



**FACULTY OF
PUBLIC HEALTH**

Protecting and improving the health of the public
through the organised efforts of our members

FPH Examinations

Regulations and information for candidates

September 2022

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Foreword

These FPH Examination Regulations 2022 apply from 1 September 2022 to the Membership of the Faculty of Public Health Examinations and cover both The Faculty of Public Health Diplomate (DFPH) and Final Membership Examination (MFPH).

Notice of future amendments to the Regulations and revisions following publication of the 2022 Regulations will be highlighted by email and published on the website.

While every attempt has been made to ensure that the FPH Examination Regulations 2022 are accurate, further changes to the DFPH or MFPH Examination, the Regulations, the examination calendar and closing dates may be implemented during this time. Candidates should refer to the examination pages on the [FPH website](#) for the most up-to-date information, and where any such changes will be detailed.

Education and Training Department

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About the MFPH Examinations

The MFPH Examinations consists of two examinations: Diplomate Membership Examination (DFPH) and Final Membership Examination (MFPH).

Diplomate Membership Examination (DFPH)

DFPH is a written examination intended to test candidates' knowledge and understanding of the scientific bases of public health, and their ability to apply their knowledge and skills to the practice of public health.

Candidates are expected to have acquired specialist knowledge and skills in public health and show a clear understanding of the principles and methods of related disciplines — notably applied statistics, behavioural sciences, health economics and management.

Success in this examination leads to Diplomate Membership of the Faculty of Public Health.

Final Membership Examination (MFPH)

The MFPH is intended to follow the successful completion of the DFPH. The MFPH is an Objective Structured Public Health Examination (OSPHE) and intended as 'show how' assessment of the candidate's ability to apply relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to the practice of public health. Candidates must demonstrate that they can integrate the theoretical and practical aspects of public health practice.

Success in this examination leads to nomination for Membership of the Faculty of Public Health. This, in combination with the satisfactory completion of an approved Public Health training programme, confers eligibility to apply for a certificate of completion of training (CCT) and entry on to the General Medical Council's Specialist Register (Consultants with a medical background) or the UK Public Health Register's Specialist Register (Consultants with a background other than medical). Individuals who are not on an approved training programme may still sit the MFPH and be elected to Membership.

Online exams

In June 2020 the Faculty of Public Health agreed to migrate both the DFPH and MFPH exams, to an online format. The MFPH will return to an in-person format from September 2022 while the DFPH Examination will be remaining online indefinitely. This decision will be reviewed by the FPH periodically to ensure that standards are maintained.

These regulations cover the DFPH, the in-person MFPH exams and the online MFPH exam.

General information on Faculty exams

Eligibility

The DFPH examination is open to all people who:

- hold a university degree
- or have equivalent qualifications and/or experience approved by the FPH Education Committee.

It is not necessary to be enrolled on a training scheme or programme to sit the examination. However, those in the UK FPH specialty training programme must be enrolled with the Faculty of Public Health to sit the examination.

Before applying for the MFPH, candidates must have passed the DFPH or have been exempted from it, e.g., obtained reciprocal recognition of the Diploma & Part I Membership Examination held by the Irish Faculty of Public Health Medicine. Further information on exemption from DFPH is available on the [FPH website](#).

Application Procedure

Application guidelines and forms can be found on the examination pages of the [FPH website](#).

To apply, a completed application form must be submitted to the FPH Education and Training Department no later than the published closing date. During the application window, the application form will be available for the DFPH [here](#) and the MFPH [here](#). Please note, the closing dates listed on the FPH website are absolute. Applications submitted after 5.00pm (UK time) on the closing date cannot be accepted. The requisite examination fee must also be paid within 48 hours of submitting the application form.

Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by email. It will normally take several days to check and process entries.

Applicants not on the UK Public Health training scheme are required to submit evidence of their university degree. Applicants, who are registered members of the General Medical Council (GMC), can submit a copy of their registration certificate instead of their university degree certificate. Medical graduates not registered with the GMC must attach a digital copy of their primary medical qualification with their application form.

A marriage certificate or other official evidence of change of name must be submitted by candidates who wish to enter the examination under a different name to that on the Medical Register or on their original diploma of qualification.

Candidates are strongly recommended to submit application forms well in advance of the closing date so that any problems can be resolved in good time.

Approximately two weeks after the application closing date, candidates will receive a candidate pack. This pack will detail the date of the examination, the start and finish times along with important information about the exam. Candidates who have not received the

candidate pack should contact the Examinations Co-ordinator. Misreading the candidate pack is not an acceptable reason for failing to attend or joining an examination late.

Candidates in Hong Kong

Candidates on a Hong Kong training programme need to complete an additional and separate application to the Hong Kong College of Community Medicine (HKCCM) for the conjoint DFPH in Public Health. This form and further information can be found at www.hkccm.org.hk

Candidates with a background other than medicine (and other candidates not in a Hong Kong training programme) applying to sit the DFPH in Hong Kong also need to complete an additional application to the HKCCM. This is not an application to sit the conjoint UK/HKCCM examination. The HKCCM acts for the Faculty of Public Health in the capacity of an examination administering body and requires a separate application form and fee to cover administrative costs.

In addition to following the normal UK application procedure outlined above, candidates should:

- complete the additional application form
- pay an administrative fee as specified by the HKCCM

Please note, the HKCCM acts only in the capacity of an examination administering authority, which is not equivalent to the conjoint arrangements for some of the other candidates. The HKCCM will not recognise the qualification gained by candidates taking the Hong Kong sitting of the UK FPH examination if they have a background other than medicine.

Fees

Fees for the DFPH and MFPH exams are set by the Board of the Faculty of Public Health. The current fees are available on the FPH website. Please see the DFPH fees [here](#) and the MFPH fees [here](#).

Preparation

Material to aid candidate preparation is available on the FPH website, this includes some past [DFPH papers](#) and samples of [MFPH scenarios](#).

