



CMSA

EXAMINATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINERS, CONVENORS AND MODERATORS

Please note Constituent College specific Examiner Guidelines, which include the CMSA basic guidelines, replace the General Examiner Guidelines of the CMSA.

JOHANNESBURG

November 2018



CONFIDENTIALITY/CONFLICT OF INTEREST UNDERTAKING

To be signed by the examiner EACH time an examiner agrees to participate in the examination process.

I Professor/Doctor/Mr/Mrs/Ms..... of the College of of the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA) hereby record: (Name of examination)

I understand that the conduct of the examination board/panel/team of the CMSA is bound by rules of confidentiality in respect of all proceedings taking place under the aegis of the board/panel/team. This includes all aspects related to setting papers, marking scripts, and participating in oral examinations, and includes all proceedings related to the adjudication of final marks and the moderation thereof.

I acknowledge in this regard that I am aware that I must take great care not to find myself in a conflict of interest situation. I understand that a conflict of interest exists when I may have a pecuniary or personal interest in a matter, or have a prejudice, which is in conflict with the proper discharge and duties and responsibilities that are in the best interest of the CMSA, or may otherwise affect the integrity and confidence in the CMSA. This would include a conflict where my duty to observe the strictest level of confidentiality and impartiality, and to observe this confidentiality undertaking, when acting as an examiner, convenor or moderator, is compromised, thereby prejudicing the integrity of the examination process. It may also include a conflict between my duty to the CMSA and another duty that I may have (for example, to another company, organisation or entity, including a university).

I understand that a detailed Conflict of Interests policy document is published on the CMSA's website and that it is recommended that I acquaint myself with the content of that document.

Should I perceive myself to be in a conflict or potential conflict of interest situation, I undertake to immediately bring this to the attention of the Academic Registrar and the Chairman of the Examinations and Credentials Committee of the CMSA to obtain guidance and, if necessary, a ruling on the matter.

Further to the above, I understand that the disclosure of any information pertaining to this examination, either in the interests of others, or to serve my own purposes, or where I am in a conflict of interest situation, will be treated as a breach of confidentiality and professional responsibility which may have serious consequences for all concerned.

I understand, acknowledge, and agree that:

- The questions and answers of the examination are the confidential property of the CMSA.
- I shall not disclose the questions, answers and discussions of the content of the examination to any person outside the examination group without the permission of the Chairman of the Examinations and Credentials Committee of the CMSA.
- I shall not sell or distribute any examination material (written, photocopied or electronic) including any questions answers or screen images outside of the appointed examination board/panel/team.

SECTION A

EXAMINERS AND OBSERVERS

1. APPOINTING EXAMINERS AND OBSERVERS

- 1.1 The board of examiners for each college should have representatives from all training institutions in that discipline. The examiner from the host institution will generally be appointed as convenor for the examination. Supplementary examiners may be added to this list should this become necessary or desirable. Examiners should all have been observers for at least one examination before their inclusion in the full examining panel. Each training institution should use the observer system to ensure that there is a sufficient pool of experienced examiners from which to draw, to maintain the necessary composition of the panel.
- 1.2 The examination panels for the next set of examinations should, as far as possible, be selected by each college during the preceding clinical examination. The examiner from each centre should, therefore, come to the clinical examination with the name of an available, suitably qualified nominee for the following examination from his/her centre. They should be experienced, competent and with good academic reputation. This panel will then be submitted to the President of the College for approval and onward transmission to the Examinations and Credentials Committee of the CMSA.
- 1.3 Convenors shall be required to submit a report about the quality of the questions set, the conduct of the examinations, the performance of the candidates and what improvements need to be effected in teaching. This report should be submitted to the Chairman of the Examinations and Credentials Committee soon after the examinations are concluded.
- 1.4 One of the examiners must come from an examination centre other than the one that a candidate comes from. In order to grow examiners from the peripheral centres, colleges can apply for funding for these examiners to observe.
- 1.5 An examiner must be identified when the panel is appointed as the person who will be responsible for a remark should the request from a candidate arise. This examiner should not have been involved in the original marking of scripts for the relevant set of examinations.

2. **EXAMINER ROLE POLICY**

Recognising that it is an honour to be invited to be an examiner and that all colleges have the power to remove examiners from the panel if they do not adhere to the CMSA standards, as per the following policy document. This policy document outlines the role of the examiner and should be read in conjunction with the other policy documents of the CMSA.

2.1 **Setting of questions**

- 2.1.1 Set all questions in English.
- 2.1.2 Provide a “bare-bones” memorandum for all questions selected to be used by the convenor.
- 2.1.3 Adhere to the guidelines and regulations of the constituent college in setting of the examination questions.
- 2.1.4 No new rules can be formulated and implemented whilst the examination is in progress.

2.2 **Written examination**

- 2.2.1 Mark all written examination scripts and ensure that the deadline of submission of marks is met.
- 2.2.2 Ensure that comments are supplied to the convenor for borderline and failed candidates.
- 2.2.3 Scripts are scanned and emailed via DropBox.

2.3 **Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examination**

- 2.3.1 Conduct the practical/clinical/oral/OSCE examination in a fair and professional manner.
- 2.3.2 Keep all discussions about candidates confidential within the examiner panel, the President of the relevant College and the Examinations Office.

