

Format of Part II Exam in Internal Medicine

The final exam shall consist of two parts:

- 1- Written paper
- 2- Clinical assessment

The written paper shall consist of 100 questions of the MCQ(best of five),EMQ and clinical data interpretation types. The questions breakdown will be as follows:

Cardiology	12 questions
Pulmonology	12 questions
Gastroenterology	12 questions
Rheumatology	8 questions
Endocrinology	8 questions
Nephrology	8 questions
Haem/oncology	10 questions
Infectious dis	7 questions
Neurology	5 questions
Clinical pharma.	7 questions
Miscellaneous	11 questions

As for the clinical component it will comprise a series of timed assessment stations where various competencies are tested by examiners.

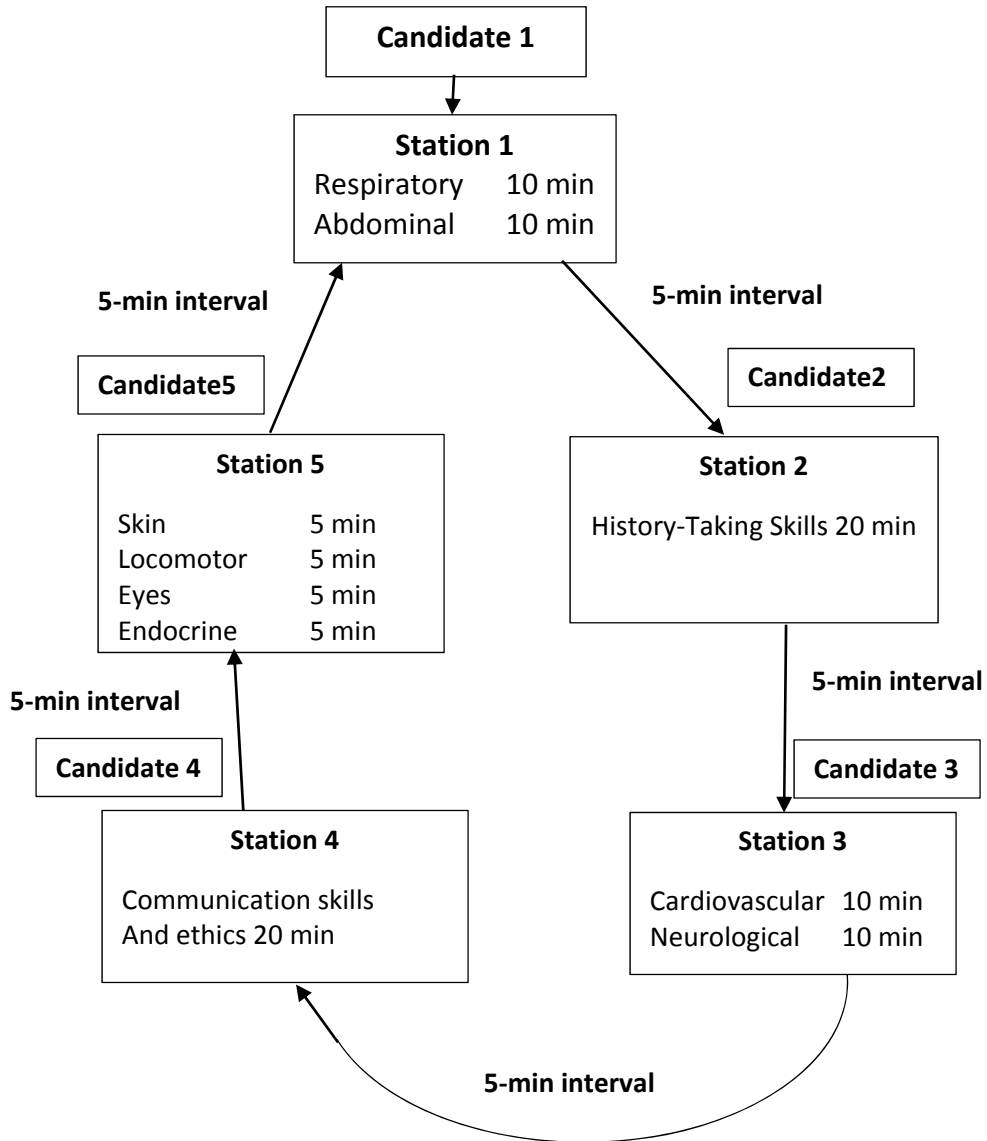
The aims of the exam are to ensure that candidates are able to:-

