



Diploma examination

Dermatopathology: First paper

2022

Candidates must answer FOUR questions ONLY

Time allowed: Three hours

1. Describe the spectrum of intravascular proliferations of the skin and what adjunctive techniques may be appropriate for diagnosis. Include endothelial, haematolymphoid and other non-endothelial proliferations.
2. Write short notes on all of the following:
 - a. Single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) arrays in melanocytic pathology.
 - b. Preferentially expressed antigen in melanoma (PRAME).
 - c. p16 expression in cutaneous melanocytic lesions.
 - d. Fluorescent in situ hybridization (FISH) in melanocytic pathology.
3. Describe how you may train and interact with your biomedical scientist colleagues to optimise the dissection of skin specimens. Give examples (e.g. punch biopsies, incision biopsies, simple excision, various types of orientated excisions, alopecia biopsies) and how dissection may vary depending on the clinical information (e.g. tumour versus inflammatory). Use diagrams and short notes where possible. Consider in your answer the pros and cons to BMS cut-up and how you would balance efficiency with safety.
4. Discuss sentinel lymph node biopsy in the management of primary cutaneous malignant melanoma. Include in your answer a critical discussion of the various protocols, the use of immunohistochemistry and histological pitfalls.
5. Describe the range of clear cell proliferations that may present in the skin. Include a discussion of the most useful adjunctive techniques for diagnosis.



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1. Discuss the diagnostic approach to a case of cutaneous mucinosis with a particular emphasis on specific clinical entities and clinicopathological correlation.

2. Write short notes on:
 - a. Clinical and pathological cutaneous manifestations of adult T-cell leukaemia/lymphoma.
 - b. Hidradenocarcinoma (malignant nodular hidradenoma).
 - c. Bazex syndrome (acrokeratosis paraneoplastica).
 - d. Pigmented melanocytoma.

3. Write short notes on:
 - a. Clinical and pathological findings in epithelioid sarcoma.
 - b. Cutaneous myoepithelioma.
 - c. Different clinical and histological presentations of rosacea.
 - d. The genetic, clinical and histological findings in Birt-Hogg-Dubé syndrome.

4. Write short notes on:
 - a. Histology of Grover's disease.
 - b. Clinical and pathological findings in ALK fusion Spitz tumours.
 - c. Extramammary Paget's disease.
 - d. Cutaneous manifestations of Covid-19 (from a dermatopathology perspective).

5. Discuss the role of dermatopathology in influencing management decisions for treating cutaneous squamous cell carcinomas, with an emphasis on the current TNM8 classification system and the role of multidisciplinary team meetings.



The Royal College of Pathologists

Pathology: the science behind the cure

Diploma examination

Dermatopathology: First paper

Spring 2021

Candidates must answer FOUR questions ONLY

Time allowed: 3 hours 15 minutes

1. Detail your diagnostic approach in evaluating a biopsy from the nail unit taken to assess a pigmented lesion.

2. Write short notes on the following:

- a. BAP-1 inactivated melanocytic tumours.
- b. Scope of digital pathology in dermatopathology.
- c. T-cell rich angiomatoid polypoid pseudolymphoma.
- d. Digital papillary adenocarcinoma.

3. Discuss cutaneous adverse effects arising from targeted oncology treatments with specific regard to histopathological aspects.

4. Write short notes on the following:

- a. Distinction of lichen planopilaris from discoid lupus erythematosus, including the role of special stains.
- b. Distinction of infiltrative (morphoeic) basal cell carcinoma from desmoplastic trichoepithelioma, including the role of immunohistochemistry.
- c. Distinction of atypical vascular proliferation after radiotherapy from angiosarcoma.
- d. Distinction of vulval lichen planus from lichen sclerosus.



5. Give a detailed account of the immunochemical stains of value in determining the likely origin of an adenocarcinoma metastatic to the skin. What pitfalls might you encounter?

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Spring 2021

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Time allowed: 3 hours 15 minutes

1. Describe your approach to the histological interpretation of biopsies sent for non scarring alopecias including salient features of the common differential diagnoses.

2. Write short notes on the following:

- a) Tumoural melanosis
- b) Differential diagnosis of an epidermotropic lymphoid infiltrate
- c) Linear IgA bullous disease
- d) Pseudomyogenic haemangioendothelioma

3. Discuss the molecular pathology of the Spitz group of melanocytic tumours with particular emphasis on recent developments in this area and their relevance to routine diagnostic practice.

4. Write short notes on the following:

- a) COVID-19 associated chilblain-like lesions
- b) Blastic plasmacytoid dendritic cell neoplasm



- c) Utility of PRAME antibody in the assessment of melanocytic neoplasms
- d) Cutaneous myoepithelioma

5. Discuss the histopathological approach to a skin biopsy sent with a clinical suspicion of vasculitis. In your answer, pay particular attention to clinicopathological correlation and diagnostic pitfalls.

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Dermatopathology: First paper

Autumn 2020

Candidates must answer FOUR questions ONLY

Time allowed: Three hours

Question 1

Discuss how specific genetic alterations relate to cutaneous melanoma classification and pathogenesis.

Question 2

Write short notes on the following:

- a. The use of fresh tissue (i.e. tissue that has not been fixed in formalin) in diagnostic dermatopathology.
- b. Microtomy related artefacts in dermatopathology.
- c. How a National Health Service (NHS) histopathology department tries to ensure the diagnostic accuracy of its dermatopathologists.



- d. The advantages and disadvantages of the dissection of skin specimens by Biomedical Scientists.

Question 3

Discuss the core data items in the RCPPath data set for primary cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma. Describe how staging of primary cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma has changed from TNM7 to TNM8. Describe any practical difficulties encountered when applying TNM8 staging to primary cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma.

Question 4

Write short notes on the following:

- a. BRAF mutation analysis in dermatopathology.
- b. Molecular techniques as a diagnostic adjunct in soft tissue neoplasms.
- c. Netherton syndrome.
- d. The histological assessment of sentinel lymph node biopsies for metastatic melanoma.

Question 5

Discuss the role of the dermatopathologist in the MDT (multidisciplinary team) meeting and MDT meeting reform.



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Autumn 2020

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Time allowed: Three hours

Question 1

Discuss the role of dermatopathology in the assessment of cutaneous paraneoplastic syndromes.

Question 2

Write short notes on the following:

- a) Neutrophilic urticarial dermatosis.
- b) Histopathological and immunohistochemical features of epithelioid sarcoma.
- c) Deep penetrating naevus.
- d) Dermatopathology of dermatitis artefacta.

Question 3

Discuss the approach to the histopathological diagnosis of mycosis fungoides. In your answer, pay particular attention to the role of clinical correlation and molecular tests.

Question 4

Write short notes on the following:

- a) Histopathology of non-neoplastic conditions of the nail/nail bed.
- b) Cutaneous neoplasms with anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK) gene rearrangement.
- c) Expected skin biopsy findings in Behçet's disease.



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d) Histopathological and immunohistochemical features of cutaneous myopericytoma.

Question 5

“Immunohistochemistry is of limited use in the diagnosis of cutaneous adnexal neoplasms”. Critically discuss this statement, with reference to examples of both benign and malignant entities