

Chair's letter – May 2019

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (PACES)

As you will know Dr Kenn Dagg was appointed to the position of Medical Director for MRCP(UK) in late 2018, and I would like to start by taking this opportunity to thank Dr Dagg for all of his hard work as Chair of the Clinical Examining Board during the last six years. Dr Dagg has led the recent review of the examination, and has been instrumental in developing the improvements to the examination that will be launched during 2020.

Recruitment for a new Medical Secretary to the Clinical Examining Board will commence shortly.

Report on assessment period January - April 2019

2433 candidates have sat PACES in the 2019/01 assessment period. 1412 of these candidates sat in UK centres, with the remaining 1021 sitting at our overseas centres. The pass rate for candidates in UK training was 56.9%; the overall pass rate was 47.6%. The pass rates for all candidate groups remain stable and in line with historical trends.

PACES Champion 2018

Warmest congratulations to our 2018 PACES Champion, Anne Aguiar. Anne has been the senior administrator responsible for PACES in both Sharjah and Dubai for over a decade. Anne deserves recognition not only for her meticulous organisation of the exam but also for her support which consistently goes above and beyond what would be expected of her role. She has been extremely supportive in trialling any changes we have made in the last few years and is very helpful in highlighting how changes may positively or negatively impact the administrative teams supporting our exams.

PACES 2020

A significant amount of work is going on behind the scenes to prepare for PACES 2020. We expect to announce the implementation diet later the summer, and more information, including examiner training materials, videos and a webinar will be made available from the autumn.



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

Hot Topics – May 2019

Neurology encounter

Candidates sometimes appeal or complain that there is a lack of equipment at in the neurology encounter to allow them to elicit the correct signs. Please ensure that ophthalmoscopes are functioning and appropriate equipment such as single use neurotips, tuning forks, cotton wool etc are readily available to candidates. It is recommended that plantar reflexes are tested using a blunt object.

We will shortly be issuing new guidance for examiners describing key aspects of the nervous system examination, focusing on those areas where general physicians most frequently seek guidance.

Examiner code of conduct

Examiners are reminded that they should be familiar with, and act in accordance with, the PACES Examiner Code of Conduct, which can be found at <https://www.mrcpuk.org/get-involved-examiners/paces-examiners>.

Responding to requests for comments

MRCP(UK) receives an increasing number of appeals against examination results from candidates, and it is often necessary to approach examiners for comment on such appeals and complaints. If you are asked for comments, please ensure you respond in a timely manner, giving as much information as you can recall. If you think that another examiner present on the day may have pertinent information, please do let us know, but do not copy them into your response.

Marksheet checks

If you are asked to perform the 11th examiner role, please ensure that you thoroughly check all the marksheets submitted by your fellow examiners to ensure that there are no missing or duplicated marks. It is much easier for an examiner to recall and confirm the correct mark during the examination day, rather than being asked once the marksheets have been returned to the college.

Trainees assisting in PACES examinations

Examiners are reminded trainees must not be involved in helping in the examination if they are registered to sit PACES in the same diet. This compromises examination security, and could potentially result in an allegation of academic misconduct against the candidate.

Filling empty slots in the cycle

Under no circumstances should examiners allow any trainee to fill in any gaps in the cycle (eg due to absence of a candidate) for the purposes of practicing the examination.