

Currency, Timing and Number of Attempts at professional examinations

Following the GMC's recent consultation on national professional examinations taken outside of a training programme, the GMC asked the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges to lead discussions with medical Royal Colleges, Postgraduate Deaneries, trainees, patients and the public and representatives of the NHS with a view to achieving agreement by 31 December 2011 in respect of the currency, timing and number of attempts at professional examinations. This work is being taken forward by the Academy's Assessment Committee

At the latest meeting of the Academy Assessment Committee on 12 October 2011 agreement was reached on two of the questions that were put to the Committee.

First it was agreed that demonstration of additional educational experience will be necessary for all candidates for each re-entry after six attempts. This, the new Academy position is being communicated to the GMC, Academy Trainee Doctors Group, Academy Education Strategy Group and JACTAG and to the public via this website.

There was also agreement on the duration of validity of examination passes. It was decided that there should be a seven year limit on any single examination pass with the option of flexibility in individual cases subject to detailed review of circumstances. This position is being communicated to the GMC, Academy Trainee Doctors Group, to the Academy Education Strategy Group and to JACTAG and again to the public via this website.

The third question regarded the issue of which exam version on which curriculum could be deemed valid. The only agreement was that Members would wait for the outcome of the GMC's legal advice.

November 2011