

The Hong Kong College of Orthopaedic Surgeons Regulations on Specialist Training and Examination

[Revised on 1 March 2005]

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Hong Kong College of Orthopaedic Surgeons is responsible for the training and accreditation of specialist orthopaedic surgeons in Hong Kong. This responsibility is granted by the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine which is the legitimate body to regulate the training and accreditation of specialists in Hong Kong.
- 1.2 Fellowship of the HKCOS is a pre-requisite for admission to Fellowship of the HKAM, which will entitle the fellow to register with the Specialist Registry of the Medical Council of Hong Kong.
- 1.3. The training program consists of two parts: basic surgical training and higher orthopaedic training. A satisfactory completion of higher orthopaedic training and a pass in the Fellowship examination will lead to Fellowship of the HKCOS. Satisfactory completion of training consists of completion of required clinical rotations and other training requirements. The regulations are described below.

2. BASIC SURGICAL TRAINING

2.1 The Hong Kong Intercollegiate Board of Surgical Colleges (HKICBSC)

Basic Surgical Training in Hong Kong is administered by the Intercollegiate Board of Surgical Colleges which consists of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists, the Hong Kong College of Emergency Medicine, and the HKCOS. All basic surgical trainees must register with the HKICBSC to entitle him / her to receive accredited Basic Surgical Training.

2.2 Admission as Basic Surgical Trainee

- a. A medical graduate registered with the Hong Kong Medical Council in good standing and is in a recognized training post may apply to the HKICBSC to register as a Basic Surgical Trainee (BST). The HKICBSC will arrange the trainee to go through a program of training (see below).
- b. A Basic Surgical Trainee may register with the HKCOS, which will enable he / she to access education information and materials from the HKCOS, to have preferential participation in educational programs organized by the HKCOS, and to receive training points from the HKCOS.
- c. From July 2005 onwards, a limit will be put to the number of Higher Orthopaedic Trainees (HOT). There is therefore no guarantee that BSTs who have started their training before or after that date may be admitted as HOTs. The criteria for selection of BSTs into higher orthopaedic training programme is described in section 3.5. Updated information concerning availability of training posts or selection criteria may be obtained from the College secretariat or Training Director of individual units.
- d. Trainees who have received basic surgical training in overseas centers may also apply to the HKCOS for consideration for higher orthopaedic training. The basic training should be of an equivalent quality and content to the requirements of Basic Surgical Training in Hong Kong [section 2.3]. Potential trainees must also meet the selection criteria and attend the selection procedures [section 3.5].

2.3 Requirements of Basic Surgical Training

- a. The training programme consists of a minimum of 24 months of clinical rotations in approved training posts:
 - (1) 12 months of uninterrupted training to be made up of approved training posts from 2 specialties, in each of which a significant proportion of work will be spent with surgical emergencies requiring the emergency/critical care of patients or care of the critically ill, and may be drawn from 2 specialties of the following list:
 - i. 6 months in General Surgery with emergency work;
 - ii. 6 months in Orthopaedics with musculoskeletal trauma;
 - iii. 6 months in Accident and Emergency Medicine with surgical and musculoskeletal trauma.

Training posts in other surgical specialties which provide a similar component of care of the critically ill may also be considered by the HKICBSC provided they have been accepted and approved as such by the HKICBSC.

- (2) Another 12 months should be spent in approved training posts in other acute surgical specialties of the trainees' choice.

This period may consist of 2 posts of 6 months each or more posts of 3 or 4 months' duration, provided they form an integral part of an uninterrupted rotational training programme.

Stand-alone posts must be of at least 6 months' duration irrespective of the design of the rotation.

