MRCPUK
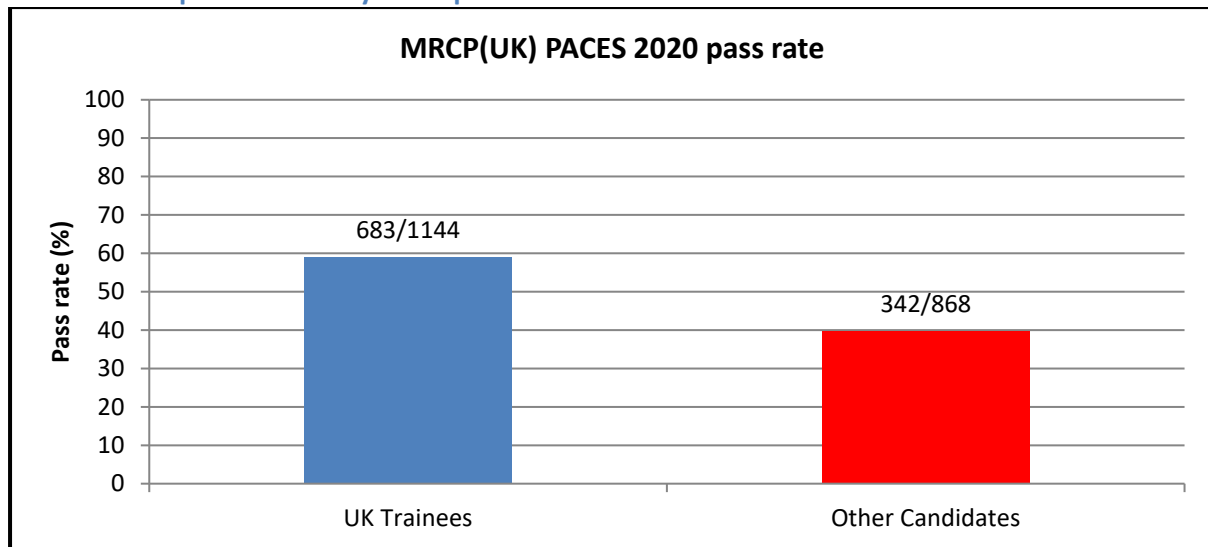Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination performance report 2020

The MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (Practical Assessment of Clinical Examination Skills - PACES) is designed to test the clinical knowledge and skills of trainee doctors who hope to enter higher specialist training (ST3). The examination sets rigorous standards to ensure that trainees are competent across a range of skills and ready to provide a high standard of care to patients. To pass PACES, candidates must achieve a minimum standard in each of the seven skills assessed and attain a minimum total score of 130 across the whole assessment.

In 2020 the summer diet was cancelled due to COVID-19. The figures from diets 1 & 3 show that 2,012 candidates sat the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination; 1,144 declared that they are in UK training while the candidates who did not declare their training details (868) are reported as 'other candidates'.

Pass rate and performance by attempt

Figure 1. Pass rates for UK trainees and other candidates. Note that training details are self-declared.

UK trainee's pass rate at first attempt = 64.1% (453/707)
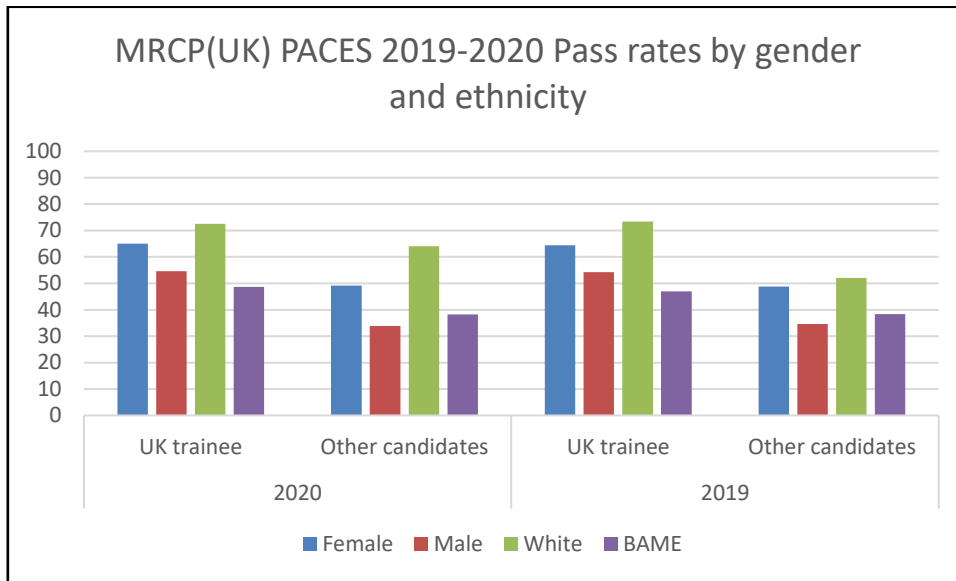Other candidates' pass rate at first attempt = 40.2% (152/378)

