

At the last meeting of the Education Committee in September 2014, the Committee accepted the recommendation from the Committee for Examinations (CFE) in relation to the changes to scoring key for the Critical Essay Question (CEQ) component of the Essay Style paper in the 2012 Fellowship Program.

The Critical Essay Question (CEQ) component of the essay paper under 2003 Regulations is currently marked across five equally weighted domains: (1) capacity to produce a logical argument, (2) flexibility, (3) capacity to communicate, (4) judgment, experience and maturity, ethical awareness and (5) ability to set psychiatry in a broader context. The CFE has observed that some domains seem to have greater relevance for some questions than others, and there are times when additional marking domains would have been relevant for the question. However, the current marking system allows no flexibility.

For the Essay style examination under the 2012 Fellowship Program, the marking grid for the CEQ will be modified to allow greater flexibility in tailoring it to the question being asked. Each marking domain will be weighted according to its relevance to the question. While the current domains will be substantially retained, others may also be added. Some of the concepts in the current domains may also be separated (e.g. ethical awareness given its own domain).

It is anticipated that the new marking system will parallel the OSCE marking in some ways. That is, the Writtens subcommittee will choose domains that are relevant to the Critical Essay Question in the examination under consideration, then determine the relative weighting for each domain. The following is an **example** of how this might be applied. PLEASE NOTE that the weightings given in the table are **illustrative only**: these are not fixed weightings that will be used every time.

**Domain 1:** *The candidate demonstrates the ability to communicate clearly: Spelling, grammar and vocabulary adequate to the task; able to convey ideas clearly. [15% of mark]*

**Domain 2:** *The candidate demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate the statement/question: The candidate is able to identify and develop a number of lines of argument that are relevant to the proposition. [20% of mark]*

**Domain 3:** *Information cited in the essay is factually correct [10% of mark]*

**Domain 4:** *The candidate demonstrates a mature understanding of broader models of health and illness, cultural sensitivity and the cultural context of psychiatry historically, and in the present time, and can use this understanding to critically discuss the essay question [30% of mark]*

**Domain 5:** *The candidate demonstrates appropriate ethical awareness*

**Domain 6:** *The candidate demonstrates understanding of patient-centred care, the recovery model in psychiatry, and the role of carers*

**Domain 7:** *The candidate is able to apply the arguments and conclusions to the clinical context, and/or apply clinical experience in their arguments. The candidate makes reference to the research literature where this usefully informs their arguments [15% of mark]*

**Domain 8:** *The candidate is able to draw a conclusion that is justified by the arguments they have raised [10% of mark]*

Some further examples of the revised CEQ scoring key will also be uploaded on the College website.

For candidates to achieve an overall pass in the essay style examination (Essay paper) in the 2012 Fellowship Program, in addition to obtaining total marks greater than the cut score as determined for the whole paper they *must also Pass the CEQ component*, that is, obtain marks greater than the cut score for the CEQ.

The Committee for Examinations considers that the skills and knowledge tested by the CEQ include the capacity to consider more than one point of view, to apply evidence-based knowledge in the critical assessment of a proposition, to express a professional opinion clearly in written prose under time pressure, and, importantly, awareness of broader philosophical and cultural models of illness beyond just the medical model. The CFE believes that these skills are essential for a consultant psychiatrist, and are unable to be adequately sampled by WBAs such as writing letters back to referrers.

The first sitting of the 2012 Fellowship Program Essay Style paper for trainees will occur in February-March 2015.