



ROYAL COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND_f

Regulations and Information for Candidates

Licentiate-ship of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (LFOM)

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Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
Frederick House
19 South Frederick Street
Dublin 2
Tel: 00353 1 8639700
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1. Introduction

These Regulations set out the rules concerning eligibility, format, admission, conduct and other issues for the Licentiatehip of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine examination (LFOM). The purpose of the Licentiatehip examination is to ensure a satisfactory level of core competence to establish safe practice in routine occupational medicine for those who work in the discipline. The examination is a non-specialist qualification in occupational medicine and is not intended as the sole diploma for physicians who seek to practice independently and unsupervised.

2. Licentiatehip of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine Examination

2.1 Entry Requirements

Candidates must hold a medical qualification.

They must be registered and authorised to practice medicine by an appropriate national body. Evidence of this will be required as part of the application process.

Candidates must have completed general professional training, that is to say, 2 years full time or equivalent experience following full registration.

Candidates must have completed academic training in occupational medicine, acceptable to the Faculty as broadly covering the required syllabus. For the purposes of these Regulations, these courses detailed in Appendix I are acceptable. Other courses may be deemed suitable - applicants will be required to provide comprehensive details of the course including the curriculum/programme, the organising body and the total number of hours.

2.2 2 Examination Locations

The LFOM written examination and portfolio VIVA are held online and via teleconference.

2.3 3 Preparation for LFOM Examination

All LFOM examinations are conducted in the English language.

There is a guideline syllabus to assist with the preparation for the LFOM which is listed at 2.4 below. The guidelines present a framework of topics which should be covered, but it is not intended to be inclusive and candidates should not limit their studies solely to these topics.

There are no past papers available for this examination.

2.4 4 Examination Syllabus

The occupational medicine syllabus for the LFOM is as follows:

- General Principles of Assessment & Management of Occupational Hazards to Health
- Toxicology
- Occupational Hygiene
- Ergonomics
- Occupational Health Disorders
- Principles of Health Surveillance
- Assessment of Disability, Rehabilitation and Fitness for Work

- Occupational Health Law and Ethics
- Environmental Issues Related to Work Practice
- Workplace Health Promotion

2.5 5 Limited Time and Attempts Policy

From **September 2024**, the time limit to obtain the Licentiate'ship of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (LFOM) will be **six years**.

This means candidates will have a total of six years, which will allow a total of six attempts per component. It applies to all Parts of LFOM examinations, i.e. written and portfolio. The limited length of time and attempts policy will apply from when the policy will start in September 2024 to all exam candidates, whether they are based in Ireland or overseas.

If you require further information regarding this policy, please refer to the FAQ document that can be found [here](#) or contact our Examinations Department at exams@rcpi.ie.

3. How to enter the LFOM Examination

3.1 Method of Application

All exam application forms together with supplemental documentation and payment must be completed online. The method of payment is by credit card and debit/Laser cards.

Applications will not be accepted by the College before the published opening date or after the published closing date.

Candidates must upload certified copies of their original diplomas (first time entrants only) of Medical Qualification, which must be adjudged to be satisfactory to the College. Copy diplomas must be attested by:

- An Garda Siochana (police)
- Solicitor
- Commissioner for Oaths
- the Issuing Authority

The receipt of the retention fee issued by the Medical Council is not acceptable as evidence of registration. Official translations will only be accepted if they have been prepared and/or authenticated by:

- (i) the issuing University or Medical School
- (ii) an Irish or British Consulate
- (iii) the candidate's own Embassy or High Commissioner

Candidates must also complete the following declaration at the time of submitting their application:

*" I apply for admission to the Licentiate'ship examination to be held on.....(date) at(name of centre).
I declare that I have read and understood the Faculty's regulations governing the examination.*

I understand that I may be refused admission, or have permission to complete the examination rescinded if I infringe any regulation or I am considered by the examiners to have been guilty of behaviour prejudicial to the proper conduct of the examination.

I understand too that I may be subject to sanctions up to and including being excluded from any further examinations conducted by the Faculty or College for life. Any such misconduct may be reported to the appropriate licensing body”.

