

MRCPUK

Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

MRCP(UK) PACES

How to organise the exam

A guide for Host Examiners, Administrators and Registrars



Introduction

Thank you for your support and hosting of PACES.

This short booklet is designed to support Fellows, organising Registrars and Administrators who have volunteered to host the PACES examination, it should be used in conjunction with the more detailed Examiner Guide Omnibus (Additional Information) and the Exam Folder which contain all the key paperwork required for the day.

This document is a **guide**. The majority of the contents can be altered to suit local requirements, however, there are a few mandatory administrative tasks:

1. **No ID – No entry.** Candidates **MUST** sign the relevant “signing in” sheet in the presence of an administrator who will check ID. Any candidate without a correct form of ID will not be allowed to sit the exam.
2. **Timing: each section** of the exam runs for 20 minutes with clear signals being given at 10 and 14 minutes. The starting time of each 20 minute section is flexible but once started the timings are mandatory.
3. **Candidate scenario information** (laminated or protected) for Stations 2, 4 and 5 **MUST** be available for the relevant candidates to read in the 5 minute breaks between sections.
4. **Completed candidate marksheets MUST** be collected during the cycle and the marks added to the relevant eCPS file. The marksheets **MUST** be collated by candidate in station number order (1–5) and stored in the original plastic folder.
PLEASE NOTE:
 - the marksheets are the final source for the results
 - each candidate has 16 marksheets and they **MUST ALL** be accounted for before leaving the centre
 - marksheets **MUST** not be damaged (**please** no rips, paperclips or rubber bands).
5. **The eCPS files MUST be completed** and the final versions returned electronically to the relevant College. These files are **BACK UP** and will only be used in the event of the hard copy sheets being mislaid. Electronic files **MUST NOT** be deleted until the relevant College has confirmed that the files have been received and are complete.

It is hoped that this booklet will evolve over time. Please feel free to adapt it to your local requirements. Please let us know if you find any errors or can suggest additional information, suggestions or tips that might be useful for future organisers. Do this either by returning a copy with your handwritten amendments to your supporting College or by email to Lindy Tedford (l.tedford@rcpe.ac.uk). All contributions will be acknowledged.

College contact details

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Checklists: Host Examiner, Administrators and organising Registrar

This checklist is for the last few days to ensure everything is in place and the exam runs smoothly on the day.

Task	
1. Inform the hospital switchboard where and when examination is occurring.	
2. Inform resuscitation team where examination is occurring.	
3. Organise/confirm the necessary catering.	
4. Check all relevant documents have been received from relevant College.	
5. Arrange transport for patients to and from the hospital.	
6. Consider arranging taxis to take the examiners from the hotel to the exam centre as necessary.	
7. Put up signs to direct patients/candidates/examiners to the examination location.	
8. Ensure sufficient pencils, erasers, sharpeners and clipboards are available.	
9. Ensure a hand held clock for each Station and an extra timer for the 5 minute interval is available plus new batteries	
10. Ensure a master timer is available (plus new batteries if required)	
11. Provide a bell or buzzer.	
12. Provide appropriate introductory statements for each encounter in Stations 1 & 3 (clearly worded and printed in a large font). The examiners may wish to change this introductory statement on the day of the examination.	
13. Provide, brief and train the patients/surrogates for Stations 2, 4 and 5.	
14. Ensure that two copies of the relevant "Candidate information" scenario sheets for Stations 2, 4 and 5 are available. These must be laminated or encased in plastic. Candidates should not write on these.	
15. Ensure that any candidates with special requirements or disabilities are accommodated and that the Chair of Examiners is informed of these arrangements. This information will have been provided by relevant College.	
16. Supply examiners with a file which contains relevant scenarios/information on the patients.	
17. Ensure a computer and printer is available, working and nearby.	

