

ANNOUNCEMENT TO CANDIDATES

August (2010)

Intercollegiate Membership Examination of the Surgical Royal Colleges of Great Britain and Ireland: Part A, MCQ Examinations

Pretesting of questions

With the approval of the GMC/Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB), the means by which new items will be piloted in the MRCS Part A, MCQ examinations will change with effect from the September 2010 sitting.

All items that are used in MRCS MCQ papers are rigorously quality assured. They are first written by groups of specialists, who then meet to review the quality of each one. Once they have been through this process, each question is then analysed by the ICBSE's Question Quality Group to ensure their quality from a broader perspective. The final quality assurance is made by the ICBSE Paper Panel, who select the examination papers, and questions that are still felt to be deficient are not used in upcoming examination papers.

The new methodology will see new items inserted in the examination as live items. All items are analysed after each examination using a range of statistical measures and any that are found to be defective will be removed from the paper and candidates will not receive a mark for them.

The potential removal of a very small number of items will not affect the validity or reliability of the examination in any adverse way.