Application checklist (Written):

Online application form which includes the following:

- Proof of Qualification – attested copy of original diploma of medical qualification
- Proof of registration with local medical council
- Declaration form

Application checklist (Portfolio):

- Online application form
- Proof of Qualification – attested copy of original diploma of medical qualification
- Proof of registration with local medical council
- Soft copy of portfolio (each case/project must be uploaded individually)

The candidate's full name must be given at the time of entry to the examination and must agree with the name(s) given on Medical Council documentation. The name you provide will be used on all official correspondence (such as diplomas, qualifications and certificates) issued by RCPI. Candidates who change their name(s) by marriage or deed poll must upload documentary proof of this, if they wish to be admitted to the examination in their new name.

3.2 Visas

If a candidate requires a visa to sit an examination, it is the responsibility of the individual to ensure the visa application is made in sufficient time before the examination date for which it has been sought. The College has no influence in granting or refusing visas. A refund will **not** be given if a candidate is unable to attend the examination as a result of a visa related problem.

3.3 Examination fees

The fees payable on entry to the LFOM examination are published annually.

No candidate will be permitted to take any part of the examination unless all outstanding fees are paid in full.

3.4 Withdrawal from the examination

Notice of withdrawal from an examination must be given in writing to the College. A refund less 10% will be made if written notice of withdrawal is received by the College on or before the closing date of entry to the examination. Refunds will not be made where candidates submit their withdrawal request after the closing date. No fee will be held over to a future examination unless there are exceptional extenuating circumstances. Each request will be dealt with on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Director of Examinations, whose decision is final. Documentary evidence is required in all cases. Any request (accompanied by supporting evidence) must be submitted within 2 weeks of the examination date if it is to be considered. For further details, please see the [RCPI » Cancellation Policy](#)

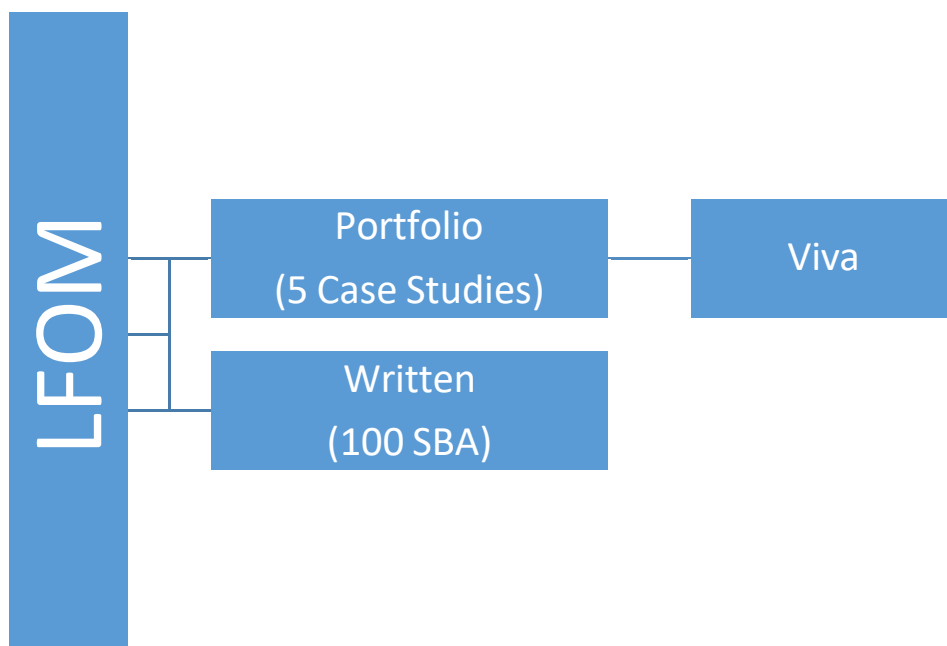
3.5 Cancellation Policy

RCPI reserves the right to cancel, reschedule the date, or change the location of an exam. In the event of a reschedule or cancellation by RCPI, the College will endeavour to inform all applicants at least six weeks prior to the exam date. If an exam is cancelled or rescheduled by RCPI, candidates will be offered a full refund or option to transfer to another date if applicable. For further details, please see the [RCPI » Cancellation Policy](#)

3.6 Examination Registration (Written and Viva only)

Registration instructions will be sent to candidates at least one week prior to the exam. The last name will be taken as the surname. Passport, equivalent national identity card or driver's licence must be produced at all parts of each Examination.

