

# **FACULTY OF SPORT AND EXERCISE MEDICINE UK**



## **Diploma in Musculoskeletal Medicine (DipMSK) Examination**

**Regulations  
with effect from October 2023**

Examination Department  
Faculty of Sport and  
Exercise Medicine UK  
1a Hill Square  
EDINBURGH  
EH8 9DR

## **PURPOSE OF THE EXAMINATION**

This Diploma in Musculoskeletal Medicine (DipMSK) examination is intended to assess knowledge and clinical application of musculoskeletal medicine, especially for primary care practitioners working in community care. The exam is an assessment of knowledge and clinical problem-solving and is relevant to current UK practice in primary care. It does not however act as a pitch side or stand-alone qualification to allow you to practice as a clinician or Allied Health Professional in Sport and Exercise Medicine (SEM), as MSK is only one part of a very wide curriculum.

## **EXAMINATION FORMAT**

The examination will be conducted in English and will be based around UK clinical practice and national guidelines.

The pass mark for the examination is pre-set using modern standard setting methods. To achieve a pass, candidates must meet or exceed the pass mark set for the paper.

The examination consists of two written papers of Multiple Choice Questions consisting of single best answer (SBA) questions. Each paper contains 90 questions and is 90 minutes in duration, and a 15-minute comfort break will be provided between Paper 1 and Paper 2.

## **Booking your exam**

Candidates will be advised by the exam provider TestReach through email to register for the exam and carry out mandatory system checks at least 72 hours prior to exam start; this includes exam time slot booking also.

## **Timeline**

One week before the exam: TestReach will contact candidates with registration and booking information.

72 hours before the exam: Candidates must have logged on to the TestReach platform, completed system checks, and have booked their time slot for Paper 1.

24h before the exam: Candidates are strongly advised to log on to the TestReach platform and confirm that all exam papers and timings are visible, and candidates are prepared to sit the exam.

Candidates will book their start time for Paper 1, and TestReach will, based on the selected start time, allocate a start time for Paper 2, allowing for a 15-minute comfort break between Paper 1 and Paper 2. Candidates are advised that without following these instructions, remote invigilators will be unable to admit them to the exam sitting on exam day, and candidates should log into the TestReach system the day before the exam to ensure that they are aware of their allocated starting times for each paper, can see both papers in the system, and contact FSEM ([exams@fsem.ac.uk](mailto:exams@fsem.ac.uk)) or TestReach support ([support@testreach.com](mailto:support@testreach.com)) should they have any queries regarding their exam registration and/or time slots.

## **Timing**

The examination will be held online and has a staggered start time, usually between 9:30am – 10:00am UK time, with candidates who are allocated extra time starting at 9:30am. Candidates will be responsible for booking and confirming their exam slot in advance of the exam.

## **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

The following candidates will be eligible to sit this examination:

Doctors with a primary medical qualification suitable for registration with the General Medical Council or Irish Medical Council, and who comply with all other requirements of the regulations.

Physiotherapists and other Allied Health Professionals registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

Nurse Practitioners (or equivalent), registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) with experience in Exercise Medicine delivery.

International healthcare professionals registered with their relevant international organisation.

Other candidates are considered on an individual basis at the discretion of the Faculty upon submission of supplementary information (e.g. letter from their employer, notary of certificate of registration).

Candidates for the examination are strongly advised to have the following:

- an active interest in Musculoskeletal Medicine;
- experience in managing MSK presentations in primary and community care

Candidates who have queries regarding their eligibility are advised to contact [exams@fsem.ac.uk](mailto:exams@fsem.ac.uk) for further guidance before submitting their application to the Faculty.

#### Number of Attempts

Candidates are permitted a maximum of six attempts at the DipMSK. A continuous record of exam attempts is kept in line with GMC recommendations; if prior attempts with previous providers were made these will contribute towards your attempts.

### ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION

The DipMSK Examination will normally be held once each year, unless otherwise stated. The dates of the examinations and the fees payable for admission to the examination are set out online on the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK's website: [www.fsem.ac.uk](http://www.fsem.ac.uk)

Application for entry to the examination must:

- be made on the appropriate (electronic) application form on the Faculty website;

- be accompanied by all required supporting information (e.g. photographic ID);

- be accompanied by the specific examination fee payment, which must be received in full by the Faculty before a candidate is entered for the examination;

- reach the examinations Department of the Faculty by the date specified online

Candidates who are unable to demonstrate fulfilment of the eligibility criteria may receive a refund of the fee paid (less an administrative fee of 20%).

**Applications received after the closing date may not be processed.** The Faculty reserves the right to review admission to the examination on an individual basis in exceptional circumstances.

## **RESULTS**

Candidates will be notified by the Faculty when examinations results are available no later than six weeks after sitting the examination. Results will be uploaded at [www.fsem.ac.uk](http://www.fsem.ac.uk) and certificates are posted to successful candidates. A resit diet is not offered in case of a failed examination.

## **FEEDBACK**

Candidates will receive their overall marks for the examination.

## **PROOF OF IDENTITY AT THE EXAMINATION**

Each candidate must bring their passport to the examination. Exceptionally, a candidate who is not in a position to provide a passport must produce an official document that includes their name, signature and a current photograph. (For example, a current driving license if it includes a photograph and signature). Identification must be valid and in date. Proof of identity is an essential element of the examination. The Faculty reserves the right to refuse to examine any candidate whose identity is uncertain.

