

Fatai Ogunlayi
Vice Chair of the
Speciality Registrar Committee



14th June 2022

Re: SpR Feedback on DFPH examination, March 2022

Dear Fatai

Thank you for taking the time to collect and collate feedback from registrars who sat the March sitting of Diplomate exam; it is much appreciated by the Faculty and the examination board.

I am glad that the organisation of the exam remains of very high quality: Laura Bland does an amazing job supporting all those involved, candidates and examiners alike.

Your comments on the variation and other comments about in the invigilation process are noted, and we will take them forward with TestReach. Feedback on the interactions with TestReach is very important to us, as it is something only the candidates truly experience.

Feedback on the specific questions is noted, and I hope the attached feedback document will help with some of these comments. It can be difficult to interpret personal feedback from candidates, but taken alongside the feedback from the examiners, highlights areas where questions might be improved in the future.

I appreciate that it may sometimes seem that the same issues are covered in different questions, but this exam is focused on assessing the knowledge and understanding of the principles underpinning public health. The examination questions often ask about application in specific contexts, and if some of these contexts are similar, it may feel as if there is repetition in content. A lot of work is done in preparing the examination paper, and care is taken to ensure that each question is testing different elements of the syllabus, even if the context does seem similar.

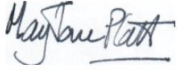
I apologise for any errors in the papers themselves. A great deal of attention is paid to getting them error free, and several pairs of eyes look at them for just this reason, but occasionally errors slip through.

With respect to your more general comments, they are appreciated; it is important that we understand and consider the candidates perception of the examination. You mention a high fail rate; however, it is reassuring that the failure rate among trainees is generally much lower than those sitting the examination out with the training programme, and indeed, we publish the exam statistics taking this into account. Thank you too for the other comments and suggestions as to how the examination might be developed. As I am sure you aware, we regularly review all aspects of the examination, and these comments are helpful and feed into the discussions.

I am sorry to hear that some candidates feel that their wellbeing is significantly affected by the intensity of the examination. We are proposing to introduce a rest day between the two papers, which I hope will be welcome, but examinations are stressful by their very existence, and it is difficult to get away from that.

Thank you again for your work in collating the feedback, it is very much valued by the examiners.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Jane Platt', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Prof. Mary Jane Platt, Deputy Chair of Diplomate MFPH Examiners