4. LFOM Examination Format



- The written examination must be passed before a candidate may submit the portfolio. A pass in the written examination may be 'banked' and carried forward for up to two years.
- The written examination consists of 100 Single Best Answer (SBA) Questions
- Examination marking will be calculated using a standardised method after the exam is completed. All examination results are subject to examination board review and approval.
- The portfolio consists of five cases – four clinical cases (occupational disease x 3, injury x 1) and one workplace-based assessment.
- The viva component must be passed in its own right – this means to achieve a passing grade in the Portfolio, the viva must be satisfactorily completed – regardless of the score achieved in the portfolio
- Compensation between different elements of the examination *i.e.* Portfolio and Written is not facilitated – each element must be passed in its own right.

4.1 1 Portfolios

Writing your portfolio

Cases should not exceed 1,500 words each. Each individual case must have its own word count, not including references or appendices.

The portfolio must be written in plain English, using the active voice whenever possible. Incorrectly formatted portfolios will be rejected.

The cases, numbered 1 to 5, should contain:

- A title, e.g. Occupational Asthma
- Patient history - including occupational history
- Clinical examination
- Investigation and results
- Diagnosis and treatment
- Case management, emphasising occupational health management and prevention
- Follow up
- Discussion
- References

In the description of case management, candidates should consider aspects of rehabilitation, legal context, task analysis, communication to the employer and their response. The case discussion is important and should include an appraisal covering the association between the clinical condition and its occupational context. In addition, issues such as causation and options for management should be discussed. Candidates must carry out a relevant literature review in regard to the case and all citations should be referenced according to the Vancouver convention.

How to select cases

The candidate is required to submit four clinical cases (three relating to occupational disease and one relating to injury) and one workplace-based assessment.

They must be cases that the candidate personally managed and this should be clearly indicated in how the case description is written.

Each case should involve a different clinical condition and be drawn from as wide a spectrum of clinical encounters as possible. Only one case should involve an occupational injury.

The cases can be drawn from a general medical clinical workload but must involve work-related disease or an occupational injury. Work-related disease is defined by the WHO as a disease caused by, associated with or loosely related to work and the work environment. Any case therefore in which work is an important factor either in causation or management is acceptable.

Display screen equipment assessments are not allowed.

Workplace assessments must not be related to a medical facility. You will need to look outside the clinical and associated administrative environment and concentrate on basic non-medical work processes.

Finalising the portfolio

In addition to a table of contents, candidates should include a brief curriculum vitae including details of their current occupational health commitments. This will not be included in the total word count. Candidates will be penalised if they exceed the allowed word count.

The portfolio should be formatted as follows:

- The margins should be 2.5cm
- Either 1.5 or double line spacing

Marks are awarded for presentation so you are strongly advised to review and proof read your work prior to submission.

Submitting your portfolio

You are required to submit an electronic copy of your portfolio during the online application process for this exam. The electronic copy should be in Word document or PDF file format without password protection. Each case/project must be uploaded as an individual document. Your name should not be included in the document. The file name should be in the format "RCPI ID - Case x"; this text should also be included as a header in the document. Applications will not be accepted until files in this format have been submitted.

As marks will be awarded for presentation, candidates are strongly advised to review and proofread their work prior to submission.

- The portfolio is subject to marking by 2 examiners and an approved marking scheme will be used for this purpose. All examination results are subject to examination board review and approval.

Candidates will be expected to respect the normal rules of citation practice. Anyone found to have plagiarised material will be considered to be in breach of these regulations. To this end, a proportion of submitted portfolios and those suspected of plagiarism may be subject to further examination using specific anti-plagiarism software.

Cases submitted previously in an LFOM portfolio are not acceptable as part of the Licentiate'ship portfolio. Any attempt to do so will be regarded as a breach of these regulations and treated accordingly.

Declaration

You must include the following declaration in your portfolio:

I declare that this dissertation consisting of words and pages (insert the appropriate numbers in figures) is all my own work. Where I have relied on the work of other people, I have acknowledged this according to the normal academic conventions. I understand that my dissertation may be subject to electronic scrutiny. I consent to the publication of an abstract or abstracts on the Faculty's website.

Signed:

Name in print:

Date:

Results: Candidate results will be sent by email approximately 4 working weeks from the closing date for applications.

