

Papers 1, 2 & 3 Marking Scheme

All the question papers will consist of multiple choice questions and extended matching items. The balance of the two types of questions will vary but will be approximately 75% MCQs and 25% EMIs.

MCQs will be in the 1 from 5, single best answer type. This type of MCQ comprises a question stem which is usually one or two sentences long but may be longer. The question stem is followed by a list of 5 options. Candidates should choose the single best option that fits the question stem. One mark is given for the correct answer.

In the EMIs candidates will be orientated by being given a theme for each set of EMIs, followed by a lead-in statement explaining what the candidate is being asked to do. This is followed by an option list, set out in a logical order. Finally, the vignettes are given and the candidate asked to choose one or more best options from the option list. One mark is given for each correct answer. Raw scores are converted to percentages and adjusted by taking into account that a proportion of the total scores are likely to have been achieved by chance alone.

Candidates are advised to attempt all questions. No marks are deducted for incorrect answers.

Standardisation - A standard is set for each paper using an absolute standard. This means that there is no pre-determined number of candidates who pass or fail. Candidates pass or fail according to their own performance and not on how well they perform in relation to the other candidates.

Currently the Angoff method is used to standardise Papers 1, 2 & 3.

In this procedure trainers who are familiar with psychiatric training, for example college tutors, educational supervisors, and recently appointed ST 4 trainees are identified. They act as assessors of the paper and are asked to review each question in the paper. Each question in the paper is independently assessed in relation to an external standard set by the examiners. These estimates are discussed and averaged across assessors to reflect the standard for each question. The standard for each question is averaged across an exam Paper to provide a pass mark. To safeguard against wild fluctuations in pass rates whilst maintaining the defensibility of criterion referencing, a compromise method is used that takes into account the pass rate as well as the pass mark. The method is known as the 'Hofstee Compromise Method' and is accepted by medical educators as a valid procedure.