Admission to exams

Proof of identity is required before a candidate will be allowed into the exam. Candidates are required to show one of the documents listed below as proof of identity at the examination. The document must be original, valid and bear a photograph:

- Passport
- UK Immigration and Nationality Department identification document
- Home Office travel document

- Full or provisional photocard driving licence
- EU identity card
- National Identity Card (or Hong Kong Identity Card for Hong Kong candidates)

If the name on the identification document is different from that on the confirmation from FPH offering a place in the examination, original evidence must be provided in good time, that the candidate is the person named in that letter. FPH will accept:

- Marriage/ Civil Partnership certificate or
- A declaration from the awarding body which granted the primary medical qualification, stating that both names relate to the candidate.
- Registered deed poll

If candidates cannot provide one of the documents listed above, or if the proof of identity document does not bear a photograph, they will not be allowed to take the examination. The examination fee will not be refundable under these circumstances.

If you are unable to provide the appropriate ID for your exam, please contact the appropriate exams co-ordinator in advance of the exam date.

Number of attempts and validity period of examination passes

Candidates are permitted a maximum of six attempts at either the DFPH or MFPH. Candidates withdrawing or who are absent from an examination will not have that attempt counted. After six attempts, candidates are required to provide evidence of additional educational or training experience. For the DFPH, the attempt limit will apply irrespective of whether a candidate has banked a paper or not.

Candidates applying for an additional attempt over and above the limit of six will need to complete an additional attempt form. This form can be found within the application form for each exam.

Guidance for completing the form and further detail about additional experience are available on the [FPH website](#).

Once the DFPH has been passed, no candidate will be permitted more than seven years to pass the MFPH. The seven-year validity period will be calculated from the date that a candidate passes the DFPH exam. Should a candidate fail to achieve a MFPH pass within the seven-year limit, they will be required to take the DFPH again.

Any examination pass achieved prior to, or while on a break from the training scheme, will only be considered valid for CCT as long as the candidate enters or re-enters the training programme within seven years of passing the examination.

Cancellation

The Faculty reserve the right to cancel exam sittings and arrange new dates. Any monies paid for dates that maybe cancelled or re arranged will either be transferred or fully refunded.

Withdrawal from the exam

The Membership Examinations are high-stakes assessments, and it is therefore in the interest of candidates that they sit the exam when they are able to complete it to the best of their ability. As such, candidates should ensure that they are both physically and mentally fit to undertake an examination.

If a candidate is not fit or there are other grounds for withdrawal, they should inform their Training Programme Director, Educational Supervisor or employer who should issue a letter of support.

The application for withdrawal together with supporting evidence should be sent to the Examinations Co-ordinator as soon as possible.

If the candidate subsequently chooses to attend the examination, they are deemed themselves 'fit to sit' and the mark awarded is deemed an accurate reflection of their performance(s).

Please see the [Withdrawal Policy and Application Form](#) for further details on supporting documentation, timelines and refunds.

Extenuating circumstances

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are unexpected, unavoidable, and beyond a candidate's control. If a candidate falls ill (or experiences another extenuating circumstance) during the time near to the examination (e.g., the evening or morning before the exam) they may absent themselves from the exam and submit the application for extenuating circumstances within three working days.

If a candidate is suffering with an infectious illness, they should submit an application to withdraw from the exam and not attend the exam venue. It will not be possible to accommodate a candidate in a separate room on the day of the exam.

Candidates who are 'fit to sit' on entering the examination/examination venue but become unwell during the exam (or experience another extenuating circumstance) should speak to the invigilator, Chief Officer or a member of the Examinations Team who will include this in a report for the Exam Board.

If the candidate leaves the exam in these circumstances, their answer booklet/mark sheet shall become null and void irrespective of whether the extenuating circumstances application is successful.

Please note that if the candidate wishes to continue the examination and subsequently submits an application for extenuating circumstances, a successful application will result in their attempt being discounted whatever the outcome.

The examinations [Extenuating Circumstances Policy and application form are available here](#).

Please note that marks/results will not be altered to reflect individual circumstances. The only available outcome from a successful submission is that the attempt will be discounted.

Fire alarms or other emergencies during online exams

If a fire alarm sounds before the exam begins, please contact FPH once safely outside the building. Depending on timing, it may be possible to allow late entry into the exam.

If the fire alarm sounds during the exam please alert your invigilator immediately, if possible, and contact FPH as soon as you are safely outside the building. It will normally not be possible to allow candidates to re-join the exam. This is due to both the security of the exam and the time lost during the exam.

Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are intended to assist candidates to demonstrate their ability, knowledge and expertise and be fairly assessed without affecting or circumventing the requirements of the assessment. FPH takes adjustment requests very seriously and carefully considers how best to accommodate the requests we receive. FPH works with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges to ensure that our policy aligns with other Royal Colleges and that we adhere to best practice.

Please note that if you wish to apply for a reasonable adjustment, you must provide all supporting documentation required and a letter from your TPD at the time of application. Ideally this should be sent to FPH at least three weeks before the application closing date. Late documentation will not be considered. Please note that there is a fee associated with withdrawing if you wish to delay your attempt due to a condition that is currently being assessed.

Please see the [Policy for Candidates Requiring Adjustments](#) for further information. If you have any queries, please contact educ@fph.org.uk.

Misconduct

If candidates engage in any activity that may be deemed to constitute professional or academic misconduct, they will be reported directly to examination officers and the FPH Education and Training Department. All incidences will be investigated in accordance with the [FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy](#), and if found to have engaged in misconduct, candidates may have their examination results declared invalid, and their names reported to their professional regulatory authority. For more information on misconduct, please refer to the specific exam sections ([MFPH](#) and [DFPH](#)) in these regulations.

Appeals

Candidates who wish to appeal against their examination results should consult the [FPH Examinations Appeals Policy & Procedure](#).

Candidates who wish to make a formal appeal against their examination results must write to the Chief Executive of the Faculty within one calendar month of the date of dispatch of the result, as indicated in the procedures. Candidates should read this guidance carefully to ensure that their grounds for appeal are legitimate before writing.

