Guidance Document
Medical Scientist Test of Professional Competence (ToPC)

Background

The Medical Scientist Registration Board is required to evaluate an international applicants' qualification(s) and experience as attesting to the standard of proficiency required for registration as a member of the profession in Ireland.

The Test of Professional Competence (ToPC) is designed to test an applicant's ability to meet the threshold Standards of Proficiency for the profession. The purpose of the test is to ensure public protection by confirming that an international applicant, once deemed eligible to apply to CORU, meets the required standard for professional practice. A passing grade in the ToPC demonstrates that the applicant has met the minimum threshold for recognition of their qualification(s) and experience and may, therefore, progress their application for registration with CORU as a Medical Scientist.

The Test of Professional Competence (ToPC)

The ToPC is designed to test against all the CORU Standards of Proficiency for Medical Scientists. Details of the Standards or Proficiency can be found on the CORU website.

The Standards of Proficiency details the skills and abilities that individuals must possess in order to join the CORU register. They are the threshold standards deemed necessary by the Registration Board at the level of entry to practice the profession safely in Ireland.

CORU applicants must demonstrate competence in each of the five domains of the Standards of Proficiency:

1. Professional Autonomy and Accountability
2. Communication, Collaborative Practice and Teamworking
3. Safety and Quality
4. Professional Development
5. Professional Knowledge and Skills

Test Format

The format of the test is a **written exam** to consist of: a combination of Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs) and interpretative or scenario/case study type questions conducted in a proctored exam environment within an exam setting.

The five disciplines of Medical Science will be examined in both tests:

- Cellular pathology
- Haematology
- Clinical biochemistry and immunology
- Medical microbiology and
- Blood Transfusion

1. **Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) exam**
   The MCQ exam will comprise of 60 multiple choice questions.
   The MCQ exam will account for 40% of the overall test result.

   Duration: 40-60 minutes

2. **Scenario/Case Study exam**
   The Scenario/Case Study exam will comprise of six scenario/case study questions.
   The first five questions (one question to be answered from a choice of two) will examine each of the five disciplines of Medical Science with the sixth question being a research question from a discipline of your choice.

   Duration: 120-140 minutes

Test Marking Scheme
Domains 1- 4 to be assigned 30% of the marks.
Domain 5 to be assigned 70% of the total marks.

Within the 70% assigned to Domain 5:

- An applicant must achieve 50% of the marks available for 4/5 of the main disciplines, with the lowest compensation mark for the disciplines being 40%.
- An overall mark of at least 50% much be achieved for domain 5.
- Examination of applicant's research knowledge will be worth 15% of the 70% assigned to Domain 5, with a pass mark of 50%. The applicant will be given a choice of the discipline from which their research question is based.

To pass the test a grade of 50% overall (across domains 1-5) must be achieved.

Resources for preparing for test
The Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine (ACSLM) have a dedicated resource page on its website to help candidates prepare for the ToPC**:** ToPC - Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine

Candidates are required to **provide their own laptop** for use on the day of the test.

Support
Continuing Professional Development (CPD) supports will include overall support for non-technical skills like communication, professional ethics and all aspects of CPD. The ACSLM can provide access to their continuous streaming of open-access CPD events as well as supports to help applicants navigate the exam platform.
Sample exam questions will also be made available in advance of the test.

The CORU Executive will also continue to engage with applicants throughout this process.

Length of Test
3 Hours.

Date of Assessment
The test will take place in the ACSLM offices on **Saturday, 14th November 2026**.

Location of Assessment
The Guinness Enterprise Centre,
Taylor's Lane,

Dublin 8
DO8 ET2R

Please note the applicant will be responsible for all expenses incurred to travel to the exam centre.

Repeat of Assessment
Each component of the test can be repeated once if failed on the first attempt.
If the applicant fails on the second attempt, the applicant will no longer be eligible for recognition of their qualification(s) and their application will not progress.

Assessment Fee
The assessment fee is included in the CORU application fee.

How to Apply
Application will be through the normal CORU on-line application portal.