

THE DYNAMICS OF THE FINAL M. B. CLINICAL EXAMINATION IN GENERAL MEDICINE

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The examination in General Medicine at Peradeniya consists of -

- (i) An incourse assessment during the clinical clerkship that includes a Research Project, M. C. Q. Test and Assessment of Ward work.
- (ii) A written component consisting of Fixed-Response (M. C. Q.) and essay questions.
- (iii) Clinical examination consisting of a 'long-case' and four 'short-cases'.

Here pairs of examiners rate the students under these categories — data gathering, data interpretation and management and related knowledge — and they assign marks independently.

Results indicate that the performance of the students in the total Clinical Examination correlate adequately with their marks in the Essay Component, M. C. Q. Component and even higher with their marks scored during the in-course assessment. The clinical examination correlated poorly with the M. C. Q. testing in-course and the Research Project.

In the short-cases and the long-cases, the marks obtained by the students in different sections show positive correlations ranging from 0.45 to 0.90. The agreement of the marks awarded by the 30 different pairs of examiners independently in the 'short-cases' and the 'long-cases' was in the range 0 - 15 in 95% of the instances. Fifteen pairs had agreed within 5%, 14 pairs agreed within 40% and one pair within 15% of the total.

This study establishes some of the assumptions on which the clinical examination is based viz.

- (i) it primarily tests competencies that are not tested by the other components of the examination.
- (ii) the structured marking scheme increases the inter-examiner agreement.