



**EECC**

EUROPEAN EXAMINATION  
IN CORE CARDIOLOGY

EECC Board 2023

## Minutes of the EECC Board

**January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

**Hybrid meeting**

**Invited Participants:** Chris Plummer (UK, EECC chair), Alessandro Sionis (Spain, MCQ Review group lead), Alexander Borg (Malta, Selection group lead), Katarina Naka (Greece, Selection group co-lead), Clive Lawson (UK, Standard setting group lead), Susanna Price (ESC Education chair), Kevin Fox (ESC CSEA chair), all EECC Board members (1 representative per National Cardiac Society), all EECC Exam Coordinators (to replace EECC Board member if necessary).

**ESC Staff:** Stephanie Thibault, Michelle Ros

**Distribution list:** all invited participants, Valentina Tursini, Stephanie Thibault, Michelle Ros

### EECC Board meeting

## Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction – *Chris Plummer*
2. EECC 2023 Update – *Chris Plummer*
3. Update of EECC Standard Operating Procedures – *Chris Plummer*
4. EECC Leadership positions – Succession planning – *Chris Plummer*
5. EECC Appraisal by CESMA 2023 – *Chris Plummer*
6. AOB – *Chris Plummer*

## 1. Welcome and Introduction

The objectives of this meeting are:

- To update on progress with preparing the EECC 2023, particularly:
  - New participating countries
  - Registration timelines and new cancellation policy from 2023
  - Update of EECC 2023 preparatory course
- To submit a succession planning proposal

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## 2. EECC 2023 Update

### Participating countries in the EECC 2023 exam

The exam is used widely around the world, particularly in countries aligned with European training standards and European guidelines.

This year, 5 additional National Cardiac Societies are going to take part in the EECC 2023:

- Egyptian Society of Cardiology (Egypt)
- Georgian Society of Cardiology (Georgia)
- Gulf Heart Association (Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE, Yemen)
- Romanian Society of Cardiology (Romania)
- Syrian Cardiovascular Association (Syria)

In addition, 22 National Cardiac Societies (NCS) and 3 Affiliated Cardiac Societies (ACS) are fully enrolled in the programme and have signed the EECC 3-year agreement.

### Number of expected candidates

As the EECC continues to expand geographically and the number of participating countries increases, the number of expected registered candidates is also growing. Between EECC 2021 and EECC 2022, we had a 14% increase in terms of participants. We are prepared for at least 800 candidates in 2023.

### Exam content development – Key dates

The EECC 2023 is scheduled on 13 June 2023. There is no change to the planned date or format (online with proctoring CYIM/ProctorU®).

The standard processes to develop the exam are being followed. For the first time this year, the MCQ writing meetings are taking place in a hybrid in-person/online format. All the other meetings are scheduled to take place online.

Given the flexibility of the online delivery mode, we are aiming for a two-week turnaround from the date of exam delivery to the date that we determine the pass mark and deliver the results to National Societies, as in the last two years.

### Registration timelines – Key dates

- 01 March 2023: deadline for participating countries to provide their list of registered candidates to the ESC
- 13 March 2023: ESC to provide EECC preparatory course access to all registered candidates and link to book an exam slot
- 31 May 2023: deadline for candidates to book their exam slot

### Cancellation policy

As discussed at the July 2022 EECC Board meeting, last year we had a large number of candidates cancelling their participation in the EECC shortly before the exam date. It was decided that this was unfair to other candidates, particularly as they were provided with access to the online introductory course to prepare for the exam. The new cancellation policy - **50% charge within a month, 100% within 2 weeks** of the exam - is intended to reduce late cancellations and has been implemented in the agreement signed by all participating countries.

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## EECC introductory course

For many years, a preparatory course including access to old questions, has been repeatedly requested by candidates in the post-exam survey. In 2022, a newly designed introductory course was developed in the new e-learning platform including:

- Access to relevant resources for each chapter of the Core Curriculum
- Mock exam of 60 questions, developed with the same rigorous writing and editing processes as standard EECC questions

The course content was put together by 10 trainees around the world, who had recently been successful on the exam (2020 and 2021), with oversight from members of the Core Curriculum Task Force. The questions in the mock exam are in the exact same format, and in the exact same delivery platform system as the real exam.