1. Basic equipment

An **Administrative equipment box** containing supporting documentation is provided by the relevant College to each centre. These boxes will contain the following:

- Laminated notices for the individual stations
- Assortment of 'Examination in Progress' signs
- Laminated direction notices
- 1 battery operated clocks showing 3 timing options plus batteries
- 6 small digital clocks – one for each station, one for cycle interval timing
- 4 boxes x 2B pencils, 30 (approx) pencil erasers
- 24 (approx) pencil sharpeners
- 25 clipboards
- Spare examiner badge holders

Should each centre retain the Administration box of basic equipment after the exam has been completed?

The supporting College will contact each centre to confirm specific arrangements.

2. The Main Exam Boxes/Files will be provided by the supporting College to each centre – one for each day. These boxes will contain the following:

File containing:

- a. **Candidate "signing in" sheet (may be provided electronically)***
 - b. **Examiner pairing sheets (may be provided electronically) - UK Centres only**
 - c. **Examiner badges/template (may be provided electronically)**
 - d. **Candidate labels (may be provided electronically)**
 - e. **eCPS guide (may be provided electronically)**
 - f. **Station calibration sheets**
 - g. **Scenario assessment forms***
 - h. **Candidate discussion sheet***
 - i. **Centre audit form – UK centres only***
 - j. **Courier information (if applicable)**
- Hard copy of the Examiner Omnibus
 - Hard copy of Administrators guide (this document)
 - Trainee Examiner packs if applicable
 - Packs of candidate marksheets (one for each candidate)*
 - Pack of spare marksheets*
 - Plastic badge holders (for examiners)
 - Patient and surrogate leaflets (may be provided electronically)

All items marked with an * must be completed and returned to the relevant College with the completed marksheets. Badge holders are expensive – please send them back!

All generic notices and forms can be downloaded from the MRCP(UK) website:

<http://www.mrcpuk.org/get-involved-examiners/paces-examiners/administrator-hosts>

Additional documents that centres may find useful can also be found on the MRCP(UK) website:

3. Setting up INSIDE and OUTSIDE the Stations

Set up the candidate seats and examiner rooms as detailed on pages 6-10:

Station 1

Station 1: Respiratory System and Abdominal System (Inside Station)	
<p>Patients or surrogates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two patients for respiratory system examination • Two patients for abdominal system examination <p>Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block of four beds (ideally a four-bedded side ward) each curtained or screened from the others 	<p>Medical Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductor for each patient (printed card) • Mediwipes, alcohol gel or hand-washing facilities • Peak flow meter • Stethoscope • Torch • Tape measure <p>Administrative Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station 1 Calibration sheets for Respiratory and Abdominal Systems (can be photocopied “back to back”) • Hand-held digital and/or wall clock (visible to candidate and examiner) <p>Dish to hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils • Erasers • Sharpeners • Container for complete marksheets placed near door
Station 1: Respiratory System and Abdominal System (Outside Station)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One chair placed underneath or near relevant station sign • Cups and water nearby 	

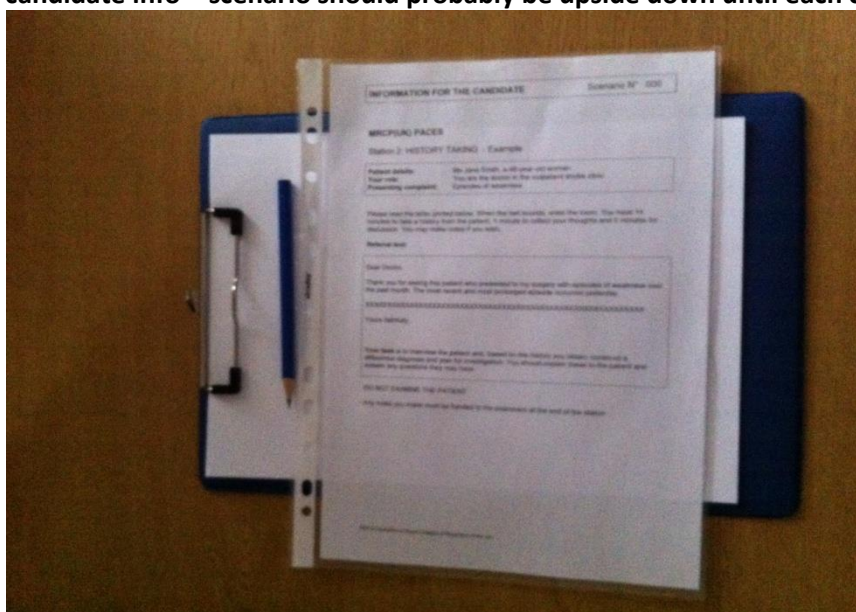
Example of station signage – can be similar for all stations