2.4 **Conclusion of examination**

- 2.4.1 Provide feedback to the convenor about any issues pertaining to the examination.
- 2.4.2 Provide a written complaint or compliment where applicable about the examination.
- 2.4.3 Keep the examination confidential.

3. **CMSA GUIDELINE ON APPOINTING OF EXAMINERS AND OBSERVERS**

Preamble

Given that the CMSA acknowledges:

- the enormous and valuable contribution of examiners
- the critical importance of harnessing knowledge, evidence, and tools to achieve a high quality examination
- the importance of professionalising the CMSA examination
- the need for a high quality examiner
- the critical role of capacity building

This guideline provides clarity for both convenors and examiners to ensure the smooth conduct of the examination.

3.1 Examination purpose

The purpose of the CMSA examination and assessment of qualification forms part of the credentialing process for medical practitioners, as specialists. The Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) stipulates training requirements, including a minimum period of experiential learning. Candidates usually sit for the examination prior to the completion of the required period of supervised learning specified by the HPCSA.

3.2 The aim of the examination

The aim of assessment of the qualification is to meet the need for formal examination certification, as well as to set standards, nationally, for such a qualification.

3.3 Definition of Examiners

3.3.1 The Convenor of the Examination

The convenor of the examination must be a senior examiner and should come from the institution that hosts the examination. It is the responsibility of the convenor to ensure the smooth and efficient conduct of the examination as per the rules of the constituent college and CMSA.

3.3.2 The Panel of Examiners

The panel of examiners should as far as possible consist of a representative from the training institutions that currently prepare candidates for the examination and should have fulfilled all requirements stipulated by the constituent college and CMSA.

3.4 Examiner qualification (certification)

The CMSA and/or individual Colleges shall arrange formal examiner training sessions for both the written and oral examination components. All examiners should undergo this training.

3.4.1 Criteria for examiner qualification (certification)

The following are the CMSA criteria for examiner qualification (certification):

3.4.1.1 New examiners must undergo certification before becoming an examiner

3.4.1.2 Part I and/or Intermediate and/or Part II examiners should undergo the same certification process “grandfathering”. The criteria for exemption will be determined by the constituent college.

- 3.4.2 To be certified as an examiner, a candidate would be:
- 3.4.2.1 Eligible to be considered as an examiner only after a minimum period post successful completion of the same examination he/she is wanting to examine (i.e. fellowship or certificate).
- 3.4.2.2 Formally supported by at least two colleagues (e.g. Member of the College Council, or a current examiner).

3.4.3 To be certified as an examiner, a candidate would need to:

- 3.4.3.1 Fully participate (as an observer examiner) in at least one CMSA oral/clinical examination, including shadow marking of candidates.
- 3.4.3.2 Attend a compulsory day-long CMSA workshop (held at various centres countrywide) on topics such as MCQ and OSCE standard setting, and generic skills including discrimination, the principles of assessment of clinical reasoning, decision making, and communication skills.
- 3.4.3.3 Provide evidence of participation in mock examinations of registrars at local training institution (observed and validated by a local existing CMSA examiner(s)).
- 3.4.3.4 Complete a written report (based on a CMSA template) reflecting on, and critiquing, various components of an observed CMSA oral/clinical examination.

3.4.4 General guidelines of certification

- 3.4.4.1 Universities should be involved in the certification process, including considering or rewarding the achievement by an individual of certified status.
- 3.4.4.2 Once established as an examiner, all examiners should be subject to quality assurance of their performance, through feedback submitted in Convenor and/or Moderator reports at the conclusion of the examinations.
- 3.4.4.3 Moderators should play a greater role in providing feedback to individual examiners.

3.5 **The Appointment Process of Examiners**

3.5.1 Observers

Examiners should all have been observers for at least one examination before their inclusion in the full examining panel. Each training institution should use the observer system to ensure that there is a sufficient pool of experienced examiners from which to draw to maintain the necessary composition of the panel.

For an individual to be awarded observer status the following steps need to be followed:

- A [nomination form](#) should be completed by the relevant Head of Department or Council Member.
- This, together with the individual's abridged curriculum vitae, should be forwarded to the President/Secretary of the constituent college.
- Evaluation of the suitability of an individual as an observer should follow the constituent college guidelines of appointment of observers.
- The individual's details will then be forwarded to the CMSA for record purposes.
- The constituent college will then inform the convenor and nominee of the observer's status.
- The appointed observer will sign a confidentiality agreement.

- This process should be completed at least SIX weeks prior to the written component of the examination such that the observer may be involved in the entire examination process.

Guidelines for observers

- The observer is to be involved in all parts of the examination.
- The observer will only be allowed to observe and will not be directly involved in the examination process.
- The observer should pair with an appointed examiner from the local centre for the written component.
- The observer will observe the process of setting-up of written questions, compilation of marking memoranda, and the marking of scripts.
- The observer will accompany the examiners for the Oral/Clinical/OSCE/OSPE component of the examination.
- The observer will be introduced to each candidate as such.
- The observer will be allowed to attend the Examiners Meeting.
- The observer will take NO active part in the examination process.

