



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Examination Bulletin

February 2019

1. Welcome

Welcome to the new year and this edition of the Examination Bulletin. Last year, the College continued to review, refine and enhance examination processes as part of its commitment to provide high quality, robust, defensible and fair assessments. It also developed and published a range of new resources to assist candidates in their preparation for examinations. As these resources were progressively released throughout the year, this edition of the Bulletin will highlight the new processes and resources implemented in 2018.

The College examined a total of 1526 candidates across the Primary and Fellowship Examinations in 2018. This could not have been achieved without the generosity of the many Fellows who give their time, energy and expertise to write Select Choice Questions (SCQs), Short Answer Questions (SAQs) and scenarios for OSCE stations and VIVAs; participate in standard setting of written examination papers; attend Marking Centres and question writing workshops; examine at the AMC National Test Centre; design and deliver Trainee Education Programs in their hospitals; sit on examination related committees and run revision and practice sessions to assist trainees in their preparation. We sincerely thank them.

2. 2019 Examination calendar

Trainees were notified in early 2018 that the timing of the major examinations would be changed from 2019, to allow trainees more notice and time to prepare for the oral component of the respective written examinations.

In 2018, the Fellowship Clinical Examination changed to twelve single stations, conducted over two (2) days. This allowed the College to conduct three (3) examinations over six (6) days, should it be necessary due to higher candidate numbers. Last year, although six (6) consecutive days (Monday through to Saturday) were set aside for the three examinations per OSCE, only two separate examinations were needed in May and again in November. On both occasions, Cohort 1 sat on Monday and Tuesday and Cohort 2 on Wednesday and Thursday.

From this year, the College will hold the OSCEs over four consecutive days for Cohorts 1 and 2 and then two days the following week for Cohort 3 if required. This will alleviate the requirement to recruit examiners and role-players for weekends and ensure all candidates may sit the OSCE at the time of their choosing.

A calendar of the 2019 Primary and Fellowship Examinations is included at the end of this bulletin. Print it to keep at home or put it up on a work noticeboard. You can also access it at acem.org.au/exams

Fellowship written examination

Online short answer question trial

Following extensive development and testing, the College trialled a new online format of the Short Answer Question (SAQ) paper at the Fellowship Written Examination 2018.2 using the Moodle platform currently deployed for the Select Choice Question (SCQ) paper.

The trial was offered to candidates sitting in Melbourne and Brisbane, with 23 trainees opting to complete the online version of the SAQ paper. Following the feedback received, an extended pilot will now take place with two further examination centres to be offered for the Fellowship Written Examination 2019.1 in May. Trainees sitting in Sydney, Auckland, Melbourne and Brisbane will have the option to sit the SAQ paper online in this examination. Trainees from other regions wishing to take the 2019.1 examination online, are welcome to apply to sit the examination in any one of the four designated cities.

A practice online SAQ paper of nine (9) questions will be available on the website in late February for candidates to trial, before making their decision on whether to compete the paper online.

Subject to successful trialling in 2019, it is planned that all candidates will complete both components of the Fellowship Written Examination online from May 2020. As per any processes, the provisions of the ACEM Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy will apply.

3. Fellowship clinical examination (OSCE)

Standardised Case-Based Discussions

A new style of OSCE station, a Standardised Case Based Discussion (SCBD), was introduced for the Fellowship Clinical Examinations, commencing 2018.1. These are primarily designed to examine the domains of Medical Expertise and Prioritisation and Decision Making. One examiner leads the discussion by asking scripted questions and provides further clinical information to the candidate as the case evolves. A second examiner is also in the room but tends not to have direct interaction with the candidate. Examples of SCBDs are located under the Fellowship Examination Resources on the eLearning section of the website.

Candidate feedback

In early 2018, ESC approved the trial at OSCE 2018.1 and later, the implementation at OSCE 2018.2, of electronically generated feedback from examiners to candidates, based on a sample of the domain criteria that a candidate at a 'Minimum level of competence' would be expected to adequately address. The generic feedback statements provided do not cover all criteria assessed in each station, but rather provide a summary of the broad or key elements that were tested in the respective domains in each station. The statements are intended to help guide candidates towards the areas where further development may be needed and allow more comprehensive and earlier feedback to be provided to unsuccessful OSCE candidates.

DEMTs are informed of examination results following candidate notification.

Number of OSCE attempts increased

In November 2018 the Board endorsed a recommendation from the Council of Education to permit FACEM Training Program trainees a maximum of four attempts at the ACEM Fellowship Clinical Examination (OSCE). This will apply retrospectively from 1 January 2018.

This increases the number of attempts from three to four for the Fellowship Clinical Examination only. The number of attempts remains at three for the Primary Written Examination, Primary Viva Examination, and Fellowship Written Examination.

Pilot OSCE preparation workshop

In September and December 2018, the College introduced a program designed to assist trainees who had been unsuccessful at the OSCE on two or more occasions. The program covered:

- OSCE marking, standard setting and key resources
- Examination psychology – Resilience and the Growth Mindset or Emotional Intelligence and Communication
- Hearing from new FACEMs who passed their OSCE after more than one attempt, about the key things that made the difference for a successful attempt
- The OSCE essentials, from an examiner perspective

- OSCE station demonstrations - discussing candidate performance in small groups
- OSCE station role-playing in two small groups (Communication and Teaching)
- The examination preparation necessities – the checklist.

Participant feedback was very positive for all aspects delivered, in particular the examination psychology sessions.