Complaints

There is a complaints procedure for all activities managed by FPH not directly linked to an outcome of an examination. The complaints procedure is available on the [FPH website](#).

Exemption from examinations

To comply with the recent GMC position on approved curricula and the role of UK and overseas exams, FPH has had to alter the reciprocal arrangement that was previously agreed with the Irish Faculty of Public Health Medicine, where a pass in the MFPHMI Part I examination lead to an exemption from the DFPH.

As part of the GMC's transitional guidelines, FPH is able to provide DFPH exemptions that count towards CCT where the following two criteria are met:

- The MFPHMI Part I examination pass has been achieved before 1 June 2015; and
- The doctor enters the UK training programme before 31 December 2016.

Exemption from either the DFPH or MFPH examination is not allowed on any other grounds.

Candidates who meet the exam exemption criteria and wish to gain membership of the Faculty of Public Health, should complete the [exemption from DFPH form](#) and enclose the relevant evidence and requested fee. A copy of the original letter of notification from the Irish Faculty will be acceptable evidence.

DFPH specific information

Content

The level of knowledge, skill and understanding required within all sections of the syllabus is that which could reasonably be expected of a competent practitioner in public health who may aspire to attain specialist status.

The DFPH syllabus, available on the [FPH website](#), provides indicative guidance on the main topics that may be examined at DFPH.

DFPH also tests the following skills:

- a) Design and interpretation of studies: skills in the design of research studies; ability critically to evaluate published papers including the validity of the use of statistical techniques and the inferences drawn from them; ability to draw appropriate conclusions from quantitative and qualitative research.
- b) Data processing, presentation and interpretation: ability to sort and manipulate data, and to draw appropriate conclusions from quantitative and qualitative data.
- c) Communication: written presentation skills; preparation of papers for publication; preparation of material for different audiences, including expert and non-expert audiences and the media. Information handling and use of media in advising the public about health services, disease prevention (including communicable disease outbreaks and environmental hazards) and health promotion.

Structure

The examination consists of two papers - Paper I and Paper II. Both Papers I and II are split into two parts: A and B – (Paper IA, Paper IB, Paper IIA and Paper IIB).

Candidates should note that there may be duplication of subject material in Paper I and Paper II.

The examination is designed to accommodate candidates from disciplines in the wider field of public health as well as candidates with experience outside the UK health service system. In setting questions, the aim is for generic questions, which, where appropriate, allow candidates to relate answers to their particular settings.

Paper I - 'Knowledge Paper'

Paper I is designed primarily to test knowledge. The knowledge part of the syllabus is broken down into five sections further details of which are available in the syllabus. The skills tested at DFPH are not the same as those tested at the MFPH, or through the ARCP process.

An ability to extract, process and present data, to criticise research evidence and to communicate in writing to a non-specialist audience, are required for DFPH

Candidates must answer 10 compulsory short-answer questions across the range of the syllabus to demonstrate their knowledge of the core sciences of public health.

Section IA (2 hours, 30 minutes)

Candidates must answer six questions covering the following subjects:

- a) Research methods, including epidemiology, statistical methods, and other methods of enquiry including qualitative research methods
- b) Disease prevention and health promotion
- c) Health information

Section IB (1 hour, 40 minutes)

Candidates must answer four questions covering the following subjects:

- d) Medical sociology, social policy and health economics
- e) Organisation and management of health care

Paper II - 'Skills Paper'

Paper II is designed primarily to test skills. The skills part of the syllabus is broken into three sections, material from any of which may be tested at any point in the skills part of the examination.

Some core data handling skills and the ability to perform core statistical techniques will be required in the examination - sensitivity, specificity, positive and negative predictive power, numbers needed to treat, relative risk, odds ratio, attributable fraction, Standard Error and Confidence Interval (CI) of a proportion and of a difference in proportions, Chi Square for a 2 X 2 table, McNemar's test, standardisation - direct and indirect, weighted averages, CI and standard errors for means.

This paper is designed to test candidates' public health skills. Candidates must answer all question posed in both sections. There is no choice of questions on either section.

Section IIA (2 hours, 30 minutes)

Critical appraisal and commentary on material in an article from a journal and its application to a specific public health problem. The first question for this paper includes a word limit, the function of which is to focus candidates in terms of the answers they provide. The remaining questions may be phrased in general terms and allow candidates to give examples from different contexts.

Section IIB (2 hours)

This is structured as five 'sections', which cover different parts of the syllabus, each section contributing 10 marks. Answers may be numerical, graphical, short phrases, sentences or a short paragraph (where indicated in the question). Multiple choice questions may be included. The paper will assess data manipulation and interpretation skills. Candidates should use their own basic calculator with sufficient functions for these purposes including a square root function but no other scientific functions. Candidates are not permitted to bring a different calculator into the examination.

Marking system

Papers are anonymised and marked by examiners working individually.

A total of 14 examiners are involved in marking the examination scripts from each sitting of DFPH.

The final mark on each paper for every candidate sitting the examination is individually discussed and agreed at the Examinations Board meeting. For further details, please see further information on marking [here](#) and the [DFPH marking algorithm](#) used by the Executive Examiners.

Notification of results

Examination results will be sent by email approximately one week after the DFPH results meeting (usually around six weeks after the examination).

Training Programme Directors will receive the overall result of candidates within their deanery. A pass list and results summary will also be published on the Faculty website the week after the results are emailed to candidates. Examination results will not be given over the telephone and will not be posted in the Faculty premises.

Candidates who have passed the examination, will have their names passed to the Membership Department of the Faculty for election to Diplomate Membership.

Feedback

All candidates receive a results letter with a breakdown of their examination performance in the form of numerical marks. Candidates will not receive detailed individual feedback.

After each sitting, the Faculty will release a report with examiner's comments and feedback to candidates. The feedback gives general points to support candidates preparing for each section of the exam in the future. Comments are intended to provide helpful guidance rather than be prescriptive.