Appointment of Examiners

3.5.1.1 Examiner panels:

- 3.5.1.1.1 As a guide, the examiner panels should comprise 60% experienced (senior) examiners and 30% ‘emerging’ examiners. A “senior examiner” would have examined at least 3 times. “Emerging examiners” need to have observed at least one constituent college examination to be eligible to examine and fulfilled all other requirements to be an examiner.
- 3.5.1.1.2 The examination panels for the next set of examinations should, as far as possible, be selected by each college during the preceding clinical examination.
- 3.5.1.1.3 The examiner from each centre should, therefore, come to the clinical examination with the name of an available, suitably qualified nominee for the following examination from his/her centre. They should be experienced, competent and with good academic reputation. This panel will then be submitted to the President of the College for approval and onward transmission to the Examinations and Credentials Committee of the CMSA.
- 3.5.1.1.4 Ideally/ and if possible/ but taking into consideration the size of the College concerned, no examiner should be allowed to examine for more than THREE consecutive examinations. To prevent this from happening, ideally Heads of Departments should co-ordinate the appointment of examiners from within his/her own department.

3.5.1.2 Experience (academic, registrar training, examination experience):

- 3.5.1.2.1 All examiners must hold one or more of the constituent college stipulated degrees or qualifications (or their equivalent) for at least three years prior to the date of the first written paper. Experience in postgraduate teaching and assessment is preferred.
- 3.5.1.2.2 Further, examiners must:
- Have been an observer at the constituent college examination on at least one occasion.
 - Have completed the compulsory CMSA examiner training.

- Examiners should ideally hold an academic appointment, either fulltime, part-time or honorary.
- Encouraged to be a member of CMSA in good standing.

3.5.1.3 *Geographical representation:*

3.5.1.3.1 As far as possible examiners must be drawn from all institutions providing registrar training in the country. The hosting institution should contribute *no more* than 50% of the total complement of examiners.

3.5.1.3.2 One of the examiners must come from an examination centre other than the one that a candidate comes from. In order to grow examiners from the rural area, colleges can apply for funding for these examiners.

3.5.1.4 *Race and gender:*

3.5.1.4.1 As far as possible, there should be good representation of race and gender demographics on examiner panels.

3.5.1.5 *Public/private sector mix:*

3.5.1.5.1 Aim for approximately 80%-90% of examiners from the public sector; 10%-20% from the private sector.

3.5.2 Evaluation of examiners

3.5.2.1 Evaluation of examiner performance (written/audio) for later review by a panel should be established as a norm.

3.5.2.2 Constituent colleges shall determine the criteria for evaluation.

4. GUIDELINES ON MARKING OF EXAMINATIONS

- 4.1 These guidelines are only applicable to colleges who have not determined their own specific criteria. In the case where a college has defined their own marking criteria, these replace the general criteria of the CMSA.
- 4.2 The marking system outlined below is recommended:
- 4.2.1 All examiners must submit a short, bare bones, memorandum for the questions that they have set and which have been included in the paper.
- 4.2.2 Marking will be in percentages.
- 4.2.3 The pass mark will be 50% for all examinations, and 50% for any sub-minimums required (see 1.1.4 and 1.1.5 below). A candidate who achieves 50% for any question is deemed to have given an answer that indicates that this is a safe doctor. 50% does not mean that the candidate only knows half of the work.
- 4.2.4 Each section of an examination must be marked as a percentage, regardless of how marks are assigned to individual questions of a paper, or to subsections of another section, thus:
- | | | |
|---------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 4.2.4.1 | Paper I | To be marked out of 100 |
| 4.2.4.2 | Paper II | To be marked out of 100 |
| 4.2.4.3 | MCQ | To be marked out of 100 |
| 4.2.4.4 | OSCE | To be marked out of 100 |
| 4.2.4.5 | Clinical cases | To be marked out of 100 |
| 4.2.4.6 | Viva voce | To be marked out of 100 |
- 4.2.5 Each College must assign to each section of each examination a weight as a fraction of the final percentage mark, e.g.
- | | | |
|---------|----------------|---|
| 4.2.5.1 | Paper I | 15% of the final mark |
| 4.2.5.2 | Paper II | 15% of the final mark |
| 4.2.5.3 | MCQ | 10% of the final mark |
| 4.2.5.4 | OSCE | 20% of the final mark |
| 4.2.5.5 | Clinical cases | 30% of the final mark – Sub-minimum required. |
| 4.2.5.6 | Viva voce | 10% of the final mark |
- 4.2.6 Any section of an examination for which a sub-minimum is required (i.e. which must be passed separately with a minimum of 50% of the marks for that particular section, in order for the examination as a whole to be passed) must be indicated, as shown in 4.2.5 above. Each College has the right to set the sub-minimum.
- 4.2.7 For purposes of analysis and for the information of candidates, each component of each section must be tabulated by the examiners.
- 4.2.8 Candidates who fail to achieve an aggregate mark of 45% in the written (First or Second Semester) part of the examination, will be turned away from the remainder of the examination. This is at the discretion of each College.
- 4.2.9 It is suggested that examiners mark their scripts in 5% increments.
- 4.2.10 Adobe marking is done in the CMSA and therefore there will be no remarks, comments or marks on the candidate's scripts. These must be recorded on the mark sheet provided. In the case of a candidate who fails your question, please give a more detailed comment separately on your marking rubric or bare bones memorandum.

4.2.11 Examination scripts are sent to examiners via DropBox and are deleted at the end of the semester. The hard copies are kept off site for a period of 7 years.

