

Clinical Examining Board Chair's letter – January 2023

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (PACES)

PACES 23 is coming

I start this newsletter with the very welcome news that we have now been able to confirm that the changes to PACES (PACES 2020), originally planned for 2020, will be implemented from the 2023.3 diet. Over the coming months you will receive full information about the changes, including how to ensure you are fully trained ahead of implementation. Training will be flexible, with choices including webinars, examiner events and online assessment. Keep an eye on the [PACES23](#) page on the MRCP(UK) website for more information.

New International Medical Director for PACES

I would like to congratulate Dr Tanzeem Raza, who has recently been appointed as the new Federation International Medical Director for PACES. Tanzeem will take over from Dr Donald Farquhar who is demitting, but will remain as an examiner, and continue to be involved in the run up to PACES23.

As a result of this appointment, Tanzeem has now demitted his role as Medical Secretary of the Clinical Examining Board, and [recruitment](#) for his replacement is currently underway (closing date 20th January).

2022/2 and 2022/3 diets

The 2022/2 diet ran from June to August, and was the first diet where we reverted to the pre-COVID format in the UK. The Clinical Examining Board (CEB) reviewed this diet at its meeting in October 2022. A total of 2096 candidates (1333 in the UK, 763 internationally) attempted the examination, with an overall pass rate of 51.8% (55.1% in the UK, 46.0% internationally).

The 2022/3 diet ran from October to December, offering 1656 examination spaces in the UK and we were pleased to be able to offer 1166 spaces internationally. Full results from this diet are not yet available.

2023/1 and 2023/2 diets

In 2023/1 and 2023/2 most centres in the UK will continue to offer two cycles of 6 candidates per day. The total spaces for 2023/1 are expected to be 1380 in the UK and 1168 internationally. All centres will revert to 5 station cycles once PACES23 is launched in the autumn.

Thank you

Finally, the Federation would again like to express its thanks to all who have participated in the PACES examination over the last three years, allowing us to continue offering trainees the opportunity to complete this important assessment and move onto the next stage in their career. We recognise the extreme pressures examiners are experiencing in the workplace, and are enormously grateful for your continued support to enable us to assess both UK trainees, and others working in the NHS and worldwide, who in time will become the next generation of consultants and PACES examiners!

Hot Topics – January 2023

- ❖ **New mark sheets.** PACES marksheets have been revised to enable them to be processed with a new scanner, so you will notice that the marksheets look slightly different in 2023. The content of the marksheets, and the order in which the skills are listed, remain the same. Samples can be viewed on the [MRCP\(UK\) website](#).
- ❖ **Common issues.** As the number of appeals from candidates continues to rise, common themes are being identified. Please bear these in mind when preparing the station, calibrating, and between candidates, to ensure that candidates are not distracted by lack of:
 - Sufficient supplies of necessary equipment readily available near the patient, including a torch if candidates are likely to need to examine the head and neck.
 - Copies of scenarios in the rooms in stations 2, 4 and 5 so that candidates can refer to this if they wish during the encounter.
- ❖ **Calibration in Stations 2 and 4.** Examiners are reminded that they need to fully rehearse the surrogate in stations 2 and 4, and to agree clearly what will constitute a satisfactory score. Where there is felt to be room for improvement with the scenario (for instance if additional information is required) please ensure that a feedback form is completed and submitted. All feedback forms are reviewed and comments passed on to the Scenarios Editorial Committee when they next review the scenario.
- ❖ **Coaching and Comments to Candidates.** Examiners are reminded that they should avoid teaching or coaching candidates during their assessment. Examiners should also avoid making any comments that might lead the candidate to believe that they have performed well or poorly during the encounter.
- ❖ **Chairs of Examiners** are asked to remind candidates of the following during the pre examination briefing:
 - On occasion, an examiner may interrupt a candidate in order to help them to demonstrate their competence in the skills assessed during the time available.
 - Encourage candidates to respond to the online survey and that they will receive a link by e-mail after the examination.



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