The combination of training posts may be drawn from the following list:

- i. Accident and Emergency Medicine
 - ii. Cardiothoracic Surgery
 - iii. Neurosurgery
 - iv. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
 - v. Otorhinolaryngology
 - vi. Paediatric Surgery
 - vii. Plastic Surgery
 - viii. Urology
 - ix. 3 to 4 months of experience in Intensive Care, where the experience is not already included in the 12 months rotations described in part (1) above. (*This may be acquired as part of an approved surgical training post or as part of the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists approved 4 months training post in anaesthesia with intensive care.*)
 - x. Orthopaedics or one of its sub-specialties where the experience gained is not already included in the 12 months rotations described in part (1) above.
 - xi. General Surgery or one of its sub-specialties where the experience gained is not already included in the 12 months rotation described in part (1) above.
- b. During the training period the trainees should successfully complete a Basic Surgical Skills Course approved by the HKICBSC.
- c. The trainee is also expected to pass an acceptable intermediate examination in order to be eligible to be considered for Higher Orthopaedic Training.

2.4 Assessment of Basic Surgical Training

The BST training is assessed every 3 to 6 months. This is done with special forms of the HKICBSC and signed by the immediate supervisor or Training Director of the unit. Unsatisfactory assessment may lead to disqualification of that period of training. Disqualification of 2 consecutive terms of training may lead to expulsion from the Basic Surgical Training program by the HKICBSC.

2.5 HKCOS Training points for Basic Surgical Trainees

- a. Training Points are allocated to participation in approved training activities which may be organized by the College, orthopaedic departments or other organizations. The Training Points are a quantification of the academic efforts of the trainees and form an integral part of the assessment of BST training.
- b. The HKCOS requires Training Points from all BSTs while they are undergoing training in Orthopaedics. Failure to obtain the required number of training points will render the academic assessment of the training period unsatisfactory.
- c. The current training point requirement for BSTs is 30 points for every 6 months training in orthopaedics. The list of approved training activities and their training points can be obtained from the College secretariat. From 2005 onwards, those Training Points which satisfy the regulations of CME can be linked to CME points in a 1 to 1 ratio.

2.6 The Intermediate Examination

The BST must pass an Intermediate Examination in order to be eligible to be considered for admission as a Higher Orthopaedic Trainee. Currently the HKCOS recognizes any one of the following intermediate qualifications as an acceptable qualification:

- a. Fellowship or Associate Fellowship of one of the British Royal Colleges in Surgery, or of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong;
- b. The intermediate examination of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong;
- c. Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (MRCSEdin), which may be taken in Hong Kong, jointly with the intermediate examination of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong, or taken elsewhere in approved centers;
- d. The Joint Membership of the Colleges of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland, starting from January 2004, taken in Hong Kong or elsewhere.

3. HIGHER ORTHOPAEDIC TRAINING

3.1 Introduction

- a. Higher training in orthopaedics and traumatology (Higher Orthopaedic Training) is organized and accredited by the HKCOS. Satisfactory completion of the required clinical training rotations and other training requirements will entitle the trainee to participate in the Fellowship examination (exit examination).
- b. At present, the training program is also accredited by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. The exit examination is therefore a conjoint examination, and the successful candidate may also be granted the Fellowship of the RCS Edin in orthopaedics.
- c. There is a selection procedure for qualified BST to be admitted as Higher Orthopaedic Trainees (HOT). From July 2005 onwards, the number of accredited HOT training positions will be closely monitored by the College.

