2019 Australasian Faculty of Public Health Medicine Oral Examination

Australia

Instructions to Candidates
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Important examination information

Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination date</th>
<th>Tuesday, 29 October – Wednesday, 30 October 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary examination date</td>
<td>Wednesday, 30 October – Thursday, 31 October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results release (by email)</td>
<td>Thursday, 21 November 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications open</td>
<td>Monday, 12 August 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications close</td>
<td>Friday, 23 August 2019 (5pm AEST)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pre-examination special consideration requests close:  
-Provisions for examination day  
Examination day special consideration requests close:  
-Technical and procedural issues  

Please note: In 2019 eligibility criteria and application deadlines will be strictly enforced. No late applications will be accepted.

Location

The Australian Faculty of Public Health Medicine (AFPHM) Oral Examination) is held once a year. Venues are selected at the discretion of the College. The 2019 AFPHM Fellowship Oral Examination will be held at the RACP Office, Sydney NSW 2000.

Candidates will receive their candidate allocation letter by email, up to six weeks before the examination day. This letter will include further information regarding the venue.

Fees

| AFPHM Oral Examination | $2,888.00 |

For more information about paying your exam fees, please refer to the Terms and Conditions of College Fees.
Applying to sit the examination

1. Eligibility

The AFPHM Oral Examination should be attempted towards the end of training. All of the following requirements must be completed by 31 July of the year you wish to sit the Oral Examination. To be eligible to sit the Oral Examination you must:

- Be registered with the College by the due date
- Have general medical registration
- Have a minimum of 29 units of training by 1 December of the year of the oral Examination
- Complete the following teaching and learning requirements
  - all Learning Contracts and Learning Contract Reports to be up to date
- Complete the following formative assessments
  - 1 Formative Oral Presentation Assessment (OPA)
  - 2 Direct Observation of Practical Professional Skills (DOPPS) Assessments
  - 2 Professional Qualities Reflection (PQR)
- Complete the following summative assessments:
  - 1 Summative Oral Presentation Assessment
  - 2 Workplace Reports (WPR) with a pass result
- Comply with the limit on the number of examination attempts and other requirements for progression through training, which are detailed in the Progression through Training Policy and 2019-20 Program Requirements Handbook
- Be fully current with all College training fees. Trainees with outstanding training fees will not be eligible to sit the Oral Examination unless they have made an application in writing to the Honorary Treasurer requesting special consideration.

1.1 Overseas Trained Physicians (OTPs)

OTPs are required to check your eligibility requirements with your Overseas Trained Physicians Case Officer before applying for the Oral Examination. Contact: otp@racp.edu.au.

2. Examination Attempts

Trainees have a maximum of three attempts at the Oral Examination. Trainees who are unable to complete the Oral Examination within three attempts are not eligible to continue in training.

Limits on the total training time allowed and the number of examination attempts are specified by the Progression through Training Policy. The revised policy took effect from 1 January 2017. Transition arrangements are in place which may be relevant to trainees sitting the Oral Examination in 2019.

For more information please see the published eligibility criteria and exam attempts as set out in the 2019-20 Program Requirements Handbook for Public Health Medicine.

All enquiries relating to the AFPHM Oral Examination eligibility and examination attempts must be directed to the Public Health Medicine Training Program.

Email: publichealth@racp.edu.au
Phone: Australia – 1300 MY RACP (1300 69 7227)
Overseas – (+61) 2 9256 5444
3. Application Period

Closing dates are listed in the Important examination information section of this document.

Eligible candidates only will be invited to apply for the Oral Examination by email. Applications will be accepted between Monday, 12 August and Friday, 23 August 2019. Please complete the application form attached to the invitation to apply email and submit the form by email to examinations@racp.edu.au or print the application form, complete and mail the form to Assessment and Selection Group, 145 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

Late applications may not be accepted.

4. Application Confirmation

You will be sent an email confirming your application has been received. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please contact examinations@racp.edu.au immediately. You should also make sure you have checked your junk/spam email folders.

Note: The confirmation email indicates only that your application has been successfully received. It does not confirm that your registration for the examination has been finalised.

5. Payment

Once the applications are closed, you will receive an email with a link to pay the examination fee and any outstanding fees due to the College. Once we have received your payment a receipt will be available in your MyRACP account.

If you have outstanding training fees, you will not be eligible to sit the examination unless you have made an application in writing to the Honorary Treasurer requesting special consideration.

