Multiple Choice Question Examination (MCQs)

The Committee for Examinations followed established procedures to create the Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examination for August 2018 and determine the overall pass mark. The pass mark was determined through intensive standard setting exercises involving Fellows from around Australia and New Zealand. Candidates are provided performance feedback in identified curriculum areas, which may be diagnostic or clinical categories. This is the only means by which feedback is able to be broken down in any detail.

The August 2018 MCQ Exam was attempted by 172 candidates throughout Australia and New Zealand. The exam had an overall pass rate of 78%. About 85% of candidates attempting the MCQ examination for the first time were successful.

Critical Analysis Problems (CAPs)

CAPs in the examination are based on articles that derive from basic sciences and medical knowledge.

The average pass rate for the whole CAP component was 57%. Statistics showed that the average mark for CAP 1 was slightly higher than that of CAP 2.

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.

Non-CAP Extended Matching Questions (EMQ) / MCQs

The candidate performance in the EMQ/MCQ component of the exam was slightly better than the CAP component of the MCQ examination, with an average mark for the EMQ being approximately 60%.

The average scores for each curriculum area covered by the non-CAP component of the MCQ examination showed that areas of strength for the cohort were questions about Assessment followed by Phenomenology. Candidates performed reasonably well in the area of Epidemiology, Diagnosis and Classification, and Sociocultural awareness. However, candidates' performance in the category of History of Psychiatry and Ethics, Leadership and Governance was the lowest.

Overall question analysis suggested that for a number of questions, candidates based their answers on guess work rather than knowledge. 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. For the CAP questions, 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 CAPs

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