

# MRCP(UK) PACES Clinical Examination

## Information for surrogates at Stations 1a and 4a

Thank you for taking part in this examination in which you have agreed to play the part of a patient or relative.

Where the examination is taking place:

When (day, date and time):

Phone contact number of the examination organiser:

If for any reason you are unable to help on the agreed day, it is important that you let us know *immediately*. We will need to choose and train a substitute.

## General information about the examination

Candidates take the MRCP(UK) examination two or more years after qualifying as a doctor. Those who pass become Members of the Royal College of Physicians and can continue training to become a consultant.

The examination is taken in several parts at different times. This part of the examination is called Practical Assessment of Clinical Examination Skills (PACES), where the ability of doctors to communicate effectively is tested. The doctors (referred to here as candidates) taking this examination rotate around a number of different testing areas (known as stations) within the examination centre. You have kindly agreed to help with Stations 1a and 4a; these test the candidate's ability to talk to patients or relatives about difficult issues or choices.

## What will happen before the examination?

- You will be contacted by the examination organiser and will be sent an outline of your role.
- Remember to keep this confidential **before and after the examination**. Please note that in addition to this, your interaction with candidates must also be kept confidential after the examination.
- You will be told how many cycles you will be involved in.
- Read your instructions carefully. Practise the role described and think about how the patient or relative would feel and respond and the sort of questions that they might ask.
- Make a note of anything that is unclear – particularly if there are words or phrases in the scenario that you do not understand. You will have the opportunity to clarify any points with the examiner before the examination.

## What happens on the day?

- Arrive in plenty of time and switch off your mobile phone or activate aeroplane mode.
- You will meet the two examiners, both senior doctors, who will discuss your role with you and answer any questions you may have.
- The examiners may ask you to raise particular issues or questions with all the candidates.

## What happens during the examination?

- The examiners will be in the room with you.
- The candidates are given information to read about you (that is, the role you are playing), your symptoms or your situation, before they enter the room.
- The candidates will have 10 minutes to talk to you. You must stay in role during this time.
- Normally candidates will use the full 10 minutes and the examiners will remain silent. If the candidate finishes early, the examiners will let them know how much time remains in case they wish to raise any further points. If not, everyone will sit quietly until the time is up.
- This will give you a 10-15 minute break between candidates.

## How should I react to candidates' questions?

- Listen to what the candidate says to you and give them a fair chance to get the necessary information from you. Treat them as if they were your doctor.
- The candidate may ask questions which don't seem relevant or haven't been anticipated. Answer these as appropriately as you can, keeping in mind the role you are playing.
- The examiners want to see how the candidate talks to you about your condition and how he /she explains what might be complex medical facts.
- The examiners want to see if the candidate listens to your questions, responds appropriately and helps you to look at the options open to you.

## What else should I know?

- Occasionally trainee examiners or observers may be present for part of the examination. They will be introduced to you and their role explained.
- Refreshments will be provided. Please let us know beforehand if you have any special physical or dietary needs.
- We will refund any reasonable travel expenses. You will be given a claim form on the day of the examination. (Please provide receipts)
- Please let us know if you'd like us to book transport or arrange parking.
- Please let us know if you would like a large print version of the scenario.

**Thank you again for taking part in this important examination. We hope you have an interesting and enjoyable day.**

**We are interested in your feedback in order to improve future examinations so if you would complete the questions below (or speak to the organiser) that would be very helpful.**

1. Did you have enough information about the examination, and the part you are playing in it, beforehand?

**Yes / No**

If no, or if you have other comments related to the information you received, please write below:

2. Were your questions or concerns addressed sufficiently well on the day of the examination?

**Yes / No**

If no, or if you have any other comments relating to help and information given on the day of the examination, **especially anything you did not understand**, please write below:

3. Finally, if you have any other comments, perhaps relating to aspects that you enjoyed, or found difficult, please note them here: