



COLLEGE OF INTENSIVE CARE MEDICINE OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Changes to the Second Part Examination

In March 2018, the College Board approved two changes to the written component of the Second Part Examination that will come into effect from 2019.

Angoff marking system

The current system of marking for Short Answer Questions (SAQs) uses a fixed pass mark of 5 / 10 for each of all 30 questions with an overall pass mark of 50% (150 / 300). A written pass mark can be used for up to three attempts at the clinical section, contributing 30% of the final score.

Although each SAQ carries equal marks, there are some questions that are more or less difficult, than others and there is also the potential for the degree of difficulty to vary between papers from different examinations. A fairer system of assessment is to use Angoff standard setting. In this system, a panel of expert raters determine a pass mark for each question, adjusted for its perceived degree of difficulty.

Thus, the adjusted pass mark for a question may be higher or lower than 5 / 10, and the final overall pass mark for the written section could be greater or less than 50%.

This system has been widely validated and is the method of standard setting used by a range of Australasian and international specialist colleges and professional bodies including RACS, RACP, ACEM, RANZCOG, RACGP, ACCRM and ESICM and promoted by AMC, GMC and AMSAC.

For the last two years, a panel of expert raters (all CICM examiners) trialed the Angoff marking system and the College Board has approved its application for the Second Part Examination from 2019.

The Second Part Paediatric Examination will remain unchanged for 2019. The Paediatric Examination Committee will undertake an Angoff trial period to adequately prepare for a planned implementation in 2020. Further developments will be communicated to trainees in due course.

Carrying a written pass mark

With the introduction of the Angoff scoring system, the pass mark for the written section will vary from one sitting to the next. Consequently, it is no longer appropriate for this mark to be 'carried' and contribute to the final mark of a subsequent examination.

As of 2019, achieving the Angoff cut-off score in the written section will ensure progression to the clinical section. The clinical section will then be marked independently of the mark for the written but with the same relative weighting.

SECTION	TOPIC	Maximum Mark	Pass Mark
Written	2 x 150-minute papers	30	Angoff cut-off
Clinical	Hot cases 2 x 20-minute encounters	30	15
	Cross Table Vivas 8 x 10-minute stations	40	20

If a candidate achieves the Angoff cut-off score in the written section however is unsuccessful at the clinical section, they will be invited to the clinical section of the next two scheduled examinations without re-sitting the written section. Candidates carrying a written result will be required to achieve at least 50% in the clinical section (=>35 marks from a possible 70).

To progress to the clinical section, candidates must:

- a) Achieve the pre-determined Angoff cut-off score in the written section;

To pass the examination overall, candidates must:

- b) Achieve at least 50% in the clinical section (=>35 marks from a possible 70); and
- c) Not fail more than one topic; and
- d) Not receive a severe fail in the hot case section*.

*A “severe fail” indicates failure in both Hot Cases AND an overall mark of less than 40% (<12 marks from a possible 30) for this topic. This results in an automatic fail in the examination overall.

It is important to note the following:

- 1) These changes **do not apply** to candidates sitting the Second Part Paediatric Examination in 2019;
- 2) Candidates carrying a written mark from 2018 **will not be disadvantaged**. These candidates will be able to use this mark under the current marking system as stipulated in the current version of the [Notes to Candidates](#);
- 3) Candidates should be aware that this change will only effect how the final pass mark of the written examination is calculated. It **does not** alter the format or nature of the SAQs or any other aspect of the marking process.
- 4) An updated version of the Notes to Candidates will be applicable from 2019 and will be available on the College website in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Cohen', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jeremy Cohen (A/Prof)
Chair Second Part Examination Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Millar', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Johnny Millar (Dr)
Chair Second Part Paediatric Examination Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mary Pinder', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mary Pinder (Dr)
Chair Assessments Committee