Borderline regression pilot - guidance for examiners

Why are we doing it?

1. The PLAB Review recommended that we should regularly review our standard setting to make sure it’s up to date.

2. We commissioned a Generalisability study of the OSCE from Dr David Swanson, an assessment expert. He said we should look at other methods of standard setting the OSCE, specifically borderline regression.

What is borderline regression?

3. Borderline regression is a method of standard setting that is widely used in OSCEs. It is a variation on the current borderline group method.

4. For each station, we plot the scores of each candidate on a graph, grouping them by the overall judgement each candidate received. We then draw a regression line through each group of scores and where the line intersects with the borderline group we find the passing score for the station.

5. The example in the graph below shows how it works.
How is it different from the current standard setting method?

6 We currently used the borderline group scoring method to set the standard in the OSCE. You can find more details on our website [here](#).

7 Borderline group uses only the scores of the candidates you judge as borderline to set the pass mark for a station. Because of the small numbers involved, we have not been able to set the standard on the day (sometimes no one marks a candidate as borderline in a station) using borderline group. Borderline regression uses the results of all candidates on the day and will let us set the standard on the day, addressing the point raised by Dr Swanson.

8 The standard of the OSCE will not change: you are still marking at the level of first day F2; rather, this is a technical change which will allow us to better reflect your overall judgements in setting the passing standard for each station.
The main difference is that the marks you give on the day will determine whether candidates pass or fail. Passing and failing will no longer be based on historical judgements.

**What effect will it have on how I mark the stations?**

- You should notice very little difference in how you mark the stations.
- How you mark individual objectives will not change.
- The global judgement (pass, borderline, fail) will change to a four point scale (good, satisfactory, borderline, unsatisfactory) to better allow us to calculate the pass mark for the station using the marks of all the candidates you have seen on the day.

The four points are defined as:

- **Good**: Could be expected to carry out work of day 1 F2 to a high standard
- **Satisfactory**: Could carry out work of day 1 F2 safely
- **Borderline**: Not convinced could carry out work of day 1 F2
- **Unsatisfactory**: Could not carry out work of day 1 F2

**When will we start piloting?**

- We will pilot borderline regression starting with the 9-11 June 2015 OSCEs.
- If you are examining on one of the days when we are piloting then the Chief Invigilator will go through what you have to do in the briefing and answer any questions you have.
- We will talk about borderline regression more at examiner training in October and November.

**Is there an opportunity for me to give feedback?**

- Yes. We will be asking you how easy you found the new marking scheme compared to the old one. In order for borderline regression to work effectively it is important that you can select the appropriate overall judgement for a candidate and the categories do not overlap.

**When will borderline regression be introduced for real?**

- We are planning to introduce borderline regression into the OSCE at the end of 2015/beginning of 2016.