MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination performance report 2017

The MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination (Practical Assessment of Clinical Examination Skills - PACES) is designed to test the clinical knowledge and skills of trainee doctors who hope to enter higher specialist training (ST3). The examination sets rigorous standards to ensure that trainees are competent across a range of skills and ready to provide a high standard of care to patients. To pass PACES, candidates must achieve a minimum standard in each of the seven skills assessed and attain a minimum total score of 130 across the whole assessment.

In 2017 6,546 candidates sat the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination; 2,843 declared that they are in UK training while the candidates who did not declare their training details (3,703) are reported as 'other candidates'.
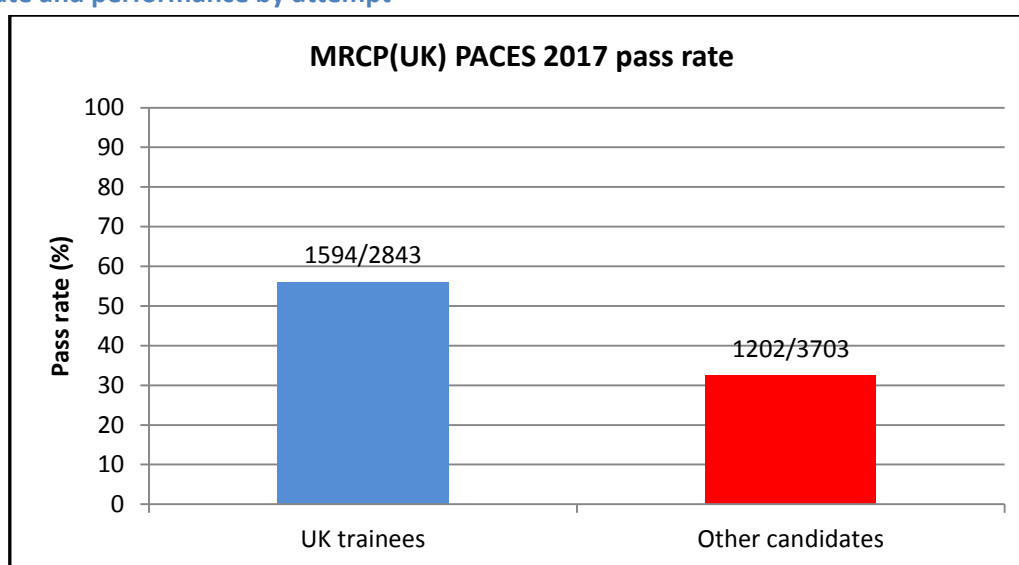
Pass rate and performance by attempt

Figure 1. Pass rates for UK trainees and other candidates. Note that training details are self-declared.

UK trainee's pass rate at first attempt = 59.0% (973/1649)

Other candidate's pass rate at first attempt = 32.6% (531/1631)

UK trainees						Other candidates				
Attempt	**Pass**	**Fail**	**Total**	**Pass rate (%)**		**Attempt**	**Pass**	**Fail**	**Total**	**Pass rate (%)**
1	973	676	1649	59.0%		1	531	1100	1631	32.6%
2-6	604	555	1159	52.1%		2-6	656	1364	2020	32.5%
7+	17	18	35	48.6%		7+	15	37	52	28.9%
Total	**1594**	**1249**	**2843**	**56.1%**		**Total**	**1202**	**2501**	**3703**	**32.5%**

Table 1. Pass/Fail rates by Attempt for UK trainees and other candidates. Candidates will be counted multiple times if they have sat on more than one occasion. For example if a candidate failed at the second attempt but passed on the third, they would be in the fail column for the second attempt but pass column for the third attempt.

More information about the limit on the number of attempts can be found on the MRCP(UK) website: https://www.mrcpuk.org/mrcpuk-examinations/regulations/limit-attempts

Pass rate and performance by skill

The seven skills are:

A   Physical Examination
B   Identifying Physical Signs
C   Clinical Communication
D   Differential Diagnosis
E   Clinical Judgement
F   Managing Patients' Concerns
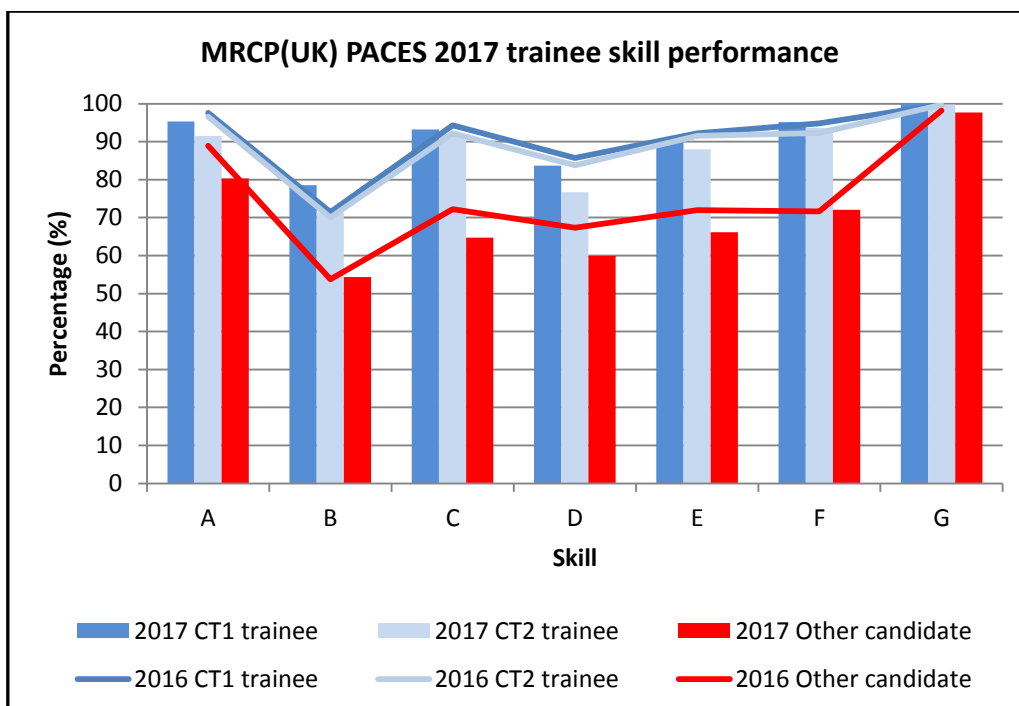G   Maintaining Patient Welfare