Banking

It is possible to 'bank' papers for the DFPH. This means that if the candidate does not pass the examination but has passed an individual paper, this result can be banked so that the candidate need not sit this paper again.

This is feasible due to the explicit separation of knowledge and skills between Papers I and II.

As of January 2017, we no longer stipulate that candidates who bank a paper at a sitting must then sit the remaining paper at each subsequent examination. A candidate may miss a sitting and sit the exam at the following sitting. For example, if a candidate banked a paper in March 2022, they could miss the October 2022 sitting but would need to sit the exam in March 2023 to retain their banked paper. If the candidate did not pass their banked paper in March 2023, they could miss a sitting again and sit their remaining paper at the following sitting. This is possible up to a maximum of six attempts.

If the candidate requires longer, they should submit a statement from their educational supervisor or training programme director which will be considered by the Chair of DFPH Examiners.

Please note the following:

- An individual paper (I or II) may be banked only when it has been passed.
- There will be no change in the examination fees for sittings of individual papers.
- Candidates must continue to take both parts (papers) of the examination at the same sitting, unless a paper has been banked previously.
- Candidates who bank a paper at a sitting must then sit the remaining paper at each subsequent examination.
- A candidate will only be considered for a prize at their first sitting of the examination.

MFPH Specific Information

Availability of places for the MFPH Exam

Each sitting of the MFPH exam is able to accommodate a maximum of 24 candidates. Candidates should check the availability of MFPH sittings on the [FPH website](#) before they apply for the examination.

It is recommended that candidates apply as soon as they are sure they wish to sit the exam, even if this is some time in the future. In their application, candidates are encouraged to specify their preference for different sittings in the year. Places are offered on a first come first served basis and candidates' first choice in any MFPH sitting is not guaranteed. Therefore, candidates should ensure that their second-choice date is kept free until they receive confirmation of sitting date.

All candidates are randomly allocated to either the morning or afternoon session for each examination sitting. Candidates will normally be notified in writing of the exact date, time and location of their examination six to eight weeks before the examination date. It is not possible to provide this information over the telephone.

Priority and Waiting Lists

Candidates who do not secure their first choice sitting may opt-in to join a waiting list for their preferred sitting. If candidates withdraw from an examination or waiting list, the list will be updated and any available sittings will be offered to applicants on the waiting list. Once allocated a sitting, a candidate will not be able to change this other than under exceptional circumstances to be agreed by the Chair and Assistant Academic Registrar.

It is advised that candidates who appeal against a MFPH outcome from the previous sittings should not reapply and join a waiting list until the outcome of the appeal process has been concluded.

Applicants for the MFPH will be able to apply immediately after receiving their DFPH examination results normally without prioritisation. Dates will be published up to a year in advance to allow potential applicants the opportunity to plan ahead.

Candidates at the end of training

FPH aim to reserve one priority place per sitting for applicants who are within 6 months of their expected CCT date. If this space is unfilled, it is released to those on the waiting list.

Content

The MFPH is a practical assessment designed to assess candidates' ability to use knowledge and skills appropriately in public health settings. The standard required in MFPH will be that which could be reasonably expected of a public health trainee with at least two years' (whole time equivalent) of service-based training left and is normally achievable by someone in training after passing DFPH.

The examination is a series of role-play scenarios that represent everyday public health practice. The scenarios are often based on the day-to-day experiences of consultants in public health. Candidates will not be required to be familiar with NHS procedures or practices. The MFPH is a 'show how' assessment rather than a 'knowledge' or 'know how' assessment, which will already have been completed in DFPH.

The following five competency areas will be assessed for each scenario:

- The ability to demonstrate presenting communication skills (verbal and non-verbal) appropriately in typical public health settings: presenting to a person or audience.
- The ability to demonstrate listening and comprehending communications skills (verbal and non-verbal) appropriately in typical public health settings: listening and responding appropriately.
- Demonstrating ascertainment of key public health facts from the material provided and using it appropriately with regard to wider Public Health information sources.
- Giving a balanced view and/or explaining appropriately key Public Health concepts in a Public Health setting.
- The ability to handle uncertainty, the unexpected, challenge and conflict appropriately.

The subject matter used in the examinations will draw on material from a wide range of topics encountered in everyday public health practice. The scenarios themselves will also be varied across the six stations of the examination.

Topic areas

- Health Protection (including Infection, Immunisation, Screening and Environmental subject matter).
- Health Promotion and Health Improvement (including lifestyle and behavioural interventions at individual and population level, partnership working and wider determinants of health).

- Quality healthcare: technical aspects of commissioning which require expert advice or assessment utilising public health skills. Examples include the application of technical material to health or health care provision.
- Quality healthcare: Implementation of health or healthcare interventions and working with patients, the public, professionals or organisations.

Types of scenario

In addition to the topic areas, there are four types of scenarios reflective of mainstream public health practice:

1. Media/high profile 'public':
media - newspaper, radio pre-recorded; member of parliament or local council leader; press officer of NHS or partner organisation.
2. Other non-health service public health 'specialist'/key 'public health improvement' partner:
meeting with/briefing for senior professional (e.g., professional whose job focus has strong public health element such as Director of Children's Services or an informed chair of a non-health or other organisation);
meeting with or briefing for new public health trainees or non-specialist staff;
meeting with other senior officer of council or other partner organisation to discuss public health actions.
3. The Lay public:
meeting with local councillor/non-NHS health partnership chair or member;
meeting with member of the public on an issue pertinent to them; meeting with representative of patient forum or pressure or lobby group.
4. Healthcare staff - clinical and general management: briefing to chair of NHS committee or board (non-clinical):
meeting with healthcare manager - commissioning or Chief Executive or other senior; meeting with healthcare professional involved in care delivery - GP/Consultant/Nurse/ Allied healthcare professional

Structure

The MFPH takes the form of six scenarios. Each scenario will have an examination station that is preceded by a preparation station where candidates review briefing material. Each preparation and examination station lasts eight minutes.

