



2023 Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Health Medicine (AFOEM) Stage B Practical Examination

Feedback to Candidates

Overview

The 2023 Stage B Practical Examination was delivered at the Royal Adelaide Hospital on Saturday 18 November, 2023.

The AFOEM Practical Examination is a summative assessment that tests a trainee's clinical skills across domains of the [Occupational and Environmental Medicine Advanced Training Curriculum](#). The examination consists of three categories:

1. Exhibit-based assessments (EBAs)
2. Objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs)
3. Clinical stations.

Each category is made up of two stations, making a total of six assessments per candidate.

Each station is developed by AFOEM Fellows. All examiners participate in pre-examination calibration sessions to ensure that an equivalent standard is applied across the related stations in each category of the examination.

At each station, a candidate's score is awarded by consensus of two examiners. If the consensus score arrived at by the two examiners is greater than the predetermined pass mark, the candidate is deemed to have passed that station.

Candidates must pass a minimum of four stations, including at least one pass in each of the three categories, in order to pass the examination.

This document provides generic feedback from the examiners about candidate performance across the AFOEM Stage B Practical Examination. Please note that these are pooled comments from all examiners and may not all apply to every candidate.

Fifteen candidates sat the examination, and the pass rate was 66.7%.

EBA 1

Candidates performed well in the following areas:

- Audiogram description.
- Systematic approach to questions.
- Workplace hazard identification awards of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Workplace exposure standards (WES).

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:

- Naming of equipment, some candidates were hesitant and had difficulty.
- Detail in investigating occupational asthma.
- Asthma management plan.
- Workplace exposure standards.
- Providing more information on workplace exposure standards.

Other comments

- Candidates should not hesitate in answering so that time is used efficiently.
- Ensure answers are clear and respond to the information presented.

EBA 2

Candidates performed well in the following areas:

- Systematic approach to answers.
- Clear concise responses.
- Occupational hygiene.

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:

- Identification of period in air monitoring result.
- Respiratory protective equipment (RPE).
- Knowledge of spirometry result.
- Knowledge of Safety data sheets (SDS).

OSCE 1

Candidates performed well in the following areas:

- Comprehensive assessment.
- Introductions.

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:

- Structured history taking.
- Approach.
- Empathy.
- Allowing patient to finish answering questions, adversely affected patient relationship.

Other comments

- Candidates should use reading time to structure their approach.
- Use sub headings in notebook when taking notes to ensure they are not missing important components.

OSCE 2

Candidates performed well in the following areas:

- Structure in medical and occupational synthesis.
- Comprehensive history taking.
- Patient interaction.

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:

- Organisation.
- Empathy.
- Explaining symptoms of sleep apnoea in detail.
- Feedback to employer eg no consent, no discussions or timelines.
- Obtaining an occupational history.
- Focus on safety critical role.

Clinical Case 1

Candidates performed well in the following areas:

- Good professional qualities.
- Interaction with patient.
- Examination of left shoulder and upper limb technique.
- Examination accuracy.
- Physical findings.

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:

- Interpretation.
- Systematic approach.
- Be more thorough, missed testing of certain areas and key signs.
- Synthesis of physical findings.
- Recognising scans.

Clinical Case 2

Candidates performed well in the following areas:

- Good professional qualities.
- Sanitation and introductions.
- Giving patient instructions.
- Examination technique.
- Identifying requirements for a musculoskeletal and neurological exam.

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:

- Completing the examination due to poor efficiency, for example some spent too long examining hip joints.
- Giving thoughts of evidence for and against if listing differentials.
- Presentation of findings not succinct.
- Order of examination.
- Reflex testing accuracy.
- Most candidates could not interpret horizontal images on the MRI. Some did not identify level of lesion.

Other comments

- Candidates covered important parts of the examination, but variations in quality / technical proficiency.