- Examine and detect the presence or absence of physical signs
- Interpret physical signs
- Make appropriate diagnoses
- Develop and discuss emergency, immediate and long-term management plans
- Demonstrate the clinical skills of history taking
- Communicate clinical information to colleagues, patients or their relatives
- Discuss ethical issues

Structure

There are five stations, each timed at 20 minutes (Fig. I)

The start and finish of each station is signaled by a bell, although it is the duty of examiners to indicate the passing of time during each station. A different pair of examiners is at each station. One examiner takes the lead in conducting the examination with the first candidate, the other examiner conducts the next, and so on. There is a five-minute seated interval between stations.



The two system station (1 and 3)

After the five-minute interval, an examiner takes the candidate to the station and provides a written instruction for the first case. The response involves the relevant examination of the system and questions from the examiners about investigation and management of the clinical problem. Candidates should aim to complete their examination by around six minutes, and examiners may prompt at the five-minute point if that looks unlikely; this is a change from the previous situation whereby if at seven minutes the clinical examination had not been completed the examiner warned the candidate that they should finish to allow time for discussion. At 10 minutes the second examiner starts the second case at the second substation exactly as above.

Stations 2 and 4

The candidate receives a letter or case scenario to read during the five-minute interval. Notes may be made on paper provided. At the bell, the candidate enters the examination room. The interview with the patient/subject lasts for 14 minutes and includes history taking at station 2 and some form of counselling or advising at station 4. Examiners advise candidates when there are two minutes remaining (i.e. at 12 minutes). At 14 minutes the patient/subject leaves the room and the candidate is given one minute to gather his or her thoughts. The examiners may then invite the candidate to summarise the important features in the remaining five minutes. At station 2 the examiners will ask about the implications of problems identified and strategies for management. At station 4 the examiners are encouraged to identify ethical implications and discuss issues arising from the interview.

Station 5

After the five-minute interval one examiner takes the candidate to the station and gives written instructions for the first of the four systems. The response involves the relevant examination of the system and questions from the examiners about investigation and management of the clinical problem. The same follows for each of the four substations, and each examiner takes the lead for two of these, swapping after 10 minutes.

Marking system-anchor statements and mark-sheets

Marking system

All marks are recorded on a four-point grading system as detailed on PACES mark-sheets as:

- Clear pass (4 points)
- Pass (3 points)

- Fail (2 points)
- Clear fail (1 point)

The overall mark (used in calculating the candidate's total score) is a global judgement of the candidate's performance, taking into account anchor statements. Anchor statements are statements that assist in determining whether a candidate has achieved a clear pass, pass, fail or clear fail on a particular criterion. These are detailed on the MRCP website but the anchor statements that confer a clear pass are listed here because even although most candidates will fall below in many stations this is the standard you should aim for:-

- System of examination- examines thoroughly and systematically
- Language and communication skills- talks to patient in a structured but flexible manner, using intelligible language and avoiding jargon.
- Confidence and rapport-displays confidence, rapport and empathy.
- Clinical method-demonstrates correct and comprehensive clinical method and skills, eliciting the correct physical signs.
- Discussion and appreciation of patient's concerns-discusses clinical issues sensibly, spontaneously and with confidence, while able to negotiate and acknowledge areas of doubt/ignorance. Shows a awareness of patient concerns.

Mark sheets

The overall mark for the examination is out of a possible 56 points, as illustrated in Table 2.

A mark of 34/56 (60%) will to be necessary to demonstrate adequate competence in the core skills at each station and thus pass the examination (equivalent to a2-3 at every station or substation)

Table 1 Marking scheme for the PACES examination				
Station	System		Examiner 1	Examiner 2
1	Respiratory	Physical Identification and interpretation of physical signs Discussion related to case	/4	/4
	Abdominal	Physical examination Identification and interpretation of physical signs Discussion related to case	/4	/4
2	History-taking skills	Data gathering in the interview Interpretation and use of information	/4	/4

		gathered Discussion related to case		
3	Cardiovascular	Physical examination Identification and interpretation of physical sign Discussion related to case	/4	/4
	Neurological	Physical examination Identification and interpretation of physical sign Discussion related to case	/4	/4
4	Communication skills and ethics	Communication skills-conduct of interview Exploration and problem negotiation Discussion related to case	/4	/4
5	Skin Locomotor Eyes Endocrine		/4	/4
Total			/28 /56	/28

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