



EM Certificate and Diploma Examinations: Standard setting and results

1. Purpose

This document has been written to inform EMC, EMD and EMAD trainees and supervisors about the method by which the examinations are developed, how the passing score is determined and how results are calculated. Trainees and supervisors are also recommended to refer to the following documents which relate to other aspects of the EMCDAD Examinations;

- [Studying for Examinations Guide](#)
- [Examinations Operational Guide](#)
- [EMCDAD Curriculum \(EM Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma Curriculum\)](#)
- [Training Handbook](#)

2. Examination Questions

The EMCDAD Examinations Working Group (Working Group for the EM Certificate and Diploma Examinations) is responsible for developing and reviewing examination questions that are aligned to the relevant curriculum. Each question is subject to at least two separate reviews prior to final approval by the Lead and Deputy Lead of the Working Group. The Lead and Deputy Lead also approve each examination paper to ensure adequate and balanced coverage of curriculum topics.

3. Determining the Passing Score

The passing score for each examination is determined using a technique called standard setting. ACEM uses a criterion-referenced method for standard setting. This method is based on the level of competency required rather than a set pass mark and takes into account the degree of difficulty of the questions that make up the paper.

The Certificate and Diploma examinations are standard set by a group of experts in Emergency Medicine who are FACEMs and Diplomates in active clinical practice. Standard setters are trained in the Angoff Method, which is widely used in post-graduate education and involves the following steps for each examination:

1. Standard setters determine the percentage of 'Just at Standard' candidates who would be expected to correctly answer each question. A 'Just at Standard' candidate for each program is defined as one who has demonstrated a minimum or sufficient level of knowledge and understanding, as defined by the relevant curriculum, to ensure safe practice and to meet the core needs of the patient.
2. The median of all standard setters' 'Just at Standard' ratings is calculated for each question within a given examination.
3. The average of the median ratings is then determined and multiplied by the number of questions in the examination, then rounded down to the nearest whole number to calculate the passing score for the examination.

4. Calculating results

Candidates who achieve a total score at or above the passing score, pass the examination. Examination results are confirmed with the Lead and Deputy Lead of the Working Group.

5. Communication of results

Candidates will receive an email notifying them of their examination result approximately two weeks after the completion of the examination.

6. Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration

The Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy can be found on the [ACEM Website](#) and clearly defines circumstances warranting special consideration. If a candidate feels an application is warranted, they must submit this to the College in accordance with the policy.

The time frame for applications is prior to the examination and as soon as relevant circumstances are known or otherwise within 72 hours of the date of the examination. As outlined in the policy, no applications for special consideration in relation to examinations will be accepted following the publication of results and the remarking of an examination is not an outcome available under the policy.

Please contact the EMCD team (emcd@acem.org.au) if you have any concerns about your examination preparation or if circumstances arose on the examination day that may have impacted your performance.

7. Feedback from Candidates and Supervisors

The College is committed to continuing to improve the examinations and assessment processes and welcomes feedback and constructive suggestions from stakeholders to assist in achieving this goal.

Education and Training Directorate June 2021