For examiner training purposes FPH video-records a random sample of MFPH stations. These videos will be used exclusively for examiner training and will not be used as part of the marking processes and not, save in exceptional cases, as evidence when considering complaints, appeals or cases of alleged misconduct. Candidates will not be permitted to opt out of being video recorded or to request copies of their station for any purpose

The samples of MFPH stations, available on the [FPH website](#) illustrate the format and structure that will be used in each question.

In-Person Final Membership Examination (Default method of delivery from September 2022)

Arrival

FPH expect all examinations to start on time. Traffic and public transport can cause delays, so candidates should allow plenty of time for their journey. If candidates are late (i.e. too late to register and be briefed with other candidates) they will not be allowed to take the examination and the fee will not be refunded.

Candidates may be asked to arrive at the centre in the morning although their examination will be in the afternoon; this is because they are not permitted to meet the candidates that took the examination in the morning.

When entering the assessment centre, candidates will be asked to store all their belongings away before moving to the candidate rooms,

Materials

Nothing can be taken into the examination area. Candidates will be provided with all the materials needed during the examination.

Misconduct

Candidates must not use or refer to any other materials or try to communicate with other candidates during the examination.

Candidates are not permitted to wear any type of watch (smart watch or analogue) or wearable technology. They should not have any electronic devices (including, but not restricted to, phones, tablets, smart watches, timers, recording devices, headphones, earpieces etc.) All books, pens, papers, mobile phones, watches and any electronic equipment must be stored away, when entering the centre.

Please note that there will be a clock in each examination and preparation room. It is not possible to use a timer for the in-person MFPH exam.

Candidates must not take any examination materials out of the assessment centre, must not write down the details of stations to take out and must not obtain information about stations from any source including other candidates.

If candidates do any of these things or engage in any other activity that may be deemed to constitute professional or academic misconduct, they will be reported directly to examination officers and the FPH Education and Training Department. All incidences will be investigated in accordance with the [FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy and Procedure](#), and if found to have engaged in misconduct candidates may have their examination result declared invalid and their name reported to their professional regulatory authority.

Completing the examination

On the day, all candidates will be fully briefed about what they have to do. When entering the examination area, candidates will find six preparation booths and six examination booths, known as stations. Each station requires the candidate to undertake a particular task. Some tasks will involve just reading instructions; some will involve tasks such as preparing a verbal briefing, giving a short formal talk, or being interviewed by a journalist.

Each station lasts eight minutes, and there will be approximately one minute between stations. The stations will be numbered clearly from 1 to 6 and staff will help candidates move between stations.

Candidates will have access to a candidate briefing pack in the preparation room. There will also be paper in the preparation room for candidates to make notes on. Candidates can take these notes with them into the examination room but should leave them there at the end of the station. A separate copy of the candidate briefing pack will be available in the examination room for reference. Candidates must not make any markings on the candidate packs.

Candidates will be required to perform all tasks. They will be told the number of the station at which they should begin in the briefing session and will be directed to that station when entering the examination area. The starting station will also be indicated by a number on the name badge given to each candidate when they register.

The first station will always be a preparation station where candidates will read the instructions for the examination station outlining what will be required to perform at that station. Candidates will have eight minutes before entering the examination station to read the instructions. They must always read the station instructions carefully and respond appropriately. Candidates should not assume they know what the station is about.

An announcement will be made to inform candidates that they may then enter the examination station. There will be an examiner in each station. Candidates will not always be required to have a conversation with the examiner; and should only direct remarks to him or her if the instructions specifically ask them to do so. Candidates should undertake the task as instructed.

In some stations there may be an actor who has been provided with a detailed script beforehand. In these stations the examiner will observe and will not intervene, except in very limited circumstances.

In addition to the candidate, examiner and actor/role-player, there may be other people in the room and these others may include examiners in training, observers participating in an audit and evaluation of the MFPH etc.

An announcement will be made after seven minutes to warn candidates that they are nearly out of time. Another announcement will be made when the time has expired. At this point, candidates must stop immediately and go to the next station. If candidates finish before the end, they must wait inside the station but should not speak to the examiner or the role-player during this time.

Candidates should continue in this way until they have completed all examination stations. They will then have finished the MFPH examination.

Examiners will not give any feedback during examination stations.

Leaving the examination

At the end of the examination candidates should hand in their card/ID Badge to a member of staff, collect their belongings and leave quietly.

Marking system

Candidate's performance is assessed against five competency areas for each scenario. Candidates will therefore receive six independent assessments of each of the five competency areas. At each station there will be at least two people conducting the examination. One examiner at each station will be responsible for and free to concentrate on marking.

Using marking guidance, examiners grade each competency A-E for each candidate, with A being excellent, B being good, C being satisfactory, D being just below satisfactory and E being poor. These grades are later converted into numerical scores.

MFPH applies a process of combining scores from individual stations to produce a global score and average marks for the five competency areas.

If a candidate were to be awarded a C for each competency at all six stations, this would indicate a pass overall. However, the marks for each competency are averaged, so the marking structure is such that it is possible to do less well on, say, two of the stations, and yet still pass overall by getting some marks higher than a C at other stations. The other requirement for a pass is that each competency area must be marked as satisfactory or above at half or more of the stations. See the [MFPH marking algorithm](#) for a summary of how results are determined.

No part/question of the MFPH exam can be banked.

Notification of results

Candidates can expect to receive their results via the email address supplied on the application within 10 working days after the examination.

There are two possible outcomes of the examination: Pass or Fail.

Candidates who have passed the examination, will have their names passed to the Membership Department of the Faculty. They will be asked to become a Member of the Faculty, which is one of the requirements for completion of training and being recommended for inclusion on the specialist register.

Training Programme Directors will receive the overall result of candidates within their deanery.

Feedback

Candidates are given feedback in the form of average scores for each competency; giving them an indication of how well they have performed in the examination and which competencies may require targeted training.

Online DFPH and MFPH exams

Please note that while the DFPH Examination is remaining online indefinitely, the MFPH exam may be held as an online sitting if necessary due to Government restrictions. In the event of a return to online exams the following regulations will apply.