4.3 LANGUAGE MEDIUM

4.3.1 Candidates will reply to the examiner’s questions in English.

4.4 MARK SHEETS

4.4.1 A mark sheet will be sent to each examiner electronically.

4.4.2 All marks obtained by each candidate must be entered on a master mark sheet by the convenor of the examination before it is sent in. This mark sheet must clearly show details of the separate marks for the written papers and for the oral, practical and/or clinical examinations. All mark sheets are to be emailed to Miss Nombuso Gcumisa – Examiners Manager immediately after the examiners meeting: nombuso.gcumisa@cmsa.co.za.

4.4.3 The mark sheets are kept as a permanent record and, when required, are used to advise candidates of their performances

4.5 CPD POINTS

4.5.1 The CPD points will be sent to examiners after the completion of the examination. CPD Points will be given to all examinations.

4.6 MARKING GUIDE FOR EXAMINERS FOR CLINICAL CASES

MARK	DESCRIPTION
<p>Less than 40% <i>Please specify mark within this range</i></p>	<p>The candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Fails to elicit most</u> of the important aspects of the history and/or physical examination, as would be expected of a competent specialist <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaches his/her conclusions by fraudulent or dishonest means, in the examiners’ opinion <p>OR</p> <p>Displays serious disrespect towards the patient</p>
<p>40 – 45% <i>Please specify mark within this range</i></p>	<p>The candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Fails to elicit some</u> important aspects of the history and/or physical examination, as would be expected of a competent specialist <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Manufactures” or finds features on history or physical examination which are, in fact, not present. <i>Examiners must satisfy themselves by their own independent evaluation that this is the case</i> <p>OR</p> <p>Is unable to make a pathophysiologically plausible clinical assessment, with an appropriate differential diagnosis, and a rational plan of further investigation.</p>
<p>52 - 69%</p>	<p>The candidate:</p>

MARK	DESCRIPTION
<p><i>Please specify mark within this range</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Successfully elicits most</u> of the relevant aspects of the history and physical examination, as would be expected of a competent specialist. <i>Examiners should be satisfied that no important aspects of the history or physical examination have been missed</i> <p>AND</p> <p>Makes a pathophysiologically plausible clinical assessment, with an appropriate differential diagnosis, and a rational plan of further investigation</p>
<p>70 - 74%</p> <p><i>Please specify mark within this range</i></p>	<p>The candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Successfully elicits all</u> the relevant aspects of the history and physical examination, as would be expected of a competent specialist <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes a pathophysiologically plausible clinical assessment, with an appropriate differential diagnosis, and a rational plan of further investigation <p>AND</p> <p>Demonstrates clinical maturity, insight and a breadth of experience and knowledge</p>
<p>75 - 100%</p> <p><i>Please specify mark within this range</i></p>	<p>The candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Successfully elicits all</u> the relevant aspects of the history and physical examination, as would be expected of a competent specialist <p>AND</p> <p>Makes a pathophysiologically plausible clinical assessment, with an appropriate differential diagnosis, and a rational plan of further investigation</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Demonstrates clinical maturity, insight and an outstanding grasp of clinical medicine, including both a broad and deep experience and theoretical knowledge</p>

4.7 CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESULTS

- 4.7.1 Results must be kept confidential at all times. Candidates are informed by the Johannesburg office of their provisional results and their final results.
- 4.7.2 The names of candidates who have passed the oral/clinical/practical examination may be put up outside the department after the examiners meeting, but the individual marks may only be released to the candidate by the Johannesburg office.
- 4.7.3 Marks will only be released to a candidate's head of department if the candidate has signed the necessary release form.

5. See Code of Conduct on page 20

SECTION B

CONVENORS

6. APPOINTMENT OF CONVENORS

- 6.1 The convenor of the examination will be appointed by a process agreed to by the constituent college. A senior examiner from the host centre shall be the convenor for the examination. This examiner should have been involved with the examination process, and should be familiar with the rules and the conduct of the examination.
- 6.2 Convenors shall be required to submit a report about the quality of the questions set, the conduct of the examinations, the performance of the candidates, and what improvements need to be effected in the teaching to the Chairman of the Examinations and Credentials Committee soon after the examinations are concluded.

7. CONVENOR POLICY

- 7.1 Examiners must be reminded by the convenor that candidates perceive the examining process as very intimidating, and therefore should act in a professional manner during the entire examination process. This includes confidentiality regarding nomination of examiners, candidates' identities and information on results.
- 7.2 At the request of Senate, these guidelines have been adopted as a result of alleged intimidation of examiners and candidates, the Examination and Credentials Committee.
- 7.3 Any complaints from a candidate or examiner must be in writing and signed. No action will be taken on verbal allegations.
- 7.4 In the first instance the complaint will be reviewed by the Academic Registrar, in discussion with the Chairman and/or the Honorary Registrar of the Examinations and Credentials Committee who may request further written information regarding the complaint.
- 7.5 Should the above persons deem the allegation to have merit, a sub-committee comprising, if possible, the above three persons plus a representative from the College concerned and the Vice-President or the President CMSA will decide on further action, if necessary.
- 7.6 If an examiner is being intimidated, he/she should not take any action but he/she should report the incident to the Academic Registrar.

8. MEMORANDUM TO EXAMINATION CONVENORS

8.1 It is the aim of the CMSA to meet the increasing costs of examinations in the different centres whilst keeping examination fees at an acceptable level. It would be appreciated if you could assist the CMSA with the following:

8.1.1 **Transport of Examiners and Reimbursement of Examination Related Expenditure**

8.1.1.1 Senate agreed that examiners would not be expected to pay for transport costs to and from meetings or examination venues, or for airport transfers.