Station 2

Station 2: History Taking Skills (Inside Station)	
<p>Patients or surrogates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One simulated patient <p>Space: Interview room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room with two chairs, and a small desk or table. Two further chairs set at right angles (out of candidates' line of vision) 	<p>Scenario information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second copy of candidate information sheet from scenario (laminate or encase in plastic – candidates should not write on this) Copy of surrogate and candidate information for patient Copy of complete scenario for each examiner (not necessary if complete scenario is in relevant examiner folder) <p>Administrative equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pencils and blank paper for the candidates and examiners Station 2 Calibration sheets Station 2 Scenario Assessment Form (one per examiner pair, completed after relevant cycle – maximum 2 cycles per scenario) Hand-held digital and/or wall clock (visible to candidate and examiner) <p>Dish to hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pencils Erasers Sharpener <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Container for complete marksheets placed near door
<p>Station 2: History Taking Skills (Outside Station)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair and desk (or equivalent) placed underneath or near relevant station sign One copy of candidate information sheet from scenario (laminate or encase in plastic – candidates should not write on this). Another copy of the same sheet (also laminated/encased in plastic) to be inside the station. NB. Scenario information is confidential and should not be available until just before the exam starts. Plain paper (clipboard if necessary) Pencils Cups and water nearby 	

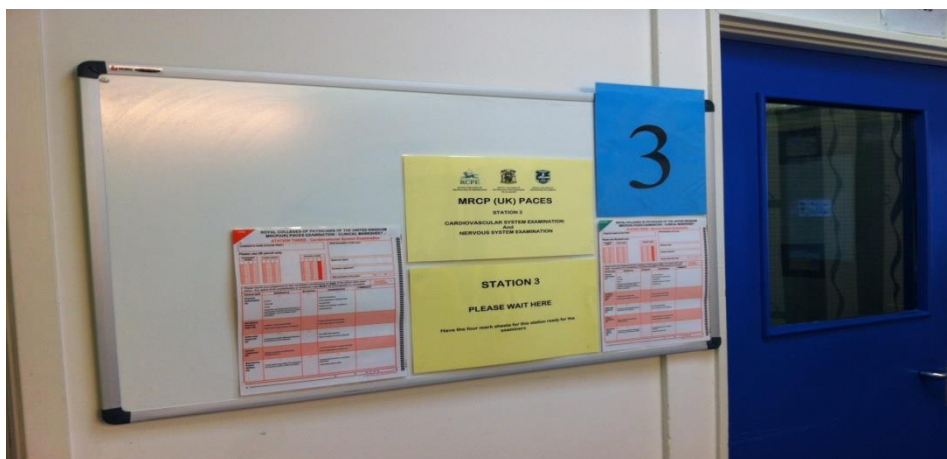
Example of scenario candidate info – scenario should probably be upside down until each candidate seated



Station 3

Station 3: Cardiovascular System and Neurological System (Inside Station)	
<p>Patients or surrogates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two patients for cardiovascular system examination • Two patients for neurological system examination <p>Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block of four beds (ideally a four-bedded side ward) each curtained or screened from the others 	<p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductor for each patient (printed card) • Summaries for examiners (may alternatively be provided in examiner pack) • Hand-held digital and/or wall clock (visible to candidate and examiner) • Mediwipes, alcohol gel or hand-washing facilities • Post box (for marksheets) • Stethoscope • Tape measure • Snellen chart • Tuning forks (512 Hz and 128 Hz) • Cotton wool • Appropriate non penetrating disposable sharps (e.g. Neurotips) and sharps bin • Tendon hammer • Tongue depressor <p>Administrative equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station 3 Calibration sheets for Cardiovascular and Nervous Systems (can be photocopied “back to back”) • Hand-held digital and/or wall clock (visible to candidate and examiner) <p>Dish to hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils • Erasers • Sharpeners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Container for complete marksheets placed near door
Station 3: Cardiovascular System and Neurological System (Outside Station)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One chair placed underneath or near relevant station sign • Cups and water nearby 	

