

20. POST EXAMINATION COUNSELLING OF UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES AND TRAINEES POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

20.1 Introduction

In modern educational circles the need to discuss the performance of candidates at examinations with them is considered important for many reasons and the process is considered as a good practice. There is also a justifiable demand by the candidates that they have a right to know how they have performed at examinations. In some Universities it is the practice to discuss with each candidate the answer to each question and the manner marks have been awarded.

At PGIM there is no formal process or procedure to discuss the performance of candidates and counsel them. However some Boards of Study do practice this to some extent. Some of the PGIM trainees in their letters addressed to the PGIM have expressed certain reservations regarding their examination results and has indicated that there has to be a formal mechanism for counselling of the failed candidates. The overseas examiners too have addressed this issue in their reports and have indicated the need to have a formal process for counselling.

20.2 Advantages and Benefits

- 20.2.1 Provide an opportunity for the examiners to know the expectations of the candidates.
- 20.2.2 Provide an opportunity for the candidates to know the expectations of the examiners.
- 20.2.3 Provide an opportunity for the examiners/trainers to improve the quality of questions and expected answers based on feedback from candidates and other examiners/trainers.
- 20.2.4 The Board of Study/Trainers will be able to identify the deficient areas in the training programme which will need improvement.
- 20.2.5 The candidates will be able to identify the reasons why they have failed the examination.
- 20.2.6 The candidates will be able to identify their deficiencies and decide on remedial action in consultation with the trainers at the meeting.
- 20.2.7 Provide an opportunity to discuss the relevant sections of the examiner's report.

20.3 Logistics

- 20.3.1 It is desirable to organize a workshop 2-4 weeks after the release of the results for this purpose.
- 20.3.2 The duration will depend on the components and the total duration of the examination. (But as a guide for theory papers/OSCE 50% of the total duration of the examination, clinicals 1-2 hours and viva 1 hour)
- 20.3.3 All failed candidates must attend.
- 20.3.4 If necessary other trainees in the programme are invited to attend as this will be a leaning exercise for them.

- 20.3.5 The Chairperson, Secretary, Chief Examiner to be present, and the meeting to be chaired by the Chairperson of the Board of Study.
- 20.3.6 At least 50% of the examiners of different sections of the examination to represent the examiners. They should have information that would enable them to discuss the relevant sections and questions with the candidates.
- 20.3.7 The trainers who are not examiners may also be invited to participate.
- 20.3.8 To conduct a successful workshop it will be a prerequisite to have model/expected answers for each question and a marking grid.

However due to practical difficulties or if the number of candidates are very limited instead of the workshop, each failed candidate can be counselled and their performance discussed by a team of examiners appointed by the Board of Study.

20.4 Objectives

- 20.4.1 To discuss with the candidates the expected answers for the questions/OSCE using model answers prepared at the time of setting of questions and obtain their views.
- 20.4.2 To discuss the marking grid.
- 20.4.3 To highlight deficient and neglected sections in the answer which may have been the cause for a low mark.
- 20.4.4 To discuss the positive aspects and strengths of the answers.
- 20.4.5 To discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the clinical and viva examinations.
- 20.4.6 If desirable the range of marks scored for different sections to be discussed so that the failed candidates will be able to judge their performance.
- 20.4.7 Unless it is very essential, individual performance and marks given for a candidate should not be discussed at the workshop but may be considered at a counselling session by a team of examiners of a failed candidate.
- 20.4.8 No indication to be given to candidates how the different examiners have given marks to candidates.