

## JOINT SPECIALTY FELLOWSHIP EXAMINATION IN CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

### CANDIDATES' GUIDANCE NOTES

#### Introduction

The Specialty Board in Cardiothoracic Surgery, in conjunction with the other surgical specialties, has amongst its several aims, a need to provide a reproducible and valid examination process. These guidance notes are issued to provide clarity regarding the structure and content of the oral and clinical sections of the Cardiothoracic Surgery examination.

#### Oral Examination

There will be four oral components each lasting 30 minutes as follows:

- i) Cardiac Surgery (30 minutes)
- ii) Thoracic Surgery (30 minutes)
- iii) Applied Physiology and Critical Care for Cardiothoracic Surgery (30 minutes)
- iv) Imaging, Investigations and Instruments (30 minutes)
  - During the investigation stations for each Thoracic and Cardiac you will be required demonstrate interpretation of investigations (angiogram, echocardiogram, CT scan, PET scan, Barium swallow, etc.) relevant to the management of patients and during the instrument station you will be expected to identify commonly used surgical instruments and ancillary devices and explain their use. 15 minutes is allocated for each section and you will be assessed on thoracic and cardiac components in equal measure.

#### Clinical Examination

There will be four clinical components each lasting 30 minutes. You will be examined by one pair of Examiners in each clinical. In each 30-minute examination, the candidate will spend 15-minutes on a case, i.e. 2 cases per section. The candidates will be asked to elicit clinical signs, perform clinical examinations and discuss investigation and management options.

**Long Cases** - One Thoracic Long Case Clinical and one Cardiac Long Case Clinical (each lasting 30 minutes)

You should treat the Long Case Clinical like a new patient consultation in the outpatient clinic. You may be given a typical referral letter to read that may include the results of investigations. You will then be asked to take a concise and relevant history and carry out a brief appropriate examination, as you would in a typical outpatient clinic. You will then be asked to formulate a management plan and discuss this with the patient, taking formal consent for any procedure you feel is appropriate.

**Intermediate Cases** - One Thoracic Intermediate Cases Clinical and One Cardiac Intermediate Cases Clinical (each lasting 30 minutes)

During each Intermediate Case Clinical you will be presented with patients and asked to examine a particular feature or take a specific history to assess your clinical skills. Each Clinical will involve 2 patients, 15 minutes each. It is intended to replicate an in-hospital consultation so you will be asked about investigation interpretation and clinical management plans.

## **Marking**

Both viva and clinical examinations will adhere to the standard marking scale (4 – 8) with both examiners awarding an individual mark. Each pair of Examiners is required to note down topics covered in the examination and record an individual mark at the end of exam session.

To pass the examination overall, you must have achieved the overall pass mark for the examination. This is an aggregate pass and it is not essential to pass the clinical section of the examination. Marks awarded at the end of each session are not divulged to, or discussed with, any other examiner until the debriefing which is held at the very end of the examination.