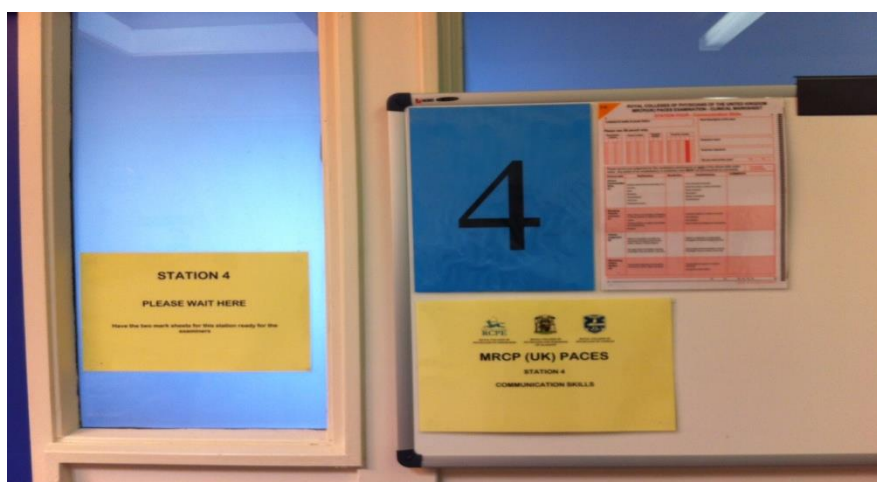
Example of station signage including laminated marksheets for candidate reference – can be similar for all stations



Station 4

Station 4: Communication Skills and Ethics (Inside Station)	
<p>Patients or surrogates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One simulated patient <p>Space: Interview room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Room with two chairs, and a small desk or table. Two further chairs set at right angles (out of candidates' line of vision)	<p>Scenario information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Second copy of candidate information sheet from scenario (laminated or encase in plastic – candidates should not write on this). First copy outside station.• Copy of surrogate and candidate information for patient• Copy of complete scenario for each examiner (not necessary if complete scenario is in relevant examiner folder) <p>Administrative equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pencils and blank paper for the candidates and examiners• Station 4 Calibration sheets• Station 4 Scenario Assessment Form (one per examiner pair, completed after relevant cycle – maximum 2 cycles per scenario)• Hand-held digital and/or wall clock (visible to candidate and examiner) <p>Dish to hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pencils• Erasers• Sharpeners <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Container for complete marksheets placed near door
<p>Station 4: Communication Skills and Ethics (Outside Station)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair and desk (or equivalent) placed underneath or near relevant station sign• One copy of candidate information sheet from scenario (laminated or encase in plastic – candidates should not write on this). Another copy of the same sheet (also laminated/encased in plastic) to be inside the station.• NB. Scenario information is confidential and should not be available until just before the exam starts.• Plain paper (clipboard if necessary)• Pencils• Cups and water nearby	

