

Summary Report of Candidate Exam Exit Surveys 2015

FELLOWSHIP CANDIDATES 2015:

Twenty of the 25 fellowship candidates (across eight subjects) provided feedback via Candidate Exam Exit Survey forms or emails. Subject specific feedback was provided to Chapter CEC and HSE.

Written papers

In general, the candidates reported that the written papers were fair but they often reported a lack of time. More time was also mentioned in relation to improving handwriting. There were also suggestions to introduce rest breaks in the written papers, as was available in some practical examinations.

Time allocation in respect of detail required for answers was also a consideration for candidates.

Nerves and stress were reported to affect performance. Enforced breaks were suggested to reduce stress and facilitate less disruptive comfort stops.

Weighting of questions did surprise in some cases. However it was felt that the papers examined across a good breadth of material, with appropriate topic selection, and at an appropriate level.

Practical Examination

Candidates commented on certain questions that were not appreciated, limited time, the format of the examination, and that no perusal time provided.

Not having perusal time was commented on; arguing that this time is needed to organise thoughts and to plan for time management, and noting that the practical examination is similar in format and time to the written examinations which do allow for perusal time.

Time allocation was also frequently commented on. It was felt that for some questions the time needed to provide the required information was not commensurate to time allowed for. It was also noted that the pace that was required due to the time allowed lead to candidates not having enough time to properly consider their answers. Comments about mark allocation being commensurate with length of the question were made.

Some commented that questions were fair, of a good variety and covered a range of topics. However another commented that they would have expected to see more specific aspects so that they could better demonstrate their knowledge.

Oral examination

There were fewer candidates sitting this component and their comments ranged from negative to positive experiences. Examiners were regarded as welcoming, friendly and clear.

The examination content was not what some were expecting, with comments made about level of theory expected, or questions that dealt with specific aspects rather than overall knowledge.

Prompting was noted, with some requesting more prompting to keep within time or to ensure that all aspects of a question were answered sufficiently where questions contained several components.

General

Candidates made suggestions on how to improve the examination process, including:

- A number (5 candidates) suggested reducing the time between written and oral examinations. One suggested starting written papers earlier in the day.
- Suggestions in relation to time allocation, including asking a recently certified Fellow to test the examination to see if it is fair and achievable in the time allocation, and providing more time for the practical examination.
- Focusing on core aspects in depth rather than peripheral subjects. More, shorter questions in paper 1.

Ten candidates said that they had a mentor, with 6 saying it was not possible to have a mentor due to circumstances. Most candidates who had a mentor said that they were in supervised training with daily contact.