

Guideline

Subject: **Quality Framework for RCPA Examinations – Written, Practical and Oral**
Approval Date: August 2015
Review Date: August 2019
Review by Board of Education and Assessment
Number: 3/2015

This Guideline for all RCPA disciplines has been developed to support the integrity, transparency, fairness, validity and reliability of examinations with reference to the standards of the accrediting agencies including the AMC, MCNZ, ADC and DCNZ.

Preparation of examination materials and standard setting ¹

1. Questions and marking guides are prepared and reviewed by the examiners under the direction of the Chief Examiner.
2. Marking guides and rubrics define the standard requirements for pass, borderline and fail grades. A meritorious pass grade may also be defined.
3. Where possible, a pre-marking calibration session is held for examiners to discuss application of the marking guides.
4. Standards are set using recognised methods, eg, Angoff, Ebel, borderline group, expert judgment, rubrics or other methods as appropriate.
5. Finalised questions and marking guides are signed off by the Chief Examiner and formatted in accordance with RCPA guidelines.

Conduct of the examination

1. Written and practical examinations will comply with Guideline 4/2002 Invigilators – Examination Procedure.
2. Candidates' segregation arrangements will be made when necessary to prevent communication.
3. For oral exams, all candidates are asked the same questions and pairing of candidates with examiners is based on no conflict of interest where feasible.

Marking

1. Examination scripts are double-marked independently by RCPA examiners using marking guides. The only exception to this is the Basic Pathological Sciences multiple choice examination which is marked electronically.
2. Candidates are identified solely by RCPA identification number.
3. Where possible one pair/group of examiners marks the **whole cohort** for any given question or section of a written or practical examination.
4. In oral examinations examiner pairs mark individual questions/stations independently and then reach consensus on the final outcome for the candidate at the question/station.

¹ Examination materials include questions, criterion-referenced marking guides, marking sheets, marking rubrics, results sheets and compiled results. These may be in hard copy or electronic form.

5. In oral examinations only the RCPA identification number will be recorded on the mark spreadsheet to be reviewed by the Chief Examiner.
6. Fail, borderline and discrepant scores in all examinations are scrutinised by the Chief Examiner and re-marked by at least one additional examiner.

Quality assurance

The College will produce a quality report for the Chief Examiner on their set of examinations at the end of the examination cycle. For disciplines with sufficient numbers this will include pass rates and analysis of difficulty, generalisability, reliability and validity. Relevant indicators are reported for disciplines with few candidates.

Related policies, guidelines and other documents

Policy 3/2005: Ownership, Confidentiality and Security of Examination Materials.

1/1999: Roles and Responsibilities of Chief Examiner, Associates, Assistant Chief Examiners, Principal Examiners and Fellows Assisting in the Examination Process.

Guideline: 4/2002 Invigilators – Examination Procedure.

Guideline: 4/2015 Security of the Production and Handling of Examination Materials