8.1.1.2 Examination Convenors are therefore requested to assist, if possible, with the transport of visiting examiners. The CMSA will reimburse Convenors for this expense at the rate fixed by the Minister of Finance by notice in the Government Gazette.

See [CMSA Travel Policy](#)

8.1.2 **Expenses Reimbursed by the CMSA for Hosting its Examinations**

8.1.2.1 The policy of the CMSA with regard to the reimbursement of expenses with the hosting of examinations at the various hospitals is outlined hereunder.

See [Fees and Charges](#) and [CMSA Claim Form](#).

8.1.3 **Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred by Patients**

8.1.3.1 Outpatients specifically brought in for CMSA examination purposes are reimbursed for their incidental costs (e.g. lunch and transport) at a rate of R335 per day. (1 June 2017 – 31 May 2018) This will be paid out upon presentation of receipts.

8.1.4 **Remuneration for Secretarial Assistance**

8.1.4.1 Examination Convenors must ensure that invigilators/secretarial assistants/typists and others who help with the CMSA examinations are suitably remunerated, by completing and submitting to the Cape Town office, the blue claim form which is sent to them with the other documentation.

8.1.4.2 Their remuneration will be calculated at the standard CMSA rate, based on the actual hours that they worked for the CMSA, and will only be paid out upon receipt by the Cape Town office of a claim form duly completed by the examination Convenor.

8.1.5 **Remuneration of Nurses, DoH/ NHLS Laboratory Support Staff**

8.1.5.1 Nurses who have to be brought in to care for patients at the time of CMSA examinations will be remunerated in the same manner as invigilators and secretarial assistants, i.e. upon receipt by the Cape Town office of a claim form duly completed by the examination Convenor.

8.1.5.2 Support or laboratory staff who assist in the running /performance of the clinical and/or practical examinations, will be remunerated in the same manner as outlined above.

9. GUIDELINES FOR CONVENORS

This policy document outlines the role of the convenor and should be read in conjunction with the other policy documents of the CMSA. While the CMSA remains indebted to the hosting Departments for CMSA examinations, if the Head of such a hosting Department does not serve as either the convenor, moderator or an examiner for a CMSA examination, such a HoD may not unduly influence the CMSA examination processes or any known candidates.

9.1 Before the examination

- 9.1.1 Sign and return the confidentiality agreement to the CMSA.
- 9.1.2 Receive and get acquainted with the letter of appointment that outlines the deadlines for submission of questions and results.
- 9.1.3 Meet all deadlines from the CMSA about when questions, marks and scripts should be returned to you and inform examiners.
- 9.1.4 Compile the final examination papers and change, amend or request new questions from examiners if necessary.
- 9.1.5 Submit the blue-printed examination papers timeously for formatting to the CMSA and re-check the final formatted papers received back from the CMSA.
- 9.1.6 Request a “bare-bones” memorandum from examiners for the questions which will be used.
- 9.1.7 Remind examiners that candidates perceive the examining process as very intimidating and that examiners should act in a professional manner during the entire examination process.
- 9.1.8 Weighting of questions in papers.
- 9.1.9 Copy of the draft written paper to the appointed moderator.
- 9.1.10 Be acquainted with any sub-minima for papers for invitation to oral/practical/clinical examinations.
- 9.1.11 Any request to alter the examiner numbers for an individual examination must be motivated in writing to the College.
- 9.1.12 All provisional results MUST be sent to the President of your college for final approval before being submitted to the CMSA.
- 9.1.13 Submit a written report to the CMSA after each examination outlining the conduct of the examination, marks achieved, success rates, problems identified and recommendations for future examinations.

9.2 During the written examination

Be on standby for written examination paper questions or queries from the Examinations Office.

9.3 After the written examination

- 9.3.1 Ensure that all marks are received back from individual examiners and that a mark sheet is compiled including the provisional outcomes, to be submitted to the CMSA Examinations Office timeously.
- 9.3.2 All provisional results will be sent to the President of your college for final approval by the Examinations Office.
- 9.3.3 Ensure timeous submission of the oral timetable.

9.4 **Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examination**

(PLEASE NOTE: THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY TO EXAMINATIONS WITH THIS COMPONENT)

- 9.4.1 Remind examiners again that candidates perceive the examining process as very intimidating and that examiners should act in a professional manner during the entire examination process.
- 9.4.2 Oversee all the organisational aspects of the Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examinations.
- 9.4.3 Ensure that the Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examinations are conducted in a satisfactory manner.
- 9.4.4 Report on the Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examinations.

9.5 **After the examination**

- 9.5.1 Remind examiners and candidates of their right to lodge a complaint, but this must be in writing.
- 9.5.2 Submit a written report to the CMSA after the examination outlining the conduct of the examination, marks achieved, success rates, problems identified and recommendations for future examinations.
- 9.5.3 Submit feedback forms for all failed candidates in both the written and oral/clinical examination.
- 9.5.4 Use electronic communication as the only method. The following e-mail address should be used: Miss Nombuso Gcumisa – Examiners Manager: nombuso.gcumisa@cmsa.co.za

10. **Code of Conduct on page 20**

SECTION C

MODERATORS

11. APPOINTMENT OF MODERATOR

11.1 The moderator of the examination will be appointed by a process agreed to by the constituent college. A senior examiner shall be the moderator for the examination.

