I cannot find an answer on the RCGP website to my specific questions about the AKT, CSA or WPBA

You can find the latest information on the AKT below.

Find more on the current replacement to the CSA – the Recorded Consultation Assessment and the Workplace Based Assessment (WPBA).

If you are not able to find the answer to your query in the links above, you can email the exams team at exams@rcgp.org.uk and we will endeavour to reply as soon as we can.

Please bear in mind that, although we would usually try to get back to you within five working days, the unprecedented number of queries coming through may mean some delays. We will continue to update the MRCGP website as the situation changes.

My GP specialty training ends this summer. How will I be able to obtain a CCT if I haven’t been able to take the AKT and/or CSA?

This continues to be a challenging situation which involves AiT Representatives, the RCGP, COGPED, GMC and government as well as many other relevant stakeholders. We would like to reassure you that important cross-party discussions are continuing to take place and we will continue to update this document.

Please read our CSA, RCA and AKT FAQs as we trust that these will answer some of your questions.

There is clear agreement that trainees who would have expected to gain a CCT in normal circumstances during August 2020 are a cohort that require special arrangements in order to transition into post-CCT working.

We are conscious that there are many difficulties around travel to take an assessment, that trainees would like flexible option choice and that the GMC, as the regulatory body, has confirmed that a statutory assessment is still required in order to maintain the appropriate standards of safe patient care.
Applied Knowledge Test (AKT)

I was due to sit the AKT in April 2020, when will it be rescheduled?

There was a reduced capacity AKT on Wednesday 15 July and, subject to there being no changes to government advice in response to COVID-19 related issues, there will be an additional, near-normal capacity AKT on Wednesday 19 August.

Who will be eligible to sit the August AKT?

The test centres will still not be permitted to run at maximum capacity for your safety and the safety of their staff. However, we anticipate that the majority of test centres will be open and that at least 1500 candidates can be accommodated.

Any priority booking system was coordinated by local Deanery and LETB GP Education teams as follows:

1. ST3s due to CCT by 04 August 2020
2. ST3s due to CCT by December 2020 and who only need the AKT component
3. Other ST3s
4. ST2s

I have received official notification that I am eligible to sit the August AKT
How do I apply?

The application process will run as normal and all information can be found on the AKT section of our MRCGP webpage.

I have received official notification that I am eligible to sit the August AKT
Where will I be able to sit the August AKT?

Pearson VUE has worked with the RCGP and have been granted special permission to open test centres across the four home nations for medical keyworkers such as qualifying GP trainees.

In the current guidelines in place for the COVID-19 pandemic this will mean fewer test centres will be able to run the exam and may mean some additional travel for some candidates. This will be confirmed as soon as possible.
Do the current government guidelines permit travel to a test centre to sit the AKT?

Keyworkers are permitted to travel to their place of work and for essential travel such as sitting a national postgraduate medical exit exam.

Please print off the letter that accompanies your booking confirmation that will act as evidence for your essential travel.

I live in a local lockdown or local restriction area, or have booked a test centre that is within a local lockdown or local restriction area. How can I sit the AKT safely?

The RCGP and Pearson VUE test centres are closely monitoring national government advice about local lockdown and restricted areas. We are aware that individual test centres, staff and candidates may be affected. Throughout the pandemic, Pearson VUE have implemented COVID-19 secure guidance.

Provided it remains safe to do so, essential key workers such as GP trainees, will be permitted to sit a strictly socially distanced AKT.

If an area is in local lockdown or deemed a restriction area, and test centres within that area are safe to open, those candidates living within the area are permitted to attend but should avoid travel to test centres outside of the lockdown area.

Candidates living outside the geo geographic boundaries of a local lockdown or restriction area will not be permitted to travel to a test centre within the affected area and will need to contact the Pearson VUE service desk in order to be re-allocated to a permitted venue.

All candidates and staff must wash their hands before entering the test centre, avoid interaction with other people as much as possible, aim to remain two metres apart and wear a face covering, unless they have a valid exception.

As the pandemic situation evolves and develops, decisions will be made based on the latest published guidance available at the time.

For any queries about local test centre availability in your area and throughout the four Home Nations, please contact Pearson VUE customer support rather than the MRCPG exams team.
For further government national information please refer to:


I might have COVID-19 symptoms or I have been recently in close contact with someone who is COVID-19 positive while I was not wearing PPE. What should I do?

You are not permitted to enter a Pearson VUE test centre if you have:

- any current symptoms of COVID-19
- had any symptoms of COVID-19 within the past 10 days
- have been in close contact in the past 14 days with someone who is COVID-19 positive (while not wearing appropriate PPE)

You need to read the latest updated Pearson VUE test centre health and safety guidance for more details: https://home.pearsonvue.com/coronavirus-update#face-masks

I am due to CCT on 5 August 2020 but still need to pass the AKT. How long will it take after the 15 July AKT to get my results and start post-CCT work?

