

# Examiner Selection and Training

Owen Sparrow

# 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- Old consultants tend to become out of date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

Owen Sparrow