



## **Notification to Diplomate exam candidates of a change in marking rules for Paper II from March 2023 sit**

**Background:** Since 2015 the Diplomate exam team has been supported by an independent Educational Consultant. Recent analysis by this educationalist from the last six exam cycles has revealed a significant issue with cross-compensation between Sections IIA and IIB, such that a small but important proportion of candidates have compensated very poor performance in one or other of IIA or IIB by a very high score in the other section. This means that we cannot be confident as a specialty that we are 'graduating' trainees to the next stage of training with both critical appraisal and data analysis skills.

**Decision:** various different options were considered by the Diplomate Exam Development Committee (DEDC) to resolve this issue. After discussion at both DEDC and the Faculty's Education Committee, it has been decided to adopt a modification of the approach used in Paper I involving passing a minimum number of questions, but also ensuring questions passed are spread between the two papers (IIA and IIB).

From March 2023 onwards, candidates will be expected to pass 5 out of 9 questions across Paper IIA and IIB with at least two passes in each paper. This is to prevent strategic revision and varied performance/capability. These criteria will be in addition to passing the overall pass mark, as is currently expected.

As part of this change, Paper II examiners will also be expected to agree pass/fail decisions at an individual question level across Paper II, as is currently expected in Paper I. As a result, candidates' marks will (from March 2023) be provided by question in both Paper I and Paper 2 alongside the pass marks for each question, within candidates' results letters. This will therefore have the positive impact of providing better information on performance to each candidate.

Modelling of this change in rules suggests that it will only affect a small numbers of candidates. Had such a rule been in place over the previous sits this would have affected between two and four candidates (i.e. up to approximately 5%).

This decision has been ratified by FPH Education Committee and has also been shared with the FPH Specialty Registrars' Committee already.

Prof. Richard Holland (Chair, Diplomate Exam Development Committee, FPH)  
Dr Derek Ward (Chair, Diplomate Exam, FPH)



### **Notification to Diplomate exam candidates - Formulae sheet**

In discussion with the Specialty Registrars' Committee, it has been agreed to publish a formulae sheet to support those taking the Diplomate exam. This list of formulae will be available to candidates in all four papers from the March 2023 as an information tab within the test platform.

The list of formulae that will be provided can be found below, and the full equations for each of those that will be made available will be published on the exam website towards the end of December 2022 and included in the candidate pack.

#### **Formulae**

- Attributable fraction
- Standard error
- Confidence interval of a proportion
- Confidence interval for a difference in proportions
- Chi Square for a 2x2 table
- McNemar's test
- Confidence interval for Standardised Mortality Ratio
- Confidence interval for the mean
- Vaccine efficacy
- Variance
- Standard deviation
- Population attributable risk
- Population attributable fraction

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**Thank you:** The DFPH Examiners would like to thank and acknowledge the contributions of members of the Specialty Registrars' Committee for their help with these changes, particularly Fatai Ogunlayi and Cat Pinho-Gomes.