UK trainees				
Attempt	**Pass**	**Fail**	**Total**	**Pass rate (%)**
1	453	254	707	64.1
2-6	228	223	451	50.6
7+	2	4	6	33.3
Total	683	461	1144	59.7

Other candidates				
Attempt	**Pass**	**Fail**	**Total**	**Pass rate (%)**
1	152	226	378	40.2
2-6	189	294	483	39.1
7+	1	6	7	14.3
Total	342	526	868	39.4

Table 1. Pass/Fail rates by Attempt for UK trainees and other candidates. Candidates will be counted multiple times if they have sat on more than one occasion. For example if a candidate failed at the second attempt but passed on the third, they would be in the fail column for the second attempt but pass column for the third attempt.

More information about the limit on the number of attempts can be found on the MRCP(UK) website: https://www.mrcpuk.org/mrcpuk-examinations/regulations/limit-attempts
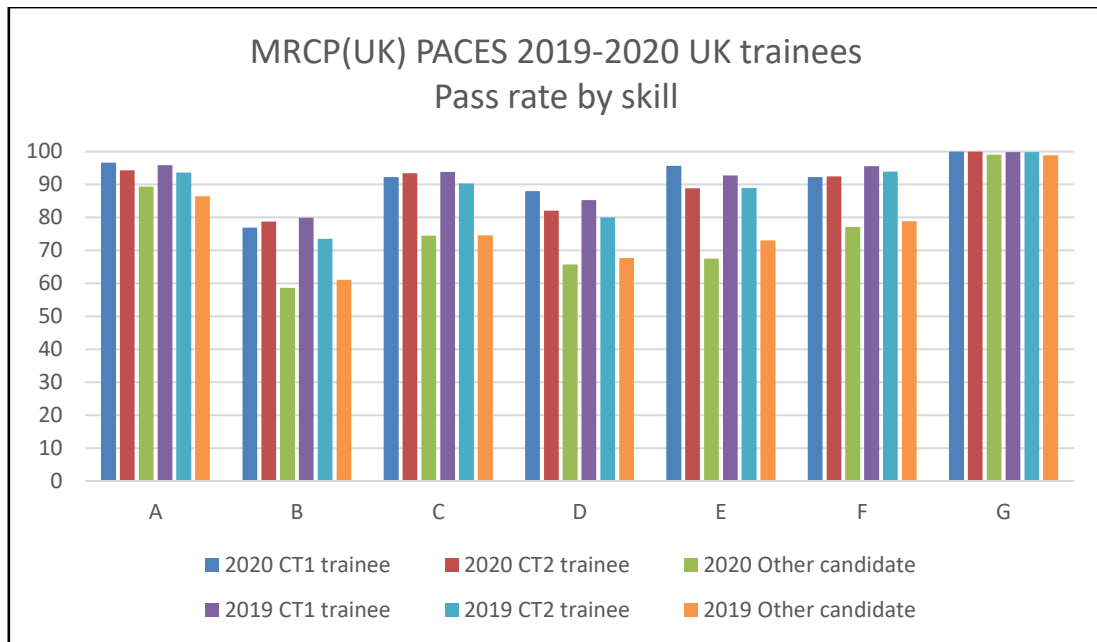
Pass rate and performance by gender and ethnicity

Figure 2. Pass rates for UK trainees and other candidates by gender and ethnicity. Note that the percentages are calculated using scores from all attempts made at the examination.

Female candidates have higher pass rates than Male candidates and White candidates have higher pass rates than BAME, for both UK trainees and other candidates groups.