For the purposes of visual identification, any candidate sitting any part of the examination may be required to remove any clothing and/or other item which covers all, or part of, the candidate's face. The Faculty will observe sensitivity, and in specific circumstances privacy in the visual identification of candidates.

The remote invigilators of the Faculty's exam provider TestReach will ask candidates to hold for a screenshot photograph prior to exam admission to validate candidate identity as part of their validation procedure.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EXAMINATION**

Any candidate who wishes to withdraw an application for admission to an examination must submit a request to the Faculty via email by contacting [exams@fsem.ac.uk](mailto:exams@fsem.ac.uk). A refund of the fee paid may be made (less an administrative fee of 20%), provided that notice of an intention to withdraw is received by the Examinations Department before the closing date by which applications are due, as shown on the Faculty's website. Refunds are not normally made to any candidate who withdraws after the closing date.

Any candidate who wishes to withdraw an application for admission to the examination on medical grounds and request a refund must submit a request to the Faculty via email by contacting [exams@fsem.ac.uk](mailto:exams@fsem.ac.uk), accompanied by a medical certificate. An application for consideration of a refund on compassionate grounds should be supported appropriate evidence. Each such withdrawal application, including supporting evidence, must be submitted to the Examinations Department who will review the application on an individual basis.

## **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

Any candidate who has a condition that they believe could affect their performance in an examination may be entitled to reasonable adjustments to the conduct of the exam in mitigation of their condition. It is the responsibility of the candidate to notify the Examinations Department when they submit their application if they are seeking special consideration. Applications for special consideration must be supported by written evidence in the form of an original medical documentation. An educational psychologist's report is required for requests relating to dyslexia.

## **INFRINGEMENT OF THE REGULATIONS**

The Faculty may refuse to admit the candidate to the examination or proceed with the examination of any candidate who infringes any of the regulations or is considered by the examiners to be guilty of behaviour prejudicial to the proper management and conduct of the examination. Examples of such infringement are as follows:

Entry to the examination being attempted by making false claims about eligibility or falsifying entry documentation. The Faculty reserves the right to make checks to validate any information or documents supplied by the candidate;

Unfair advantage being sought or obtained; by possession of material or devices during an examination that might give advantage; by plagiarism of any description; by communicating or attempting to communicate with another candidate once the examination has commenced; or by refusing to follow instructions given by examiners or examinations staff regarding the conduct and procedure of the examination;

Removal of or an attempt to remove from the examination room or screenshot in the virtual examination environment, any confidential examination material;

Any attempt to obtain confidential information relating to the examination from an examiner or

examination officials;

Passing confidential information on the content of the examination to a third party.

This list is not exhaustive. These guidelines can be obtained from the Faculty website at:

[www.fsem.ac.uk](http://www.fsem.ac.uk).

These regulations should be read in conjunction with the Candidate Protocol Document dated 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023. Candidates must adhere to the candidate protocol and any further instructions provided by TestReach and its remote invigilators. The Candidate Protocol can be accessed on the Faculty website at [www.fsem.ac.uk](http://www.fsem.ac.uk) and will be emailed to each candidate after successful eligibility and ID checks by the Faculty's Examination Department and upon examination enrolment.

If a candidate is found to have acted improperly, they will be referred to their Regulatory Body (e.g. GMC, NMC, HCPC...) or National Authority.

## **NOTIFICATION OF PREGNANCY AND DEFERRAL**

A deferral may be permitted to candidates supplying an appropriate medical report, which satisfies the Faculty indicating:

the candidate has any pregnancy related problems or illness and/or;

the candidate's confinement is due shortly before or around the date of the examination and/or;

the candidate has sufficient discomfort for them to consider that it will have a detrimental effect on their performance.

In such circumstances, should any such candidate be unable to sit for the examination, a deferral will be permitted. If an examination is deferred, the examination fee paid by the candidate will be transferred to the next scheduled examination diet. The candidate is permitted to sit the deferred examination when payment of the annual increase in examination fee is received by the Faculty.

Any candidate who does not inform the Examinations Department of the Faculty of their pregnancy and is consequently unable to sit for that examination will not normally be allowed to defer this examination without submission of another full examination fee.

## COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURES

All appeals or complaints must be lodged in writing in accordance with the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK Exams Complaints Procedure. The full document can be downloaded from the Faculty website at [www.fsem.ac.uk](http://www.fsem.ac.uk) or obtained from:

Examination Department  
Faculty of Sport and  
Exercise Medicine UK  
1a Hill Square  
EDINBURGH  
EH8 9DR  
Email: [exams@fsem.ac.uk](mailto:exams@fsem.ac.uk)

## MEMBERSHIP

Successful examination candidates may apply for Diplomate Membership to the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK. They will be eligible for Diplomate Membership and will be entitled to use the post-nominals DFSEM(UK) – only upon membership ratification. Full details on how to apply can be found on the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine UK's website: [www.fsem.co.uk](http://www.fsem.co.uk)

## SYLLABUS

The Syllabus for this Examination can be obtained from the Faculty website at [www.fsem.ac.uk](http://www.fsem.ac.uk).

**NOTE: These Regulations are under continual review therefore it is recommended that candidates keep in regular contact with the Faculty to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information. The Examination Department will be able to advise you:**

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