many supervisors as possible is essential.

In Edinburgh candidates sit an oral examination (general viva) consisting of six different topics, whereas in London candidates sit the OSCE. Most topics in the structured general viva are shown by a picture, where quick definitions and answers are required. Edinburgh includes a separate station for communication with an actor which lasts for ten minutes. Scenarios range from explaining a type of treatment to offering advice to a parent. The London OSCE consists of 16 stations including communication skills, interpretation of diagnostic material, practical skills and decision making in clinical situations. Stations vary from written, communication (four stations) and practical, including wire bending or tracing and interpreting a

trainees to keep updated with any changes, so they can tailor their own learning needs and be fully prepared to succeed. This article gives an overview of the current examination formats for supervisors to best prepare orthodontic trainees. It is vital to be aware of recent changes to the Edinburgh RCS MOrth format with regard to part A: two written two-hour papers (instead of a single three-hour paper) and part B: a shortened presented case template. In 2020, the bicollegiate London and Glasgow exam will be taken online in a changed format with changes to the Edinburgh exam also.

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Dentists added to PPE portal

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has now added dentists and orthodontists in England to the list of primary and social care providers able to order and receive 'emergency' supplies of critical coronavirus PPE through a government portal. The portal will enable dentists to order and receive emergency supplies of Type IIR masks, aprons, gloves, visors and hand hygiene free of charge. Weekly order limits will be calculated based on a practice's number of UDAs and UOAs per year.

The portal is intended solely as an 'emergency top-up system' and dentists should continue to use their existing business-as-usual and wholesaler supplier routes to access PPE.

In Scotland, supplies of PPE are being provided by NHS National Services Scotland. Deliveries are being made to Health Boards across Scotland for onward distribution to all dental practices.

The British Dental Industry Association (BDIA) is concerned with this government intervention in the commercial supply chain when there is currently no PPE 'emergency' and is involved in continuing discussions with the office of the Chief Dental Officers and senior DHSC officials regarding the ongoing provision of PPE supplies to dental practices and will remain in close contact in relation to the operation of the portal.

BDA Eastern Counties Branch AGM – Online

Wednesday 30 September 2020
19:00–20:30

Please ensure you register your interest in attending at www.bda.org/bse in order to receive the link to access the AGM or email branchsectionevents@bda.org.