



Examiners' comments – Feedback to Candidates

March 2022 sitting

This feedback gives general points to support candidates preparing for each section of the exam in the future. Comments are intended to provide helpful guidance rather than be prescriptive. Feedback is based on comments received from all the examiners who marked the March 2022 sitting, and therefore covers all papers and questions. Comments from the Chair of Examiners are also included. These indicate general points to support candidates preparing for the exam in future sittings.

All questions included in the March 2022 exam were marked according to pre-agreed mark schemes.

Candidates should be aware that mark schemes will always be used with discretion by examiners, so that answers that do not fully fit the model answer or mark schemes are judged in terms of their relevance and overall fit with the question asked.

Candidates are encouraged to review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the Faculty website (particularly the section that deals with preparing for the DFPH examination) and pay particular attention to the examination syllabus.

Summary statistics for the March 2022 sitting are also published on the [FPH website](#)

All questions are blind double marked i.e. two examiners each mark the questions anonymously according to an agreed marking schedule without knowledge of how the other examiner has marked. Any differences in marks between examiners are subsequently resolved by discussion. The examiners then provide general feedback on candidates' performance for each question, highlighting areas/reasons where candidates have scored poorly. As these tend to be similar across the different questions, rather than provide repetitive feedback at individual question level, I have summarised them below.

Remember to read and think through each question before you answer it. Some questions specify what they require, e.g., a definition, strengths and weaknesses, etc, whereas others ask about more general aspects, expecting you to address a range of broader issues such as implications and consequences, both of which are plural, so more than one is usually expected. For these questions, although it can appear that the examiner is asking no more than 'common sense', it is important to remember that this is a professional examination, expecting successful candidates to demonstrate that they have a greater depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding than the general public, for example, candidates may need to demonstrate this with evidence or justification for their answers.

Paper I is divided into 5 parts, across the two papers, with each pair of questions focusing on a specific curriculum area. Candidates should note this and ensure that their answers relate to the curriculum area being tested. Furthermore, some questions are set in a context or ask for the application of knowledge/understanding to a specific example or setting. Candidates are expected to tailor their answer to the same context. This is particularly the case when the question asks for the application of theories or theoretical models. It may also be helpful to view the context required from different perspectives.

Candidates should pay attention to the distribution of marks within in each question: the distribution is there to guide you as to the depth of detail that each element requires. Some questions indicate the number of different examples expected, and candidates should use this as a guide to the distribution of marks. Candidates who provide long explanations for elements allocated only 1 mark will not score more than the 1 mark available. Similarly, candidates who provide very short answers/single word answers to sections allocated a higher percentage of the marks within a question are unlikely to score highly.

Within paper IIA, candidates should note the distribution of marks across the paper and try to allocate their time (and word count where this is limited) accordingly. Examiners have commented on the detailed, and sometimes excessively long, answers in the first part of the paper, and the more superficial response to questions later in the paper, but with a similar allocation of marks. Furthermore, candidates should remember that the questions are interlinked so some of the answers to the earlier questions may be relevant/ require a more comprehensive explanation for later questions.

It is helpful if candidates can structure their answers logically, not only for the examiner; it can also help reduce the chances of a candidate repeating or contradicting themselves; e.g. questions asking for strengths and weaknesses. Candidates should also bear in mind that rarely is credit given for the same answer repeated across the question. Some candidates lost marks for simple errors, such as not expressing definitions fully and correctly.