Royal College of Physicians | Faculty of Physician Associates

Terms of reference: exam board

1. Purpose and scope of this document

To provide the terms of reference for the exam board of the faculty board at the Royal College of Physicians.

2. Objectives of the exam board

- To review and consider the analysis of the PA national exam on behalf of the faculty of physician associates
- To decide and agree the result of the PA national exam on behalf of the faculty of physician associates
- To ensure that standard set and verify, ensuring the national and recertification examinations are valid, reliable and aligned to best clinical practice

3. Composition of the exam board

The exam board will comprise the following posts.

a) Chair (chair of the examination sub-committee)
b) Deputy chair(s) of the examination sub-committee
c) Lead for single best answer examinations
d) Lead for OSCE examinations
e) HEI representative
f) Expert on MRCP exam (medical director MRCP or deputy)
g) External assessment expert
h) Royal College of Physicians college staff in attendance (to be agreed)

4. Method of appointment of exam board members

Appointments are made by invitation to ensure the correct depth and breadth of expertise required. All members must be in good standing with the faculty of physician associates (or their respective college for doctors).

The exam board shall be appointed by the faculty of physician associates board at the Royal College of Physicians.

The position of an exam board member is an unpaid position though the faculty of physician associates.

Committee members may be removed from the committee by majority action of the commission as a whole for reasons of non-participation, civil malfeasance, or disreputable public behaviour.

5. Role of exam board members

Exam board members must be available to attend to the duties of the exam board (which are numbered below) and relate to both the national and recertification examinations:

a. Review the standard setting of questions

b. Review the pass mark with the results

c. Review the examination to confirm validity, reliability and quality of questions

d. Recommend modifications to the examination e.g. format, process

The faculty of physician associates board at the Royal College of Physicians shall have oversight responsibility for the exam board and shall ensure there is adequate indemnity coverage for the legal protection of the committee.

The chairperson shall be responsible for the general management of exam board and shall cause meetings to be held regularly and to be conducted appropriately after each exam.

Should the chairperson not be available or able to chair an established meeting a designated committee member (OSCE or SBA lead) would assume the post of acting chair.

Committee members must make every effort to participate in the exam board responsibilities to the best of their abilities.

Should any committee member find that they have a conflict of interest in any business before the exam board, they must so declare that conflict and recuse themselves from that business.

6. Quorum

A quorum of the sub-committee requires 50% of members including the presence of the chair or deputy chair.

7. Frequency of meetings

Exam board meetings are held three times a year, typically at Royal College of Physicians of London within two weeks of the PA National Exam.