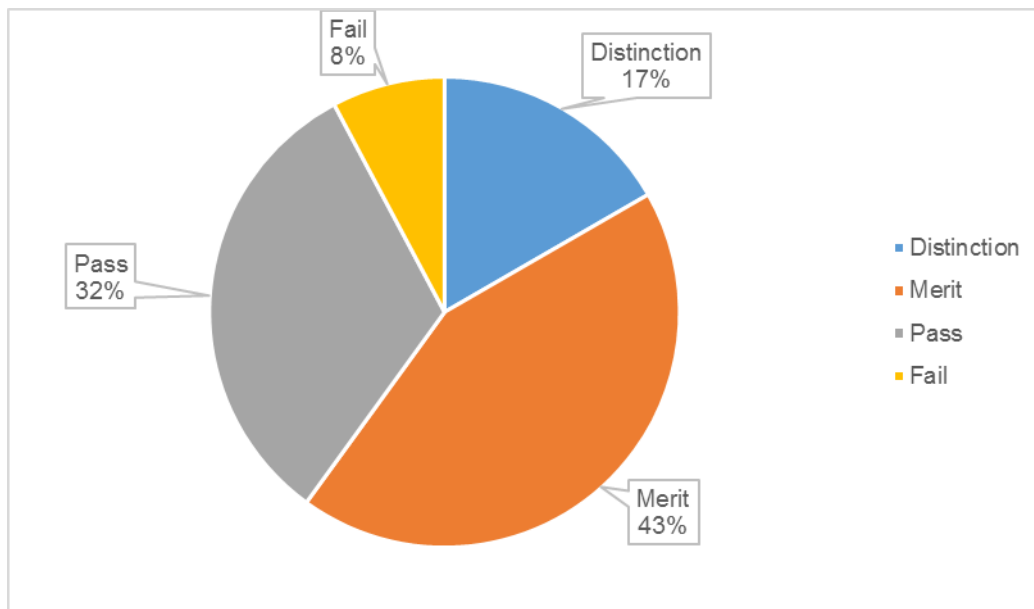




## 5528-364 - Level 3 Medical Principles for the Medical Administrator

### Examiner's report - December 2017 series



### General comments

This examination is set at level 3 which compares to A level standard. The exam contains a mixture of short answer questions and others which require more in-depth answers to test candidates' understanding of the subject matter.

The general standard was fairly high with most candidates achieving a Merit, Distinction or Pass grades. Only a small number of candidates were unable to achieve an overall pass grade. The Merit and Distinction papers were pleasing to mark. The candidates were able to show a good standard of knowledge of the syllabus. Marks ranged from 90+ to 35.

Candidates that did not gain an overall pass grade showed lack of appropriate knowledge of the subject matter, provided incorrect information or failed to attempt the question in its entirety leaving the examination script blank. They also demonstrated poor spelling techniques, evidence of not reading the questions fully, illegible handwriting, providing too many answers to some questions, an inability to develop the answers as required and poor examination technique.



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These findings are a real concern particularly, as candidates will be seeking employment in a profession where attention to detail and accuracy is essential.

## Areas of good performance

The questions gaining the best percentage of the available marks were numbers:- 1b, 2, 3, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12b, 12c, 14a, 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a, 16b, 16c, 16d.

In all these questions there was either; only one mark available for each piece of information given or the answer required came directly from the lists provided to centres. As a result, candidates were awarded the mark even if they gave only the barest minimum of correct information or they were only required to rote learn the information from the lists.

Candidates do not need to show any depth of knowledge and understanding.

## Areas for improvement

Q1a. The understanding of preventative medicine was not evident in many of the candidates' answers. The weak candidates thought that preventative medicine was the same as screening tests, and did not mention the use of immunisation programmes or prophylactic medicines.

Q4. Only the more able students demonstrated a true understanding regarding the ways in which the administrator can support the clinical staff. Some answers were too brief to gain both of the marks which were available for each of the 3 answers required.

Q 9. This question was the most poorly answered on the paper even though this area has been covered on all previous examination papers. There were inadequate descriptions given by many candidates and several candidates gave totally incorrect information in their answers. A small number of candidates failed to attempt any or all parts of this question.

Q10. Some candidates confused the role of the Radiologist with that of the Radiographer. A few candidates described the role of a clinical area secretary rather than the administrator of the diagnostic department.

Q12a. A high number of candidates were unable to state the meaning of Medical Ethics and Etiquette with real knowledge and understanding. The examples many provided



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were incorrect as those for Medical Ethics were put in the Medical Etiquette section of the answer and vice versa.

12b Although all successful candidates gained at least 50% of the available marks for this question, many answers were very brief and poorly organised.

Q13 Very disappointing answers generally to this question with no one candidate gaining all of the marks available. Information provided was limited or focused solely on dealing with patients' prescriptions. The majority of students showed little understanding or depth of knowledge regarding the roles and responsibilities of the hospital pharmacist. Very few mentioned Controlled drugs, stock control and the overseeing and training of junior staff. The wider role and responsibilities was not made evident in the candidates' answers.

The seeming inability of some candidates to read the questions accurately or check their answer to ensure it related to the question asked and very poor spelling resulted in a loss of marks.

More than the required number of answers to the question was provided by some candidates. If the question asks for 2 examples, then only the first 2 answers given by the candidate will be marked even if these 2 answers are incorrect. Candidates should be discouraged by Centres from doing this.

## Recommendations and Tips

**Reading the questions.** It is important that all parts of the questions are read, and important requests highlighted very carefully by the candidates. It is also important to check all the answers provided, to ensure all parts of the question are attempted, and at the same time provide only the information requested by each question. Precious examination time is wasted in giving answers that cannot gain any extra marks. For example, in question six, five signs indicating infection were needed. Very often there was a mixture of signs and symptoms given as well as many candidates giving far more than the 5 requested answers.

**Spelling.** It is noticeable in some instances, that handwriting and spelling is still below the standard required especially relating to medical terminology and drug categories. When learning anatomical terms such as those of the human body it may be useful for candidates to practice the spelling of the term until this can be spelt correctly from memory. It is important to note that drug categories, medical terms and the names of body parts/systems taken from the given lists cannot be given the available mark if they are spelt incorrectly.



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**Examination preparation:**-Candidates should be sufficiently prepared for their examination by paying close attention to organising their answers, writing as neatly as possible and providing adequate information to questions. This would enable them to gain the marks needed for success. Teaching staff should ensure that candidates understand how to answer questions that requires them to either “explain or describe” for example a department or a role.

Candidates should pay close attention to the overall marks allocated to the question as this would give them a good indication of the factual detail required in the answer. It is of some concern that some very weak candidates may not have been given sufficient correct information during their learning to adequately prepare them to write satisfactory answers in this examination.

Plan the answers properly. Give some thought and time to providing organised answers, writing as neatly as possible and providing adequate information. Teaching staff should ensure learners understand what the words explain and describe require in an answer. Also, the fact that the overall marks allocated to the question should give the candidate a good indication of the amount of detail required in the answer. It is of some concern that some candidates may not have been given sufficient correct information during their course to write good answers in their examination

Take note of the marks available for each question as this will guide as to how much information is required.

Highlight important words in the question such as (list, explain, describe and the number of answers required).

Ensure that all parts of the question have been attempted.

Continue to practice spellings of medical words, drugs and body organs until you can spell them correctly.

Make sure that your answer is clearly written and can be easily read by the person marking it.

Continue to read the questions. Take note of the marks available for each question as this will guide as to how much information is required.

Highlight important words in the question such as (list, explain, describe and the number of answers required)



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Ensure that all parts of the question have been attempted.

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