
EDITORIAL

**Examinations In Iraqi Board For Medical Specializations
(Facts and Fictions)**

Iraqi Board For Medical Specializations is the largest and state supported university for postgraduate medical specializations providing 38 medical and surgical specialties dedicated to achieve excellence in teaching and training to its students , and those certified by the Iraqi Board have successfully completed an approved training program. The trend in training include decrease class time , increase small groups learning , increase the use of clinical cases specially problem based and more time for theatre and interventional training .

In the Iraqi Board For Medical Specializations there are three examinations :

The first examinations held in August yearly for those who want to enrol in the study and only graduates from accredited medical colleges and who have finish their rotation two years program in a recognized teaching hospitals are allowed to sit for this entrance competence examination comprised of a written multiple choice questions in the format of best single answer covering the specialty the candidate applied for and he should acquire the minimum 65% marks and then to compete with the others for final acceptance .

Those who passed and enrolled in the study will face two examinations .The primary examination is in basic medical and surgical sciences and the candidate has got three attempts during the first two years of his study and the examination consists of two papers MCQ and Essay and he should score 60% in each with an average of 70% in both papers .The final examination will be conducted in two sections. Section one MCQ and Essay papers , section two comprised clinical , oral and practical . Candidates must meet the required standard in section one to gain eligibility to proceed to section two .The final examination will assess various elements of applied knowledge , diagnostic skill , clinical judgment and proper management with mature and professional performance . Ideally all the candidates should pass this examination as it is carried at the end of the general part of training program supervised by a professor or a consultant This indicates that they are competent surgeons or physicians and they have

sufficient knowledge base to practice as an independent specialists upon graduation .

The teaching staff in the Iraqi Board For Medical Specializations are under attack from all sides. Being a president of The Iraqi Board , I have been in the frontline of the issue and always aware of the numerous pressure that my colleagues face .Parents and students resent the result of the examinations when ended with failure .Critics in the Ministry of Higher Educations and Scientific Research criticize our methods of examinations specially the scoring system .Worst of all the examining staff are increasingly worried nowadays being conducting the examinations in an atmosphere of fear that may foster violence .

It is disappointing to see some candidates protest that the examination is not fair and that only a certain proportion are allowed to pass and the examiners are forced to fail some candidates . This is not true ,the examination is based on a standard and if this is achieved , all the candidates may pass .Such a standard is outlined and agreed upon by all the examiners when they meet at the end of the examination .

It is also disappointing to see some candidates protest that the examiners create an atmosphere of tension and some of them are tough in clinical examination .It should be clear that all the examiners are well trained to examine in a best way which should set the candidates at ease and allow them to do their best . In clinical examinations , each candidate meets at least eight examiners for short cases , long case, oral and practical , So one bad mark by a ‘ tough ‘ examiner will not necessarily fail a candidate.

Such thoughts of doubt and fear are pathway to failure and the candidate should always conquer these negative attitudes . A clear message to all future candidates that they will always see a fair examination that help a good candidate to pass and at the same time maintain the credibility and integrity of the Board qualification .

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