



AMSPAR

**June 2014 series - Examiner's Report  
5519-335 Level 3 Medical Principles for the Administrator**

Section 1 – Areas of good performance

COMMENT

This qualification was reaccredited from a Level 2 to a Level 3 award in 2013 and whilst the updated syllabus content remains very similar the new examination is designed to allow candidates to demonstrate their depth and breadth of knowledge at this higher level.

The new format examination gives a little more flexibility across the syllabus. The reduction in the number of questions ensures more marks can be allocated for some individual questions thus requiring more in-depth answers which will better test candidate's understanding of the subject matter.

The pass rate has also been increased from 50% to 55% to bring this award in line with other Level 3 qualifications

In this examination there were many excellent papers where candidates demonstrated full and accurate knowledge across the breadth of the syllabus but there were also several papers marred by poor exam technique, lack of basic knowledge and very poor spelling. This is particularly worrying as these candidates are, or are hoping to be, employed in a profession where attention to detail and accuracy is essential...

Q's 2a, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12a, 15 and 16 were well answered by many of the students, These questions generally only require the candidate to give very short answers or recall words and phrases from a prescribed list and do not require candidates to demonstrate understanding or any in -depth knowledge

Section 2 – Areas for development

Several candidates lost marks because they did not read the questions carefully enough or they failed to check the answer given against the question when they had completed their answer. Poor examination technique marred several papers with candidates often only giving very brief or even one word answers instead of descriptions and explanations. Several candidates gave multiple answers when only 2 or 3 were requested. If the question asks for 2 examples then only the first 2 answers given by the candidate will be marked even if these 2 answers are incorrect. It was particularly worrying that there were many totally incorrect answers given across the breadth of the paper.

Q1 The answers to this question were often confused. Some candidates muddled preventive medicine (PM) with health promotion (HP) and several stated incorrectly that the **only** purpose of PM was to detect anomalies earlier and so improve prognosis. Only the more able candidates mentioned the use of immunisation programmes and use of prophylactic drugs

Q2 b Many candidates gave examples of the advice that would be given rather than identifying the health areas/aspects.

Q3 A few candidates still offered direct advice to patients and several asked for the child's age and red book etc instead of referring them to the GP or nurse

Q4a Several candidates gave only the advantages to the patient and failed to mention the long term savings to the NHS

Q4b Several candidates misread this part of the question and mentioned tests other than blood and urine tests and several that take place after the 1<sup>st</sup> 12 weeks of pregnancy

Q 9, This question was poorly answered by many candidates even though this area has been asked in many past examinations. There was inadequate description given by the majority of candidates across all areas and several candidates gave totally incorrect information in their answers. Several described the work of the personnel rather than the sections of the pathology department. A small number of candidates failed to attempt this question

Q12b Several candidates gave answers relating to the GP and the staff rather than to the patient as requested in the question

Q12c This question asked for breaches connected with completed prescriptions, some candidates failed to read the question correctly and dealt with checking whilst preparing the prescription

Q13 several of the answers to this question were very, very poor with only a handful of candidates gaining all of the available marks. Many candidates were only able to give information regarding the dispensing of prescriptions and were unable to give information regarding the wider role of the community pharmacist.

Q14 A number of students did not attempt both parts of this question, the spelling of Pharmacopoeia caused difficulty for a large number of candidates. If only the vowels at the end of the word were incorrect then the mark was given

Weaker candidates did not appear to understand the meaning of the term 'describe' and as a result their answers did not contain sufficient information. Spelling was very poor in some instances, Correct spelling is a necessity when working in this environment and all the drug categories, organs and medical terms have been given to candidates in the lists provided

### Section 3 – Recommendations

**Reading the questions.** Candidates should read the questions carefully and should keep checking their answers to ensure that they are only giving the information/number of answers requested in the paper. Giving extra answers may use valuable time and cannot gain extra marks. E.G. in Q6b candidates were asked to give five symptoms which may indicate infection. Some candidates gave 10 or more answers and gave both signs and symptoms. Only the first five answers given were marked even if the candidate had given the correct answer further down their list.

'Temperature' is not a correct answer, it should be high temperature or pyrexia to gain the mark

The majority of candidates lost valuable marks because they did not give sufficient correct information in their answers. Tutors should stress that the words 'explain' and 'describe' require more than a couple of words in their answer

**Spelling.** In some instances writing and spelling is still quite poor and a couple of papers were almost illegible. When learning information such as the medical term for a bone or body part, candidates should practice the spelling of the term until they can spell it correctly. Drug categories, medical terms and the names of body parts/systems taken from the given list which are spelt incorrectly will not be awarded the available mark

**Extra space for answers.** When asked to describe or explain something candidates should include as much information as possible. The number of marks allocated to a question should give some indication of the length of the expected answer. Although space for answers was limited on this paper spare paper should always be available in case candidates require it

#### Section 4 – Tips

Keep reading the questions Look at the number of marks allocated to your answer to help gauge how much information is required

Make sure that you have attempted all parts of the paper

Practice spellings until you are perfect

#### Section 5 - Additional comments

The general standard was very high with only a 7% referral rate and with 15% of the students gaining distinction level.

There was one centre where the overall standard was much lower than the national average with 0% of candidates reaching a Distinction and with 14% being referred.