



Physician Associate National Examination – examination board

Terms of reference

Background

The Physician Associate national certification examination (PANE) and recertification examination (PANRE) are developed and delivered by the RCP Assessment Unit on behalf of the Royal College of Physicians, of which the Faculty of Physician Associates (FPA) is part. The PANE currently takes place in three assessment periods annually and consists of a 200 single best answer knowledge-based assessment and a 14 station OSCE.

The PANRE currently takes place in three assessment periods annually and consists of a 200 single best answer knowledge-based assessment only.

Remit

The PA National Examination Board has the responsibility to ensure that the PANE and PANRE examinations are conducted appropriately and in line with the approved regulations for these examinations, wider regulatory frameworks (e.g. Equality Act, GDPR) and applicable RCP procedures throughout the lifecycle of the assessment process, including for example:

- Setting and delivery of the examination
- Review of candidate performance and sign-off of results
- Recruitment and management of examiners

Membership

- PANE Senior Examiner
- PANE Clinical Examination Lead
- PANE Written Examination Lead
- FPA representative¹
- PA Schools Council (PASC) representative²
- Independent Physician Associate x3
- External Independent Assessment Expert

Membership is *ex officio* for senior and lead examiners and named RCP roles. Other appointments will be for three years and, exceptionally, may be renewed: particularly if this helps regulate the turnover of board members to ensure sufficient depth and breadth of experience and expertise remains in years when otherwise the majority of the Board would leave. Extensions of tenure to account for periods of long-term absence (for example maternity leave or sickness) would also be considered by the RCP Assessment Unit on a case-by-case basis to ensure no member is disadvantaged.

If a senior or lead examiner, the FPA representative, or the PASC representative, is unable to attend a meeting they should propose to the RCP Assessment Unit a nominated alternative to act in their stead. The RCP Assessment Unit will verify that the nominated individual is qualified to fulfil the role for which they are the proposed alternative before inviting them to the examination board.

¹ Or nominated deputy

² See note 1

Observers

The exam board may be attended by the following individuals, on an ad-hoc basis:

- Health Education England representative
- General Medical Council representative
- The RCP Vice President of Education and Training
- Representatives of the RCP Assessment Unit, which may include one or more of the following:
 - Assessment Unit Chief Examiner
 - Deputy Director for Education
 - Deputy Head of Assessment Unit
 - Senior Statistician
 - Examinations Coordinator(s)
 - Examinations Administrator(s)
- Other individuals as invited by the PANE Senior Examiner and/or RCP Assessment Unit

They may contribute to the examination board meetings where appropriate, but have no formal place on the examination board and have no direct input into the decisions the examination board make

Governance

The PANE Examination Board are responsible for the sign off of results for each assessment period. Any developmental work surrounding the PANE that is identified as part of the above process is governed by the PANE Development Group, which has representation from the PANE Examination Board.

The RCP Assessment Unit provides all administrative support to the Examination Board.

Frequency of meetings

Three times a year, following each assessment period.

Quorum

A minimum of five members of the Examination Board must be present in order for results sign off to be valid.