



MRCP(UK) PACES Examination

Trainee Examiner's Guide – TE1

The PACES (Practical Assessment of Clinical Examination Skills) format to the MRCP(UK) Part 2 Clinical Examination was introduced in 2001. It aimed to standardise the assessment of candidates and improve the reliability of the examination. It is important that examiners are trained in order to achieve that consistency and reliability.

The training of new examiners will comprise:

Preparation before attending PACES

In the days prior to attending the clinical examination, the Trainee Examiner should:

- Read/re-read the latest version of the Examiner's Guide. This should be sent by the College Examination Department and can be downloaded from the [MRCP\(UK\) website](#). The latter is updated continually and should be reviewed by examiners prior to each diet in which they participate.
- View/re-view the PACES23 VIDEOS

Attend PACES as Trainee Examiner

New examiners must attend two cycles of PACES. The Trainee should arrive in good time and introduce him/herself to the Host and Chair of Examiners.

Essential Components of Training

- Attend the briefing by the Chair of Examiners
- Cycle 1: Calibrate and "shadow-mark" 5 candidates at Station 1 or 4
- Cycle 2: Calibrate* and "shadow-mark" 5 candidates at Station 2 or 5

****Where participation in calibration is not possible prior to Cycle 2 it is permissible for the trainee to be briefed by the examiners on the agreed calibration criteria for the consultation encounter at Stations 2 or 5.***

The Chair of Examiners should agree the training plan at the start of the day and complete the Trainee Examiner Assessment form (TE2) (see attached or download from [MRCP\(UK\) website](#)) at the end of the day. This form and the shadow mark sheets must be returned to the College.



Further detail follows:

Trainee examiners must attend the briefing given by the Chair of Examiners before the examination starts. Thereafter, the Trainee should take part as follows:

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SPECIFIED CONTENT OF CYCLE 1 AND 2 MUST BE ADHERED TO AND UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE SEQUENCE BE REVERSED

Cycle One (essential)

- The Trainee should join either Station 1 or Station 4 for the first cycle of 5 candidates. They should participate with the examiners in the calibration process for both the Communication and Physical Examination encounters and agree with the examiners the criteria required for the award of a satisfactory mark for each of the skills assessed. The trainee must complete a calibration sheet both as part of the training process and to assist them during the subsequent live examination. They should then shadow mark five candidates in both encounters independently of the examiners.
- The Trainee will be introduced to each candidate as a Trainee Examiner and will observe the conduct of the examination without playing an active part in the questioning. The Trainee should “shadow mark” the candidate, justifying the award of Unsatisfactory or Borderline with comments that would allow feedback to the candidate. Comments should also be written when a candidate is awarded Satisfactory – the co-examiners might have come to different judgements.
- The “shadow marks” and appropriate comments to justify the mark and give feedback to the candidate should be entered on the mark sheets without conferring with the examiners. However, after the mark sheets have been collected, the marks awarded and the comments should be discussed between examiners and Trainee in the interval before the next candidate starts.
- Shadow mark sheets are not pre-completed by candidates. The candidate’s RCP Code Number and Examination Number as well as the Trainee Examiner’s name should be entered and a brief description of the case given. The shadow mark sheets will be collected at the end of the examining day and returned to the College Examination Office along with the Trainee Examiner Assessment Form (TE2).

Cycle Two (essential)

The trainee should join the examiners for a Consultation encounter at either Station 2 or Station 5. If possible, the Trainee should participate in the calibration process with the examiners and agree the marking criteria for all of the seven skills assessed. When calibration has already taken place prior to an earlier cycle the Trainee should, after familiarising themselves with the scenario, be briefed by the examiners on their agreed calibration criteria and then complete a calibration sheet for reference during the exam.

Post-cycle discussion (essential)

The Chair of Examiners will lead a short discussion of the marks after each of the cycles. The Trainee must attend this important session where marks are reviewed, discrepancies between examiner pairs are discussed, and any errors in mark sheets are identified. Candidates whose performance merits counselling are identified at these post-cycle discussions. Any procedural irregularities or problems running the cycle are identified at each post-cycle discussion and are forwarded through the relevant College Examination Office to the Clinical Examining Board. Candidates who were thought to be rough with the patient will be discussed in detail.

At the end of the day, the Trainee Examiner should discuss the experience with the Chair of Examiners. The Chair will seek feedback from the examiners with whom the Trainee was attached, review the mark sheets, and the aptitude for examining. The Trainee should let the Chair know whether he/she feels confident to examine independently.

The Trainee must ensure that the Host Examiner has the following papers to return to the College:

- **Trainee Examiner Assessment Form (TE2, attached to this document or download from [MRCP\(UK\) website](#)) - completed fully, signed by the Trainee and by the Chair of Examiners or the Host Examiner at the centre at which the training took place.**
- **The shadow mark sheets for Station 1 or 4 and for Station 2 or 5.**

The Examination Office at the College through which the training was arranged will notify the Trainee whether he/she can proceed to examine independently following the day as a Trainee.

Trainee examiners are encouraged to comment on the training experience and a Trainee Examiner Feedback Form (TE3) is also attached, or can be downloaded from www.mrcpuk.org. It should be returned to the College which organised the training – either through the Host examiner with the other training documents or independently.



**MRCP(UK) PACES Examination
Trainee Examiner Assessment Form – TE2**

Trainee Examiner Name:

Trained at:

Centre No: (College: Edinburgh/Glasgow/London)

Date:

Confirm completion of the following training requirements:

Reviewed examination regulations YES / NO

Reviewed PACES 23 videos YES / NO

Attended Examiner briefing by Chair of Examiners YES / NO

Shadow marked station 1 or 4 YES / NO

Shadow marked station 2 or 5 YES / NO

Attended each Post-Cycle Discussion YES / NO

Have completed "Fair Assessment: Are my judgements unbiased?" YES / NO

Does trainee Examiner feel confident to examine independently YES / NO

Comments from Host Examiner/ Chair of Examiners

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Does the candidate display competence, appropriate attitudes
and aptitude for examining independently in PACES23? YES / NO

Signature of Trainee Examiner:

Signature and number of Host/Chair of Examiners:



**MRCP(UK) PACES Examination
Trainee Examiner Feedback Form – TE3**

Trainee Examiner Name:

Exam Centre:.....

Date:.....

Chair of Examiners' Name:

Stations observed (Please circle): **1 2 4 5**

Do you feel you were adequately prepared for today? YES / NO
Any comments

Was the day informative? YES / NO
Any comments

Do you feel ready to examine in PACES? YES / NO
Any comments

If we can improve either the way we train examiners or how the PACES exam is run, please add your comments below:

Examiner Training:

PACES Exam:

If you feel you need to observe the exam again, please tick this box

Any further comments:

Please return this form to the College which arranged your training. Thank you.