The Medical Licensing Assessment - Applied Knowledge Test (MLA-AKT)

Terms of Reference – MLA-AKT Exam Board

1. Purpose

1.1 The Medical Licensing Assessment Applied Knowledge Test (MLA-AKT) Exam Board assures the consistency of academic standards across AKT assessment delivery.

1.2 The MLA-AKT Exam Board has two distinct functions; one as an Executive providing oversight of the operational functions and groups of the AKT, and the other as an Exam Board ratifying the results for each AKT.

2. Key objectives

2.1 The MLA-AKT Exam Board Executive undertakes the following activities:

a) approving the appointment of Item Development Group, Exam Construction Group, and Standard Setting Group members and the monitoring of their performance

b) assuring the consistency of academic standards across assessment delivery dates by scrutinising all operational group reports

c) sharing information across operational groups and boards to take account of any important changes that might be needed prior to consideration of the annual report

d) producing the annual report each academic year for the MLA-AKT Board and GMC

e) working with the operational groups to implement and monitor aspects of the Equality Analysis and Action Plan relevant to the MLA-AKT design and delivery

f) working with the Policy Group to consider and address any EDI issues raised by the implementation of the MLA-AKT

g) supporting UK medical schools to meet the AKT requirements through collective evidence and coordinating activity for those elements where the MSC is responsible

h) monitoring delivery issues across medical schools

i) making recommendations for improving the design, implementation and delivery of future assessment diets if required

j) identifying EDI impacts and any changes required as a result

k) liaising with the MSC Assessment Advisory Board to suggest areas for the development and maintenance of the Exam-Write platform on which the MLA-AKT will be delivered.

l) maintaining records of decisions made.

2.2 The MLA-AKT Exam Board will undertake the following activities:

a) participate in the Rapid Response Team providing advice and guidance to the MSC assessment team and schools in real time should significant issues be reported on AKT days

b) carry out a detailed analysis at the end of each delivery date, working to an SOP to ratify the exam results before releasing the results to medical schools

3. Confidentiality

3.1 The work of the Exam Board is highly sensitive, and it is the responsibility of those working on the development and delivery of the MLA-AKT to ensure that the confidentiality of candidate information, examination results and examination content is respected at all times. Participation in any external commercial or non-commercial enterprise related to the MLA-AKT without express permission from the MSC, is not allowed. Confidentiality constraints will continue for 5 years after demitting office.

4. Membership

4.1 For the implementation phase the Chair of the Exam Board will be appointed by the MLA-AKT Board. In future rounds the Chair and Deputy Chair will be recommended by Exam Board members from among the medical school representatives and approved by the MLA-AKT Board.

4.2 The following members with voting rights form part of the Exam Board by virtue of their position:

- Item Development Group Chair
- Exam Construction Group Chair
- Standard Setting Group Chair
- Policy Group Chair

4.3 At the discretion of the Chair, one of the appointed MLA-AKT psychometricians may also be invited to attend when necessary and will have voting rights when in attendance.

4.4 Additionally, seven representatives of medical schools will be invited to apply to join the Exam Board as members with voting rights, but without portfolio. Applications will be pseudonymised and reviewed against an agreed scoring criteria by a subgroup of the Exam Board who will act as a selection panel.

4.5 If a member was originally appointed when employed by a school in full membership, they may continue to stand for office even if they move to a new school which is an Associate member.

4.6 To perform its regulatory oversight role and support its quality assurance of the MLA-AKT, including ensuring that it is delivered in line with the processes approved by the GMC, a GMC observer with appropriate expertise and authority may attend Exam Board meetings in order to assure itself about the Board's work. The GMC observer will not have voting rights. Academic experts on the Board will have the final decision as to the required passing standard.

5. Meeting Frequency

5.1 The MLA-AKT is delivered across two consecutive days, on seven occasions from January through to August. Members will need to participate in a rota for the Rapid Response Team on these AKT exam days and in Exam Board meetings to ratify results on completion of the post exam analysis. In addition to this, members will need to attend two Exam Board Executive meetings held remotely in the autumn term, and attend a three-day in person meeting held in late spring.

6. Review

6.1 Non-portfolio members join the Exam Board for a 3-year term after which there will be an option to extend for a further 3 or 4-years. Extension is on the basis that their circumstances haven't changed significantly. A maximum of two terms can be served.

7. Conflict of interest

7.1 Should a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest arise it is the responsibility of the individual to inform the Chair of the Exam Board. This includes involvement with other comparable medical licensing assessments and is to reduce the risk of confidential information being shared between assessments.

8. Anti-Fraud, Anti-Bribery Policy

8.1 Members are required to sign the MLA-AKT anti-fraud, anti-bribery policy.

9. Promoting equality and diversity

9.1 Members must engage with MSC's aim that all doctors, irrespective of their background, have the competence and skills to care for the diversity of the UK's patient population, and understand the ethical and professional issues that arise in practising in the UK.

9.2 Members must have an understanding of and a commitment to addressing equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusivity, with a non-discriminatory approach to cultural differences and take into account the needs of individuals who share protected characteristics. Members must also have an appreciation of the issues faced by newly qualified doctors.

Version	Date	Author	Status	Comments
0.1	15 October 2021	Veronica Davids	Draft	Initial draft
0.1	21 March 2022	Veronica Davids	Final	Signed off. No changes.
0.2	1 September 2023	Veronica Davids	Final	Anti-fraud, anti-bribery added
0.3	13 March 2026	Veronica Davids	Final	Clarification on CoI, 7.1
0.4	August 2026	Veronica Davids	Final	Clarification on Executive function, membership and time commitment