

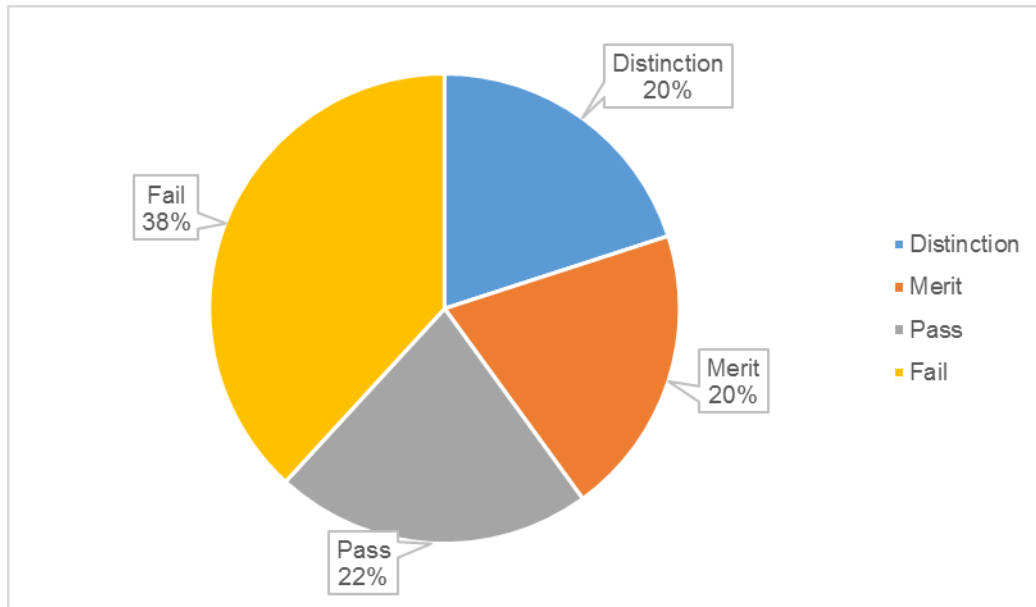


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5519-330 - Level 3 Medical Terminology

Examiner's report – November 2017



General Comments

This was a fairly small batch of papers from several centres. The overall standard was very mixed with marks ranging from very high (130+) to very low (-30). Approximately 30% of candidates reached distinction level and both these candidates and their tutors are to be applauded.

Unfortunately, it would appear that some less able candidates had not been sufficiently prepared for this examination. There were some very poor, or totally incorrect, attempts at answering some of the questions, thus displaying lack of knowledge or understanding of the use of some of the terminology. There was much evidence of poor exam technique displayed in the poorer papers. For example, not answering the questions in sufficient detail, lack of knowledge or understanding of the terms, not explaining the meaning of all parts of the medical terms, incorrect use of the combining vowel, giving more than one answer, crossing out, untidiness and terrible spelling.



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Areas of good performance

Q4 This question was well answered by the majority with many candidates being awarded all of the available marks. Q1 and Q7 were muddled by some candidates.

Q5 This was well answered by most of the more able candidates. The answers only required the recollection of abbreviations taken from very limited list. The very poor attempts by some candidates may be the result of some candidates not having access to the list.

The questions causing the most problems were:

No 3 GFR - glomerular filtration rate

No 4 PBI – protein bound iodine

No 7 HDL – high density lipids

No 10 COC – combined oral contraceptive

Q6 This question only required recall of word parts from a given list. Several candidates scored 100% of the available marks. Some weaker candidates scored very badly and had obviously not learnt, or were unable to recall the meanings of the listed word parts.

Those causing the most problems were:

No 3 circo – around/surrounding

No 4 kypho – crooked/humped/curvature

No 5 amylo – starch

No 8 entero – intestine

No 9 bucco - cheek

No 13 scope- a lighted instrument to examine



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Areas for improvement

Q1 Although this passage put the words into context to assist candidates in their recall of the terms several candidates failed to explain their answers in sufficient detail to gain all the available marks.

Breaking down the medical term given in the question into word parts often did not always help the candidates as literal meanings did not always fully explain the meaning of the term given. With this type of question, it is necessary for candidates to have discussed, with their tutors and peers, a wide range of common terms and their correct meaning and usage during their course. This cannot happen unless the tutor has a very wide working knowledge of this subject

A few candidates scored less than 10% of the available marks whilst the more able candidates appeared to have no difficulty in explaining the meaning of most of these terms.

The questions causing the most problems were:

No 4 axilla – underarm area of the body/armpit, several gave the answer as ‘front of chest’.

No 6 metastasis – secondary spread of disease from the primary site/source.

No 9 sacrum – several candidates gave the answer as ‘part of back’ rather than explaining that it is part of the spine and giving the correct position.

No 14 prognosis – forecast of the probable duration and outcome of a disease after investigating the signs, symptoms and diagnostic tests and making a diagnosis.

Q 2 This question resulted in the lowest marks across the examination paper with a couple of candidates gaining none of the available marks. Lack of attention to detail and terrible spelling lost several candidates vital marks. It is insufficient to just word build from the literal meanings. Several of these words could not be built in this way. Accurate teaching of all aspects of the body systems is needed to ensure candidates are fully conversant with these terms.

Although all the questions posed difficulties for the weaker candidates the main problems were seen with:

No 1 the answer is thrombus not embolus

No 5 the correct answer is platelets/thrombocytes and not white blood cells

No 7 only the very able candidates gave the correct answer of haematemesis

No 9 the correct answer is cholecystolithiasis and not cystolithiasis or cholecystolith



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Q3 The more able candidates had no problems with this question but weaker candidates lost marks because they gave incorrect or insufficient information in their answers.

The questions causing difficulty for some candidates were:

No 2 cauterisation

No 5 pleurisy

No 8 anastomosis

No 12 stertorous

No 15 pneumothorax

Q7 This short question required candidates to show an understanding of the meaning of the medical terms which had been put into context. The majority of more able candidates found no difficulty in giving full accurate answers, but a few weaker candidates really struggled with this question.

The questions causing the most problems were:

No 2 INR

No 4 infarction

No 7 syndrome



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Recommendations and Tips

Tutors must have a full working understanding of medical terms connected with each body system. Candidates undertaking this course should be screened to ensure that they are capable of fully participating in, and gaining a satisfactory outcome, from a course set at level 3. This was clearly not the case with some of these candidates. It is worrying that they are either working or training to work in positions of responsibility in our NHS.

It is important that candidates read the questions on the examination paper very carefully. If the question requires the definition of a medical term they should give as much information as possible in their answer. Only in very rare instances will a one-word answer be awarded both of the available marks.

Spelling is of the utmost importance in this field as one incorrect letter can completely change the meaning of the medical term and may result in a devastating outcome for the patient. Candidates should spend a great deal of study time practicing the spelling of each term.