

# MRCPsych Theory Exams

An illustration of a person with dark hair, seen from behind, sitting at a desk and typing on a keyboard. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt. In front of them is a large computer monitor displaying a webpage with a prominent green checkmark icon. To the left of the monitor, there is a blue mug and a smartphone. To the right, there is a mouse. The background is a light teal color with a white cloud icon in the upper right corner.

Dr Tom Hewson

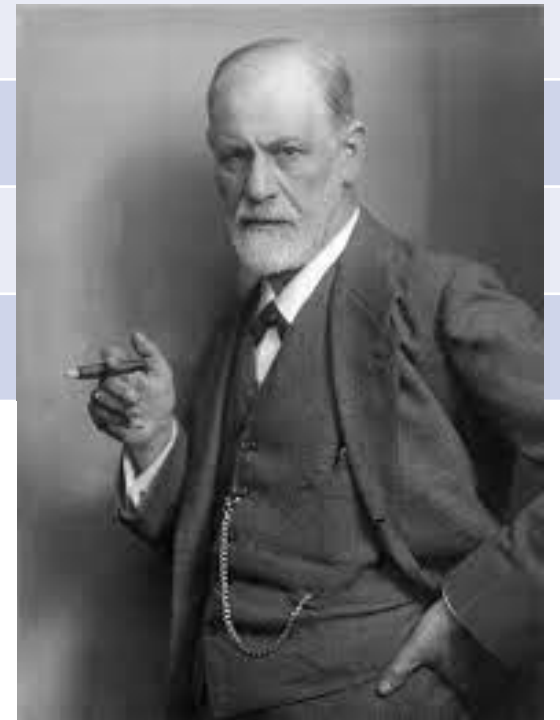


# What is Paper A?

- 1 of 3 exams needed to obtain MRCPsych qualification
- Paper A, Paper B, CASC
- Tests **scientific and theoretical knowledge**
- 3 hour exam worth 150 marks (1 minute 12 seconds per mark)
- Approx. 2/3 MCQ and 1/3 EMI

# Topics in Paper A

Topic	Mark Allocation
Behavioural science and sociocultural psychiatry	16.67%
Human development	16.67%
Basic neurosciences	25%
Clinical psychopharmacology	25%
Classification and assessment in psychiatry	16.67%



# What is Paper B?

- 3-hour exam
- Assess **critical review (research methods)** and **clinical topics in psychiatry**
- 2/3 multiple choice and 1/3 extended matching item questions

# Topics in Paper B

Organisation and delivery	5.50% / 8
General Adult	20.00% / 30
Old Age	9.00% / 14
Psychotherapy	5.50% / 8
Child & Adolescent	9.00% / 14
Substance misuse	6.50% / 10
Forensic	5.50% / 8
Learning disability	5.50% / 8
Critical Review	33.5% / 50



# Booking Exams

- 15 minute online application form via RCPSych website – allow at least 15 mins to do.
- Payment of £496 (A) or £446 (B) via card payment – **you can claim tax back on this!**
- Tax claims via HMRC website – medics money gives a useful guide on how to do this.

# Paper A Dates

## Paper A

Applications must be submitted no later than 3.30pm UK time on the last date of the application period.

<b>Diet</b>	<b>Date of Examination</b>	<b>Application Period</b>	<b>Publication of Results</b>
2	1 December 2022	26 September - 7 October 2022	15 February 2023
1	12 April 2023	30 January - 10 February 2023	TBC
2	11 July 2023	2 May - 12 May 2023	TBC
3	15 November 2023	29 August - 8 September	TBC



# Paper B Dates

## Paper B

Applications must be submitted no later than 3.30pm UK time on the last date of the application period.

<b>Diet</b>	<b>Date of Examination</b>	<b>Application Period</b>	<b>Publication of Results</b>
2	28 September 2022	18 July - 29 July 2022	28 October 2022
1	14 March 2023	9 January - 20 January 2023	TBC
2	13 June 2023	3 April - 14 April 2023	TBC
3	10 October 2023	31 July - 11 August 2023	TBC

# How to prepare for exams

- Generally, at least 2-3 months in advance
- You are preparing now by attending MRCPsych teaching!
- Decide what works for you:  
Shorter intense revision VS more gradual revision
- Lots of resources available.....



# Resources

- Paper A/B syllabus – via RCPsych website - [https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/training/examinations/exams-syllabic-curriculum-mrcpsych-february-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=20c35fdb\\_8](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/training/examinations/exams-syllabic-curriculum-mrcpsych-february-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=20c35fdb_8)

## 4.1 General

- 4.1.1 Outline knowledge of the history/evolution of psychotropic compounds.
- 4.1.2 Classification - major classes and intra-class groups.
- 4.1.3 The placebo effect.
- 4.1.4 Compliance/adherence – relevance and methods of maximisation.
- 4.1.5 Assessment methods and monitoring - efficacy and tolerability.
- 4.1.6 Basic principles of drug development and evaluation
  - 4.1.6.1 Phases I – II
  - 4.1.6.2 Phase III – the RCT in psychiatry: randomisation/endpoints (primary/secondary)/superiority vs non-inferiority/accounting for missing data
- 4.1.7 Drug regulation – the purposes and processes of licensing, 'approved' versus 'off-label' use, branded versus generic drugs
- 4.1.8 Principles of rational prescribing – the 'risk/benefit' appraisal



