

Chair's letter - January 2017

MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examinations Report on assessment period October – December 2016

2473 candidates sat PACES in the 2016/03 assessment period from October to December 2016. 1391 of these candidates sat in UK centres, with the remaining 1082 sitting at our overseas centres. The pass rate for the UK graduates was 67%; the overall pass rate was 44%. The pass rates for all of the candidate groups remain stable and in line with historical trends.

Recent Developments

PACES Pass Mark Change

The pass mark for some PACES skills has been changed following the recent recommendations of the PACES Standard Review Group. The change has been advertised to candidates, particularly those sitting in the 2017/01 assessment period. The pass mark for Skill A has increased by two marks, and for skills C, D and E by one mark. The overall pass mark of 130 remains the same.

Lay Assessment in PACES

Lay assessors are currently used in several OSCEs in the UK. A second PACES lay assessment pilot at Queen Elizabeth University Hospital Glasgow took place in October 2016 and the planned pilot at James Cook University Hospital has been postponed to 2017/1. Analysis of the data and a report on the possible benefits of incorporating lay assessment into PACES will follow once initial research has been completed.

PACES Champions

Our new PACES Champion Award can be bestowed on anyone involved in the delivery of the PACES examination who has shown extraordinary commitment and dedication to promoting and developing the examination. Two awards are to be presented in 2017/01. Dr Mahir Hamad has been awarded the UK PACES Champion award for his work in developing James Cook University Hospital as a high capacity centre while maintaining the high standards that our candidates have come to expect from the examination. Professor Nyunt Thein has been awarded the International PACES Champion award for his support in opening up two PACES centres in Myanmar, ensuring excellent hospitality and consistent experiences for examiners and candidates alike.

Examiner equality and diversity training

The online equality and diversity training project continues with plans to make the scenario content interactive. The videos/ scenarios will be viewed by examiners and a discussion will be facilitated (and audio recorded) with some subject matter experts. The e-learning module will show examiners a series of scenarios and at the same time ask them to reflect on the issues they see portrayed. They will then be able to compare their views to those of colleagues.



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Hot Topics – January 2017

Incorrect Marks

Transcription errors by examiners during the completion of candidate marksheets can occasionally occur, and may only become apparent in the post cycle discussion. In situations such as this, transcription errors can be corrected with Chair's approval and provided the new mark matches the examiners comments on the marksheet. It is not permissible to change the judgment made in the encounter following discussions at the post cycle briefing.

UK Examiners travelling internationally

It is the responsibility of UK Examiners travelling to international PACES centres to ensure that their passport complies with regulations for the destination country. Many countries require six months validity on a passport, particularly in Asia and the Middle East. You can visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website [here](#) for more details on specific destinations.

Testing Skill B

The ability of candidates to identify abnormal physical signs is a key skill that we test in PACES. It is essential, in encounters where this skill is tested, that candidates are given the opportunity to present the findings of their physical examination. In the brief clinical consultations the leading examiner should always start by asking the candidate "What, if any, abnormal physical signs have you identified?"

Satisfactory Candidates

As clinicians, continuous professional development and lifelong learning are a key part of our careers. Large numbers of candidates who fail the PACES examination are already requesting copies of their marksheets to learn how they can improve their performance in future sittings. We are also receiving an increasing number of requests for marksheets from passing candidates seeking to identify areas where they can improve in their future practice. We would therefore encourage examiners to provide comments on performance not only where they have made a borderline or unsatisfactory award but also when a satisfactory award has been made. We see the PACES examination as an opportunity to provide additional formative feedback.

New eCPS

The new pass mark for Skills A, C, D and E have been included on the new eCPS form. This form has been uploaded on to the MRCP(UK) website and will calculate candidate marks as they move round the carousel. The new eCPS form has a green background instead of a blue background. Please make sure you are using the correct form.