3.2 Requirements of Higher Orthopaedic Training

- 3.2.1 The Higher Orthopaedic Training may be completed in a minimum of 4 years (48 months). The programme includes the following clinical rotations in approved centers:
 - a. Compulsory subspecialty clinical rotations made up of the following combinations (total 39 months):
 - i. 18 months in Trauma
 - ii. 12 months in General Orthopaedics, including adult joint reconstruction, sports medicine, foot and ankle surgery, spinal surgery, and musculoskeletal oncology
 - iii. 3 months in Hand Surgery
 - iv. 3 months in Paediatric Orthopaedics
 - v. 3 months in Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation
 - b. The remaining 9 months may be spent in one or more orthopaedic subspecialty clinical rotations of the trainee's choice, including those described above. The time spent in each of these clinical rotations should not be less than 3 months.
 - c. Up to 6 months may be spent in approved basic science or clinical research in orthopaedics and traumatology.
 - d. Of all the clinical rotations, 2 rotations of 3 months each should be carried out in another training center in Hong Kong. This is arranged by the College Secretary.
 - e. Overseas training may under exceptional circumstances be accredited as fulfilling the training requirements for up to a maximum of 3 months.
- 3.2.2 The level of expertise required in terms of knowledge and skills for each subspecialty training are described in the Core Curriculum Book of the HKCOS (version 1993).
- 3.2.3 The following items are also required as measures of satisfactory completion of training. All the items need to be fulfilled:
 - a. Training points: 45 training points are required for every 6 months of training. A total of 360 training points for 4 years of training.
 - b. Operation record (log book): a satisfactory number of index operations performed independently or under supervision. The number of operations is certified every 6 months by the Training Director.
 - c. Satisfactory 6 monthly assessments.
 - d. To complete one research project under supervision.
 - e. To make at least one oral presentation at an orthopaedic related local or overseas conference.
 - f. To publish at least one orthopaedic related scientific paper in a peer-reviewed journal as the first author.
 - g. To pass the exit HKCOS examination.
- 3.2.4 Other requirements:
 - a. The HOT is required to complete the Basic Orthopaedic Bioskill Course, to provide proof of training in basic microsurgery skill (e.g. Basic Microsurgery Course), fracture fixation course (e.g. the AO or AADO course), and for HOTs admitted after July 2003, the ATLS course.
 - b. The HOT is required to pay an annual training fee which is non-refundable. Failure to pay the annual training fee may lead to suspension or termination of trainee status.

3.3 Record of Training and the Operation Log Book

The HOT is required to keep a good record of his training, together with all relevant documents, and a record of operation experience. The record is presented for assessment for consideration of admission to the exit examination. The format of this Log Book is available from the College Secretariat and should contain the following items:

- a. A record of undergraduate medical education and degree, medical registration, and if relevant, any post-graduate degree or professional qualifications, and courses attended. Copies of these documents and the annual practice certificate issued by the Medical Council of Hong Kong should be provided.
- b. A copy of the intermediate qualification.
- c. A record of all training rotations, including basic surgical training.
- d. Record of Training Points for each 6-month period.
- e. Record of leaves that are over 28 calendar days, indicating their nature and duration.
- f. Summary of a research project which is certified by the supervisor or the Training Director.
- g. Copy of the abstract of a presentation in an orthopaedic related meeting.
- h. Copy of one published scientific paper(s) as first author.
- i. Copies of attendance certificates of courses or workshops attended.

3.4 Admission Procedure of Higher Orthopaedic Trainees

3.4.1 Starting from July 2005, the number of Higher Orthopaedic Trainees will be closely monitored and likely to be limited, and the admission will be selective and competitive. Candidates are selected on the basis of their clinical and academic performance and professionalism through a structured selection procedure [see section 3.5].

3.4.2 The College does not guarantee that all BSTs who intend to take up orthopaedics & traumatology training will be offered a HOT position. Potential applicants should contact the College secretariat for the most updated information on the regulations and requirements of the selection procedure.

3.4.3 Potential applicants who have received their basic surgical training abroad may be considered for admission as HOTs. They are subjected to the same requirements as local applicants. They should enquire the College secretariat for the procedures and the documents required.

3.5 Admission Criteria and Selection Procedure of Higher Orthopaedic Trainees (HOT)

3.5.1 The following criteria must be met:

- a. A Hong Kong citizen with a current full registration with the Medical Council of Hong Kong and in good standing.
- b. Completed an accredited Basic Surgical Training programme as described in section 2.
- c. Holds a recognized intermediate qualification.

3.5.2 The selection procedure consists of a structured interview and requires the following documents from the applicant:

- a. An application form and the prescribed fees.
- b. A structured curriculum vitae using a specific form, including information on basic medical qualification, postgraduate qualification(s), training and research experience.
- c. Documentation of a successful pass in a recognized intermediate examination [see section 2.7].
- d. 6-monthly Assessment Reports of an accredited BST training programs, including documentation of training points and CME points, unless otherwise exempted by the College.

3.5.3 Information supplied by the applicant and the interview will be rated. The selection criteria may be changed from time to time. Potential applicants may obtain the most updated information from the College secretariat.

