The FRCPath Autopsy
- an examiner pontificates

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Why use OSCEs?

Traditional examinations
Å Inconsistent
Å Unreliable
Å Not observed taking histories, or very much at all!
Å No formal marking scheme, and no standardisation
Why use OSCEs?

OSCEs
- more reliable and consistent
- structured marking schemes
- observation of students performing focused task
The FRCPath autopsy examination - now

Phase 1
The autopsy practical
Â dissect a cadaver
Â examine the organs
Â provide a cause of death
and/or
Â plan further investigatory action
The FRCPath autopsy examination - now

Phase 2
The Centralised OSPE
\- tests knowledge, skills and attitudes across the eleven major autopsy pathology scenarios
\- knowledge and competence are examined, according to a blueprint
The FRCPath autopsy examination
- now

Eleven major autopsy pathology scenarios

1 Sudden death in the community (including sudden cardiac death)
2 Medical disease death
3 Peri-operative death
4 Toxicology death
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Eleven major autopsy pathology scenarios

5 Medical Biochemical death (e.g. diabetes, renal failure)
6 Alcohol-related death
7 Special deaths (e.g. maternal, sickle cell, HIV)
8 Infections
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Eleven major autopsy pathology scenarios

9  Trauma
10  Industrial-related death
11  Death in the elderly
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Domains of knowledge and competence

a  Gross pathology
b  Histopathology images
c  Histopathology (microscopy) in real time
d  Body fluid analysis
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Domains of knowledge and competence

e  Communication skills
f  Data interpretation
g  Whole Case interpretation
h  ONS cause of death formulation
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Domains of knowledge and competence

i. Medical-legal aspects of death
j. Health & Safety issues
k. Human Tissue Authority and human tissue regulations
The FRCPath autopsy examination - designing a station

Choose a blueprint intersection

2 Medical disease death

Body fluid analysis
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2 Medical disease death

d Body fluid analysis

? diabetes mellitus
? transfusion reaction
? familial hyperlipidaemia
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- designing a station

? diabetes mellitus

You are provided with:
- a clinical history
- a description of macroscopic findings
- a microscope slide
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Questions
1. Describe the microscopic findings  
   3 marks
2. What other information could be useful, and why?  
   4 marks
3. Give a cause of death in the standard ONS format  
   3 marks
The FRCPath autopsy examination - designing a station

Answers
1. Describe the microscopic findings
2. What other information could be useful, and why?
3. Give a cause of death in the standard ONS format

Examiners get an outline model answer
The FRCPath autopsy examination - designing a station

Examiners get an outline model answer
- give each candidate a mark according to the mark scheme
- rate each candidate as fail, borderline or pass
- double-marked
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Examiners get an outline model answer
- marks analysed by a psychometrician using the borderline groups method
- reality check
The FRCPath autopsy examination - conduct

- 14 stations
- 15 minutes each
- one minute between stations
- two stations are face-to-face with examiners
  - test communication skills
  - test understanding of complex data
  - rest stations may be used to read complex case