VIVA: All candidates will be called forward to defend, by a viva voce examination (VIVA) any of their 5 submitted cases. The viva component must be passed in its own right – this means to achieve a passing grade in the Portfolio, the viva must be satisfactorily completed – regardless of the score achieved in the portfolio. At the VIVA, two of the five submitted cases will be scrutinised. Candidates will be asked to speak on each case for 10 minutes with two examiners. Ten minutes before the exam the candidate will be given a copy of the two cases that will be scrutinised.

4.2 Written Section

There is one component to this section, the MCQ. This will generally be of the “best of five” type and will consist of 100 questions. The exam is of three hours duration.

This paper is intended to test knowledge and will therefore cover the content of the syllabus laid down by the Faculty.

Although the focus of this paper will be on testing knowledge in occupational medicine, questions covering clinical medicine and the management of occupational health problems may be included.

LFOM Written exam is being held online, via remote invigilation.

4.3 Examination rules and guidelines

4.3.1 These Regulations apply to all candidates for examinations of the College. Candidates should note that by applying to enter to sit an examination, they are deemed to have understood and agreed to comply by these Regulations.

4.3.2 Candidates **must** have their personal identity card and notification email with them at **all** MRCPI/Faculty examinations as proof of identity. A passport or drivers licence may be accepted if the candidate’s name is stated in the same manner as on their primary medical degree. Candidates will **not** be admitted to the examination unless they produce photographic identification.

4.3.3 Candidates should note that drugs will almost always be referred to by their UK approved names (National Formulary) rather than their trade names. Biochemical and other measurements will be expressed in SI units.

4.3.4 Candidates are not permitted to bring into the examination centre, mobile phones or Smart watches, pagers, laptop computers, palm pilots, calculators, text books, documents or items of any kind other than those specifically allowed for that particular examination and previously notified to them. For online exams, the “examination centre” shall be the room in which the exam is taken.

Any candidate found to be in possession of such a device during the examination will receive a verbal warning from the exam invigilator. A written report will be drafted and signed by the invigilator and countersigned by a witness to the event. This report will be forwarded to the Director of Examinations. If the Director considers the event to be a serious infringement of the exam regulations, the candidate will be advised that he/she is suspended from the exam. **This**

will result in exam failure, the loss of the exam fee and possible exclusion from re-entry to future exams.

- 4.3.5 Candidates are **not** permitted to have their bags and/or other personal items at their desks during the examination. Invigilators will direct candidates to a secure area for personal items to be deposited for the duration of the examination.
- 4.3.6 Rough work paper is not provided and candidates must confine notes to the online notepad provided.
- 4.3.7 Candidates are not permitted to copy questions of the paper or part paper in any format (written, electronic, photograph etc.).
- 4.3.8 It is strictly forbidden for candidates to talk or attempt in any way to communicate with other candidates while the exam is in progress.
- 4.43.9 A single brief toilet break (maximum 5 minutes) is permitted during the examination, but in an effort to minimise disruption candidates are requested to visit the toilet before the exam commences.
- 4.3.10 Candidates are advised to provide their own refreshments during the examination. Liquids must be in clear container, and no wrapping containing writing is permitted.
- 4.3.11 Any candidate acting in breach of any of the above Regulations, or misbehaving in any way, may be suspended from the examination or be deemed to have failed the examination. If an infringement of the College Regulations is deemed to be particularly severe, the candidate concerned may be **permanently** disbarred from entering any future College examinations.

5. Fire Evacuation

- 5.1 The emergency exits will be pointed out to candidates during the announcements prior to the commencement of the examination.
- 5.2 All alarms should be treated as an emergency unless otherwise advised. If the alarm is sounded a College staff member will be responsible for the evacuation of the examination venue.
- 5.3 Candidates should note that they remain subject to examination rules during the evacuation and should not communicate or have contact with other candidates. Candidates must not attempt to collect personal belongings.
- 5.4 All students should cease writing and leave their answer booklets on the desk when instructed by a College staff member.
- 5.5 The College staff member will instruct the invigilators to act as 'Fire Marshalls' and these marshals will be responsible for leading their designated sections of candidates from the examination centre.
- 5.6 The Fire Marshall should collect the exam register and evacuate the candidates to the assembly point using the emergency exists.
- 5.7 Do not use the lift.

