

## ATTITUDE TO THE PRESCRIBING SKILLS ASSESSMENT IN FINAL YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS AT AN IRISH UNIVERSITY



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### Introduction

The Prescribing Skills Assessment (PSA) is recognised as method of assesses the prescribing skills of medical students. In an effort to improve first year doctors prescribing skills the PSA has been implemented in all Medical schools in Irish Universities in a voluntary capacity (figure 1).

The study investigated the current attitude of Irish medical students towards the PSA.

### Methods

A cross-sectional, quantitative survey of medical students in the final two years at University College Cork was undertaken to evaluate the following domains; (1) Awareness of the Prescribing Skills Assessment; (2) Evaluate the relative importance of the PSA;(3) Identify potential barriers hindering students' performance in the PSA.

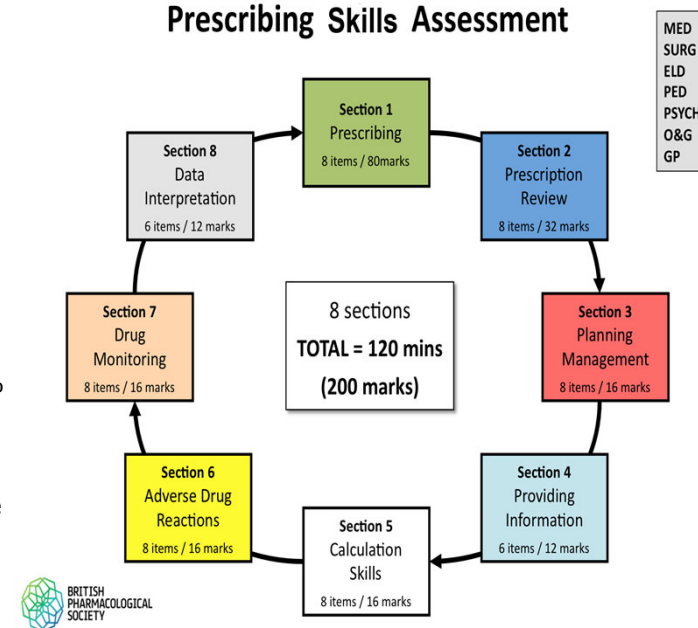
### Results

An overall respond rate of 39% was recorded and 140 completed surveys were considered for final analysis. (n=140, 60% female:40% male, median age 23 years (21-41years)). 25 individuals had sat the PSA. 89% of students were aware of the assessment but only 23% had indebt knowledge of the structure of the PSA. There was mixed opinion on the relative importance of the PSA and only those intending to practise in the United Kingdom were likely to take the assessment. The time of year at which the examination was conducted was irrelevant to students.

### Conclusions

The PSA appears to be an optional extra at a time when students are preparing for final medical examinations and their intern year. Given that prescribing is a recognised area of weakness for junior doctors these results suggest that the authorities should consider making the PSA a pre-registration requirement. (\* P <0.05, \*\*p <0.01)

### Prescribing Skills Assessment



adapted from [www.prescribingskillsassessment.com/aboutpsa](http://www.prescribingskillsassessment.com/aboutpsa)