Example of station signage – can be similar for all stations



Station 5

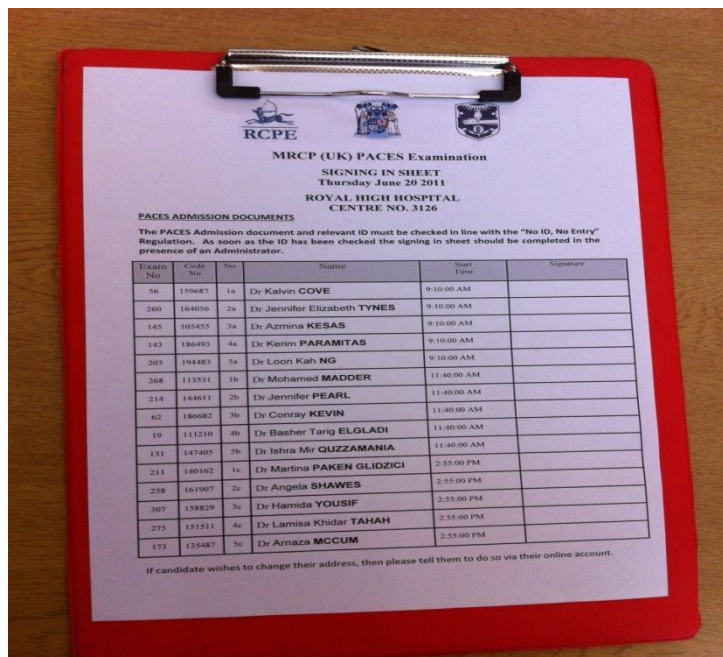
Station 5: Integrated Clinical Assessment - Brief Clinical Consultation 1 and 2 (Inside Station)	
<p>Patients or surrogates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two patients or surrogates; one reserve • Room(s) with space for two beds, two chairs or one bed and one chair • May need to be darkened if scenario involves examination of the fundus 	<p>Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One copy of each of candidate information from the two relevant scenarios (laminare or encase in plastic - candidates should not write on this) • Information for each surrogate/patient • Two scenarios for each examiner (not necessary if complete scenario is in relevant examiner folder) • Ophthalmoscope if necessary • Mock drug charts or observation charts if necessary • Calibration sheets for Station 5 <p>Administrative equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils and blank paper for the candidates and examiners • Station 5 Calibration sheets for BCC1 and BCC2 (can be photocopied "back to back") • Station 5 Scenario Assessment Form (one per examiner pair, completed after relevant cycle – maximum 2 cycles per scenario) • Hand-held digital and/or wall clock (visible to candidate and examiner) <p>Dish to hold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencils • Erasers • Sharpeners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Container for completed marksheets
<p>Station 5: Integrated Clinical Assessment - Brief Clinical Consultation 1 and 2 (Outside Station)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair and desk (or equivalent) placed underneath or near relevant station sign • One copy of each of candidate information sheets from the two relevant scenarios (laminare or encase in plastic – candidates should not write on this). Two further copies (also laminated/encased in plastic) should be inside the station. • NB. Scenario information is confidential and should not be available until just before the exam starts. • Plain paper (clipboard if necessary) • Pencils • Cups and water nearby 	

Example of scenario candidate info for Station 5 – scenarios should probably be upside down until each candidate seated. It is helpful to photocopy each scenario on different coloured paper. Please ask Examiners to decide which patient the candidates will see first and mark the scenario 1 & 2 accordingly.



4. Preparing the candidates

- Each candidate **MUST** have their ID checked by an administrator and complete the signing in sheet. These two tasks **MUST** be done at the same time.



- Marksheets should be removed from the plastic pockets and placed on a clipboard
- Plastic pockets should be removed and taken to the “scoring room”
- Candidates should be given their unique badge which has been provided
- All the relevant information for completing the marksheets is printed be on the candidate label
- Each candidate must complete the 16 marksheets, in **pencil**, with their:
 - Full Name
 - Exam Number (plus corresponding number lozenges underneath)
 - Centre Number (plus corresponding number lozenges underneath)

NB. Marksheets to be kept in numerical station order with the starting station on top.



- The candidates will be nervous – if possible, please make them feel at ease.
- Water/cups should be provided.
- Mobile phones **MUST** be switched off.

5. Timing and Administration Station

- This is usually a central point in the exam area.
- Spare paper, pencils, clipboards, erasers, sharpeners should be available.
- The main timer, the interval timer and a bell or equivalent should be kept at this station.
- The precise timings before the first exam section and between subsequent exam sections can be flexible. The Host should always try and adhere to agreed start times but it is important that all Stations, examiners and candidates are ready before the exam starts.