Prior to the exam

Candidates should familiarise themselves with the online exam proctoring platform. Candidates will be sent details on how to log into the exam and all candidates are required to log onto the exam platform to check they have equipment a laptop or PC with the appropriate specifications to take the exam. Candidates will receive access to the online platform system in advance of their exam date and are advised to log on and familiarise themselves with the online exam environment, navigation, and functions etc. Any queries with the system should be raised with the FPH office in good time before the exam.

DFPH

Approximately two weeks before the exam candidates will be sent a booking email from TestReach. Candidates must enrol in their exam papers before the deadline specified in that email to be able to sit the exam. Candidates will lose their exam fee if they do not enrol in their exam papers before the specified deadline. Further information on the online platform can be found [here](#).

Additional candidate responsibilities for online exams

As both the DFPH and MFPH are conducted as online proctored exams, they can be taken in the candidate's chosen location (normally home or workplace) that they feel is suitable for exam conditions. If a candidate is sitting the exam at a place of their choosing (i.e., a home or work environment) it is their responsibility to ensure that their location is quiet, undisturbed and appropriate for taking a professional examination.

For online proctored examinations it will be the candidate's explicit responsibility to ensure they have the appropriate IT facilities and data connectivity in accordance with the specifications for the relevant examination. Candidates must test their IT systems by checking the websites of the exam providers in good time prior to an examination. Any issues with this should be raised with the Faculty before the day of the exam, so the problem can be investigated.

Candidates need to take all reasonable steps to ensure that they can be seen and heard by the examiner/invigilator for the exam. Failure by the candidate to ensure this will mean the exam attempt is voided and no refund of the application fee will be given.

FPH accepts no liability whatsoever in connection with a disrupted or curtailed assessment due to a candidate's inadequate IT equipment or data connectivity.

Permitted devices for taking the exam

Candidates are responsible for ensuring they have an appropriate device on which to take to the examination remotely. This will be an appropriately enabled laptop or PC with a keyboard. Mobile devices such as phones, iPads or other tablet or any device with a touchscreen keyboard enabled are not acceptable devices and candidates will not be permitted to take the DFPH or the MFPH exam on such a device. Please note that laptops with a touchscreen function can be used as long as the touchscreen element can be switched off and a keyboard is used (either on the device or connected via USB or wireless connection).

Joining the online examination

DFPH

All candidates must be logged in, have their ID ready to present and be ready to commence the assessment 15 minutes before the start of the examination.

In the event that a candidate logs in to the exam later than the allocated start time, it will still be possible to start the exam up to a maximum of 30 minutes after the exam has begun. If a candidate logs in to the exam after this initial 30 minutes has passed, they will not be permitted to sit the exam and refunds will not be provided.

MFPH

All candidates must be logged in to the video conference platform and have their ID ready for registration at least 15 minutes before the candidate briefing is due to start.

Candidates who fail to login at least 15 minutes before the briefing is scheduled to start will not be permitted to sit the exam and a refund will not be provided.

Following the briefing the candidates will need to login into the exam platform. Candidates who fail to login at least 15 minutes before the exam is scheduled to start will not be permitted to sit the exam and a refund will not be provided.

Exam environment

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure they have an environment that complies with the requirements for taking an online examination.

Additional reference materials or study aids are not permitted and should not be present on the candidate's desk (including, but not restricted to, pre-written notes, textbooks or printed materials).

Candidates are not permitted to wear any type of watch (digital or analogue), other wearable technology or have any electronic devices (including, but not restricted to, phones, tablets, smart watches, recording devices, headphones, earpieces etc). Candidates are not permitted to have any security cameras or other type of cameras in the room.

Candidates are permitted to use a basic timer. This device should not have any other functionality. It is not possible to use a phone or another device as a timer. Invigilators will check this on beginning the exam.

Candidates are allowed to bring a snack and water for the exam. Please note that food/water must be in clear packaging otherwise the invigilator will ask them to remove it from the room.

In the event of a disruption such as a second person entering the room the candidate should quickly ask them to leave. Failure to do so may be grounds for a misconduct issue, (please see the section on [Misconduct](#)).

Watches, smart watches and other wearable technology should be kept in a separate room.

DFPH

Please note that candidates should not use PCs with two screens as the platforms have not been developed to deliver to this specification.

If you wish to use a separate screen with your device, please ensure that only one screen is switched on. Please refer to the [FAQs on the website](#) for more details.

Phones should be left out of reach and turned off before the exam has begun. They should only be used to show the invigilator the environment if required or if there is a problem in connecting to the exam or re-joining the exam in the event that connection is lost completely. In all other circumstances they should be used in the event of emergencies only. Failure to do so may be grounds for a misconduct issue (please see the section on [Misconduct](#)).

Candidates should not have any notes or any materials to take notes for the DFPH Exam. However, candidates will be allowed to use a single-sided A3 or A4 whiteboard to make notes during the exam. Please ensure that you have a working erasable pen (with eraser). Leaving the room to access another pen/eraser will not be permitted.

Candidates are not permitted to speak aloud during the exam unless this has been requested and approved due to a request for an adjustment.

Candidates will be asked to scan the room in which they are taking the exam with their webcam to confirm there are no prohibited materials or devices in the room. If the candidate is unable to scan the room, the invigilator may ask the candidate to use the camera on their phone or a mirror. If the candidate is unable to do this the invigilator will record this in their report. Candidates may also be asked to demonstrate that they have no hidden devices on their person, for example by rolling up sleeves to show any watches, showing their ears to assess for any earpieces and emptying pockets.

The whole desk area surrounding the PC/laptop must be clear of materials (in all directions). The only device candidates are permitted to use are their own simple, non-scientific, non-programmable calculator. Invigilators will verify that the calculator matches this specification upon registration to the exam. There will also be a simple (non-scientific) calculator provided on the online platform. Please ensure that your calculator is working

before the exam. You will not be permitted to leave the room to access additional equipment during the exam.

