

UEMS - OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE GUIDELINE FOR THE ORGANISATION OF EUROPEAN POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

The main role of UEMS Occupational medicine specialist assessment is to:

- promote harmonization of European board assessments;
- encourage acceptance of board occupational medicine assessments as a quality mark;
- offer an alternative to national occupational medicine assessments, if required.

Need for guidance documents

The aim is to provide these guidelines to assist the examination board for the assessment in occupational medicine with a common framework for their assessment.

Expected outcome

In providing Guidelines for occupational medicine assessments UEMS Occupational Medicine Section aims to assist the organisation European examinations by

- Increasing the recognition of occupational medicine,
- Reinforcing occupational medicine corporate identity within UEMS,
- Improving the quality and accountability of occupational medicine.

PART I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR EUROPEAN POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL ASSESSMENT IN OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

Status of European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine

European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine is to be considered as **a quality mark** unless otherwise recognised by a **national competent authority** (NCA). Unless full NCA recognition has been obtained, the European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine will be considered complementary to the national examination.

European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine will facilitate mobility of medical practitioners throughout the European Union (EU) by assessing specialist knowledge at an agreed EU standard. Furthermore, the European examination in occupational medicine will enable benchmarking of candidates against their European colleagues in other EU countries.

However, passing a European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine will **NOT** imply a licence to practise. It is only the NCA that will be able to provide such a license. Nevertheless, where full NCA recognition of a qualification applies, the European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine may provide a means for the NCA to determine eligibility for a licence to practise.

Purpose of assessment in occupational medicine

The purpose of assessment of European examination in occupational medicine is a fairly complete assessment of the competence of medical specialists in respect of relevant knowledge and judgement. As part of this, several aspects of training is covered, especially knowledge and attitude.

Multiple-choice questions (MCQs) are considered and used for the assessment of knowledge as valid option.

Guiding principles

Steering Committee

The organisation of a European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine has been developed by a *Steering Committee (i.e. Working Group 1 in Occupational Medicine Section)* composed not of only medical specialists (clinical experts), but also of educational

and assessment experts (*in collaboration with European Association of Schools in Occupational Medicine – EASOM*) to ensure not only the clinical validity of the assessment can be guaranteed, but also educational methodology underpinning it.

Commitment and time frame

It took much time and energy from Working group 1 in Occupational Medicine Section starting intensively in December 2016. A protocol was developed for the set-up of a new European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine, in which a detailed time schedule was included.

Assessment rules

The following aspects were described:

- Detailed specification of the eligibility criteria:
 - Applicants must prove to be trainees in occupational medicine one year before final exam in occupational medicine **or** full specialists in occupational medicine who wish to prove their personal quality mark
 - Number of permitted attempts by candidates: three times is considered the maximum
 - Candidates should only be eligible to sit a maximum of two different assessments within any 12 month period
- Availability of the curriculum: European Training Requirements for the specialty in occupational medicine are available at UEMS website and UEMS Occupational medicine Section website:
 - https://www.uems.eu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/19422/UEMS-2013.19-SECTIONS-AND-BOARDS-Occupational-Medicine-European-Training-Requirements-2013.04.18.pdf
 - https://www.uems.eu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/19420/UEMS-2013.19-SECTIONS-AND-BOARDS-Annex-1-Occupational-Medicine-European-Training-Requirements-2013.04.18.pdf
 - https://www.uems.eu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/19421/UEMS-2013.19-SECTIONS-AND-BOARDS-Annex-2-Occupational-Medicine-European-Training-Requirements-2013.04.18.pdf
- Detailed description of the assessment method used:
 - MCQs composed by 130 questions
 - 50 questions of low level á 1 score each, 50 questions of medium level á 2 scores each, 30 questions of high level á 3 scores each
- Detailed description of the score calculation procedure:

- 50 questions of low level (50x1=50), 50 questions of medium level (50x2=100), 30 questions of high level (30x3=90) i.e. 240 scores maximum
- Detailed description of pass-fail decision criteria:
 - 62,5% of scores is the limit threshold, i.e. 150 scores is needed to pass
- Detailed description of the appeal procedure: in Doc. No. 3

Assessment venue

The decision of the Board is to provide European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine in the Domus Medica Europea at Rue de l'Industrie, 24, B-1040 Brussels – Belgium.

The number of expected candidates is 20 at the most in the first five years.

Duration of assessment

One part is organized only,

MCQs are used to assess knowledge,

Expected duration is 150 minutes.

Archiving

Archives of the documents are kept and properly secured **at least** five years at Domus Medica Europea, Rue de l'Industrie, 24, B-1040 Brussels – Belgium.

A permanent electronic and properly secured database of successful candidates are maintained by the current Secretary of the UEMS Occupational Medicine Section. The minimum information to be included within this database comprises: full name, country, date and place of assessment.

Assessment fees

An acceptable assessment fee to cover the costs of providing the assessment and aim not to significantly disadvantage candidates is 700 EUR and has to be covered in advance at least 7 days before the exam.

Assessment size

Examinations in occupational medicine are classified as

- small-scale assessment: up to 50 candidates.

PART II. ORGANISATION OF EUROPEAN POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL ASSESSMENT IN OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

Before the assessment

For the organisation of European postgraduate medical assessment in occupational medicine we considered the following aspects reminded by the UEMS-CESMA (as described in previous Part I):

- we established a *Steering Committee* (i.e. Working Group 1 in case of our Section in occupational medicine) in 2016,
- prepared a detailed protocol including a timeframe,
- determined the format of assessment (MCQs),
- set eligibility criteria,
- communicated assessment rules,
- provided notification of examination value (and timing when the process approved),
- selected the panel of examiners (UEMS Section members and EASOM members).

During the assessment

- registration of candidates is provided by the Secretary of Occupational Medicine Section, registration of examiners by UEMS Occupational Medicine Section Board,
- availability of sufficient examination papers and answer sheets for paper based examinations is going to be provided by UEMS Brussels office,
- availability of sufficient personnel for the supervision and organisation of the assessment (security) is going to be provided by *Steering Committee* of Occupational Medicine Section,
- score calculation on site is going to be provided by *Steering Committee* of Occupational Medicine Section,
- reliable pass-mark is set prior the assessment (62,5 % scores to pass).

After the assessment

- results are going to be disseminated to candidates within 5 hours after the exam is finished,
- failed candidates are counselled immediately,
- analysis of assessment questions is going to be done within one month after the exam.