As the feedback from 2022 candidates on this preparatory course was excellent, we have decided to keep the same format, but update it with the more recent resources (e.g., 2022 guidelines)

*Q: Are there dedicated dates for candidates to join the course and discuss with other participants, or is it just an online course?*

Currently it's an online course that candidates can access at any time between 13 March and 13 June 2023. We do not have chat rooms or coordinated sessions. This is interestingly something that we are discussing with APSC, as they are very interested in running such course for their trainees in 2023-24.

*Q: Is it be possible for Board members to have access to the module to see how it looks?*

Yes - we would be very happy to receive feedback from Board members on the structure and content.

*Q: Who can access this module?*

The module is made available to all registered candidates, 3 months before the exam date. It is part of the package (EECC preparatory course + exam sitting)

*Q: Do we have data on how candidates have used the course?*

Yes, we have data on how candidates have used the course, how many modules they have accessed, their progress throughout the 3-month period. We also asked for feedback in the post-exam survey that was sent to all candidates after the exam.

*Q: Some National Cardiac Societies and other organisations are providing paid courses for candidates.*

We do not want to prevent National Cardiac Societies from running their own preparatory courses. We are trying to make clear which resources are official and which are not, so that candidates know whether the materials will reflect the real exam, and to make excellent preparatory resources available to all registered candidates, to ensure that the process is fair to all.

*Q: When is the course available to candidates?*

The course is made available to candidates 3 months before the exam date. We know from last year's data that most of the course revision is in the last month before the exam. The mock exam is only made available one month before the exam date. The main reason for this is that we want candidates to make use of the full module, rather than potentially being falsely reassured by a high mark in the mock exam, too early in their revision.



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*Q: Who is responsible to update the mock exam content?*

Chris Plummer as chair of the EECC and Clive Lawson as chair of the standard setting group will review and update the questions for 2023. We have recently received some data on the performance of each question, as we have for the real exam. Poorly performing questions will be reviewed, as we do for the real questions, although only one mock exam question had a negative correlation.

*Q: Would it be possible to make the normal ranges button more visible? (Exam delivery software)*

The exam delivery software has been redesigned. We can investigate further with CYIM how to make the normal ranges button more obvious to candidates. We will provide a screenshot of the new layout of the exam delivery platform to see if the display of this document is better now.

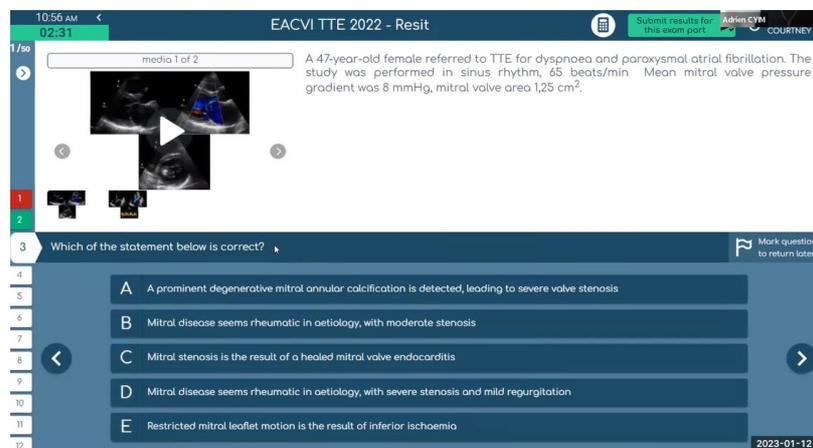
<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EECC Board members to be provided access to the EECC preparatory course (ESC – on 13 March, at the same time the 2023 course is made available to candidates)</li></ul>
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## CYIM – New developments

Adrien, CYIM project manager joined the EECC Board meeting to present 2 new features:

- New layout of the exam delivery platform
- Possibility for candidates to have access to a results page after validation of exam results

### *Redesign of the exam delivery platform*



- A, B, C, D, E on top of each other – more intuitive format
- Easy navigation from one question to another with left and right arrows
- Progress through the exam is more visible (answered questions in green, flagged questions in red, unanswered questions in white)
- Simple way of displaying images and video
- New features for media – ability to zoom and pause a video



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*Results page available to candidates after validation of exam results*

CYIM has developed a new web interface which allows candidates to access their exam results after validation of the pass mark. It can also give them additional details about their performance in the exam – the parameters can be changed if we want to display different information:

- Details about the exam (date, time...)
- Exam result (pass or fail)
- Score of the candidate in each section of the exam
- Score of the candidate compared to the other participants
- Possibility to download a certificate of success



There is an administrative burden on the National Societies to email this information to candidates, particularly in the UK, which has the largest number of candidates. It can take days to complete all the checks required to ensure that the right information is sent to the right candidate. This page is an opportunity to reduce this burden and give candidates access to their results more quickly.