6. Final Confirmation

Once your payment has been finalised, you will be asked if you have any exam session preferences. Please note that while attempts will be made to accommodate requests where there is a well-justified reason, priority will be given to candidates having further to travel to the examination. Once all candidates have been confirmed, you will be sent a Candidate Allocation Letter by email. This letter will confirm your registration for the examination and will also provide details of your examination session time and venue.

7. Withdrawal of Application

If you wish to withdraw from the Oral Examination, you must advise the College by email: examinations@racp.edu.au. Withdrawals are not counted as examination attempts. You may withdraw up until the commencement of the examination.

Refunds of application fees will be provided according to the following rules:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of withdrawal</th>
<th>Refund</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 August – 1 October 2019 (up until 5pm AEST)</td>
<td>50% of application fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2019 (5pm AEST onwards)</td>
<td>No refund available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To request a refund outside of these rules on medical or compassionate grounds, you must submit an application under the Special Consideration for Assessment Policy (see below).
8. Special Consideration

Candidates are unable to request any of the following in relation to their examination mark or result:
- Appeals
- Reviews
- Reconsiderations

Following the examination, candidates may request only:
- Special Consideration due to technical or procedural issues encountered during the examination (see below). Your marks/results will not be altered.

8.1 Grounds for Special Consideration

The College will take the following circumstances into consideration for the Oral Examination:

- Circumstances occurring prior to the examination, including
  - permanent and longstanding impairment;
  - temporary impairment – medical grounds;
  - non-medical compassionate grounds or serious disruption;
  - essential commitments (religious, cultural, societal or legal obligations).

- circumstances occurring after you have commenced the examination:
  - technical or procedural problems encountered during the examination

Please refer to the Special Consideration for Assessment Policy for possible outcomes of an application for special consideration.

8.2 How to apply for Special Consideration

1. Read: the Special Consideration for Assessment Policy
2. Confirm the grounds for the request and the outcome you are seeking.
3. Collect the appropriate supporting documentation for your category.
4. Submit your request in writing to examinations@racp.edu.au

The College is unable to accept late applications. Closing dates are listed in the Important examination information section of this document.
Preparing for the examination

9. Overview of the Examination

The Oral Examination is a summative assessment completed at or near the end of the training program.

The Oral Examination aims to test the candidate’s knowledge and understanding of important public health issues as set out in the Public Health Medicine Advanced Training Curriculum and their ability to analyse a situation in a systematic way and present a coherent argument in a face-to-face situation.

Oral examinations provide an opportunity to explore a candidate’s knowledge and reasoning in greater depth and breadth through follow-up questions, probes and through seeking of detailed clarification. The dialogue format seeks to eliminate miscommunication and misunderstanding, as it allows for the clarification of both questions and answers.

The Oral Examination aims to provide an environment in which each candidate is able to display their knowledge and skills as fully as possible.

NOTE: Please refer to Item 16 for broad criteria considered by the Examiners during the exam interview.

9.1 Format of the Examination

The Oral Examination consists of a discussion of eight questions across two 30-minute interviews with two separate panels of three examiners each. There is also a brief changeover time of up to 15 minutes between interview sessions. See Item 12 for a sample timetable.

There will be four questions with each panel. This allows time for limited probing and exploration. Within each panel, you can answer the four questions in any order you wish. You will be asked in each panel if you would like to answer the questions in the order they have been given to you.

In general, the questions will be of a type that requires the candidate to apply their knowledge to a particular scenario or public health issue, rather than the recall of factual knowledge.

The questions will generally describe real-life public health scenarios and candidates will be asked questions relating to the scenario and in particular how they would respond to that situation in a practical sense. Usually there will be one or at most two key concepts at the heart of scenario questions, for example (but not limited to) evaluation, health promotion, or risk management. It is not necessary to state a particular framework you wish to answer with, but rather to apply it to the context of the question.

Follow-up questions and prompts
Given the interview style of the exam, a series of generic follow-up questions and prompts has been developed. If time allows, there is likely to be some interaction between the candidate and the examiners.

Candidates may be asked to clarify their answer if the answer is not clear to the examiners or if the candidate says something inappropriate, perhaps inadvertently. For example, “Could you explain that in a little more detail?” “What might be the effect of that course of action?” Similarly, there may be appropriate questions/prompts for candidates who go off track, to give them an opportunity to retrieve their position, or for candidates who haven’t addressed key parts of the question or need to broaden the scope of their answer. Additional information may also be sought when the candidate has given a thorough answer but has time for additional discussion.

