



MEDICAL COUNCIL OF CANADA LE CONSEIL MÉDICAL DU CANADA

FAQ for Candidates

BLUEPRINT PROJECT

As the delivery of health care evolves rapidly, so, too, are the competencies that are expected of medical professionals. In 2011, the MCC began the “Blueprint Project”. Its purpose is to evaluate how well the MCC’s examinations reflect the reality of medical practice and the health-care needs of society today. The resulting Blueprint is a matrix of

foundational core competencies to be used to assess the readiness of medical graduates to enter residency and to enter independent practice.

The new Blueprint was approved in September 2014 and the MCC is now transitioning MCC Qualifying Examinations Parts I and II to this new framework.

Which candidates will be affected by the new examinations?

The new MCCQE Part I based on the Blueprint will launch in spring 2018 while the new MCCQE Part II will launch in fall 2018.

Please note that only the MCC Qualifying Examinations Part I (entry into residency) and Part II (entry into independent practice) will be updated to reflect the new Blueprint.

Will the examinations become more difficult?

Examination content is being updated to reflect a different emphasis on particular competencies and dimensions. This activity is not meant to alter the level of difficulty of the examinations, but rather to ensure that the examinations adequately assess the knowledge, skills and behaviours required at two key points in a physician’s early career, namely:

- Entry into residency (Qualifying Examination Part I)
- Entry into independent practice (Qualifying Examination Part II)

The MCC will provide support for candidates by publishing examination preparation resources and other material designed to provide in-depth information on the upcoming enhancements to the examinations.

How can I prepare for the new examinations?

In spring 2018, the MCC will publish a variety of examination preparation tools for the MCCQE Part I and Part II. These tools will update and enhance the existing examination preparation resources that are currently available online for each of the Qualifying Examinations.

These will include:

- Test specifications outlining the weightings for the different Blueprint dimensions on the examinations.
- Objectives linked to the new Blueprint
- A presentation providing a comprehensive overview of the new Blueprint
- New sample items and updates to existing sample items
- Updates to other online resources to align to the new Blueprint

In addition, the MCC will continue to work closely with Canada's medical faculties, certification colleges, and regulatory authorities to ensure that the entire community is aligned with the new Blueprint.

● **Will the examination format change?**

The MCC Qualifying Examinations will continue to use the same content formats that are currently in place, namely:

- Multiple-choice items (MCCQE Part I)
- Clinical decision making questions - write-in answers and/or long menus of choices (MCCQE Part I)
- Objective Structured Clinical Examination stations (MCCQE Part II)

● **Will the scoring standards change?**

In 2018, the MCC will run a standard-setting exercise for the spring MCCQE Part I and fall MCCQE Part II before scores are released to candidates. To complete these exercises, the MCC will need to delay communicating results to candidates beyond the normal time frame for releasing results.

The standard-setting exercises will ensure that fair pass/fail decisions are made based on the new expectations for each examination.

● **How do we know the new examination content will be of high quality?**

The MCC will continue to apply its existing standards, guidelines, and expertise to the development of new examination content. Furthermore, new examination content will be tested before it is launched in 2018. Content is assessed in the following ways:

- New items are piloted within the MCCQE Part I but are not identified as such. Any items that do not perform well are excluded from the scoring – this is true for all questions regardless of whether they are new.
- New clinical stations are included in the MCCQE Part II but are not identified to the candidate as pilot or test stations. The results on these stations do not count towards the candidate's score.

● **Who contributes to the decisions about what the examinations will assess?**

Canadian physicians, medical educators, and other stakeholders have been key collaborators in the Blueprint process. The new Blueprint and content specifications were developed and reviewed in collaboration with:

- Canadian medical faculties
- The Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada and its members
- Canadian physicians and clinical supervisors
- Canadian certification colleges
- Medical students and resident associations
- Other stakeholders