

Clinical Examining Board Chair's letter – May 2022

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (PACES)

As we welcome the return of the pre-pandemic format of PACES in the UK the Federation would again like to express its thanks to all who have participated in the PACES examination over the last 18 months, allowing us to continue offering trainees the opportunity to complete this important assessment and move onto the next stage in their career.

2021/3 and 2022/1 diets

Firstly an update on the most recent diets, the last ones (we hope) to be offered in the modified format introduced in 2020/3 for the UK.

The 2021/3 diet ran from early October until December, and the Clinical Examining Board (CEB) reviewed this diet at its meeting in February 2022. A total of 1590 candidates (908 in the UK, 682 internationally) attempted the examination, with an overall pass rate of 55.0% (56.7% in the UK, 52.6% internationally).

The 2022/1 diet ran from the end of January to early April, offering 960 examination spaces in the UK and we were pleased to be able to offer 774 spaces internationally, a significant increase on numbers in recent diets. Full results from this diet are not yet available.

2022/2

As [announced in March](#), we are very pleased to be able to revert to the pre-COVID format from the 2022/2 diet. This means that there will no longer be a two mini cycle format, and all stations will be run on a face-to-face basis. Candidates and examiners will still, however, be expected to have a negative lateral flow test on the day of the exam, to use the PPE provided at centres and to adhere to the local infection control guidance.

The change back to the standard carousel has enabled the Colleges to significantly increase the number of examination places offered in the UK to over 1400. This has allowed us to accommodate a larger range of candidates, including some of those who have been waiting for a place during the pandemic.

In order to maximise the number of examination spaces, some centres will revert to three cycles per day, whilst those centres offering two cycles per day, will be running cycles for six (rather than the usual five) candidates. This will mean that candidates will still be assessed in the usual five stations but that there will be a sixth "rest" station added to their carousel. This will increase the total duration of a carousel by an additional 30 minutes. Centres with suitable facilities will also be able to run double cycles again.

Once again, the College based teams have put in a significant amount of work to recruit centres and examiners and we are very grateful for their efforts. We are of course also very grateful to all the hosts and their teams.

Examiners participating in three cycles per day will receive the usual 6 CPD points per day, and those assessing two cycles of six candidates will receive 5 points.

Hot Topics – May 2022

- ❖ Existing [Infection Control guidance](#) will remain in place for 2022/2, so please continue to ensure that you, and the candidates, continue to follow this. Examiners should still complete the health questionnaire prior to attending the examination.
- ❖ Once again, a reminder to ensure you check that your marksheets are correctly completed before handing them in. You should ensure that the marksheets are complete, and that you have not written anything outside the prescribed areas. Where you have amended a mark, please ensure that the original mark is erased completely. Marksheets with minor errors such as these require manual processing, which delays results release.
- ❖ On rare occasions where only 9 examiners are present, the candidates should be informed of this, before the examination begins, and that there is a standard procedure for this. No appeals will be considered on the basis of only 9 examiners being present. If a candidate chooses not to go ahead at this point their withdrawal will be dealt with in line with the MRCP(UK) Regulations.
- ❖ On rare occasions concerns are raised about unprofessional behaviour of an examiner. Chairs of examiners are asked to report all such concerns raised with them in the relevant section of the Centre Incident Form.
- ❖ Please be aware of the impact on candidates of any noise or chatter during and between encounters. Discussions between examiners or centre staff should not be held within hearing of any candidates trying to read the scenarios ahead of stations 2, 4 and 5.



Dr Stuart Hood
Chair
MRCP(UK) Clinical Examining Board
stuart.hood@mrcpuk.org



Dr Tanzeem Raza
Medical Secretary
MRCP(UK) Clinical Examining Board
Tanzeem.Raza@mrcpuk.org