It is important for candidates to realise that dialogue with the examiners does not signify that they are doing poorly.
9.2 Supplementary Oral Examination

A Supplementary Oral Examination is offered for borderline candidates or candidates with procedural issues following the main examination. As with the main examination, the material examined is chosen from key areas of public health as per the Advanced Training Curriculum.

The Supplementary Examination will follow the same format as the main Examination.

If required, the Supplementary Examination will be conducted on the final day of the Main Oral Examination day and/or the following day. Therefore, the Supplementary Examination/s will be conducted either in the late afternoon of Wednesday 30 October 2019 or the morning of Thursday, 31 October 2019.

All candidates are required to return to the venue following the completion of the Examination Day/s to receive a Supplementary Examination notification letter. College Staff will verbally advise candidates at the end of their examination of the time that they need to return to the venue to receive this letter. The notification letter will inform each candidate if they are to be offered a supplementary exam or not. Notification letters stating that a candidate is not required to sit a Supplementary Exam do not necessarily indicate a passing grade.

It is recommended that candidates book flexible flights to allow for the possibility of a Supplementary Examination.

9.3 Pre- and post-examination contact

Candidates should be aware that the following actions may be perceived as attempting to gain an advantage in the examination, and may lead to disqualification from the examination and/or may affect the candidate’s progress through training:

- Any attempt to contact ‘potential’ Examiners seeking guidance on how to improve their performance in the examination. If your supervisor is an Examiner, he or she should declare a conflict of interest and direct you to an alternative supervisor for exam guidance.
- Any attempt to contact the Examiners they have encountered during the Oral Examination seeking information about the exam or their performance in the exam.

All candidates are required to submit a signed Annual Participant Agreement (confidentiality agreement) before taking the exam. This may be submitted prior to the exam or on the day of the exam.

All enquiries following the examination must be made through the Assessment and Selection Group: examinations@racp.edu.au.

Please refer to www.racp.edu.au for information on the Academic Integrity in Training Policy.

10. Travel Arrangements

You are responsible for your own travel arrangements and all related costs, including accommodation and any meals.

As stated above, it is recommended that candidates book flexible return flights to allow for the possibility of a Supplementary Examination.
Examination day

11. Registration
When you arrive at the exam venue assembly point on exam day, a College staff member will greet you. At this time you will be required to present your photo identification, sign in on the attendance sheet and submit a completed confidentiality agreement (if not already submitted). You will receive a name badge which you must wear and which must be visible at all times during the day.

You will be asked to leave your personal belongings, including mobile phones and other electronic devices with College staff before entering the official examination area. After you have registered, you will be led to an assigned reading space and asked to take a seat outside.

12. Examination Day Timetable
The Oral Examination is held at one site only and typically over two hours for each candidate.

Please refer below for details of the timing of the Oral Examination. You will receive a Candidate Allocation Letter detailing your scheduled start and finish times, examination rooms and assembly point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candidates must present at the assembly point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>Pre-reading time – Start of the Oral Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Session 1 (Panel 1 of three Examiners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10−15 mins</td>
<td>Changeover period (reading time continues)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Session 2 (Panel 2 of three Examiners)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Items to bring to the Examination
You are required to bring the following items to the Oral Examination:

- your candidate allocation letter (hardcopy or an electronic copy e.g. email or on your mobile phone) showing your candidate name, number and examination location. This letter is sent in September/October by email and will also outline your examination venue details. You cannot sit the examination without this letter.
- current photographic identification, which displays your full name and signature e.g. passport or photo driver's licence.
- blue or black pens.
- A timing device such as a standard wrist watch or silent desk-top timer (NO smart watches or electronic devices) may be brought only if needed. Clocks will be provided in each room.
If you misplace your Candidate Allocation Letter prior to the Public Health Medicine Oral Examination, please contact the Assessment and Selection Group immediately to organise a replacement: examinations@racp.edu.au.

Please note that your belongings cannot be accessed for the duration of the examination session.

14. Items not permitted in the Examination Area

The following are not permitted in the examination area:

- written material (other than your candidate allocation letter)
- mobile phones
- calculators/electronic devices (including ‘smart’ watches and/or any communication devices);
- food or beverages (water will be provided)
- all other belongings e.g. bags.

All mobile phones/pagers/electronic communication devices including smart watches must be switched off and left with your bags. You will be advised on the day of the examination where your bag will be placed.

