

# March 2017 Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) Examination

## Advice to Candidates



### **Multiple Choice Question Examination**

The Committee for Examinations followed established procedures to set the Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examination for March 2017 and to determine the pass mark. Standard setting to determine the pass mark involved Fellows from around Australia and New Zealand.

The pass rate for the 161 candidates who sat the MCQ exam across Australia and New Zealand was approximately 73%. The reliability of the MCQ examination was satisfactory. Out of the number of trainees who sat the MCQ exam for the first time, approximately 78% passed.

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. Some questions within the paper can only be categorised as 'other disorders'. Areas such as sexual health, neuropsychiatric conditions, sleep and eating disorders fall under this category. Questions classified under 'Not related to a diagnostic category' are likely to include those testing knowledge of basic or clinical neurosciences.

The average performance of the candidates in the 'Child & Adolescent psychiatric disorders' question category was the best followed by questions in the 'Psychotic disorders' category. Candidates' performance score on questions in the Organic disorders category was the least well performed.

The MCQ practice exam, available to all candidates through the Pearson Vue website, was utilized by 68% of the cohort enrolled to sit the online exam. This practice exam is used as a preparation tool, giving candidates a familiarity with the online exam tests functionality.

### **Extended Matching Questions (EMQs)**

The performance of the EMQs continued to be on par with previous cohort performances with individual candidate scores ranging from a minimum of approximately 35% to a maximum of approximately 84%.

Analysis of the results for EMQs showed that an area of strength for the cohort was on questions about child and adolescent psychiatric disorders and psychotic disorders. Candidates did well in the 'Other disorders' category also.

Areas of the curriculum where candidates would benefit from further study are in the areas of the organic disorders and substance abuse. It was noted that candidates performed poorly on only a few questions which related to clinical signs of an overdose, ethical issues or the treatment of anxiety disorders. These areas of weakness are of concern as these questions were asking about important core knowledge or about high prevalence disorders. It is essential to clinical practice that psychiatrists have a well-developed knowledge of ethical and professional issues.

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### **Critical Analysis Problems (CAPs)**

The two Critical Analysis Problems presented to the cohort were drawn from articles about epidemiology, diagnosis and classification and sociocultural awareness as well as assessment and treatments in psychiatry.

The cohorts' scores for the CAPs component of the MCQ examination ranged between 27.5% and 87.5%.

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.

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