12. ROLE OF THE MODERATOR

12.1 As an academic centre, the CMSA needs to implement guidelines for moderators which are clearly defined, transparent to all concerned, and consistently applied. An integral part of the assessment procedure is the review of candidate scripts by moderators with a view to maintaining quality, establishing benchmarks and ensuring fairness.

12.2 Moderators are recruited for their professional expertise. The purpose of the moderator is threefold:

12.2.1 To ensure fairness in the assessment of individual candidates

12.2.2 To ensure consistency in marking

12.2.3 To oversee standards in learning outcomes

12.3 The moderator shall be responsible for examining a sufficient number of scripts to enable him/her to confirm that the level and consistency of marks allocated by the examiner(s) is appropriate.

12.4 The moderator may also comment on the appropriateness and consistency of assessment practice and procedures, and on content and programme development. The moderator can also advise on the comparability of academic standards against examining and awarding processes in other institutions.

12.5 The moderator shall attend the clinical/oral component of the examination.

12.6 Procedures for Moderators

12.6.1 A sample of marked scripts from the top, middle and bottom of the range of grades are sent to the moderator. Borderline grades may also be sent.

12.6.2 Moderators are not expected to perform the task of marking candidate work. Moderation is the process of reviewing the marking of other examiners and expressing a view on the marks awarded.

12.6.3 The moderator considers the following questions:

12.6.3.1 Is the mark awarded by the examiner fair?

12.6.3.2 Are the marks appropriate?

12.6.3.3 Are the marks awarded consistent?

12.6.3.4 Are the standards consistent?

12.6.3.5 Should there be any changes in the mark awarded?

12.6.3.6 What recommendations/comments can be made about the marks awarded?

12.6.3.7 Were the methods of assessment well-balanced and fair?

12.6.3.8 Were examination/assessment procedures and the schemes for marking and classification correctly applied?

- 12.6.3.9 Were the standards of knowledge, understanding and skills demonstrated by candidates consistent with the level of award?
- 12.6.3.10 Were the standards appropriate to programme specifications and the national qualifications frameworks recommendations?
- 12.6.4 If the moderator feels there are serious discrepancies in the marks awarded, he/she should review all the scripts to determine if there is a systematic error in the standards applied.
- 12.6.5 Moderators do not overrule marks awarded by examiners, but recommend why changes should be made to the grades awarded.
- 12.6.6 Scripts are sent via DropBox. A template is supplied to each moderator giving the names of the scripts to be reviewed and the mark awarded by the original examiner. If the moderator feels the marks awarded need to be altered, he/she can note this on the form giving a detailed reason as to why he/she thinks the original marks should be altered. This report is then returned to the CMSA Academic office in Johannesburg.
- 12.6.7 Following the process of moderation, moderators may be involved in influencing the marks awarded through discussion and negotiation. Where discrepancies arise between the examiner's mark and the view of the moderator, the examiner will be asked to consider the recommendations of the moderator. The examiner can accept or reject the recommendations of the moderator.
- 12.6.8 If, following the moderator's recommendations, it is agreed that marks need to be altered, then these changes will be noted and presented to the Examination and Credentials committee of the CMSA.
- 12.6.9 Where a moderator feels there is a systematic error in grading, all scripts should be altered proportionally in line with his/her recommendations.
- 12.6.10 Colleges that have their own Moderator procedures do not need to implement these. This document is a guide for those colleges that do not have Moderator procedures in place.

13. MODERATOR ROLE POLICY

This policy document outlines the role of the moderator as an integral party of the assessment procedure. This policy document should be read in conjunction with the moderation procedures. Moderators are appointed for their professional experience and expertise. The role of the moderator includes the following: to ensure fairness in the assessment of individual candidates through reviewing of all papers; to ensure consistency in marking through reviewing of marks and/or scripts; to have oversight in all Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examinations and to oversee standards in learning outcomes.

13.1 Before the examination

- 13.1.1 Reviewing of all papers compiled by convenors to ensure content coverage (“blue-printing”) and fairness and practicability of such papers.
- 13.1.2 The moderator may also comment on the appropriateness and consistency of assessment practice and procedures, and on content. The moderator can also advise on the comparability of academic standards against those of other comparable institutions.

13.2 After the written examination

- 13.2.1 The moderator shall be responsible for reviewing a sufficient number of scripts to enable him/her to confirm that the level and consistency of marks allocated by the examiner(s) is appropriate.
- 13.2.2 The moderator shall have a sample of marked scripts from the top, middle and bottom of the range of marks sent for moderation via DropBox. Borderline and failed marks must also be sent.
- 13.2.3 Moderators may not perform the task of marking candidates’ work. Moderation is the process of reviewing the marking of other examiners and expressing a view on the marks awarded. If the moderator feels there are serious discrepancies in the marks awarded, he/she should review all the scripts to determine if there is a systematic error in the standards applied.
- 13.2.4 Moderators shall not overrule marks awarded by examiners but recommend to the convenor why changes should be made to the marks awarded. Following the process of moderation, moderators may be involved in influencing the marks awarded through discussion and negotiation.

13.3 During the Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE examination

(PLEASE NOTE: THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY TO EXAMINATIONS WITH THIS COMPONENT)

- 13.3.1 The moderator must attend the Practical/Clinical/Oral/OSCE component of the examination.

