

February 2018  
Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination  
Advice to Candidates



### **Multiple Choice Question Examination**

The Committee for Examinations followed established procedures to create the Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examination for February 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 feedback as to their performance 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 February 2018 MCQ Exam was attempted by 146 candidates throughout Australia and New Zealand. The exam had an overall pass rate of 75% and the reliability was deemed satisfactory. About 78% of candidates attempting the MCQ examination for the first time passed the examination.

### **Critical Analysis Problems**

The two Critical Analysis Problems in the MCQ exam were drawn from articles drawing on basic sciences and medical knowledge. 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.

The range of scores for the CAP component covered almost the entire breath of marks available, whilst the average scores for each CAP fell within the middle of the spectrum.

CAP 2 performed marginally better than CAP 1 with the average mark for the whole CAP component being approximately 59%.

### **Non-CAP Extended Matching Questions (EMQ) / Multiple Choice Questions**

In general, candidates performed better in the non-CAP EMQ component of the MCQ examination with an average mark for this component being approximately 63%.

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 Phenomenology and Assessment. From the specific areas of practice covered in the exam, candidates tended to perform better in the consultation-liaison area of practice; and less well in the Old Age area. As for specific disorders, candidates tended to perform best in anxiety disorders, followed by psychotic disorders. However, candidates' performance in the category of specific personality disorders 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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