- 5.8 When assembled the Fire Marshall will check the candidates against the examinations register.
- 5.9 If it is possible to resume the examination, candidates will be instructed to endorse their scripts with the words 'examination interrupted' indicating the time of the interruption and the time of resumption. Candidates will be allowed compensatory time equivalent to the period from the time the alarm sounded to the resumption of the examination, plus 10 minutes for re-reading the examination paper and settling back into the examination. The invigilator will inform candidates of the revised finishing time for the examination.
- 5.10 A written report of the evacuation will be filed by the College staff member and forwarded to the Chief Examiner / Academic Registrar.
- 5.11 A delay of more than thirty minutes will automatically require a re-scheduling of the examination concerned. In this case, invigilators will announce to the students that they should contact the Examinations Department regarding alternative examination arrangements. Students may then leave.

6. Code of Conduct

This code shall apply to all candidates for examinations of the College. Candidates should note by applying to enter to sit an examination they are deemed to have understood and agreed to comply by this code. Misconduct includes, but is not restricted to:

- 6.1 Introduction into any examination materials other than those specifically permitted for the examination.
- 6.2 Any attempt to communicate with another candidate or any person other than an invigilator on duty.
- 6.3 Any attempt to gain access to or plagiarise the work of another candidate.
- 6.4 Any attempt to gain or pass on information with regard to the contents of the examination in advance of the date of the examination.
- 6.5 Impersonation of a candidate.
- 6.6 Bribery of another candidate or examination official.
- 6.7 Unacceptable or disruptive behaviour during an examination.
- 6.8 Failure to abide by the instructions of an invigilator or other examination official.
- 6.9 Falsification or alteration of any results document or qualification.

6.1.1 Report procedure

Suspected misconduct may be reported to the College by examiners, invigilators, candidates, patients and any other person who becomes aware of suspected misconduct.

Where an invigilator suspects a candidate of violation of examination rules and guidelines, they will:

- (a) Confiscate any unauthorised material in the possession of the candidate.

- (b) Make a note of the time when the alleged infringement was discovered. An invigilator will ask another invigilator to act as a witness to the alleged infringement and countersign the note to confirm this.
- (c) Allow the candidate(s) to continue the examination. Ejection from the examination centre will only take place in the event of a candidate(s) causing disruption to other candidates.
- (d) Inform the candidate(s) at the end of the examination that a written report of the incident will be submitted to the Chief Examiner / Academic Registrar.
- (e) Within three working days of the examination, the invigilator will submit a written report on the alleged incident together with any confiscated materials to the Chief Examiner / Academic Registrar.

6.1.2 Investigation procedure

The Examinations Manager will review the report of the alleged case of misconduct within three working days of the examination and will determine whether there is sufficient evidence of a case to be answered after consulting with other members of College staff where necessary. In cases deemed to be of a very minor or technical nature, a letter of reprimand will be issued to the candidate, and no further action is required.

In all other cases the Examinations Manager will review the report with the Chief Examiner / Academic Registrar and the Examination Board Chairs. Following the review, the candidate will be informed of the allegations in writing within 10 working days of the examination.

The candidate will be invited to reply to the allegation of misconduct, within 10 working days from receipt of the email/letter. If the candidate does not respond to the letter within the specified time frame, the College will consider this as an acknowledgement of the allegation and will proceed to the next phase of the misconduct investigation procedure.

Following a response from the candidate, the College will acknowledge the receipt of the response.

The Chief Examiner / Academic Registrar will prepare a file which includes the candidate's response if one has been received and sent the file to the Examinations Committee for a final decision along with a recommendation of an appropriate penalty.

The candidate will be notified of the final decision within 30 days of the examination date.

A candidate who believes that there was an error in the conduct of the investigation may, with 10 working days of receiving the Committee's decision, request a review of the investigation by the College Censors.

The College Censors shall review all information provided by the candidate, to determine if the correct procedure was followed in the conduct of the investigation, and if the investigation was fairly treated. The purpose of this review is solely to determine if such a procedural irregularity has occurred and is not to relitigate the decision.

If the review concludes the investigation to be fair the candidate will be notified within 10 working days from receipt of their request.

