

February 2020 Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) - Post Examination Report



The Royal
Australian &
New Zealand
College of
Psychiatrists

Multiple Choice Question Examination

The Committee for Examinations followed established procedures to create the February 2020 Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination and to determine the overall pass mark. The pass mark was determined through intensive standard setting exercises involving Fellows across Australia and New Zealand.

The pass rate for the 144 candidates who sat the MCQ Examination throughout Australia and New Zealand was approximately 83%. Out of those candidates who sat the exam for the first time, approximately 89% were successful.

Candidates were provided performance feedback in identified curriculum areas, which may be diagnostic or clinical categories. These areas include: Assessment, Basic Science/Medical Knowledge, Epidemiology, Diagnosis & Classification and Public Health, Ethics and History, Phenomenology, Psychiatry, Philosophy & Psychodynamic Principles, Specific Areas of Practice, Specific Disorders, and Treatments in Psychiatry.

This is the only means by which feedback can be broken down in any detail. The feedback is intended to identify relative strengths and weaknesses of candidates by Examination content area.

Critical Analysis Problems (CAPs)

The two Critical Analysis Problems presented to the cohort were drawn from articles about early intervention and substance dependence.

Comparing the average marks of both CAP's, CAP 1 performed better than CAP 2. The frequency distribution of responses for all questions showed that the majority of the cohort had good knowledge of the questions being asked. The frequency distribution for the remaining questions showed that they were answered in a scattergun style.

The CFE would like to remind all candidates that the ability to read and interpret the professional literature is regarded as a core skill of a psychiatrist. Candidates are expected to have knowledge of different types of research studies, controls, sources of bias, basic descriptive and analytic statistics, and reporting of findings. You can access a detailed guide to the knowledge that may be assessed in the CAP component on the College website: [RANZCP Guidelines for CAP's](#)

Extended Matching Questions (EMQ) / MCQs

The performance of the EMQs continued to be on par with previous cohort performances with individual candidate scores covering almost the entire breadth of scores available.

Some of the poorly performed EMQ's were challenging to candidates who may have sat the exam in the early stages of their training and therefore in answering the questions correctly, required both a greater understanding of knowledge and clinical experience.

Analysis of the results for EMQs showed that areas of strength for the cohort were on questions about Phenomenology and Basic Sciences.

Areas of the curriculum where candidates would benefit from further study were in the areas of substance abuse, ethical issues and the history of Psychiatry. It is essential to clinical practice that psychiatrists have a well-developed knowledge of ethical and professional issues.

The CFE would like to remind candidates that, as the MCQ examination is predominantly a knowledge-based examination, it is important for candidates to ensure that they are up to date with basic sciences and medical knowledge.

Dr Nathan Gibson
Chair
Committee for Examinations

Dr Brett Kennedy
Co-Chair
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