

Faculty of Pain Medicine Examination Committee

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES AND SUPERVISORS of TRAINING

Structured Oral *Viva Voce* (SOV) and Observed Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE)

1. PREAMBLE

The FPM Curriculum Redesign Project has seen the inception of a new examination protocol for admission to Fellowship of the Faculty of Pain Medicine.

The Faculty of Pain Medicine Training Handbook states that, in the course of the examination day each candidate will be required to undertake 8 *viva voce* stations of 15 minutes each, undertaken in two rounds of four vivas over one day. Each viva attracts equal marks.

The following qualities of a medical expert are assessed:

- clinical judgement
- the application of principles of acceptable and safe pain medicine practice
- prioritisation
- scholarly interpretation of complex clinical situations
- an ability to make decisions based on changing clinical situations
- anticipation of clinical actions and their sequelae
- effective communication
- the capacity to collaborate, advocate and administer in the health system context

2. OSCE DESIGN

The OSCE stations assess the above skills and attributes in the context of a series of simulations and discussions. Each station requires attention to specific aspects of a given scenario; these stations are not necessarily designed to assess every aspect of a particular situation.

3. WHAT IS AN OSCE?

The observed structured clinical examination is an assessment approach designed to promote objectivity and standardisation in the testing of skills and competence. A broad range of clinical, professional and communications competencies can be assessed.

Generally, but not always, a real or simulated patient will be the subject of the station. Sometimes photographs, video or audio capture may be used instead. The OSCE may involve an exploration of a hypothetical administrative or organisational scenario.

Your examiners will expect you to provide specific pre-determined responses to the situation in order for you to achieve the marks available for the scenario. Any questions put to the candidate will be scripted, along with the timing of such questions. Examiners cannot provide candidates with questions, prompts or responses which are not scripted to be given to all candidates.

The candidate may be asked to comment on imaging studies or other investigations in the course of the OSCE.

4. HOW WILL IT WORK

Each candidate will move through a series of eight (8) examination stations (4 OSCE's and 4 SOV's), and each station will pertain to a given scenario, in relation to which specific responses are required in order to satisfy the requirements of that station. The questions posed, and responses required, are closely scripted to ensure standardisation of the examination across the candidature.

The eight stations will be divided into 2 sets of four active stations, with the possible inclusion of an inactive "Bye" station which may need to be included depending on rostering requirements. The 2 sets of 4 active stations will be punctuated by an interval break.

A candidate will have an opportunity outside of each station, to consider a typed scenario which will be posted outside the station. You will be permitted to make notes.

At the bell, the candidate will enter the booth and spend 15 minutes with the examiners. At the 15 minute bell, the candidate will exit the booth and proceed to the next station to repeat the process.

After completion of 4 active stations (with the possible inclusion of a "Bye" Station depending on logistics), the candidates and examiners will have a brief intermission.

5. GENERAL NOTES TO CANDIDATES

The use of written or electronic aids, communication devices, or the writing of notes upon the body are strictly prohibited. Candidates are advised that the Faculty staff will provide an opportunity for candidates to surrender telephones, tablet and laptop computers prior to the examination.

Candidates with "smart" wristwatches are advised that such equipment will not be allowed into the examination room and that timing devices are available in all examination rooms. Of course, standard wristwatches are permitted. Candidates are also welcome to bring their own stopwatch or electronic timer if one prefers to use a familiar device, than that supplied by the Faculty.

Candidates will be provided with blank notebooks.

Candidates with special needs, and particularly those with hearing or visual impairment, should discuss their situation with the Chairman of the Committee for Examination, via their Supervisor of Training (SOT), at the time of submitting their application.

All examination stations are administered by a pair of examiners. At least one of the examiners will have had significant experience in the role. The purpose of having two examiners is to promote the standardisation of the examination process. Wherever possible, the Faculty endeavours to ensure that candidates are not examined by an examiner to whom they are well known. That is not always

achievable across the breadth of all stations. Be aware that, should you encounter such an examiner, that examiner will have elected to “step back” somewhat, surrendering the lead role to the other examiner.

You may also find an observer in the room. That person may be the External Observer, or an S.O.T. or examiner-in-training. Observers are prohibited from taking any active role in the examination process and may make no comment whatsoever which might influence the assessment provided by the examiners.

The 2015 FPM Examination is the first time that the Faculty of Pain Medicine will run this format of assessments. Whilst every effort has been taken towards ensuring the smooth running of this examination, there remains a possibility that unforeseen matters may arise. The FPM Examinations Committee will take every effort to ensure that candidates are not unreasonably affected in any such instance.