If the College Censors determine that there was an error in the conduct of the investigation, they may refer the matter back to the Examinations Committee for further consideration. The candidate will be

notified of the status of their review request and provided with an estimated timeline for the final decision. The Censors shall then refer the matter to the College Executive, which shall decide on any appropriate further action. The decision of the Censors and/or College Executive shall be final.

7. Adapted Examination Arrangements

Any candidate who has a physical disability, learning disability or any other special need that they believe could affect their performance in an examination, may be entitled to adapted examination arrangements. The purpose of any specific arrangement is to compensate for any restrictions imposed by a disability without impairing the validity of the examination. All such candidates should inform the Examinations Department at the time of application of their circumstances in writing, together with a consultant's report to support their application. Failure to include this information at the time of application may affect the arrangements that can be put in place in time for the examination. The information provided is treated strictly confidentially.

8. Written Examination Results

The College processes the marking of LFOM examinations as quickly as possible, consistent with ensuring accuracy, fairness and a stable pass standard. Mathematical performance indicators are calculated and scrutinised by the examiners, to confirm the fairness of every question. The mathematical procedure for determining the pass mark is then applied and approved by the examiners.

- Examination results will be emailed to candidates approximately three weeks after the date of the examination. Under no circumstances will examination results be given over the telephone, by fax, or by visiting the College in person.
- The result letter will be sent to the email address as per the candidate's online application.
- Please refrain from telephoning the College regarding your result during this period, as this will delay the process.

8.3 Recheck procedure and appeals policy

Candidates can request a recheck of their examination results in the LFOM examinations. There is a fee of €150 for this procedure. This charge will be refunded if a recheck changes the overall examination result to a pass mark. Requests for a recheck of examination results must be made in writing, to the Academic Registrar/ Chief Examiner at the College address within four weeks of the results release date, together with the recheck application form which is available by email at exams@rcpi.ie.

- 8.3.1 Any representations by candidates must be submitted to the Chief Examiner / Academic Registrar within one month of the completion of the examination.
- 8.3.2 The submission must be made on the official recheck application.
- 8.3.3 The appeal will be managed according to the RCPI appeal process. For details of this appeals policy, please the Examinations Department at exams@rcpi.ie.

9. Admission to the Faculty

Candidates must pass all sections of the examination. No compensation is allowed.

Prior to admission, each successful candidate must pay the appropriate admission fee, the first year's subscription and a declaration that they will continue to pay their annual subscription in the future.

10. Appendix

Portfolio Templates (*compulsory from 1st January 2017*).

Clinical Template (Occupational Disease & Injury Cases)

Section	Suggested Proportion of Total Document
Current Occupational Role	5%
Occupational History of Patient	5%
Clinical History	10%
Clinical Assessment & Relevant Investigation Findings	15%
Possibility of Occupational Aetiology of diagnosed condition	10%
Basic Outline of Treatment provided to date by GP or Hospital	5%
Functional limitations of working capacity	10%
Precis of report to employer	10%
Ethical and legal considerations	5%
Describe any monitoring, rehabilitation or permanent workplace adjustments	10%
Long term prognosis	5%
Global assessment including references/ appendix, diagrams / photographs	10%

Template (Workplace Assessment)

Section	Suggested Proportion of Total Document
Description of Site & Work Process	10%
Perceived Hazards	15%
Risk Assessment	15%
Observations & Investigation Results	10%
Significance of Observations	10%

Legislation	5%
Risk Reduction	10%
Presentation of Findings	15%
Professional References Global Assessment of Portfolio	10%

Recommended Courses

The following courses are recommended by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine:

- The Occupational Medicine course organised by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and the Irish College of General Practitioners (Run by the ICGP)
- The Diploma/MSc courses in Occupational Medicine run by the University of Manchester
- The Diploma/MSc courses in Occupational Medicine run by the IOEM at University of Birmingham
- The course in Occupational Medicine organised by the Malaysian Occupational Health and Medical Services
- The MSc/Graduate Diploma in Occupational Health for medical practitioners run by University College, Dublin
- The Royal Society of Public Health, London
- The course in Occupational Medicine run jointly by ADNOC and the Faculty of Occupational Medicine in RCPI, Abu Dhabi, UAE
- The DipOccMed and MOccMed courses run by the Dept of Occupational and Aviation Medicine, University of Otago