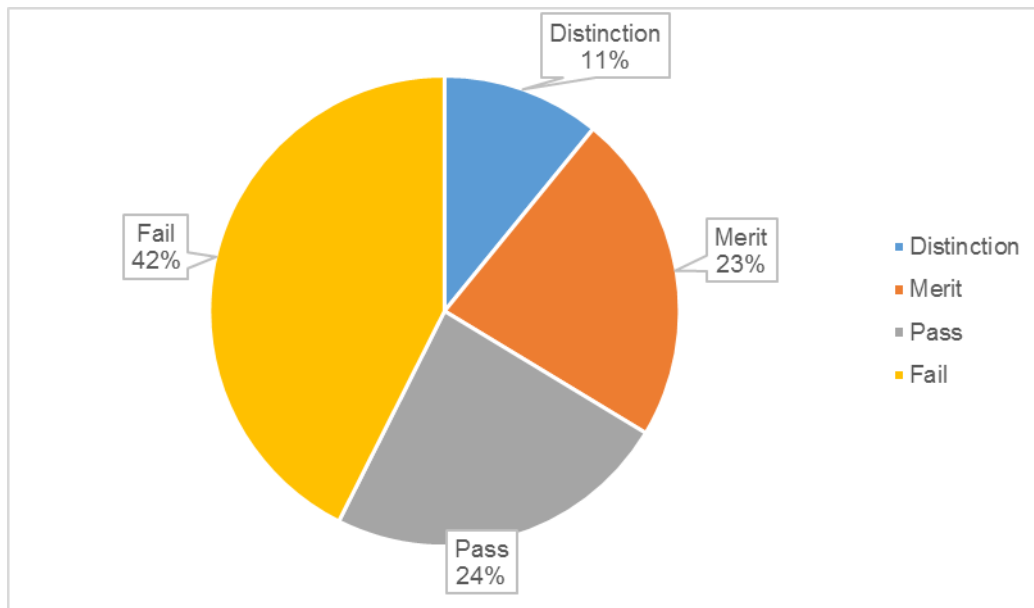




5528-265 – Level 2 Medical Terminology

Examiner's report – November 2017



General comments regarding this cohort of students

Although there were a few excellent papers the majority of the successful candidates only achieved a pass grade.

A high percentage of candidates scored very low marks and did not appear to be adequately prepared for an examination at this level. A few candidates appeared to have very little knowledge of the meaning and use of medical terminology and judging by the many totally incorrect answers given they are likely to be a real danger to patients if they should gain employment in the NHS. Several centres had entered candidates who clearly had no chance of passing this examination.



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Areas of good performance

Q1 This question posed no problems for the more able candidates. All the words given in the paper were taken from a prescribed list and only required rote learning and recall. Some of the weaker candidates did not attempt all the questions or clearly did not know the meaning of some of the word parts.

The main difficulties were with:

Contra – incorrectly defined as opposite rather than against

Ism – incorrectly defined as concerning rather than condition of

Phallo – widely not attempted

tome – incorrectly defined as a procedure rather than an instrument to cut

Q3a & 3b In this question the written word aids memory and the small number of terms used in each part makes the question very easy, although the use of distracters tempers this a little. The majority of candidates were able to achieve at least 6 of the 10 available marks and these marks, plus those attained in questions 1, 4b and 5, allowed several of the otherwise quite weak candidates to scrape a pass in this examination.

The most errors were made with ilium and oesophagus for question 3a and phylaxis and sub for question 3b.

Q4b This question required rote learning from a given list and the majority of candidates were awarded at least 4 of the available marks

The terms causing the most difficulty were:

Endocrinology – several candidates gave the meaning as diseases of the female reproductive system. This is incorrect as the endocrine system involves many of the body systems.

Histology- several gave the answer as the study of cells rather than study of tissues.

Q5 This very short question requires rote learning from a given list and does not require a real understanding of the use of the pharmaceutical abbreviations. Although many of the more able candidates were awarded all of the available marks, several weaker candidates scored very poorly and did not appear to have learned these abbreviations thoroughly. It may be that they had not had access to the list.



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Areas for improvement

Q2 Some candidates still cannot identify words in common use concerning the anatomy, physiology, diseases and abnormalities of the listed body systems. Tutors should teach candidates the meaning of the common words used in connection with each listed body system as several of these medical terms cannot be broken down and identified from the word parts on the lists. Literal answers are often not sufficient to explain the full meaning of these terms.

The terms which posed the most problems were:

Chondrial – often not attempted

Atrium – to be awarded both the available marks students were required to identify that this word refers to the upper chambers of the heart.

Lumbar – several students just stated that this was part of the spine and did not identify the position the word indicated.

Hypotension – several candidates incorrectly gave the answer as high blood pressure or low tension.

Q4a. All the terms required in the answers are in common use in the medical field and six of them could have been built from the very basic/common word parts which should have been taught during their course. Marks were sometimes forfeited due to very poor spelling and the inappropriate use of the combining vowel. Some candidates gave more than one answer to each question, only the first answer attempted was marked. Generally, this question was very poorly attempted with only a handful of candidates gaining all the available marks.

Some candidates did not attempt to answer all parts of this question and many made very basic mistakes.

The main problems identified were:

No 1 Many candidates gave the answer as laryngitis instead of pharyngitis.

No2 Very few students answered this question correctly.

No 3 Several did not give the whole term in their answer. When the full answer was given some candidates were unable to spell cholecystectomy correctly.

No4 Many incorrectly gave pericardium or myocardium rather than pericardium.

No5 Very few attempted this question.

No 6 Very few attempted this question.

No 7 Weaker candidates gave the answer as tracheostomy or trachyectomy.

No 8 the majority of students incorrectly gave metatarsals or metacarpals as their answer.



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Recommendations and Tips

Centres must ensure that their tutors have a wide working knowledge of the subject being taught. Rote learning alone is not sufficient in this subject, as, when candidates are in the workplace, it is imperative that they can write clearly and accurately and that they understand the meaning of what they are writing and reading so that they can recognise mistakes and prevent inaccuracies. Self taught candidates should study from textbooks (Anatomy and Physiology and medical dictionaries) that fully embrace the effective teaching of medical terminology.

Several of the very weak candidates did not attempt to answer many of the questions or scored very poor marks across all the questions, even the matching block questions. These candidates had clearly not been adequately prepared for an examination at this level and had no chance of being successful. It is possible to pass this examination by thorough learning and recall of the lists provided to centres by C&G's. It may be that some candidates are not having access to these lists.