Figure 2. Performance by skill for CT1 and CT2 UK trainees and other candidates. Note that the percentages are calculated using scores from all attempts made at the examination.

Skill G – Maintaining Patient Welfare - has the highest pass rate
Skill B – Identifying Physical Signs - has the lowest pass rate

Performance by individual encounter

There are eight patient encounters across the five stations in PACES.

Station	Encounter
1	1: respiratory system examination
	2: abdominal system examination
2	3: history-taking skills
3	4: cardiovascular system examination (CVS)
	5: nervous system examination (neurological)
4	6: communication skills and ethics
5	7: brief clinical consultation 1 & 2

Compared to the maximum achievable score, the mean of the Communication skills encounter 6 (Station 4) has the smallest difference for CT1 and CT2 trainees while the Nervous system encounter 5 has the highest difference (more difficult). For the Other candidates group, the smallest difference is at Communication skills encounter 6 (Station 4) and the highest at the Brief clinical consultation encounter (Station 5).
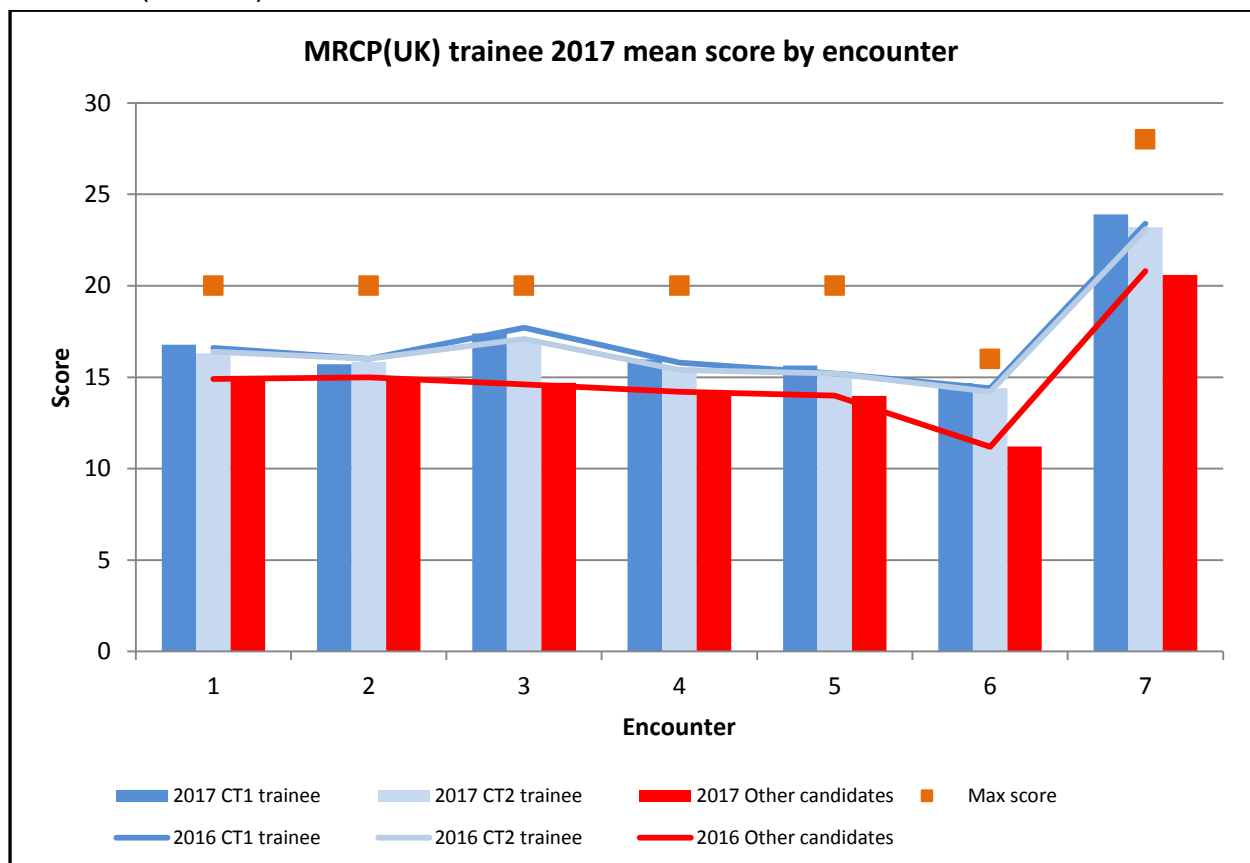

Figure 3. Performance by encounter for CT1 and CT2 UK trainees and other candidates. Note that the average scores are calculated using scores from all attempts made at the examination.

MRCP(UK) Research Unit
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