

Examiners for the Faculty of Public Health Final Membership (MFPH) Examination – an overview

INTRODUCTION

Examiners are experienced Fellows of the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) or other Colleges or Faculties who have specialist knowledge of at least one area of the curriculum. Examiners should be willing to give up some time to ensure that the education standards of both medically and non-medically qualified candidates are tested and maintained over time.

It is a responsible position, as candidates may feel powerless and anxious during this hurdle in their career and the FPH needs to ensure that the whole process is confidential, thoughtful, unbiased and fair to all candidates, whatever their background.

Examiners are not paid, but they can claim reasonable travel and accommodation expenses at FPH rates for travel to meetings and examinations. Involvement in the OSPHE is a rewarding experience for examiners who can claim elements of the work as continuing professional development (CPD) and as part of their professional appraisal process.

HOW ARE EXAMINERS CHOSEN

Potential Examiners can be self-nominated or nominated by a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health. All nominations and applications are screened by the Chair of the MFPH Examiners against the person specification* before formal consideration by the Education Committee. New Examiners are brought on to the panel as existing Examiners retire. The initial term of service is for three years and is reviewed every three years thereafter. FPH endeavours to maintain a group of experienced Examiners who are representative in terms of personal characteristics, professional background, geographical distribution, areas of expertise and workplace settings.

All Examiners must be able to demonstrate the knowledge required, their competency and their commitment to the principles underlying the examination to the Chair of Examiners or the Academic Registrar before becoming Examiners.

Prior to undertaking full marking duties, all Examiners are required to do the following:

- submit a CV for consideration by the Chair of MFPH Examiners and a statement outlining their knowledge and experience in at least one area of the curriculum.
- attend one examination as shadow observers and to receive training under examination conditions
- carry out the role of shadow Marking Examiner at two sittings, and subject to their performance, may require further sittings
- perform the Examiner role-player role in at least one examination session, have a formal discussion with the marking examiner during the sitting and write a reflective note
- submit a question proposal or work up an existing question proposal to a full scenario

KEEPING UP TO DATE

FPH expects all Examiners to keep up-to-date with developments in the speciality. Examiners must meet the minimum requirements of FPH or another recognised relevant professional body. Examiners will be required to confirm that they comply with CPD requirements on an annual basis.

In addition, Examiners are required to attend examiner development sessions at least once every three years. They should also undertake Equality and Diversity Training in relation to assessment systems.

WORKLOAD AND DUTIES

Examiners are required to:

- examine at least three sittings every two years.
- author or provide the outline for one OSPHE scenario each year OR edit and/or peer review two OSPHE scenarios per year.

This process integrates the writing and scripting of questions, the use of specific marking criteria and their performance and operation in the examination itself.

Some Examiners also fulfil specific Officer roles as part of the OSPHE Development Group, which comprises a Chair, Vice-Chair, Logistics Lead, Deputy Logistics Lead, Question Lead and Devolved Administration Question Adviser. As such, they contribute to the ongoing development and conduct of the exam.

Officers are required to:

- Examine at one session (not necessarily the whole sitting) per year.
- Attend OSPHE Development Group meetings at least twice per year.
- Watch OSPHE video feeds at least two sessions per year where this facility exists.
- Author, Edit and/or peer review one OSPHE scenario per year.

MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

Examiner performance is actively monitored and fed back to individual Examiners. The feedback will include quantitative and qualitative measures as follows:

- Quantitative – OSPHE assessment benchmarking
- Qualitative
 - reflective discussion of role-playing between marking examiners and role-playing examiners
 - candidate feedback for each sitting.

Examiners receiving consistently poor feedback will be highlighted to the Chair of the MFPH Examiners and they, in consultation with at least one other Officer, will decide whether the

Examiner needs additional training and development to continue as an Examiner. Where necessary, the Chair will make a recommendation to the Board for the Examiner to discontinue their role.

Dr Fu-Meng Khaw
Vice-Chair OSPHE Examiners, on behalf of
OSPHE Development Group

PERSON SPECIFICATION

[E = essential D = desirable]

Knowledge:

Specialist, up-to-date knowledge and experience of at least one area of the curriculum (E).

Skills:

Ability to respect and preserve confidentiality (E).

Ability to stick to tight time schedules and turn around work quickly (E) (such as deadlines for question setting and commenting).

Good communication skills (E).

Ability to work in teams (E).

Ability to make thoughtful and unbiased decisions (E).

Ability to role-play (E)

Experience:

Experience of weighting evidence, making important and difficult objective decisions and ensuring that judgment is not swayed by personal bias or sectional interests (E).

Experience of setting and marking examinations (D).

Experience of training specialist registrars/trainees (D).

Experience of role-playing (D)