We are working with all relevant regulatory stakeholders on this. We are aiming to be able to make recommendations to the GMC in time for the GMC to still grant CCTs for 5 August 2020 to all successful AKT candidates who have already passed CSA with completion of satisfactory WPBA. Delivery of this timeline cannot be guaranteed.

I have received official notification that I am not eligible to sit the July or August AKT, but feel I have exceptional circumstances for taking it then. What should I do?

You should approach your Deanery or LETB GP Education team to discuss your circumstances.

I am regarded as being at high risk (clinically extremely vulnerable) from coronavirus (‘shielded status’). How can I sit the AKT safely?

We hope you are keeping safe during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and
we fully recognise that the initial uncertainty about a date for your MRCGP AKT exam was also difficult for you.

As you are regarded as a person who needs shielding for medical reasons it was clearly unsafe for you to leave home and travel to a test centre during July. The national government guidance changed significantly in early August 2020 and you can now go to work as long as the workplace is COVID-secure.

We looked very closely at the practicalities of delivering the AKT as a remote assessment for candidates providing evidence of their 'shielded status', but this was not an option we could deliver securely enough for a national licensing assessment.

I am regarded as being at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable) from coronavirus (i.e. warranting an annual influenza vaccination such as for pregnant women, people with asthma or other long term medical condition). I am therefore not able to leave my own home other than for essential food or medical appointments. How can I sit the August AKT safely?

We hope you are keeping safe during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and we fully recognise that the initial uncertainty about a date for your MRCGP AKT exam was also difficult for you.

Since the national government guidance changed in early August 2020, you can now go to work as long as the workplace is COVID-secure.

I am not in a risk group but am anxious about travelling to a test centre during the COVID-19 pandemic. How can I sit the August AKT safely?

Essential keyworkers are being asked to work and we trust that a socially distanced AKT at a carefully run Pearson VUE test centre is acceptable to you.

You can drive or be driven and then wait nearby in your car until check-in time. You can bring your own gloves if you wish (sanitiser is provided). You must wear a face covering, but please note that that you will still need to briefly show your face at ID checking. Please see the Pearson VUE website for more information.

Please do allow adequate time for the check-in process which will be carried out in accordance with strict social distancing requirements.
I am concerned about the risk of contamination at a test centre. What measures are in place to ensure the safety of candidates while sitting the AKT?

Pearson VUE have worked with the RCGP and have been granted permission to open test centres for medical keyworkers such as qualifying GP trainees. In the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic this will mean reduced test centre occupancy to 50% or less, adherence to strict social distancing rules and more time will be needed to check candidates in.

Pearson VUE have had significant international experience of this issue. Enhanced cleaning of workstations and keyboards is in place and hand sanitiser is available, but you will need to bring your own gloves if you wish to wear them. You must wear a face covering, but please note that that you will still need to briefly show your face at ID checking.

For further information, please also refer to Pearson VUE’s Coronavirus update page.

Pearson VUE advertise remote testing. Why can’t I take a remote AKT from my own home during this time of a national pandemic?

The RCGP have explored this option in detail but it is currently not fit for purpose in a high stakes national postgraduate medical exit exam. There will be an ongoing review of the variety of IT platforms currently available.

I was due to sit the AKT in April 2020. What will happen to the fee I paid?

As per our usual policy, payment for an exam that has been postponed, or where the candidate can demonstrate the reason for their inability to attend, will be automatically carried over until the next booked AKT sitting. We will refund any fees on request.

It is important to note that there will likely be an extremely high demand for examination sittings when the AKT resumes, and so where we can (subject to capacity), priority for re-booking will be given to those already booked and carrying forward their fee.

For refunds, please email the exams team at exams@rcgp.org.uk.
If I sit the AKT on 15 July or 19 August and am unsuccessful does this attempt count towards the total number of permitted attempts at the AKT exam?

Due to the exceptional circumstances and stresses of sitting your assessment during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, then a single unsuccessful attempt at either the July or August AKT will not count towards the total number of permitted attempts at the AKT exam.

If I sit the AKT on 15 July or 19 August and am unsuccessful, does that equate to an automatic extension of my training?

The decision to award additional training time due to exam failure will be made by your ARCP Panel and will be based on your overall progress in the training programme.

I have not had the opportunity to sit the AKT, and now my 7 year exam currency runs out. What do I do?

Please note that all trainees (not just TGPT candidates, but also LTFT trainees, those on maternity leave, etc.) due to CCT in the next year who will now have a new issue due to exam currency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, should be offered as additional 6 months exam currency. In other words, the group of trainees now impacted by COVID-19, and only the group now impacted by COVID-19, will be allowed to carry forward an exam currency of 7 years and 6 months, rather than the normal 7 years.