MFPH

Please note that candidates should not use PCs with two screens as the platforms have not been developed to deliver to this specification.

Headphones or headsets are permitted for the online MFPH Exam so that candidates can ensure that they are able to clearly hear examiners/role player.

Candidates are also permitted to use a basic timer. This device should not have any other functionality. It is not possible to use a phone or another device as a timer.

Materials for making notes, for example pens and blank sheets of paper, are allowed for the MFPH exam. Notes should be destroyed while observed by the invigilator at the end of the exam.

Candidates are allowed to bring a snack and water for the exam. Please note that food/water must be in clear packaging otherwise the invigilator will ask them to remove it from the room.

In the event of a disruption such as a second person entering the room the candidate should quickly ask them to leave. Failure to do so may be grounds for a [misconduct issue](#).

Phones should be placed out of reach and used only to make contact with FPH before the exam has begun and in emergencies only. Watches, smart watches and other wearable technology should be kept in a separate room. Failure to adhere to these rules may be grounds for a [misconduct issue](#).

The whole desk area surrounding the PC/laptop must be clear except for materials listed above.

Invigilation of remote examinations

All FPH online exams will be remotely invigilated as such candidates should try to ensure that they sit with a wall behind them to both facilitate the remote invigilation process and ensure security of the exam. It is important to ensure that your image is clear and is not obscured by either too much or too little light in the room.

All candidates will be connected to a live invigilator at all times, and candidates will be monitored through their webcam and microphone, which must be in good working order. Speakers are also required so that the invigilator is able to communicate with candidates. By agreeing to these regulations candidates are giving agreement to be filmed (please see the section on [recording](#))

Bathroom breaks

DFPH

Candidates will be permitted to take one bathroom break of a maximum of five minutes for each paper that they are taking of the exam. They should notify the invigilator who will

record this for the invigilator report. The invigilator may ask to do another check to ensure that prohibited material have not been brought into the room. Please note that the clock will not be stopped for bathroom breaks so candidates will lose this time from their exam.

If a candidate is taking the exam over a 3-hour period, typically because of a reasonable adjustment request, they will be allowed two bathroom breaks, of a maximum of 5 minutes each. Please note that the clock will not be stopped for bathroom breaks so candidates will lose this time from their exam.

MFPH

Candidates will be permitted a bathroom break of a maximum of 5 mins between the briefing and the start of the exam.

During the exam a candidate will be permitted to take a bathroom break however this is strongly discouraged. They should notify the invigilator who will record this for the invigilator report. Please note no additional time will be provided for candidates who take bathroom breaks.

Loss of connectivity during the exam

In the event of an examiner/invigilator losing connection or not being able to view/hear a candidate properly, they will notify the candidate, where possible, and this will be captured on the examiner/invigilator's report.

DFPH

If a candidate's internet connection drops completely, the exam platform will try to resume a connection for 10 minutes. The test will resume as normal if resolved in this time. If the connection is not resumed in 10 minutes, the candidate should contact the software provider immediately. Failure to contact the software provider within 15 minutes of the loss of connection will mean that the candidate is not allowed to re-join the exam.

If the candidate's connection drops completely for more than 10 minutes again, they will not be allowed re-join the exam.

Candidates should report any incidents and issues to their TestReach invigilator during the exam. Once the exam is complete, candidates must inform FPH of any significant issues/incidents they experienced as this may not be done by TestReach.

MFPH

In the event of an examiner/invigilator losing connection or not being able to view/hear a candidate properly, they will notify the candidate, where possible, and this will be captured on the examiner/invigilator's report.

If a candidate's internet connection fails for less than 4 minutes during a preparation station, they should inform the invigilator and the examiner in the relevant station. The invigilator for the preparation station will record this as part of their report. If a candidate's internet connection fails for less than 4 minutes during an examination station, the examiner will record this as part of their report.

No additional time will be granted for the candidate in these circumstances.

If a candidate's internet connection fails for more than 4 minutes, during a preparation station or examination station, then the candidate will not be permitted to complete the exam and the attempt will be voided.

Please note that any candidate that has been granted a reasonable adjustment of extra time, will receive the proportional equivalence in terms of the time they will be permitted to be disconnected from the exam.

If the examiner or role-players connection fails for less than 4 minutes during an examination station then the examiner will include this as part of their report.

No additional time will be granted for the candidate in these circumstances.

If the examiners or role-players internet connection fails for more than 4 minutes, during an examination station, then the candidate will not be permitted to complete the exam and the attempt will be voided. The candidate will then receive a place at the next available sitting without charge.

If in any one station the candidate, examiner and/or role player experience a combined loss of internet connection of more than 4 minutes in total, then the exam attempt will be voided. In this instance, if the candidate believes that the loss of their internet connection was beyond their control, they should submit an [Extenuating Circumstance application](#).

If a candidate experiences an internet connection failure for any period of time for 2 or more stations, preparation or examination, then the exam attempt may be voided. This includes internet connection failures on the part of the candidate, examiner or role-player or any combination of these. In this instance, if the candidate believes that this was beyond their control they should submit an [Extenuating Circumstance application](#).

Exam Re-runs

At the end of each session, re-runs of examination stations are possible. Re-runs will be conducted under the following circumstances:

1. Where there is loss of internet connection in the Examination station for the Candidate, Role Player, or Examiner of greater than 4 minutes duration affecting a candidate for more than one station.
2. Where there is loss of internet connection in the Preparation station for the Candidate affecting an individual candidate for more than one station.

The final decision to re-run of a station and the amount of preparation time allocated will be made by the Chief Officer. The decision will be informed by an update from the Exam Controller. If this happens, the Faculty will ensure that the Candidate is connected to the appropriate Examination station so that the station can be repeated.