3.6 Registration with the College and Hospital Positions

3.6.1 Potential HOTs selected by the College are required to obtain their own hospital positions in one of the accredited training centres. The HKCOS is not responsible for arranging the positions.

3.6.2 Potential HOTs are required to register with the College as advanced trainees and to pay an annual training fee. The trainee status will only start when the registration procedure is completed. The registration form is available through the College secretariat. Failure to pay the annual training fee may lead to suspension or discontinuation of the training status.

- 3.6.3 A registered HOT can access information of training activities of the College, access to training materials, and will receive documentation of Training Points and CME points endorsed by the College.
- 3.6.4 The College may suspend or discontinue (terminate) a trainee's registration and his / her training status. This is outlined in section 3.7.

3.7 Assessment of Higher Orthopaedic Training

3.7.1 Monitoring of satisfactory progress of Higher Orthopaedic Training

- a. There is a 6-monthly assessment by means of a structured assessment form, to be completed by the Supervisor / Training Director.
- b. The assessment form includes assessment of the trainee's clinical and academic performance, documentation of training points and CME points, types and number of operations performed, and courses / conferences attended.
- c. Satisfactory completion of each 6-month term of training is required for progression to the next term of training.

3.7.2 Unsatisfactory progress

- a. In case the performance of the trainee is found to be unsatisfactory, his / her case will be discussed at the Education Committee.
- b. Management of unsatisfactory progress may consist of one of the following procedures:
 - i. Disqualification of that term of training
 - ii. Remedial programme
 - iii. Suspension / termination of training [see below]

3.7.3 Disqualification of the term of training

When disqualified the term will not be counted towards training. The trainee will need to repeat the term and therefore will need to extend the total length of training. The trainee will be bound by the regulation on the maximum duration of training [see section 3.10]. However Training Points and CME points gained during this disqualified period will still be valid.

3.7.4 Remedial programme

The remedial programme is drawn up by the Education Committee together with the Supervisor / Training Director of the trainee. It may involve transfer to another training programme if necessary. It may require an extension of training. Failure to meet the requirements laid down in the remedial program may lead to disqualification or suspension or termination of training.

3.7.5 Suspension or Termination of training

The Education Committee may recommend to the Council to suspend or terminate the trainee status of a trainee. The trainee will cease to be a HOT of the College.

- a. For termination, the individual may not re-apply to be readmitted as a HOT, and he / she may not apply to sit any future exit examination. Training fees paid will not be refunded.
- b. For suspension, the trainee status may be reactivated after satisfying the requirements of the Council. Time lapsed during suspension will not be counted towards training requirements. No Training Points or CME points will be granted during suspension. Training fees paid will not be refunded.

3.7.6 The College is not responsible for any financial loss that may arise from any decision of disqualification, suspension or termination of the training of a trainee or any other disciplinary actions.

3.7.7 Regulations on Disqualification of training

- a. Disqualification of training may be considered on any one of the following grounds:
 - i. Unsatisfactory performance, including insufficient Training Points;
 - ii. Extended period of leave without approval;
 - iii. Failure to pay the annual training fees of the HKCOS [see below].

3.7.8 Regulations on Suspension / Termination of Training

- a. The training may be suspended or terminated under any one of the following circumstances:
 - i. If in the opinion of the Education Committee / Council that he / she ceases to hold any of the qualifications rendering him / her eligible as a trainee of the College;