# Resources - TrOn



Home About TrOn My TrOn Learning modules Contribute Help Contact us Logged in as Dr Thomas Hewson (Log out)

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**Modules List**

**Refine result**

**By Duration**

- 30 minutes
- 60 minutes
- 90 minutes
- Show all

**By CPD Domain**

- Show all

**Other**


- Show all

**Learning modules**  Printable version


**Browse By :**

All ModulesA-to-ZBy CategoryForthcoming


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**Adverse drug reactions**  
Minimum recommended time: 90 minutes  
Author(s): Dr Margaret Gani and Dr Amy Manley



**The physiology of neurons**  
Minimum recommended time: 60 minutes  
Author(s): Dr Amy Jebreel and Dr Amit Bhaduri



**The development of cerebral functions**  
Minimum recommended time: 60 minutes  
Author(s): Dr Deepa Parry-Gupta and Dr Ipshita Mukherjee



**Adaptations in adult life**  
Minimum recommended time: 60 minutes  
Author(s): Dr Kapila Sachdev

# Resources - VLE

- HEE NW School of Psychiatry VLE – links to various online modules, practice questions, and mock papers

[www.schoolofpsychiatry.net](http://www.schoolofpsychiatry.net)



**NHS**  
Health Education England

HEE(NW) School of Psychiatry VLE

## The HEE(NW) MRCPsych Course

[Dashboard](#) / [My courses](#) / [MRCPsych](#)

# Resources

- MRCPsych Mentor
- 4 months for £45, 6 months for £55
- Also has mock exams at extra cost
- <https://www.mrcpsychmentor.com>
- Similar questions to the exam from my personal experience

## MRCPsych Paper A revision - Demo

Questions

Timed test

Start the questions >

Filter your questions below (2,257 questions found):

### Categories:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	Attempted 28 of 2,285
<input type="checkbox"/> Behavioural science and socio-cultural psychiatry	6 of 324
<input type="checkbox"/> Human development	1 of 185
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic neurosciences	1 of 429
<input type="checkbox"/> Molecular genetics	4 of 227
<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical psychopharmacology	10 of 710
<input type="checkbox"/> Classification and assessment in psychiatry	6 of 410

### Question selection:

Show me new questions only



# Resources - SPMM

- SPMM
- STARTER packages – study materials and practice questions with explanations - £299 for 6 months
- Booster (Mock) packages – access to 6 mock exams with reconstructed questions from the most recent college exams - £249
- <https://spmcourse.com/local/coursepackages.php>

# Resources – Each other

- Study groups!
- Share practice questions and resources
- Discuss explanations that you don't understand
- Answer each other's queries – e.g. how do I do X? Did anybody else's system test say this?
- Venting frustrations together can be therapeutic!





# Top Tips



- Make a revision timetable – allow leniency when doing so
- Include some time to cram the essential facts (**recency effect**)
- Be strategic – remember 50% of marks for neuroscience and pharmacology
- Practice, practice, practice – it's not all about the knowledge!

# Taking the Exam at a Test Centre

- Reduced availability of slots due to COVID-19
- Act **QUICK** to get a test centre nearby!
- Make sure you book the correct time slot



# Taking the Exam Online

- Check the IT system requirements – e.g. screen size, webcam, internet speed
- Check specific instructions for Windows vs Apple
- Ethernet cable improves connectivity reliability
- Run a systems Test – available via Pearson Vue!!!

# Planning the Exam Setting



# Planning the Exam Setting

- Think carefully about this to avoid issues on the day.

## Things to consider:

- Is my home environment quiet during the day?
- Do I have a partner/housemate who could make noise?
- What is my internet speed?
- If my home environment is unsuitable, could I book an office space at work or attend Pearson Centre? **ASK EARLY IF DOING THIS!**
- Are there any planned disturbances? E.g. regular fire drill
- Proximity to needed items e.g. mobile phone, toilet

# Online Proctoring

- Things that will trigger a proctor warning:
  1. Somebody else in the room
  2. Mumbling/reading aloud
  3. Covering mouth or face with your hands
  4. Learning outside the webcam view
  5. “Suspicious” eye gaze
  6. Unauthorised objects in view – e.g. pen, paper, calculator, food, phone



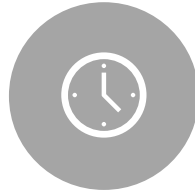
# The Exam Process

- Log in
- ID and environment checks – what is around you? Ensure no forbidden materials.
- After these checks, you are monitored by the proctor
- Wait for exam to begin...
- Exam is split into thirds
- At the end each of third, there is an option to review your answers for that section and take a comfort break. You CANNOT go back after this.

# My experience



I started preparing early September for Mid-December exam



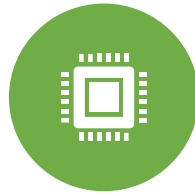
Approx 1 hour per evening then intense revision for last few weeks



Used TrOn, MRCPsych course materials, MRCPsych Mentor and study groups.



Completed systems test... no issues.



On the day.... computer crashed!



Urgent call to Pearson Vue to troubleshoot the issue → restarted laptop and cleared cookies → successfully re-started the exam



Online proctor very helpful



Results Feb 2021 – Pass!



# Questions?

- [Examinations@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:Examinations@rcpsych.ac.uk)