If we want to introduce this additional service, it would be provided to all participating candidates. We cannot offer this to some National Cardiac Societies and not others.

*Q: If the score varies a lot between the different sections, but the global score is above the passing mark, does the candidate pass overall?*

Yes, we do not require the candidate to pass each section of the exam. But this breakdown can be useful to the candidate and potentially his/her mentor to identify areas where the candidate needs to improve their knowledge.

*Q: Will the exam coordinators still have access to the results?*

Yes. After approval of results by the EECC Board, the results will be sent to the exam coordinators. This is just a different way for the candidates to access their results.



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*Comment from Switzerland: It may be an issue in Switzerland for results to be made available to the candidates on such a web page, as it is a legal requirement that the results go out to the candidates through the Swiss Society. It would need to be clarified with the Swiss Head Organization if this could be implemented or not.*

We are not committed to offer this results page to candidates. It was important to show to the EECC Board what has been developed by CYIM for another organisation, and to decide whether it fits with the needs of our candidates and the countries participating in the EECC.

<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Results page:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Clarify with CYIM what is technically possible or not (access, information available to candidates) (ST/CYIM - ASAP)</li><li>○ Circulate to EECC Board members and EECC exam coordinators more information about CYIM new developments (new exam delivery software layout and results page) (ST - ASAP)</li><li>○ EECC Board to decide whether to pilot this results page or not – If necessary, organize an extraordinary EECC Board meeting to take a pragmatic decision on this (ST)</li></ul></li></ul>
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### 3. Update of EECC Standard Operating Procedures

The EECC documentation is reviewed and updated regularly. It includes a large amount of information on the exam's governance, its organisation, and procedures. There are no significant changes in this update, other than the proposed expansion of the leadership team (next agenda item).

### 4. EECC Leadership positions – Succession planning

The EECC has been successfully delivered for 11 years and has grown significantly. It is now necessary to expand the leadership team with the appointment of “chair-elects” while maintaining continuity with new “past-chair” positions.

The current leadership team comprises:

- EECC Board Chair
- EECC MCQ Writing group chair
- EECC Selection group chair and deputy
- EECC Standard setting group chair

Expressions of interest will be requested for each of the four chair-elect positions, with the current chair taking the past-chair role when they stand down. Each chair will be appointed for 2 years, renewable once, as in ESC committees. When appropriate, one group will change its leadership roles each year.

To be eligible for a chair-elect role, MCQ writers will have to have been a member of the group (MCQ writing, selection, or standard setting) they wish to lead for a minimum of 2 years. To be eligible to chair the EECC board, members should have been in a leadership role for at least 2 years.

The EECC Board approved this proposal and the call for applications.

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<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Circulate a call for application (ST - ASAP)</li></ul>
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## 5. EECC Appraisal by UEMS CESMA 2023

As a follow-up from last year, the EECC will be appraised by UEMS CESMA (UEMS body for assessment). This was approved by the EECC Board in 2022 but was unfortunately delayed by CESMA to 2023. We are waiting for more information from CESMA to start the process. The EECC Board will be informed of any progress on this topic.

## 6. AOB

*Q: Would it be possible to have 2 topics per question instead of 1?*

It is currently hard to implement this with our current database. It would also increase complexity, particularly in the selection process. It would be possible to use the keyword functionality of the system and to search questions per keyword.

*Q: How are new guidelines are included in the next exam?*

Usually, MCQ writers produce more questions on recently released guidelines. But there is a balance of all topics in the exam. MCQs based on old guidelines are reviewed and updated as necessary.

*Q: How to address requests from non-cardiologists to take the EECC?*

The exam is designed to test core cardiology knowledge at a level appropriate for independent practice. To allow extraordinary candidates to take the exam (like UK did for CESR candidates), the National Cardiac Society would have to make a formal request to the EECC Board. National societies take responsibility for registering the appropriate eligible candidates. Some National Cardiac Societies like Malta or Finland receive requests from people outside Europe to take the exam and use it as a European recognition (from North Africa for Malta, from Russia for Finland).

<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redraft the eligibility section of the SOP (CP) and circulate it to the Board</li></ul>
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