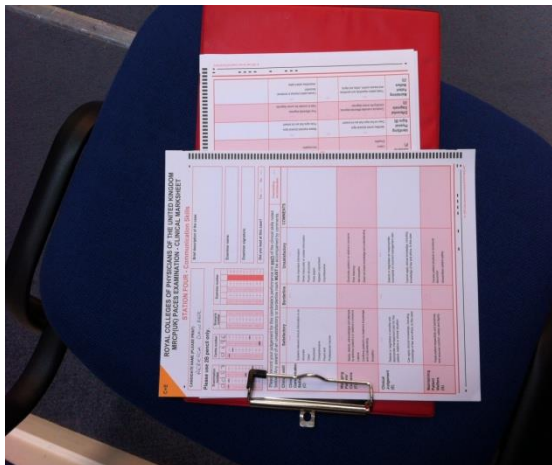
- Accurate timing of each 20 minute section is **MANDATORY**.
- Stations 1, 3 and 5 get a 10 minute warning.
- Stations 2 and 4 get a 14 minute warning.
- The bell rings (loudly!) at 20 minutes and the candidates move station.
- The time lapse between sections is supposed to be 5 minutes to include moving and reading.
- When the interval timer reaches "0.00" ring the bell and start the main triple timer or equivalent.

NB. Examiners must take responsibility for timing the interactions within each Station and encounter and should be encouraged to use the digital clock that has been provided in each station.



6. Moving the candidates round the cycle

- The candidates will be focused on the exam and will probably need help moving from one station to the next
- Ask candidates to leave their marksheets outside the station
- During the 20 minute section sort the next set of marksheets (four sheets for Stations 1, 3 & 5; two sheets for Stations 2 & 4). This helps candidates and administrators to know exactly which station the candidate goes to next.



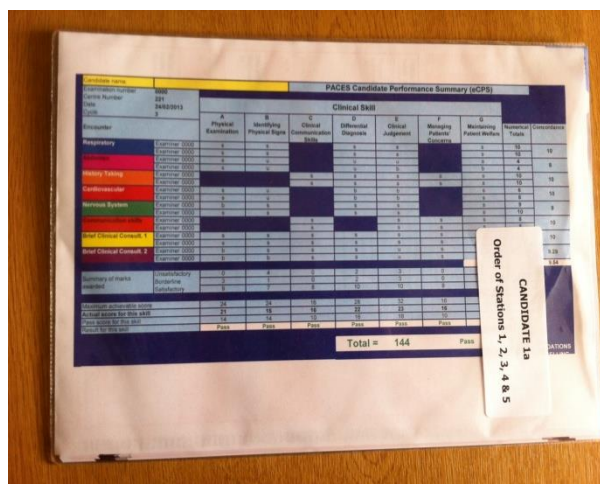
7. During the 5 minute intervals

- As soon as the previous candidate has completed station 2, 4 or 5 make sure that the relevant scenario is ready (upside down) for the next candidate. A sheet of blank paper and a pencil must also be available.
- When the main time keeper gives the “interval” signal make sure the candidate is aware and that they start reading.
- As soon as the “waiting” candidate is settled and reading the relevant scenario the administrator responsible for that station should take the appropriate marksheets off the candidate clipboard and hand them to the examiners in the station.
- The administrator responsible for that particular station should collect the completed marksheets (belonging to the previous candidate) from the examiners in that station and ensure they are taken to the scoring room.
- There should be minimal disruption during the reading of scenarios at Stations 2, 4 and 5. **DISCOURAGE** examiners from introducing themselves to the “waiting” candidate as this can not only interrupt the concentration of the specific candidate but also the concentration of other candidates in the cycle.