- ii. If in the opinion of the Education Committee / Council that the performance of the trainee has been very unsatisfactory, or that he / she has taken extended period of leave of absence without approval, or that he / she has accumulated disqualification of terms of training for 12 months or more;
 - iii. In the ground of poor health;
 - iv. If he / she fails to pay the annual training fees before the designated deadline;
 - v. If by a resolution of the Education Committee / Council passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of the members for the time being it is declared that his / her conduct has been prejudicial to the interests and the good name of the College, and it be resolved that his / her trainee status be suspended or terminated. Provided that at least 28 days before the Education Committee / Council meeting at which such a resolution is passed the trainee shall have been sent written notice of such meeting and of what is alleged against him / her and of the intended resolution, and that he/she shall at such meeting have had an opportunity of giving any explanation or defense he / she may think fit. This includes matters that lead to disciplinary actions taken by the Medical Council of Hong Kong against the trainee.
 - vi. If he/she resigns by written notice to the Education Committee or Council, and such written notice shall reach the College no later than 30 days before the effective date;
- b. The involved individual may appeal against the decision of Suspension / Termination.
 - c. The duration of suspension will be specified by the Council and shall normally be not more than 12 months from the date of resolution by the Council.
 - d. Termination will take immediate effect from the date of resolution by the Council.
 - e. For termination, the individual may not reapply to be readmitted as a HOT, and he/she may not apply to sit any future exit examination. Training fees paid will not be refunded.
 - f. For suspension, the trainee status may be reactivated after satisfying the requirements of the Council which are laid down at the time the resolution was made. Time lapsed during suspension will not be counted towards meeting training requirements. No Training Points or CME points will be granted during suspension. Training fees paid will not be refunded. After reactivation of training any lapsed training fees during the suspension will need to be repaid in full.

3.8 Training points for Higher Orthopaedic Trainees

3.8.1 Definition of training points

- a. Training points are allocated to accredited training activities of the HKCOS or other recognizable educational activities. They are a record of participation in training activities and a documentation of academic pursuit of the trainee.
- b. Training points are granted for pre-approved training activities and the current list can be obtained from the College secretariat.
- c. Ad hoc activities may be accredited for training points if they fulfill all of the following criteria:
 - i. Organized or participated by more than one training centre / programs;
 - ii. With a minimal of 5 Fellows participating;
 - iii. Open to all trainees with proper announcement.
- d. Programs accredited for CME points *may* be accredited for Training Points, subjected to approval by the Education Committee.

3.8.2 Requirement of training points

- a. At present, HOTS are required 45 training points for every 6 months of training, or a total of 90 training points per year. The Education Committee may adjust the number of training point requirement from time to time.
- b. The training points are documented in each 6-monthly training assessment report.
- c. A trainee who has obtained less than the required number of training points may be required to carry out one of the followings: -
 - i. Additional training points to be obtained over the next 6 months or any period to be specified by the Education Committee, on top of the regular requirements.
 - ii. Disqualification of the training period under consideration.

3.9 Leave of Absence

- 3.9.1 A Higher Orthopaedic Trainee may take up to a maximum of 28 calendar days of leave in every 6 months of training. This includes annual leave, sick leave, vacation leave or leaves for other purposes unrelated to training. Training leaves, study leaves or conference leaves are exempted from this calculation. Maternity leave is considered separately below.
- 3.9.2 Maternity leaves may be taken according to the current labour law requirements and provisions. However if the maternity leave falls within the term of a subspecialty training rotation rendering the remaining time of that term insufficient for training, the Education Committee may require the candidate to take remedial training programmes or to repeat the subspecialty training rotation after the maternity leave.
- 3.9.3 Leaves extended over the maximum period may render that 6 months term of training disqualified, unless special approval is given by the Education Committee.
- 3.9.4 For any 3 months term of a subspecialty rotation, the maximum period of leave is 14 calendar days. Otherwise that 3 months term of subspecialty rotation may be disqualified.
- 3.9.5 For extended study leave locally or overseas, for professional training, clinical attachment or for research, the trainee should apply and seek prior approval from the Education Committee. A maximum of 24 calendar months of leave for the whole training period may be granted for these purposes. Such study leave is normally not considered as part of Higher Orthopaedic Training unless approval is granted by the Education Committee. If endorsed, the trainee is still required to obtain training points during the study leave period. The trainee is also bound by the regulations on Maximum Duration of Training [see section 3.10].

3.10 Maximum Duration of Training

- 3.10.1 The maximum duration of training is 60 months, counting from the date of admission into Higher Orthopaedic Training. The trainee is to meet all clinical rotation requirements and other requirements during this period of time.
- 3.10.2 Normally at the end of 60 months the trainee status will be automatically terminated.
- 3.10.3 Under exceptional circumstances the Council may consider extension of the training period beyond 60 months. However this additional extension is usually not more than 12 months unless otherwise approved by the Council.
- 3.10.4 Trainees who fail to fulfill their training requirements within this maximum duration of training, including any approved extension thereafter, are not eligible to sit the exit examination.
- 3.10.5 A trainee who has failed the exit Fellowship Examination but has already completed all training rotations and other requirements is considered separately [see section 4.3, 4.11.3].