The College will continue to run an OSCE Preparation Program in 2019 with two courses scheduled for 29 May and 27 November 2019.

There will be two additional workshops in Melbourne, held in the same months, titled 'Resilient Leadership' presented by Professor Jill Klein, Professorial Fellow in Medical Education, Melbourne Medical School. Two further workshops, to be held in NSW, titled 'Owning the OSCE' are in the development stage, and will be added to this new suite of courses once finalised.

All programs will be run on a 'cost recovery' only basis.

4. New Fellowship examination resources

New resources were added to the [Fellowship Examination Resources](#) online during 2018. These include:

- About the Fellowship Written Examination
- Preparing for the Fellowship Written Examination
- Four SAQ questions from the FE2018.1 Written Examination
- Two OSCE stations from the FE2018.1 Clinical OSCE
- The OSCE Preparation Checklist
- OSCE Domain Criteria
- Reflections on the OSCE

New procedures that describe aspects of the examination processes were developed and published during 2018, including:

- Procedures for standard setting the Fellowship examinations
- Procedure for determining minimally competent criteria for the FEx OSCE
- Procedure for the recruitment, training and appraisal of OSCE personnel
- Procedure for candidate feedback on the conduct of the OSCE

5. New guidelines

New [Guidelines for Pregnant Examination Candidates and Candidates Nursing an Infant](#) and related changes to the [Exceptional Circumstances and Special Consideration Policy](#) were approved in August 2018 to make provisions for pregnant examination candidates and candidates nursing an infant at the time of an examination.

6. Examiners

Court of Examiners

In response to a call to FACEMs for Expressions of Interest to join the Court of Examiners, a further nine (9) new examiners were accepted to the Court of Examiners in September 2018. All new examiners commenced their training at the FE18.2 OSCE with two days of orientation/training and a third day of examining.

<i>Hamed Akhlaghi</i>	<i>Alistair Fergusson</i>	<i>Lucy Reed</i>
<i>Emma Batistich</i>	<i>Ignatius Munjodzi</i>	<i>Claire Shadwell</i>
<i>Felicity Day</i>	<i>Julia Peters</i>	<i>Jamie Thomas</i>

Twelve examiners were appointed in March 2018 as outlined in a previous Bulletin. Although twenty-one new examiners were recruited during 2018, the College will continue to recruit and train new examiners. Monitoring and expanding the Court is necessary in order to be able to continue to meet candidate numbers, share the time and workload commitment that is involved, ensure diversity is encouraged and to replace those members retiring.

The College sincerely thanks the following Fellows, on their recent retirement from the Court, for their longstanding commitment as examiners; five of whom have examined FACEM trainees for over 20 years.

Betty Chan	Pam Rosengarten	James Taylor
John Maguire	Bob Dunn	Tony Bottrall
Don Liew	David Richards	Fergus Kerr
Tony Joseph	Simon Chu	

A special thank you to Bob Dunn for his long-standing role as Peer Support and Lead Examiner, his sage advice to examiners over many years, commitment to trainees and robust processes, and major involvement in the training program of new examiners.

7. Online examinations

As reported in the Examination Bulletin of April 2018 and in the light of the recent publicity regarding reported systems failure at the examinations of another Specialist Medical College, the College reminds candidates of the following provisions to mitigate the possibility of issues occurring at ACEM examinations:

Processes in place regarding online SCQ and SAQ examinations include:

- From the FE Written of 2018.1 an Assessment Team or Education Unit staff member has been in attendance at each of the examination centres, in addition to FACEM and Clifton's invigilators, to oversee processes and advise in case of an incident occurring.
- A paper copy of the examination will be available for use in the unlikely situation of an issue occurring with the online system, such as a power failure at an examination centre.
- Thorough testing and live trials of examinations are undertaken prior to the examination being deployed for use. This testing involves the Education and Assessment teams, Educational resources and IT.
- The ACEM IT team carries out stringent testing prior to each examination to try to ensure every eventuality is covered.
- ACEM technical support is available for the entirety of each examination day.
- ACEM has three servers in different locations at the user end of the examination site which help to balance the load and provide backup in the unlikely case of a server failing.
- At the back end, two servers support each other to store the examination answers. In the unlikely case of a server at the back end failing, the other server will copy all data and take over data storage within 30 seconds.
- The College ensures adequate communications regarding IT developments and processes are made to trainees and Fellows engaged in the examinations or in decision making processes at all levels.

Lyn Johnson

Executive Director
Education and Training
February 2019



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICINE

2019 Examination Dates

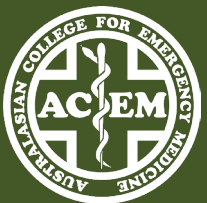


2019 Primary Examination Dates

Australasian College for Emergency Medicine

	Exam	Applications open	Applications close
Primary Written	8 Feb	-	Now closed
	2 Aug	3 Jun	28 Jun
Primary Viva	2-3 May	11 Feb	8 Mar
	31 Oct-1 Nov	12 Aug	6 Sep

acem.org.au/exams



2019 Fellowship Examination Dates

Australasian College for Emergency Medicine

	Exam	Applications Open	Applications Close	
Fellowship Written	17 May	25 Feb	22 Mar	
	15 Nov	26 Aug	20 Sep	
Fellowship Clinical (OSCE)	12-15 and 18-19 Mar*	3 Dec	18 Jan	Eligibility deadline 4 Feb
	10-13 and 16-17 Sep*	17 Jun	12 Jul	5 Aug

*Extra dates may be added to accommodate higher candidate numbers

acem.org.au/exams