Pass rate and performance by skill

The seven skills are:

A   Physical Examination
B   Identifying Physical Signs
C   Clinical Communication
D   Differential Diagnosis
E   Clinical Judgement
F   Managing Patients' Concerns
G   Maintaining Patient Welfare

Figure 3. Performance by skill for CT1 and CT2 UK trainees and other candidates. Note that the percentages are calculated using scores from all attempts made at the examination.

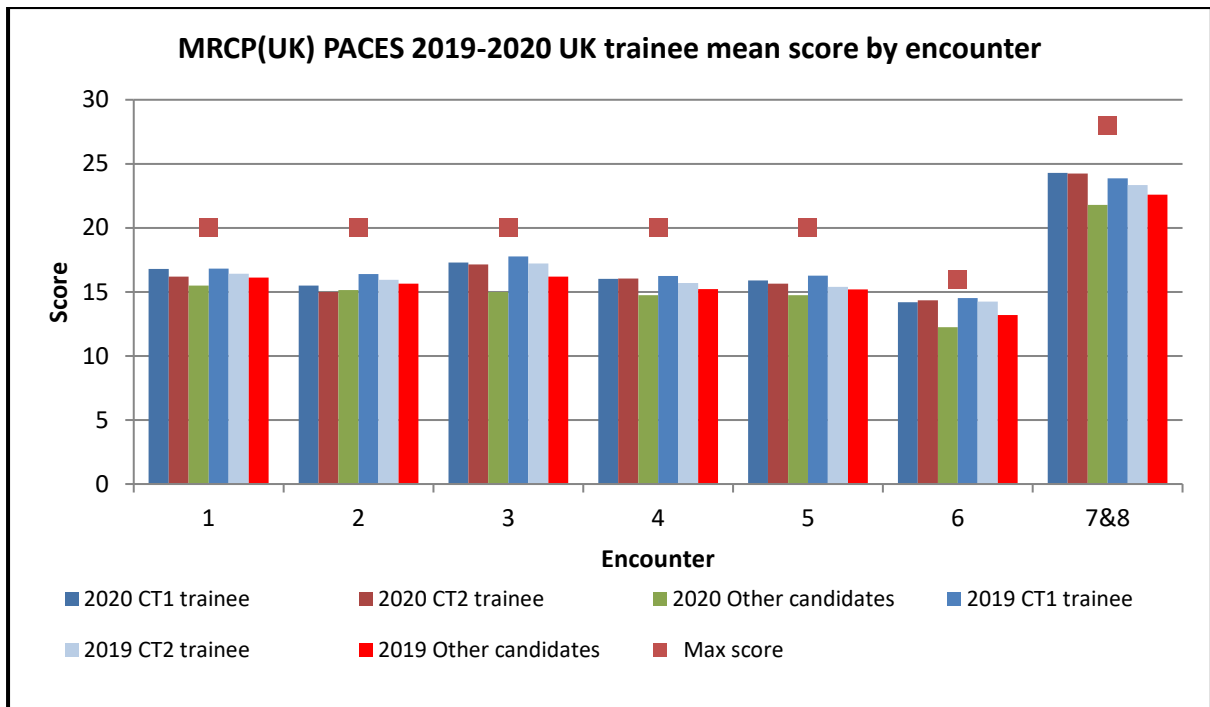Skill G – Maintaining Patient Welfare - has the highest pass rate
Skill B – Identifying Physical Signs - has the lowest pass rate

Performance by individual encounter

There are eight patient encounters across the five stations in PACES.

Station	Encounter
1	1: Respiratory 2: Abdominal
2	3: History Taking
3	4: Cardiovascular 5: Nervous System (Neurological)
4	6: Communication skills and ethics
5	7 & 8: Brief Clinical Consultation 1 & 2

Compared to the maximum achievable score, in 2020 the mean of the communication encounter 6 (Station 4) has the smallest difference for CT1, CT2 trainees and Other candidates. Also in 2020, encounter 2 (Station 1) has the highest difference for CT1 and CT2 trainees, while for Other candidates encounters 4 & 5 (Station 3) have the highest difference.

Figure 4. Performance by encounter for CT1 and CT2 UK trainees and other candidates. Note that the average scores are calculated using scores from all attempts made at the examination.

MRCP(UK) Research Unit
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