3.11 Completion of Training

- 3.11.1 Training is only considered complete after the HOT passes the exit Fellowship Examination in addition to fulfilling all training requirements.
- 3.11.2 Trainees who have completed all the required training rotations and other training requirements but who have not passed the exit Fellowship Examination are required to register with the College as the Examination Eligible Candidate [see section 4.11.3].

3.12 Training Fee

- 3.12.1 All trainees of the HKCOS shall pay annual training fees. The amount of these fees will be recommended by the Council from time to time. The annual training fees shall be paid within 3 months after admission as a trainee of the College, and before the end of March of each calendar year for the subsequent annual payments. The College will send at least one but not more than 2 reminders to the trainees before the payment deadline. In addition the Council may impose fees for a particular service or event if and when it seems necessary.
- 3.12.2 Failure to pay the annual training fee may lead to suspension or termination of the trainee status and removal of his / her name from the trainee list.

4. THE FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION

4.1 The role of Fellowship Examination and the status of a Fellow

- 4.1.1 The Fellowship Examination is an 'exit' examination. It is an assessment of whether or not a Higher Orthopaedic Trainee (HOT) has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to enable him / her to practice independently in orthopaedic surgery in the community.
- 4.1.2 The Fellowship Examination forms part of the requirements for a HOT to qualify as a specialist in Orthopaedic Surgery. He / She has to pass the examination besides

completion of all the training requirements. Training is incomplete if a HOT cannot pass the examination within allowable time [see section 4.3.2] and will not be eligible to be admitted as a Fellow of the HKCOS.

- 4.1.3 Having passed the Fellowship Examination, and on satisfactory completion of all training requirements, the HOT can apply to be admitted as a Fellow of the HKCOS.
- 4.1.4 The HKCOS will nominate Fellows to be admitted as Fellows of the HKAM in Orthopaedic Surgery (FHKAM Orthopaedic Surgery).

4.2 The Conduct of the Fellowship Examination

- 4.2.1 The HKCOS holds the Fellowship from time to time. At present, the Fellowship Examination is conducted once a year.
- 4.2.2 The present Fellowship Examination consists of 4 parts, but the Council may change the format and content as necessary according to the prevailing circumstances, requirements and standards. The 4-parts are:
 - a. An assessment of the trainee's operation log book
 - b. A written examination
 - c. A clinical examination that consists of long cases and short cases
 - d. Viva examinations
- 4.2.3 At present the Fellowship Examination is held conjointly with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Some of the examiners are sent by the RCS Edin. A pass in the examination will entitle the candidate to both the Fellowship of HKCOS and the Fellowship in Orthopaedic Surgery of the RCS Edin (FRCS Edin Ortho).
- 4.2.4 A candidate may either pass or fail the examination. There is no pull-up viva or supplementary examination for failed candidates. The failed candidates may re-sit the examination at future sittings of the examination. The number of re-sits is limited [see section 4.3.2]

4.3 Eligibility for the Fellowship Examination

- 4.3.1 Regulations that apply to trainees who are taking the examination for the first time:
 - a. The applicant must be a currently registered HOT in trainee list and in good standing, and has completed or at the time of the examination, would have completed the required clinical training rotations [see section 3.2.1] or with the exemption stated in [4.3.3], and has also satisfied the other training requirements including training points, conference presentation, publications and operation log book; and
 - b. Submit the required documents and pay the required examination fees.
- 4.3.2 Regulations for candidates who have failed the examination previously and are applying to re-sit the examination:
 - a. The applicant should be a currently registered Examination Eligible Candidate (EEC) [section 4.11] of the College in good standing, and provides proofs of continuous "training capacity" in orthopaedic surgery [see section 4.11].
 - b. Submit the required documents and pay the required examination fees.
 - c. **Limit to the number of re-sits at the Fellowship Examination** – For any candidate who has failed the first attempt at the exit examination, he / she may re-sit the examination again for not more than 3 times within the next 4 years, counting from the date of the first attempt at the examination, whichever criterion comes first.
- 4.3.3 With effect from January 2004, currently registered HOTs in trainee list may sit the examination if by the date of the examination they have already completed 3 years and 6 months of accredited clinical training rotations, including all the compulsory subspecialty training rotations (the core rotations), and provided all the other training requirements are met. However they will only be admitted as Fellow of the HKCOS after completion of a full 48 months of training rotations.