DFPH and MFPH

If internet connectivity is lost during a remotely delivered exam and this was beyond the candidates control this could be considered an extenuating circumstance. The candidate would need to submit an [Extenuating Circumstance form](#) and provide a statement

explaining the steps they took to re-establish connection with the exam and any additional evidence to support their claim. Applications would then be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

If the candidate can demonstrate that loss of connection was demonstrably out of their control, then FPH may allow them to sit the examination at the next possible opportunity at no charge and the exam attempt may also be discounted.

Misconduct

The invigilator may stop any candidate suspected of misconduct and issue a warning during the examination, and if necessary, expel the candidate from the examination. Failing to follow instructions of examiners and invigilators may be grounds for a misconduct issue.

Examples of moderate offences include:

- A second person accidentally entering the room.
- Leaning out of view of the camera.

Examples of serious offences include:

- Answering a ringing phone (unless you are making contact with TestReach/the FPH Exam team due to a complete loss of connection). TestReach will ask candidates to switch off phones in front of the camera before the exam begins to avoid risk of disturbance.
- Possession of or consulting any prohibited items in the examination environment, such as textbooks and websites;
- Helping or receiving help from another candidate; and
- Writing down or attempting to capture any details of the exam questions for use outside of the exam.
- Use of any Artificial Intelligence software during the course of either DFPH or MFPH would be considered a serious breach of your professional obligations, and would void the entire exam, this would be notified to your training organisation (if you are in training) and lead to referral to your regulator if you are a member of a regulated profession.

Candidates committing these offences or any other activity that may be deemed to constitute professional or academic misconduct will be reported to examination officers and the FPH Education and Training Department. All incidences will be investigated in accordance with the FPH Examinations Misconduct Policy and Procedure, and if found to have engaged in misconduct candidates may have their examination result declared invalid and their name reported to their professional regulatory authority, and (if on a UK training scheme) to that training scheme as well.

DFPH

The DFPH exam will be invigilated by remote online invigilators. A full list of the infringement levels that will be followed by invigilators can be found at the end of this document (please see [Appendix I](#)).

Completing the exam

DFPH

If a candidate fails to complete and submit their assessment for either exam this would still count as an attempt and no refund will be issued.

When the time limit for the exam has expired candidates will be prevented from amending their answers. Candidates choosing to complete the exam before the allotted time and submitting their answers early will be logged out of that particular exam and will not be able to log back in to amend their answers.

MFPH

If a candidate fails to complete and submit their assessment for either exam this would still count as an attempt and no refund will be issued.

All candidates will need to remain at their last station and visible to the invigilator until instructed that they may log out of the platform.

Once the candidate has completed the final examination station for their exam they will need to log out of the platform and the exam will then be completed. If the candidate deliberately logs out before completing their final examination station they will be deemed to have finished the exam and will not be allowed to log back in.

Recording of exams

Candidates should not record their exam attempts for any purposes for either DFPH or the MFPH exam. This will be deemed misconduct and any candidate suspected of this during a sitting will be expelled from the examination and their attempt voided.

DFPH Exam

It is important to note that remote examination attempts will be recorded for later review should there be any concerns about a candidate's conduct. By agreeing to these regulations, candidates are consenting to be filmed for the exam.

These recordings will be retained and deleted 60 days after the date of the exam sitting in accordance with current data protection laws.

The candidate will not be able to request a copy of the recording so that we can ensure exam question security.

MFPH Exam

Please note that this exam maybe recorded by the Faculty for internal training purposes. By agreeing to these regulations candidates are consenting to be filmed for the exam.

These recordings will be retained in accordance with current data protection laws, with candidates' identities being anonymised if used for training purposes. If not retained, the recordings will be deleted within 60 days of the exam. The candidate will not be able to request a copy of the recording in order for the Faculty to ensure exam question security.

Amendment of these regulations

These interim regulations may be amended from time to time, and candidates will be made aware of changes prior to sitting any examination.

Appendix I: Infringement levels for the DFPH

Minor infringements

A minor infringement is one that is deemed a low-level exception. Minor Infringements may not compromise the test and can be rectified immediately, however, all minor infringements are logged.

- Leaning out of view of the camera.
- Commencing hand movements that could be interpreted as sign language.
- Glancing at other areas of the room that the supervisor cannot see (in this instance prior to raising an infringement the invigilator will query the candidate and ask the candidate to pan the room and in particular that area to check).
- Behaving in an unsuitable manner to the supervisor.

Major infringements

A major infringement is one that is deemed as misconduct. Candidates would be asked to stop the behaviour immediately and this will be recorded for FPH to review and if necessary take action on completion of the exam.

- Accessing a scientific or programmable calculator.
- Failing to show the invigilator that the whiteboard has been cleared at the end of the exam.
- Reading the questions aloud or talking during the exam other than to the invigilator.
- Leaving the desk to visit the bathroom without alerting the invigilator.
- Absence from exam for longer than five minutes when leaving the exam to visit the bathroom.
- Writing on paper (or any other material other than an A3 or A4 whiteboard that has been declared at the start of the exam).
- Referring to any material or information outside of the TestReach exam canvas. This includes textbooks, study aids, notes/paper.
- Accessing (or trying to access) another site / document when online.
- Attempting to capture exam content – taking a screenshot, taking a photo of the screen with another device, copying questions down, reading aloud, recording these on another device.
- Not agreeing or responding to the validation questions asked by the invigilator.
- Repetition of minor infringements
- Blocking the computer camera

A blocker infringement is one that is deemed a high level exception. One that compromises the test and causes the test to be terminated. Invigilators will contact FPH to confirm that this action will be taken before terminating the exam.

- Refusing to remove items/objects that are not permitted or deemed interactive such as watches, smart watches and other electronic devices at the request of the invigilator.
- Communication with a third party – indisputable dialogue that confirms that the candidate is being passed information or is attempting to record or pass on information.
- Using a mobile phone or an electronic device (other than to turn off a ringing mobile or using it to reconnect with TestReach if the connection is lost).
- Use of any Artificial Intelligence software would be considered a serious breach of your professional obligations, and would void the entire exam, this would be notified to your training organisation (if you are in training) and lead to referral to your regulator if you are a member of a regulated profession.

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