Any candidates found with their mobile phone/pager/electronic communication devices on their person during the examination will be automatically disqualified and immediately escorted out of the examination venue.

15. Completing the Examination

15.1 Examination Procedure

Reading Time
You will be provided with a copy of the exam questions in printed form 45 minutes prior to the Oral Examination so that you can make notes in preparation for your answers. Please note the reading space will be fully supervised and the door will be left open. You will have time to make any notes that may assist you in responding to the questions as provided. You will be able to take the folder with the exam questions and your notes with you during the entirety of the examination, but it must be returned at the end of the examination.

No textbooks or other resources will be allowed in either the examination rooms or the reading rooms. Notepaper will be provided.

At the end of this period, you will be escorted to the examination area by an exam assistant. At the start time of your first interview you will be invited to enter your allocated room.

Interview Sessions
You will spend two 30-minute sessions, each with a panel of Examiners. Each session will cover four of the examination questions provided to you during the reading session.

Changeover Period
After the first 30-minute session there will be a changeover time of 10–15 minutes. You will be escorted to a reading space which will be fully supervised by College Staff. If at this time you require the use of the toilet, you will be escorted by a College Staff member, one candidate at a time.

You are permitted to continue reviewing the questions and your notes during this changeover time.

At the end of this changeover time you will be escorted to your allocated room for your second examination session with the second panel of examiners.
Candidates may refer to their Candidate Allocation Letter which will provide their exam timetable and allocated rooms.

Post Exam
All candidates will be notified whether they are being offered a supplementary examination at the end of the examinations. Please be reminded of the recommendation to book flexible return flights to allow for the possibility of a supplementary examination.

Variations
You will be informed of any variation in the procedure on the day before the start of the examination. If further variation in the procedure is required during the examination, you will be informed at the earliest opportunity with as little interference as practically possible.

15.2 The Role of Examiners, Quality Assurer and Observers

Three Faculty Examiners will be present at each session. You will be greeted by the Examiners and introduced. One of the examiners will then provide a brief clarification of the process.

The 30-minute period will start after the introductions and brief clarification of process are completed. Each Examiner in turn will take the role of lead questioner.

The three examiners are all involved in the assessment of the answers and may take notes during the interview.

The Examiners will note any procedural problems that occur during the exam. College Staff will meet with the candidates after the examination to ensure that any procedural issues that may have arisen are noted prior to your departure.

It is the responsibility of each candidate to manage their time appropriately across the four questions in each 30-minute session.

An AFPHM-approved Quality Assurer and Observer, who is also an AFPHM Fellow, may also be present at a session and will be introduced to you by the Examiners in the room. The Quality Assurer and/or Observer are not involved in examining or contributing in any way to the assessment. The Quality Assurer’s role is to ensure the examination procedures and timetable are followed and to observe the Examiners and the process of the examination. The Observer is present to observe and learn about the exam process. The Quality Assurer and/or Observer will be seated in a position that is not visible to the candidate.

15.3 Leaving the Examination Room

On completion of the exam, your folder and all papers must be returned. All examination material is confidential and must not be removed from the venue.

Candidates are not permitted to discuss their performance or details of the examination with the Observers, Quality Assurer, Examiners or any examination organising member during or after the examination. Any such discussion may be considered as academic misconduct and a breach of the College’s Academic Integrity in Training Policy.

15.4 Conduct

Candidates who wilfully damage or interfere with any facilities will be excluded from the examination. Any candidate in breach of the requirements outlined above will be excluded from the assessment.
After the examination

Please note the following relating to Examination results:

Candidates are unable to request any of the following in relation to their examination mark or result:

- Appeals
- Reviews
- Reconsiderations

Following the examination, candidates may request only:

- Special Consideration due to technical or procedural issues encountered during the examination (see below). Your marks/results will not be altered.

16. Marking

16.1 Passing a question

Candidates’ response to each question is awarded a score out of ten independently by three examiners. In judging the quality of answers, the Examiners consider to what extent the candidate:

- addresses relevant aspects of the question;
- demonstrates good understanding of the relevant issues;
- demonstrates a sound knowledge base in their response;
- presents an answer in a structured manner;
- illustrates conceptual issues with relevant practical examples;
- responds appropriately to follow-up questions.

Examiners will have agreed on the basic criteria for each answer to ensure consistency in marking; however, there will be flexibility if a candidate takes a different approach.

Questions may have more than one part. In questions with more than one part, the parts may have different weightings.

