



Physician Associate National Examination – Question & Scenario Writing Groups

Code of Conduct

The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Assessment Unit relies on the professionalism and commitment of a large number of healthcare professionals to generate and review content for the Physician Associate National Clinical Certification Examination (PANE), both the knowledge-based assessment (KBA) and the objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).

To maintain the quality of the PANE, the RCP Assessment Unit monitors all aspects of the KBA and OSCE, including the appointment and performance of question and scenario writers, and their compliance with relevant equality and diversity legislation.

All individuals involved with any RCP activity are, in the first instance, expected to follow the RCP's [Code of Conduct](#). Further to this the RCP Assessment Unit has developed the following code of conduct specifically relating to the PANE Question and Scenario Writing Groups.

General standard of behaviour

Question and scenario writing group members are expected to behave in a professional manner befitting of a healthcare professional who is acting in accordance with the principles and values set out by their respective regulator/membership organisation's guidance on best practice.

All members are expected to respond to communications from the RCP Assessment Unit, including allocation emails and requests for information, in a timely and open manner.

Interacting with colleagues

Members are expected to act with respect for fellow writers, clinicians and others within the team running the question and scenario writing groups.

If a member has any concern about the conduct or performance of a fellow question or scenario writer this should be brought to the attention, confidentially, of the lead or deputy lead examiner or a member of the RCP Assessment Unit.

Handling personal and sensitive data

Question and scenario writers may be provided with information from one or more of the following areas in order to undertake their duties:

- current and/or historical examination performance data (including candidate/cohort performance, pass marks and pass rates) from PANE KBA or OSCE
- multiple choice questions from previous PANE KBAs and/or the current PANE KBA question bank
- scenarios from previous PANE OSCEs and/or scenarios from the current PANE OSCE question bank
- other confidential information held by the RCP regarding the PANE examination that is not intended for release into the public domain

All PANE questions and content, including KBA questions and OSCE scenarios, are confidential and are under the copyright of the Royal College of Physicians. The RCP reserves the right to remove from the question and/or scenario writing group any individual who discloses information without permission and may escalate the matter accordingly in line with the RCP's [Code of Conduct](#).

The RCP reserves the right to initiate legal action if theft of intellectual property is suspected.

Participation in commercial activities

It is not acceptable for members of the PANE question and/or scenario writing groups to take part in commercially run (i.e. for profit) training or revision courses, including online courses. If a non-member takes part in such courses and is invited subsequently to become a question or scenario writer, it is on the understanding that such activity will cease.

It is not acceptable for question or scenario writers to write or contribute to books, website or other materials, or to re-edit or revise existing texts or other publications whose specific purpose is to help candidates prepare for any or all parts of the PANE.

The only exceptions to the above are individuals who teach on an approved postgraduate Physician Associate course at a higher education institution or who publish materials internally for use on these courses. These materials should not attract an additional fee payable by students that falls outside of the overall course fee paid.

Individuals who cease their membership of the PANE question or scenario writing groups may not contribute to any of the commercial activities listed in above for a period of three years after they cease to be a question or scenario writer.

All question and scenario writers must complete and return a Question/Scenario Writing Group Code of Conduct & Confidentiality Agreement prior to attending their first meeting.