4.4 Application procedures for the Fellowship Examination

- 4.4.1 The date of the Fellowship Examination will be announced not less than 6 months before the examination unless otherwise approved by the Council.
- 4.4.2 The deadline for application will be not less than 1 month after announcement of the examination date.
- 4.4.3 The application must be completed with all the required documents and examination fees.

4.5 Acceptance of Examination Candidates

- 4.5.1 All applications for the Fellowship Examination are assessed by the Examination Committee of the College which will decide whether or not to accept the applicant for the examination. The Committee may request clarification or additional information from the applicant.

- 4.5.2 Successful applicants will be notified within 2 months after the closure of application.
- 4.5.3 For unsuccessful applicant(s), an explanation will be made. Suggestions on additional documents or remedial training may be given to the applicant(s) to enable he/she to fulfill the examination requirements in the future.
- 4.6 **Withdrawal from the Fellowship Examination**
- 4.6.1 Any candidate who submits an application form but is subsequently found to be not eligible to sit for the examination will have the examination fee refunded but 20% will be deducted for administrative charge
- 4.6.2 An accepted examination candidate who wish to withdraw from the examination must do so in writing to the College secretariat.
- The examination fee may be returned less 20% administration charges, when written notice is received by the College prior to the closing date of applications.
 - Half of the examination fee may be refunded, when written notice is received not less than 21 calendar days before the commencement of the examination.
 - No refund will be made to candidates who fail to attend the examination for any reason whatsoever, or whose withdrawal notice is received less than 21 calendar days before the commencement of the examination. No allowance will be made for postal or other delays.
- 4.7 **Cancellation and Change of Date of the Fellowship Examination**
- 4.7.1 The Council may under special circumstances decide to cancel or change the date of the Fellowship Examination. There is no obligation for the College to hold a Fellowship Examination every year or at a fixed date, or after the announcement has been made.
- 4.7.2 The College does not hold responsibility for any consequences that may arise for its decision to cancel an examination or to alter the date of an examination.
- 4.7.3 The decision to cancel or alter the date of an examination will be made at a reasonable time before the date of the examination. The examination fees will be refunded in full.
- 4.8 **Successful Pass in the Fellowship Examination**
- 4.8.1 The successful candidate will be informed by the Panel of Examiners at the end of the examination. The result will be endorsed at the next Council Meeting.
- 4.8.2 For candidates who have completed 48 months of accredited clinical training rotations, they can apply to be admitted as Fellows of the HKCOS at the next Council Meeting. The Fellowship conferment ceremony is held at the next Admission Ceremony of the College. The College will subsequently nominate these new Fellows to be admitted as Fellows of the HKAM.
- 4.8.3 For candidates who have not yet completed 48 months of accredited clinical training rotations, they are required to complete the remaining months of training in a satisfactory manner. They may then apply to be admitted as Fellows of the College after satisfactory completion of these remaining training rotations.
- 4.9 **Failure at the Fellowship Examination**
- 4.9.1 Candidates who fail the Fellowship Examination will be informed by the Panel of Examiners at the end of the examination. The result will be endorsed at the next Council meeting. There is no "pull-up" viva or supplementary examination.
- 4.9.2 A review meeting with the failed candidate will be held within the next few days by a representative of the Examiners (usually a representative of the team of External Examiners).
- 4.9.3 In the event that a candidate wishes to appeal his / her case, he / she should do so verbally to the Chairman of the Court of Examiners as soon as possible, followed by writing, and not more than 7 days after the examination.
- 4.9.4 The candidate's appeal will be directed to the Chairman of the Appeal Committee [section 4.10].
- 4.9.5 The failed candidate may apply to re-sit the examination, subject to regulations [section 4.3.2].
- 4.10 **The Appeal Committee**
- 4.10.1 The Council will form an Appeal Committee for each Fellowship Examination. The Chairman of the Appeal Committee is appointed before the Fellowship examination.
- 4.10.2 The Appeal Committee will consider every case of appeal independently and will report to the Council.
- 4.10.3 The Council will base on the recommendation of the Appeal Committee to make a final decision on the status of each appeal case.