A Candidate is deemed to have passed a question if at least two of the three examiners award a score of 5 or more and the average score awarded by the three examiners is 5 or more.

16.2 Passing the examination

Candidates who score 60% or above as the average of all questions and pass 6 or more questions will pass the examination.

17. Results

You will be notified of your examination outcome by a personalised email. Please ensure that both your email and postal address with the College are current.

Results release: Thursday 21 November 2019

If you have not received your results by 8am the day after the results release date, please:

- check your junk/spam folder
- identify if you are using a computer with a firewall
If you still have issues, please contact the Assessment and Selection team at examinations@racp.edu.au and request that your results notification be resent. * You may also contact the College by phone at 1300 MY RACP (1300 69 7227), (+61) 2 9256 5444.

* Please note that the Assessment and Selection team is unable to discuss examination results with candidates over the phone or by email.

18. Candidate Feedback

Candidates and their Supervisors will be notified of the outcome of their performance in the Oral Examination by email on 21 November 2019. The period between the Examination and results release allows time for preparation of reports and feedback.

Unsuccessful candidates will receive written feedback of a general nature on their overall performance and on their performance on each question. For all candidates who are unsuccessful, feedback will also be provided to their Supervisor, so that they can be assisted in their preparation for presenting again for the Oral Examination if applicable.

Candidates who are successful in the examination will not be provided with the opportunity of seeking written feedback on their examination performance.

19. Next Steps

Upon successful completion of the Oral Examination, some candidates may be eligible for Fellowship of AFPHM, whereas others may still need to fulfil assessment or other requirements. Trainees must have successfully completed all training program requirements to attain Fellowship.

- For any training certification queries, please contact Publichealth@racp.edu.au.
- For any queries on Fellowship applications, please contact AFPHM@racp.edu.au.

Refer to the Progression through Training Policy found at: Progression through Training Policy and published eligibility criteria and exam attempts as set out in the 2019-20 Program Requirements Handbook

Please see the College website for important information on the AFPHM Advanced Training program and important education policies:

- AFPHM Training Handbook
- Public Health Medicine Advanced Training Curriculum
- Professional Qualities Curriculum
- Education Policy
## Appendix A – Summary of Possible Special Consideration Outcomes

*Please note that an outcome of a request for special consideration may be that your request has not been granted*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceptional Circumstance</th>
<th>Application deadline</th>
<th>Documentation required</th>
<th>Decision made by?</th>
<th>Possible outcomes for successful applications: [e.g. allocations, provisions, refund]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essential commitments (including religious, cultural, social or legal commitments)</td>
<td>At time of exam application</td>
<td>As per the Application Guide</td>
<td>Exams Unit/relevant Committee or delegate of</td>
<td>Specific allocation within designated exam period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary or permanent/longstanding impairment – occurred prior to commencement of exam</td>
<td>At time of exam application</td>
<td>As per the Application Guide</td>
<td>Exams Unit/relevant Committee or delegate of</td>
<td>Specific allocation within designated exam period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary impairment or compassionate grounds and other seriously disruptive events – occurred prior to commencement of exam</td>
<td>Up to commencement of exam</td>
<td>As per the Application Guide</td>
<td>Exams Unit/relevant Committee or delegate of</td>
<td>Permission to withdraw from the exam without financial penalty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical or procedural issues*</td>
<td>Candidate must make examiner aware immediately at time of issue</td>
<td>As per the Application Guide</td>
<td>Results Committee or delegate of</td>
<td>Compensation or resolution during the course of assessment, where possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical or procedural issues* that could not be compensated or resolved during the examination</td>
<td>Application within 5 days of exam via email and prior to results release</td>
<td>As per the Application Guide</td>
<td>Results Committee or delegate of</td>
<td>Written exam: Attempt designated a withdrawal rather than a fail. Re-sit exam at next available opportunity. Refund provided. Clinical/Practical Exam: supplementary exam organised by the College for affected trainees or attempt designated a withdrawal, on a case by case basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary impairment – occurred during exam; candidate opted to complete exam</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Completed exam is designated an attempt. No refund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary impairment – occurred during exam; Candidate unable to, or opted not to complete exam</td>
<td>Application within 5 days of exam via email and prior to results release</td>
<td>As per the Application Guide</td>
<td>Results Committee or delegate of</td>
<td>Committee based decision made on a case-by-case basis. Outcomes may include: - Exam is designated an attempt or withdrawal. - Refund may or may not be granted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>