

Clinical Examining Board Chair's letter – May 2021

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (PACES)

Once again, we would like to say how extremely grateful the Federation is to all who have participated in the PACES examination since it restarted in October 2020. In the midst of the biggest challenge that modern medicine has faced, your commitment to assessing physicians of the future, in addition to your other clinical duties, must be acknowledged and appreciated.

2021/1

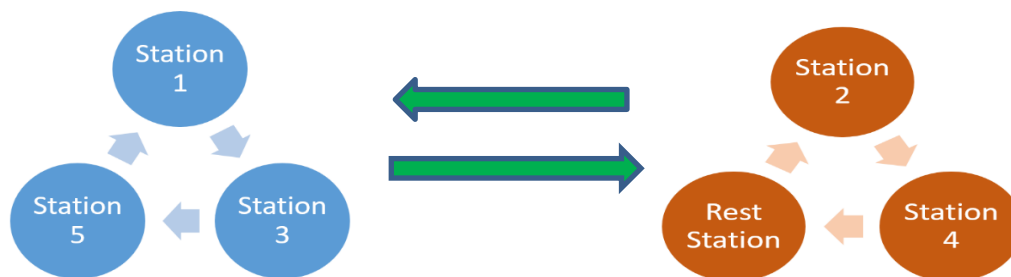
Usually we would report on the previous diet at this point, however, due to the pandemic the 2021/1 diet ran later than usual, and at the time of writing has not yet been completed. The centres that had been due to run in February and early March were rescheduled or replaced, and we were able to offer over 1000 places in total, with over 700 of these in the UK (up from just under 700 in the UK in 2020/3). We are particularly grateful to host examiners who rescheduled their centre or offered additional places.

In the UK the diet ran in the modified format introduced in 2020/3, and in the UK the priority system ensured that trainees who had already started their ST3 jobs or those who were approaching Higher Specialty Training were prioritised.

2021/2

Looking forward to 2021/2, we have again been able to increase the number of places and expect to offer in excess of 850 places in the UK. The diet will also be longer, running from early June through to mid-August. The knock-on effect of the later running in 2021/1, and the increased turn around time for results means that a large number of UK trainees have applied for provisional places in the 2021/2 diet, pending their results from the 2021/1 examination. This may result in some gaps in cycles as candidates who have passed in 2021/1 receive their results. The three Colleges have waiting lists for places, and make strenuous efforts to fill these gaps, but this is not always possible at short notice. We are continuing to actively seek ways to improve this process.

The 2021/2 diet will continue to run the [amended format](#) in the UK, with the communication mini cycle utilising remote examiners and surrogates. If you have concerns that your centre will find it difficult to accommodate this please speak to your College.



Hot Topics – May 2021

- ❖ If you are examining in the UK in 2021/2 please ensure you are familiar with the format and have viewed the COVID 19 PACES section of the [MRCPUK website](#). Key points to remember include:
 - Examiners are reminded that it is **essential** that candidates physically examine patients in stations 1, 3 and 5, even if surrogates without physical signs are being used.
 - Please ensure that all candidates are allowed sufficient time for **donning and doffing of PPE**.
 - Please check your mark sheets thoroughly before returning them. We frequently encounter mark sheets with missing or duplicate marks which then cannot be scanned. If changing a mark please erase thoroughly as this is often the cause of “duplicate” marks
 - Please keep in mind the possibility of COVID related symptoms and diagnosis when **calibrating** cases in all stations ahead of the examination.
 - Please ensure that you **report any incident or issue**, however minor, to the Chair of Examiners on the day. Chairs of Examiners should include these in their reports on the examination which allow College teams and MRCP(UK) to monitor the examination effectively.
- ❖ If you are examining in the communication stations in the UK, please ensure that you follow the instructions from the College for return of completed marksheets. Please **ensure the marksheets are returned securely and as soon as possible after the examination**. One of the major factors in delays to processing results is the delay in receiving marksheets from remote examiners.
- ❖ All examiners are asked to complete a module of the **MRCP(UK) Fair Assessment Equality and Diversity training** every three years. If you have not yet undertaken the training, please ensure you do so ahead of the next examination. If you completed the training in 2017 or early 2018 you should now undertake a refresher by completing another module. The training is accessible via <https://mrcpuk.helmlms.com>. You will need your examiner number and your unique access code. If you have mislaid these details, your college will be able to send you them again.



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