Examiner Selection

Competing Priorities:

• National representation
• Standards to establish/uphold
• Genuine enthusiasm
• Equal opportunities legislation
• Fixed term appointments
Examiner Essentials

• Fair-minded
• Broad knowledge (avoid sub-specialists?)
• Sympathetic demeanour
• Demonstrated interest in assessment/training
• Appropriate language skills
  – N.B. Difficulty of exam in second language
• Sufficient experience as trained specialist
• Ethnic and gender mix
Examiner Oddities

• New consultants are “hawkish”
  – Perhaps to show off their knowledge
• Sub-specialists are “single minded”
  – Up to date in generality of specialty?
  – Able to judge level of pass for a generalist?
• Old consultants tend to become out of date
• Regulatory body investigations = suspend
• Subconscious bias can be an issue
  – Religious/racial/gender/perception of “acceptable”
Examiner Training: Needed

• Attitude
  – Getting best out of candidates

• Technique
  – Exploring knowledge, not exploiting gaps
  – Co-examiner intervention when necessary

• Consistency
  – Explicit, agreed standards of what is a “pass”

• “Statutory”
  – Equality & diversity
Examiner Training: The Level

Testing “higher order thinking”
• Problem solving
• Balancing advice on treatment options
• Getting out of trouble
Avoiding Complaints or Litigation

• Minimise allegations of bias
  – Examiners’ approach
  – Ethnic & gender mix among examiners

• Ensure
  – Consistency
  – Reliability

• Examine in pairs
  – New with experienced
  – “Hawk” with “dove”
Achieving Consistency

• Examiner training
  – Marking descriptors helpful
• Examiner inspection/moderation
  – Internally by co-examiner
  – By expert assessor from time to time
  – By chairman of panel of examiners?
• Examiner performance feedback
  – Examiners’ scores referenced to mean
Examiner
Selection and Training

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