8. Completing the eCPS

- The eCPS file, for each cycle, must have the candidate and examiner information inserted before the marksheets scores can be added
 - The relevant marks should be put into the file as the cycle progresses. The file needs to be saved regularly. Please make sure:
 - a. The correct marksheets for each case in Stations 1, 3 and 5 have been used
 - b. Comments are legible and are inside the red borders
 - c. Examiner names and numbers are correct
 - d. Comments have been made where a borderline or unsatisfactory mark has been given
 - e. The correct number of lozenges have been completed
 - f. The correct marksheets in Stations 1,3 and 5 have been used e.g. **Abdominal** case has **not** been marked on the **Respiratory** marksheet. If this has happened new marksheets **MUST** be completed by the examiner in question.
 - g. **NEVER** use the “cut and paste” option if a mistake has been made – this will remove the formula.
- NB. The eCPS is a “back up” and will only be used in the event of the actual marksheets being mislaid.**

NB. If any of the above are incorrect or have been missed please ask the examiner(s) in question clarify their intentions and if need be complete new marksheets.



Candidate Details		Clinical Skills										Total
Station	Score	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
Respiratory	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Abdominal	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Cardiovascular	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Neurological	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
General Clinical Skills	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Final Clinical Exam 1	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Final Clinical Exam 2	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
Total	144	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	144

Example of individual candidate composite marksheet

9. Collating the marksheets during the cycle

- As the cycle runs the completed marksheets must be collated in individual candidate order. Please use the plastic pockets to provide security.
- Once the cycle is complete the individual candidate marksheets must be collated in Station number order (1-5)
- Print one copy of the individual composite candidate marksheet and place it in the relevant candidate folder. The information on this sheet will be required for the examiners’ briefing meeting especially if there are no facilities to display the marks on a screen.

10. The eCPS MUST be completed and the final files returned electronically to the relevant College. These files are **BACK UP** and will only be used in the event of the hard copy sheets being mislaid. Electronic files **MUST NOT** be deleted until the relevant College has confirmed that the files have been received and are complete.

11. Packing and returning the completed marksheets

Check that all the sheets are accounted for:

- 1) Each candidate's set of marksheets **MUST** be checked to ensure that all 16 have been accounted for.
- 2) The sheets need to be collated in each plastic folder, by candidate, in Station order (1-5)

Return of the marksheets to the relevant College

- 3) The individual sets of candidate marksheets should be arranged by exam number (ascending) order, regardless of cycle.

Place the individual composite candidate marksheet on one side*

NB. Some centres will have been provided with a plastic box file containing all the items in section 2 of the Basic Equipment – see page 4. In these cases the marksheets need to be collated as above and returned in the individual plastic sleeves - Stages 4 and 5 above can be omitted.

- 4) For all other centres when 3) has been completed please **remove** the sets of marksheets from the individual plastic sleeves.
- 5) When 3) and 4) have been completed the pile of candidate marksheets **MUST** be placed in the rigid plastic box that has been provided by the relevant College for each day of the exam.

The completed boxes must be returned to the relevant College as soon as possible – web results are issued no more than 10 working days after the exam is taken.

PLEASE BE AWARE

- The marksheets are the only mechanism to produce the exam results.
- They need to be scanned by computer
- **PLEASE DO NOT** return the marksheets folded, with paperclips or use rubber bands
- The **“back up”** and completed eCPS files must be returned to the College electronically.

****For each candidate, the single composite candidate marksheet, should be retained by the Host Examiner as a record and should be kept for 3 months in case of an appeal.***

12. Items that **MUST** be returned to the relevant College

The items that **MUST** be returned to the College are:

1. **COMPLETED MARKSHEETS** – stacked in candidate examination number order and packed in the rigid plastic box in which the marksheets were delivered. Please refer to section 10.
2. **Station 2, 4 and 5 Scenario Assessment forms** – please make sure the relevant Examiners complete these forms
3. **Completed “signing in” sheets** – please note any absentees.
4. **Completed Centre Audit Form (UK centres only)**
5. **Discussion Sheet (if applicable)**
6. **Trainee Examiner feedback sheets (if applicable)**
7. **The spare, unused, marksheets**
8. **Plastic badge holders.**

13. Any questions? Don't hesitate to ask. All Exam Department contact details are on page 2.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST – THANK YOU!