13.4 Conclusion of the examination

- 13.4.1 Provide a written report to the CMSA detailing any anomalies encountered during the examination

SECTION D

CODE OF CONDUCT

14. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EXAMINERS, CONVENORS AND MODERATORS

This Code shall be applicable to examiners, observers, convenors and moderators who shall, for the sake of convenience, be referred to in this Code as “examiners.”

Preamble

Conduct and Academic Integrity for CMSA examinations

Given that the CMSA acknowledges:

- The critical role together with the enormous and valuable contribution of examiners
- The importance of professionalising the CMSA examination
- The need for a high quality examiner
- The importance of fostering a culture of professionalism, collaboration and harmonisation This Code shall apply to all examiners and all examinations held under the auspices of the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (the “CMSA”). Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action and even removal of the examiner from the panel of examiners.

The CMSA depends on the commitment and the professional conduct of all its examiners. In order to ensure that the standard and quality of the CMSA examination is adhered to, all examiners are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct. In the event of any allegation of misconduct, the CMSA will conduct an investigation in accordance with the guidelines and the regulations of the CMSA.

14.1 General standard of behaviour

- 14.1.1 Examiners are expected to behave in a professional manner that is befitting to the CMSA. Examiners who examine for the CMSA examination (“examiners”) accept responsibility and obligation to abide by this Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity. Conduct and Academic integrity violations include all forms of misconduct and academic dishonesty.
- 14.1.2 Adherence to the Code of Conduct is expected at all times.

Standard of behaviours

- 14.1.3 While undertaking all duties associated with the CMSA examination, examiners are expected to behave professionally and adhere to the standards of the whole examination process.
- 14.1.4 Examiners are expected to conduct themselves in an honest and proper manner. Improper conduct includes, but is not limited to offering or accepting bribes, telling, divulging or hinting at candidates’ cases and/or questions to expect in the examination, and divulging candidate performance to candidates without finality of the examination process.
- 14.1.5 Examiners are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the CMSA into disrepute.
- 14.1.6 Examiners should refrain from colluding, either by helping, or by allowing another examiner or candidate to commit any act of academic dishonesty.
- 14.1.7 Examiners should not disrupt or obstruct the conduct of any CMSA examination in any manner.

14.2 **Interaction with colleagues**

- 14.2.1 Examiners are expected to be respectful, professional and collegial at all times with colleagues.
- 14.2.2 Where an examiner has a concern about a colleague, the examiner is encouraged to communicate with the said colleague and find resolution. If no resolution can be reached the matter is to be escalated to the convenor, the President of the relevant constituent College and finally to the President of the CMSA.

14.3 **Interaction with candidates**

- 14.3.1 Examiners are expected to respect and behave in a fair and non-discriminatory manner to candidates.
- 14.3.2 Assess the candidates and ensure that the candidate is comfortable and relaxed.
- 14.3.3 Examiners may not deliberately mislead candidates during the examination.
- 14.3.4 Examiners should refrain from making disparaging remarks about the candidates before, during and after the examination process.
- 14.3.5 Examiners are not allowed to give unauthorised assistance since candidates must rely upon their own abilities and examiners should refrain from giving assistance to candidates in any manner that the CMSA does not explicitly allow. This includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving answers to an examination, use of unauthorised materials or answers, or allowing a candidate to have someone else take their examination.
- 14.3.6 Examiners should not lead, coach or give answers to candidates during the examination process. No part of an examination may be discussed with a candidate during the examination.
- 14.3.7 Examiners should guide the candidate on an approach to patients if any cultural or religious sensitivities exist that the candidate may not be aware of.
- 14.3.8 Examiners may not misrepresent themselves e.g.
- Falsifying qualifications; or
 - Falsifying expertise.

14.4 **Patient interaction**

- 14.4.1 Patients must be treated with dignity and respect all times.
- 14.4.2 Sensitivity should be maintained when discussing patient issues with the candidate.
- 14.4.3 Examiners may suggest withdrawal of a patient if a patient for any reason becomes ill or uncomfortable during the examination.
- 14.4.4 Patient confidentiality should be maintained at all times.
- 14.4.5 Correct and clarify to the patient any incorrect information about the patient that may occur during discussions with examination candidates.
- 14.4.6 Where applicable, and as far as possible, ensure that discussion about the patient with examination candidates occurs away from the patient.
- 14.4.7 Adhere to hygiene protocols.
- 14.4.8 Maintain the comfort and safety of the patient.

14.5 **Confidentiality**

- 14.5.1 Strict confidentiality with regard to all aspects of the examination is expected from all examiners.
- 14.5.2 Examiners should maintain strict confidentiality of candidates' results.

14.6 **Copyright and use of materials**

- 14.6.1 Copyright is assumed on all material used for the CMSA examination. No part of these materials may be reproduced without the written permission of the CMSA.
- 14.6.2 Examiners should not publish, distribute, make available as a group or independently any material reviewed or prepared for the CMSA examination.

14.7 **CONDUCT**

Examiners are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and with integrity as responsible members of the CMSA's academic community. This requires the demonstration of mutual respect and civility in academic and professional discourse.

Examiners shall not act in any manner as set out below.

