

Theory exams in 2020.3 diet - option 2: online invigilation

Examinations team

To ensure the safety of our candidates and invigilators in the COVID-19 pandemic, candidates will have two options for taking a theory exam, a computer-based exam: at a test centre with appropriate social distancing, or at one's own home or workplace with online invigilation. We explain the second option here.

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Table of contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Timings](#)
- [System requirements](#)
- [Applying for online invigilation option](#)
- [Systems check and set up](#)
- [Where can I sit my examination?](#)
- [Instructions for the day](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Downloads](#)

Introduction

This guidance is for candidates preparing to apply for and sit one or more theory exams of the MRCPC or Diploma of Child Health in the 2020.3 diet - in September or October, in any country. We are offering two options to candidates, and the fees for both are the same.

One option is to sit the exam at a test centre, in the UK or overseas, with social distancing - you can [read about this option](#).

The other option is to sit the exam at one's own home or another private location with online invigilation, which we explain here.

If you select this option, you will be monitored by our online invigilators during your exam.

The live invigilation process will be conducted by a trained person (an invigilator referred to as a proctor) in real time and it will also be recorded and reviewed later.

We have been working with our suppliers to put this in place. Our theory exams are taken via the assessment system of BTL, our provider. This system is called Surpass. Our supplier for online invigilation is called ProctorExam.

Candidates from almost all the countries where we host theory exams are eligible to select online invigilation. The **exclude** Egypt, Sudan, and United Arab Emirates (due to local restrictions).

You will need to have certain hardware, software, and network connectivity - more details below.

Timings

As is usual, each exam is 2 hours 30 minutes, unless you are allocated additional time. If you are sitting both FOP and TAS on the same day, or the AKP, you will have a break between the two parts, which you can take away from your computer.

For UK candidates, the start time is as normal - at 09:30 for FOP and AKP paper 1, and 14:00 for TAS and AKP paper 2.

For candidates in other countries, the online invigilation for FOP and AKP starts at at 07:00 UK time. (So, your start time will depend on your time zone.)

It is your responsibility as the candidate to ensure you are ready to start at the correct time.

System requirements

You will need both a desktop or laptop computer **and** a mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet.

Requirements for desktop or laptop computer

You will need a desktop or laptop computer, on which you'll take the exam and record live audio and video for the online invigilation. We'll provide instructions on a system set up, but first check that your computer meets these requirements:

- **Bandwidth** - A minimum 1mbps or higher upload speed, recommended 1.5mbps + upload speed, 10mbps download speed and ping under 25 ms. If you are unsure how to check your bandwidth there are a number of bandwidth testing sites that you can access online to test your bandwidth for you.
- **No tethering** - Tethering is not supported
- **Operating system:**
 - Windows 8 or higher (to check which operating system you have for Windows - Select the Start button > Settings > System > About . Open About settings. Under Windows specifications, check which edition and version of Windows your device is running)
 - MAC OSX (latest releases – If your Mac is using earlier versions of any Mac

operating system, we advise that you install the latest Apple software updates, which can include important security updates also).

- **Broadband** - You will need to be positioned where WiFi signal is strongest or connected directly to the Ethernet cable.
- **Web browser** - Your default browser must be set to the latest version of Google Chrome - here's a [guide to changing it](#).
- **Webcam** - Video is required throughout the exam. You'll need a webcam with a maximum resolution of 1280 x 720.
- **Microphone** - Audio is required throughout the exam. You'll need a microphone that is built in to your desktop or laptop computer. You are **not** permitted to use a separate headset or earphones unless you have been provided with permission from our Exams team in line with the Reasonable Adjustment Policy, available on our [rules and regulations page](#).
- **Single monitor/screen** - Dual monitors are **not** permitted. Any candidate identified as using a dual monitor will be disqualified from sitting their examination.
- **Not on a virtual machine or VPN** - We do **not** invigilate computers running virtual machines or a VPN (virtual private network). If you are running a virtual machine or running through a VPN you will be asked to close your virtual machine/VPN and use standard operating system to take your test.
- We do not support development previews, beta builds, or release candidates of any operating system unless specified.

