



Exam Expertise

MRCS Part A

Opinion, advice and insight from the January 2020 exam

The MRCS Part A exam (2020/1) took place on 14 January 2020, with results released on 11 February 2020.

44% of Pastest customers have reported passing the exam, which is **11% higher** than the last overall pass rate reported by the surgical Royal Colleges.

On average, **successful candidates answered 3,721 questions** in the Pastest resource with unsuccessful candidates averaging 2,471 questions answered.

Top Tips

Brush up on Basic Science: In the last two exam sittings, Pastest users felt that “Basic science knowledge relevant to surgical practice” was the most difficult topic, so refresh your knowledge in this area.

Prepare for a long day: The MRCS Part A exam is five hours long, comprising a three-hour Applied Basic Sciences paper and a two-hour Principles of Surgery in General paper. That’s 300 questions to answer... all on the same day! Unsurprisingly, many Pastest users complained of fatigue and felt this impacted their performance on Paper 2.

Most frequently searched for MRCS Part A terms in MyPastest

Anatomy



Thyroid Cancer



Splenectomy



Watch out for the odd image: In the previous two sittings, a single image appeared in the exam. This time around, candidates reported as many as five images,

including X-ray and ECG investigations. The Royal College exam content guides do suggest that images may appear in either paper, however there seems to have been a trend to include more images in recent sittings.



The pass rate of our desktop and app users was **5% higher** than desktop-only users

Get to grips with the guidelines: It was noted by candidates that the exam followed new guidelines - such as for burns, for example - so prep with these in mind and not what you would necessarily do in practice.

Start early: The stand out piece of advice from past candidates is clear: start revising early and hammer through as many practice questions as you can!

The pass rate of users of our **Past Papers** was **10% higher** than non-users



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Formed in 1972, Pastest is a global provider of revision materials for undergraduate and postgraduate medical exams.