

The McLachlan report recommendations – an update on progress as of 9 August 2026

Rec. No.	Descriptor	Health Status	Update
1	The Results Analysis should include the mean Point Biserial (PBS) or Discrimination Index for each exam, and for preceding papers in the same category.		Completed – reported January 2026
4	Exam results presentation should be reviewed so that the data is presented in a clear, detailed and comprehensive manner which is self-explanatory for non-expert psychometricians.		Completed – reported May 2026
6	That the Federation consider providing the correct options to Surpass along with the question papers.		Completed – reported May 2026
7	That the time between administration and results delivery is sufficient to ensure that there is adequate time for analysis and quality control.		Completed – reported January 2026 (links to Recommendation 12)
8	That the Federation consider publishing the overall percentage correct score to candidates, along with the scaled score: and the percentage pass mark for that exam, and that the percentage pass mark also be made available to the Boards on an ongoing basis, as part of their monitoring of outcomes.		Completed - reported January 2026
9	That standard setting methods for the SCEs are reviewed with a view to reestablishing confidence in both the methods used and the quality of data for anchor items.		Completed - reported January 2026

12	Results should be reviewed by the Board Chair and an expert sub-committee of the Board before release to candidates		Completed - reported January 2026 (linked to Recommendation 7)
14	That the Federation consider making Board meetings hybrid.		Completed - reported January 2026
15	That the timetable for results release should include adequate time for checking, and guidance to candidates that results release may be delayed for good cause.		Completed - reported January 2026
20	That the move to digital scoring for PACES is seamlessly incorporated into the Exam Management System, with clear outputs and easy interrogation of outcomes.		Update - March 2026 Digitisation of PACES is confirmed as out of scope of the current digital programme of work. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: Plans regarding the digitisation of PACES scoring, and subsequent paper scanning are not currently underway. Whilst discussions about potential digitisation have taken place, these are not part of our current digital transformation programme. As and when we do explore this in the future, we will address matters of integration with other parts of the system as recommended in the McLachlan report.
21	That close attention is paid to developing security risks with regard to Remote On-line Proctoring (ROP) examinations. This activity would best be carried out in association with other medical Royal Colleges.		Completed – May 2026 In June 2026, MRCP(UK) Written examinations and the SCEs moved back in centre due to concerns with technical failures and exam security associated with ROP.
2	That written Standard Operating Procedures be in place for each step in the exams process, and that these have been followed is checked regularly as part of the Quality Management process.		New – Completed August 2026 SOPs are now in place for each step in the end-to-end exam process. Audit arrangements are now in place to ensure these are followed as part of the QM process. Status in May 2026 reported as: The review to ensure the end-to-end exam processes are all appropriately documented in written Standard Operating Procedures is close to

			completion with a target date of the end of May. The review of all high risk / manual processes was prioritised and completed in March 2026 Adherence with SOPs will be part of the iterative Quality Management process going forward. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: In progress. All Standard operating procedures covering end-to-end exam processes are under review and those linked to manual processes prioritised. Audits to ensure these are being followed are routinely undertaken by the Chief Operating Officer and Exam managers.
5	That the relationship with the delivery provider is governed by clearly documented procedures, associated with written Standard Operating Procedures, reviewed regularly as part of the Quality Management process.		New – Completed - August 2026 The end-to-end process flow (examination processes and procedures) has been converted in to Standard Operating Procedures which were formally agreed and signed off with our delivery provider in June. Status in May 2026 reported as: End-to-end examination processes and procedures have been signed off with our delivery provider which provide clarity of ownership and responsibility. Next steps are to convert this end-to-end process flow into Standard Operating Procedure, linking all related processes for sign off with our delivery provider. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: In progress. We are currently working with our external delivery provider at executive level to review and renew contracts and agreements along with the governance framework that underpins them, to ensure that all activity meets appropriate standards of quality, security and integrity of exam delivery. Standard Operating Procedures will be updated. Clear lines of accountability are being established, with oversight provided through our governance groups and regular performance reporting. The new Quality Committee will play an important governance role here.