- 14.7.1 Actions, oral statements, and written statements which threaten or violate the personal safety of any member of the examination's board/panel/team, staff, or other candidates.
- 14.7.2 Harassment, sexual or otherwise, that has the effect of creating a hostile or offensive examination environment for any candidate, examinations board/panel/team, or staff member.
- 14.7.3 Stalking, persistently pursuing another person that has the effect of imposing unwelcomed contact and/or communication.
- 14.7.4 Disruptive behaviour that hinders or interferes with the conduct of the examination.
- 14.7.5 Violation of any applicable professional codes of ethics or conduct.
- 14.7.6 Failure to promptly comply with any reasonable directive from the examinations board/panel/team or CMSA officials.
- 14.7.7 Failure to cooperate in a CMSA investigation.
- 14.7.8 Carrying of weapons on property/campus, at property/campus-sanctioned events, examination venues or when meeting with property/campus personnel.
- 14.7.9 Using, dealing in, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on CMSA property or in a CMSA examination.
- 14.7.10 Failure to maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of personal or professional information communicated about patients, candidates or staff.
- 14.7.11 Falsification, alteration or invention of information, including, but not limited to, any third party document used to apply for examination credentialing or information contained on any mark sheet or document.
- 14.7.12 Violation of national, provincial, or local laws or regulations that impacts the CMSA's educational environment.
- 14.7.13 Contravention of any of the provisions of any applicable policy document published by the CMSA.
- 14.7.14 Violations of the code of conduct of the HPCSA.
- 14.7.15 Bringing the good name of the CMSA into disrepute.

14.8 VIOLATION OR BREACH OF THE CODE

In any prima facie (on a first impression) suspected violation or breach of the code of conduct by an examiner (“the Respondent”), an investigation into such violation or breach of the Code will be initiated. Any member of the CMSA, who suspects or has been advised that an examiner is in breach of, or has breached the Code, must immediately, once such a member becomes aware of the alleged breach, initiate proceedings as set out hereunder.

- 14.8.1 If the Respondent is suspected of a violation of the Code at any time before the examination process has commenced, then that suspected violation or breach must be reported to the President of the College responsible for the examination concerned. The Respondent shall be advised of the suspected breach and be requested to recuse himself/herself from the examination process, and should he/she refuse to do so, the President of the College concerned shall have the discretion to suspend the Respondent from the examination process until the investigation and/or disciplinary process have been concluded. The President of the College shall immediately document the circumstances and the reasons for suspecting the Respondent of the alleged breach of the Code.
- 14.8.2 If the Respondent is suspected of violating the Code at any time when the examination process has been commenced and is still in progress, the suspected violation will be reported to the Moderator in charge of the examination process. The Respondent shall be advised of the suspected breach and be requested to recuse himself/herself from the examination in question. If the Respondent refuses to recuse himself/herself, then the Moderator in charge of the examination process shall have the discretion to immediately suspend the Respondent from the examination process until the investigation and/or disciplinary process has been concluded. The Moderator shall immediately after the examination document the circumstances and the reasons for suspecting the Respondent of the alleged breach of the Code.
- 14.8.3 If at any time after an examination has been completed, it comes to the attention of any member of the CMSA that an examiner has acted in breach of the Code, the member who acquires such information shall immediately document the circumstances and the reasons for suspecting the Respondent of the alleged breach of the code of conduct.
- 14.8.4 The written report, as provided for in clauses 14.8.1, 14.8.2 and/or 14.8.3 (“the Complaint”) will be submitted as soon as possible and without delay to the office of the Academic Registrar of the CMSA.
- 14.8.5 The Academic Registrar shall forthwith and without delay advise the Respondent in writing of the Complaint and the fact that it is alleged that the Respondent may have breached the Code. The Respondent shall be afforded a period of 10 (ten) days, from receipt of the notification, to respond thereto in writing (“the Response”).
- 14.8.6 On receipt of the Response, or in the absence of a response after the 10 day period, two or more senior nominated members (excluding the Chair of the ECC) of the Examinations and Credentials Committee (ECC) will meet to consider the Complaint and the Response, if any. If it is decided that prima facie the Complaint, having regard to the Response, if any, evidences a breach of the Code, a suitable charge will be formulated. If not, no further action will be taken and the Respondent and the complainant will be advised accordingly. If no further action is taken, the suspension, if any was imposed on the Respondent, shall be lifted with immediate effect. The members referred to above will be nominated and appointed by the Academic Registrar, in consultation with the President of the CMSA.
- 14.8.7 If a charge is formulated (“the Charge”), the Academic Registrar shall forthwith and without delay advise the Respondent in writing of the Charge. The Academic Registrar shall

- simultaneously advise the Respondent of the opportunity to request the Disciplinary Sub-Committee (DSC) to allow the Respondent legal representation.
- 14.8.8 The Academic Registrar shall place the Complaint, the Response and the Charge before the Disciplinary Sub-Committee as provided below.
- 14.8.9 The Respondent has the right to opt out of the disciplinary process. Should there be a refusal to go through the disciplinary process procedure, the Respondent and the matter will be reported to the relevant training platform/academic institution/academic department/Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA) or appropriate and relevant Professional Board.
- 14.9 **DISCIPLINARY SUB-COMMITTEE (“DSC”)**
As provided for in the rules of the CMSA, the disciplinary procedure shall apply.
- 14.10 **PROCEDURE FOR APPEAL**
- 14.10.1 A Respondent has the right to appeal the finding(s), decision(s) or penalties imposed by the DSC by giving written notice of this intention to appeal to the Registrar of the CMSA within 10 (ten) days after the outcome of the DSC hearing has been communicated to the Respondent.
- 14.10.2 The Appeal process as prescribed in the Code will apply.