

**The Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists  
Board of Pain Medicine**

## **Guidelines on Examination and Assessment for Fellowship in Pain Medicine**

### **Formative assessment**

1. In-Training Assessments (ITA) shall be conducted after every 6 months of vocational training by the current Supervisor of Training (PM) and the pain trainee, and countersigned by the Director of the pain unit.
2. The assessment shall cover:
  - i. reviewing data on case exposure, intervention and multi-disciplinary exposure
  - ii. progress on the formal project, educational activities, courses and examinations
  - iii. review of generic competencies according to the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine guidelines.Any inadequacies or remedial action shall be documented and agreed by both the pain trainee and the Supervisor of Training (Pain Med) during the evaluation.
3. The evaluation results are submitted to the Education Officer (Pain Med). Satisfactory results will be archived. The Director of pain service shall be informed and invited to participate in the evaluation in case of failures, or when there is disagreement from any party. Further appeal shall be directed to the Education Officer (Pain Med), who shall refer the case to the Board for final validation.
4. A pain trainee may fail in one evaluation in the entire pain medicine training program only. In case of more than one unsatisfactory evaluation, the Education Officer (Pain Med) shall refer the case to the Board for any remedial action.

### **Final Fellowship examination in Pain Medicine**

5. The Fellowship examination in pain medicine shall be conducted annually according to the Administrative Instructions of the Board of Pain Medicine, the Hong Kong College of Anaesthesiologists.
6. Eligibility for the examination:
  - i. All candidates shall have completed a minimum of 12 months of vocational training on or before the closing date of application. They shall remain eligible to apply for the examination for up to 2 years after

completion of the full time pain training. After this period, candidates must complete another 12 months of vocational training before they are eligible again for another 2 years.

- ii. All candidates must apply before the closing date of application, be approved by the Education Officer (Pain Med), and paid the examination fee, before the candidate present for the examination. Forms are available for download at the College website or upon written request.
7. The Chief Examiner (Pain Med) shall be responsible for assembling the court of examiners, consisting of both internal and external examiners. All examiners shall be appointed by the College Council upon the recommendation of the Chief Examiner (Pain Med).
  8. Eligibility to be an internal examiner include:
    - i. Fellow in Pain Medicine (FPM) or equivalent qualification;
    - ii. A minimum of 5 years of post-pain fellowship clinical experience in pain medicine, or a First Fellow in Pain Medicine;
    - iii. Is currently involved in postgraduate medical education or examination, or attended a course or workshop on medical education or examination;
    - iv. Has observed a fellowship examination by the College

Appointments for internal examiners shall normally be 4 years, and is renewable for up to a total of 12 years.

9. At each examination one external examiner shall be invited from overseas sister College/Academy. Other specialists from related medical specialties / healthcare disciplines may also be invited as external examiners for specific skills or competency in the final examination.
10. Observers may be allowed at the discretion of the Chief Examiner (Pain Med), without interference or influence on the examination process or outcome.
11. Announcements on the examination date, fee and closing date of application shall be distributed to all trainers and trainees, as well as on the college website, at least 6 months before the examination.
12. The examination fee shall be reviewed by the board annually and approved by the College Council, and processed as per other fellowship examinations by the HKCA.
  - i. Candidates accepted for the examination and withdraw before the closing date shall have the fees refunded, minus an administrative fee.
  - ii. Candidates who withdraw after the closing date of application, or is absent from the examination, shall have the fees forfeited.
  - iii. The Board might consider partial refund of the fees for sickness (with valid medical documentation which is not produced by the candidate) or compassionate reasons of the candidate, provided that the request was made within 7 days of the withdrawal.

13. Candidates who are absent at the time of the examination shall be handled according to the Administrative Instructions of the College
14. There shall be a written examination, an oral examination and a clinical examination.
15. The written examination consists of 2 papers (each of 90 minutes). Paper I consists of 6 compulsory short-answer questions. Paper II consists of 9 optional short-answer questions which the candidate is required to answer six.
16. The oral examination shall include 3 tables (30 minutes each), each table with 2 examiners on 2 clinical scenarios.
17. The clinical examination shall include a long case (1 hour), and 4 short-case stations (10 minutes each) comprising the following:
  - i. physical examination
  - ii. anatomy / intervention
  - iii. investigation
  - iv. communication
18. Results shall be available to candidates and announced at the College notice board and website at the earliest convenience.
19. Specific remarks by the examiners (if any) shall be delivered to the unsuccessful candidates as soon as possible.
20. Appeals shall be addressed within 7 days of the end of the examination to the Board of Pain Medicine, which will be processed according to the administrative instructions on appeals against the Board.
21. A prize shall be awarded for each examination to the candidate with the highest mark and has demonstrated excellence, at the discretion of the court of examiners.

### **Exit assessment**

22. Exit assessment shall be conducted according to guidelines from the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine.
23. Exit assessment date and venue shall be available to all pain trainees and Supervisors of Training (Pain Med). These assessments shall follow the same arrangements as per other exit assessments by the HKCA (for Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care), and shall be conducted with the Censor (Pain Med) or his delegate.
24. The pain trainee shall present all documentation of training, including all the in-training assessments, case log, project or other relevant information.

25. The Board periodically audit the case log presented for exit assessment. The Board shall inform the applicant before the exit assessment in such case, and the applicant shall be responsible for data collection and presentation during the auditing process.
26. Failure of exit assessment shall be reported to the Board of Pain Medicine, which shall decide if any remedy is appropriate for each individual case, or if the pain trainee has to restart training.

*Endorsed by HKCA Council on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011*  
*Approved by HKAM Council on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2011*