4.11 Eligibility to re-sit the Fellowship Examination

- 4.11.1 Any candidate who wishes to re-sit the Fellowship examination is required to register with the College as an Examination Eligible Candidate (EEC).
- 4.11.2 An EEC must fulfill all the following:
- Have already satisfactorily completed 48 months of clinical training rotations
 - Have completed other training requirements
 - Current registration with the Medical Council of Hong Kong and in good standing.
 - In a "Training Capacity" [section 4.11.3].
- 4.11.3 "Training Capacity" is defined as consisting of all the following requirements:
- In active clinical practice;
 - In a "supervised practice" under supervision by an accredited Trainer(s) approved by the College [see section 4.11.5 and 6];
 - Maintains a record of operation experience - the operation log book;
 - Satisfies the training points requirement of a HOT.
- 4.11.4 Regulations of "Examination Eligible Candidate (EEC)"
- Trainees who have failed the Fellowship examination, or trainees who are unable to sit the Fellowship Examination within 6 months after they have completed all training rotations are required to register with the College as Examination Eligible Candidates (EEC).
 - The registration as an EEC should be done within 2 months from the date of the last Fellowship examination or within 2 months of the date of completion of the 48 months of required clinical training rotations.
 - The registration is to be renewed annually.
 - The EEC status may not be approved or renewed after 4 years, counting from the date of the first attempt of Fellowship examination or the date of completion of 48 months of required clinical training rotations, or after the candidate has re-sit the exit examination for 3 more times, whichever criterion comes first [refers section 4.3.2].
 - An annual registration fee is payable in advance and is non-refundable.
- 4.11.5 The EEC is required to submit an annual plan of "supervised practice" [see section 4.11.6] under a potential trainer at the time of registration and at each annual renewal, as a documentation of his / her "training capacity". This plan will be submitted to the Education Committee for approval. The plan should include the following information:
- Name of potential trainer(s),
 - Name of hospital(s) of the supervised practice,
 - An outline of the supervised practice, including number of clinic sessions, operation sessions and on-call duties, if applicable.
- 4.11.6 A "supervised practice" is defined as an orthopaedic surgical practice in which the trainer is fully informed of the work of the candidate and the candidate does not perform orthopaedic operations that are beyond his / her capacity as a surgeon still under training, as is outlined in the curriculum for HOT training.
- 4.11.7 The EEC will be assessed by the Council every 6 months by means of an assessment form which is signed by the trainer(s).
- 4.11.8 The "training capacity" of the immediate past 6 months may be disqualified if its quality is deemed unsatisfactory by the College. A candidate may not have more than 12 months of "training capacity" disqualified by the College. Any candidate who has 12 months or more "training capacity" disqualified will not be renewed as an EEC and will not be allowed to sit or re-sit any future exit examination.
- 4.11.9 The candidate may change his / her trainer(s) or program of supervised practice. The change should not be made more frequently than every 6 months, and the new plan must be approved by the Education Committee in advance before its implementation.
- 4.11.10 Leave of Absence – The EEC may take leave of absence following the same regulations governing HOTs.
- 4.11.11 Under exceptional circumstances, a candidate may apply to the Council for approval to take extended leaves while registered as an EEC or before registering as an EEC. However the Council may still require the candidate to be bounded by the regulations on the limit of attempts at the Fellowship examination, described in [section 4.3.2], as well as the regulations on the limit of the duration of registration as an EEC [section 4.11.4].

5. INTERPRETATION OF THESE REGULATIONS

The College Council has the final authority in the interpretation of these regulations, and may make revisions from time to time. The most updated information and current resolutions of the Council may be obtained from the College Secretary.