11	That the Federation create an integrated team, under clear leadership, responsible for the whole exam process from item writing, through paper development, to results analysis.		New – Completed August 2026 The new staff structure is in place and an appointment made to the new Chief Quality and Assessment Officer role. We are pleased to confirm Matt Hunt, currently Associate Director of Exams at the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, and formerly an Exams Manager with the Federation, will be taking up this role on 5th October 2026. We are also pleased to announce the appointment of James Goodwin to the role of Chief Operating Officer for the Federation from the 12th October 2026. James is currently Associate Director of Faculties with the Royal College of Anaesthetists. Status in May 2026 reported as: The revised structure to ensure an integrated assessment team under clear leadership has now been fully defined and appropriate HR practices followed. As a result, several appointments have been made to the revised management structure already and others are out to advert, and some staff have moved across to the exam team. The Chief Quality and Assessment Officer (lead) role will now be advertised early May along with the recruitment for a new COO following early retirement of the current incumbent. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: Under development. This involves restructuring within the department and will be delivered in phases. The first step in this process is to create a new leadership role, an Executive Director for Assessment, dedicated to the Assessment function to work in collaboration with the Medical Director and Associate Medical Directors for Assessment. A job description has been drafted and will be advertised early February. Acting on a further point in the McLachlan report, we have also reviewed and revised business function names as appropriate to better reflect the nature of the work undertaken.
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3	That manual handling steps must be eliminated wherever possible in the development of the (new) Exam Management System (EMS).		New – Update - August 2026 Initial testing (including automation of manual handling processes) of the new EMS has now commenced. Our success in removing manual activity will increasingly become clear as testing progresses. The review of processes outside the scope of the EMS has identified additional areas of focus relating to marking/equating (to be considered as part of the Data Warehousing & Reporting Project) and question management (to be considered as part of the work on Question Bank Optimisation). Planning work is underway to determine what can be done to minimise risk in those areas. The detailed plans along with a view on any other residual items not picked up will be completed by end of Sept 26. Status in May 2026 reported as: The manual handling processes that can be embedded within the new EMS system have been identified and included in the build phase. For those that can't, we will be reviewing these in May/June to determine practices to ensure risks are mitigated. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: The new Exams Management System is expected to go live in Q1-Q2, 2027. Manual processes involved in the end-to-end management of Federation exams have been reviewed as part of the discovery phase of this project. Where possible these will be embedded in the new automated system.
10	That the relationship between the Federation and Colleges be structured so that the resources necessary for secure exam delivery are available in a timely manner.		New – Update – August 2026 The review is progressing as planned and remains on target to conclude this year. Status in May 2026 reported as: A review of the broader relationship between the Federation and the Colleges has commenced – this is anticipated to conclude later in the year.

			Status in Jan 2026 reported as: The governance framework between the Federation and the colleges includes arrangements for the Federation to define its resource requirements to the Federation Board on an annual basis and for these to be appropriately considered. A governance review of the current arrangements is planned during 2026 which we expect to further optimise arrangements.
13	Technical Induction for clinical Board members in the generation of results and processing of outcomes.		New – Update – June 2026 The new Assessment Quality Management Committee will have responsibility for developing learning resources for examining board members (see Recommendation 16 below). Status in May 2026 reported as: We are delighted to announce the appointment of Helen Oram to the new Associate Medical Director for Assessment Quality Assurance role. Helen will take up her role from 01 June 2026. Development of a technical induction for clinical board members to cover this activity will be one of Helen’s priorities upon appointment. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: Narrated presentation material detailing the results processing steps and basic psychometric indices has been developed and shared with Board members. Once appointed, the new Associate Medical Director for Quality will develop a new structured induction process for Board members.
16	That an Exams Quality Assurance Management Committee be created, that particular attention be paid to integrated quality management of the exam process from beginning to end, and that regular review of the Risk Register, including Mitigations, should be part of this process.		New – Update - August 2026 An initial meeting has been held to discuss the remit of the committee and consider membership. Draft Terms of Reference have been prepared, and an external expert has been recruited. Further meetings will be held to finalise these arrangements with a view to holding the first meeting in Q4 2026.