Requirements for mobile device (smartphone or tablet)

You will also need a mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet, for additional monitoring for the online invigilation. We will provide you instructions to download the ProctorExam app, which is designed to support online invigilation. First, ensure your mobile device meets these specifications:

- **Operating system:** you can see this in your device's setting
 - Android 4.1 or higher, or
 - iOS (Apple) 8.0 or higher
- **Video resolution** - minimum 800 x 600 px
- **Internet connection** - Ensure you can connect to WiFi so you don't use up your data.
- **Power** - Ensure your device can be plugged in for the duration of your exam.

Applying for online invigilation option

When you apply online, you select the online invigilation option if it's available in your country.

As is usual, we accept applications on a first come, first serve basis, and only before the closing date. Once an application is confirmed and paid, you will not ordinarily be able to transfer to an alternative option.

[Read our full application guidance](#)

Systems check and set up

Once you have successfully booked your exam via online invigilation, we will email you two

weeks before the exam day with a link to do a systems check and set up.

Once you have completed this, your ProctorExam record will be updated. If you do not complete the system set up check, you will **not** be permitted to take the exam.

Remember:

- Perform the system setup on the computer you will take the exam on.
- Do this well in advance of the exam date – do not leave it until the last minute.
- If you need to upgrade anything on your computer or mobile device after the system check and before the exam, you'll need to request another system check by emailing us on exams@rcpch.ac.uk.

Ensure you are familiar with the [MRCPCH & DCH Examination Rules and Regulations](#), as any breach of these rules may mean your exam is disqualified.

Where can I sit my examination?

You can sit your exam anywhere you have a fully private space, and using your PC/laptop and mobile device that meet the minimum requirements stated above.

We recommend candidates do **not** sit their examination at work. If you choose to sit at work, it is your responsibility to:

- Ensure you have a private space where you will not be disturbed.
- Check in advance with your IT Network Administrator that they can help to support you sit your examination. You will need to ensure that you will not experience any problems using your works network or firewalls
- Ensure that you undertake the systems check on the devices that you will be using.

Instructions for the day

Our supplier, BTL, has put together two useful resources: a [video for candidates](#) and a quick start guide, which you can [download below](#).

Identifying yourself

You will need your photo ID and your admission document to prove who you are, so make sure you know where these documents are and have them easily to hand. You will be prompted to show your ID and admission document in the environment checks before your exam. Failure to produce ID and admission document will result in disqualification. If you cannot see yourself in the webcam and you cannot take a photo of your ID and admission document, you should not proceed with the examination until the webcam works.

Breaks

Online invigilation means you will be restricted in taking bathroom breaks during your examination. You will still have free time during the break between papers - between FOP and TAS or AKP paper 1 and AKP paper 2 but during each single paper, you will only be permitted to take one five-minute bathroom break throughout your examination, if you need

it. If you do need to use your 5 minute bathroom break, you will not get this time back and the examination will not be paused. Make sure you go to the toilet before your exam.

If you have any medical reasons which mean you will need an adjustment to this rule in order to safely and comfortably sit the examination, then this must be included in your application form so that we can notify ProctorExam.

What you can have in your workspace

You cannot have or use notepaper during your online invigilated examination.

You can take water into the exam, but ensure any bottles are translucent.

Make sure you are comfortably dressed - but be aware that you are being recorded.

Setting up your private space

It is essential that you let those close to you (friends, family and your work colleagues) know when you're sitting your exam, so that you will not be disturbed. If someone enters the room that you are in when you are taking your examination and you are seen communicating in any way with others there is a risk that you may be disqualified from your exam.

We would recommend setting your laptop up so that the door to the room that you take your examination in is visible behind you when you are sitting your examination. This will help to avoid any confusion that may arise for the invigilator who will be able to see if anyone has entered behind you clearly.

Sample papers

To familiarise yourself with an online examination delivery, we recommend that you [try our exam sample papers](#). These papers are not of the same length and difficulty as the live exam, but they provide candidates an opportunity to become familiar with the functionality of the system and the format of the questions.

Frequently asked questions

We've put together some [FAQs about both options](#).

Downloads

[Online invigilation candidate quick guide - Surpass](#)204.47 KB