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Sources of further help and support
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Further reading

References
The second set of eight stations are individual ‘stand-alone’ station will be linked to a related task in the second station. Eight stations are linked in pairs; the clinical task in the first examination is split into two sets of eight stations. The first of Skills and Competencies (CASC) examination. This is a following the written papers there is a Clinical Assessment Programme (ARCP), at which educational supervisors and College tutors complete their mandatory workplace-based assessments.

Workplace-based assessments will take place throughout the 6 years of specialist training and competencies will be rated according to the level of training. Psychiatrists in training must register with the Royal College of Psychiatrists’ assessments online (http://training.rcpsych.ac.uk/) and complete their mandatory workplace-based assessments. The evidence collected in the workplace-based assessments will form part of the annual review of competence progression (ARCP), at which educational supervisors and College tutors review your training.

The MRCPsych examinations have been mapped onto the training years. The written papers 1, 2 and 3 can be taken at any time and in any order after a minimum of 12 months post-foundation experience/internship in psychiatry. However, it is recommended that paper 2 should be taken after 18 months and paper 3 after 24 months of post-foundation/internship experience in psychiatry. The CASC examination can be taken after successful completion of Papers 1, 2 and 3 and if you have a minimum of 30 months in post-foundation training in psychiatry.

Further details can be found on the College website (www.rcpsych.ac.uk) and in the document General Information and Regulations for the MRCPsych Examinations and Assessment Programme 2008 (http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/Regulations2008_October%20Amends%20Final%2016%20Oct.pdf). This document also provides information about the workplace-based assessments required at each stage of training.

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- make notes or Mind Maps® to aid learning and revision
- set aside a regular time to study
- allow time for preparation and breaks from studying
- keep a balance between work and personal life.

**Study skills or techniques**

Postgraduate examinations require a significantly greater depth and breadth of knowledge than undergraduate examinations. There is no escape from having to learn vast amounts of information in order to pass the MRCPsych examination. It is important to reinforce memory by revising and by practising recall. Clinical scenarios are useful especially for the CASC.

Belonging to a study group may help you reduce your workload of finding information and enable you to share experience and provide support to each other. Study groups also aid reflection on progress.

It is important to discuss learning and your progress with your educational supervisor. If you lack experience or would benefit from more training in a particular area, make sure these educational needs are addressed.

**Practice**

Core competencies are the basis of the new format for training so it is important to use every opportunity to learn and practise clinical skills. Practise a variety of scenarios to prepare for the workplace-based assessments. Other mental health professionals will be involved in these assessments and trainees will need skills in teamwork.

**TIPS**
- find out what is required at your level of training
- do not get downhearted if you do not achieve high marks in the early stages of training, your marks should improve during training
- plan your workplace-based assessments at the beginning of each post and relate this to your learning objectives
- keep the necessary paperwork to hand
- keep a record of workplace-based assessments
- obtain feedback and take steps to improve your performance.

**Theory**

The core curriculum has sections which must be covered. One strategy is to skim all sections and then return to studying specific topics in depth. Another strategy is to methodically study each section in turn before moving to the next.
**Curriculum**

The new curriculum for psychiatric training has been designed to ensure that a high standard of training is accomplished using a patient-based and learner-centred approach (Bhugra, 2006). The curriculum (http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/training/crimeiclim.aspx) defines the competencies, professional behaviour and attitudes which psychiatrists should acquire and demonstrate in their clinical practice.

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The following tips may help you go through the assessments and examinations more easily:

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