			Status in May 2026 reported as: As per update to recommendation 13 above, the establishment of the Exams Quality Assurance Management Committee will be a priority for the new Associate Medical Director for Quality. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: A new Quality Assurance Committee is in the process of being set up. It will be chaired by the Executive Medical Director. In addition, the Federation Board approved the appointment of a new Associate Medical Director for Quality. This will be advertised early February.
17	That the development of the EMS is integrated with the examination processes, enabling clear non-technical data presentation and straightforward interrogation by Boards, staff and officers.		New – Update – August 2026 Federation Board approved the proposal and funding, as part of the Digital Transformation Programme work, to build a Data warehouse and reporting capability in July 26 and we are currently evaluating responses from potential partners. Once identified the work of the new partner or partners will be seamlessly integrated with the existing EMS development to ensure the new system is able to meet the requirement of clear presentation of non-technical data as well as providing a new strategic capability to help meet long term research and analytical objectives. Status in May 2026 reported as: Proposals for building a dedicated Federation data warehousing and storage facility will be explored with the Federation Board in July. If approved, Data Warehouse development will take place towards the end of 2026 and as part of the EMS integration. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: In progress. We agree it is essential that examination processes are integrated into an overall cohesive system. The first stage of delivering this

			is implementing a new system that enables data to flow seamlessly between the different parts of the system. As part of future stages, we will be exploring the need for a data warehouse to support longer term analysis - a clear part of any such project will be the audience for any data outputs and how to present data to enable discussion and decision making.
18	That training in the use of the new Examinations Management System (EMS) is paralleled with sufficient support to ensure that the current assessment system is operated safely.		New – Update – August 2026 Detail planning on EMS training will commence in Feb 2027 once we reach the later stages of the build phase. Work commenced in July 2026 on reviewing the existing arrangements for supporting all our IT systems, including the new EMS. Recommendations are due by October 2026. Status in May 2026 reported as: No update – Status unchanged at June 2026 - training plans will come in to play towards the end of the year. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: In progress. Training for staff forms part of the overall plans for roll out of the Exams Management System and resource planning to ensure existing systems run properly during the transitional period will be undertaken.
19	That the Federation and Colleges consider how to unify PACES delivery and administrative systems to the greatest extent possible.		New – Update – August 2026 Three meetings have been held to date with a further meeting scheduled in late August. The group has reviewed the end-to-end examination processes and the different approaches adopted to examination content development, managing candidate applications, centre organisation, examiner recruitment, and examination delivery. The group has been updated on the benefits of the new EMS.

			A working group is being established to explore variations in arrangements between the Colleges and host centres. A meeting with scenario vetters from the 3 Colleges is arranged for 22nd September looking at unifying station 2 & 5 scenario vetting rather than all 3 colleges vetting independently. Status in May 2026 reported as: The cross-college and Federation group members have been established and will have its first meeting in May 2026. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: A working group of the three college and Federation PACES delivery managers will be established as a first step to address areas of difference and consider how to standardise delivery where possible. The actual unification of PACES and the administrative systems used is a considerably greater and complex undertaking and given that, will be explored following implementation of other recommendations of higher priority.
22	That succession planning for staff involved in delivering the standard setting method be implemented.		New – Update – August 2026 The Federation is identifying requirements for additional psychometric support. The new AMD Quality and the Assessment Quality Management Committee will be responsible for supporting the Assessment Data Analytics Team, including developing new skills where required. A skills matrix exercise has been completed for the team, with targets to ensure that appropriate cover is in place. Status in May 2026 reported as: The Assessment Data Analytics Team have been trained in standard setting methodology. Psychometrician support is still to be actioned and under discussion. Status in Jan 2026 reported as: In progress. We have recruited and now have three trained staff covering this work. All processes have been reviewed and are documented. There is

			however further work to do here in terms of the psychometric support for the Federation examinations and discussions are currently underway as to how we can strengthen this area of activity.
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