2025 Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Health Medicine (AFOEM) Stage B Practical Examination

Feedback to Candidates

Overview

The 2025 Stage B Practical Examination was delivered at the Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney on Saturday, 15 November 2025.

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 apply to every candidate.

Seventeen candidates sat the examination, and the pass rate was 65%.

EBA 1

Candidates performed well in the following areas:
- Internation Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classification
- Respiratory personal protective equipment (PPE) identification
- Hazard identification
- Differential diagnoses for radiology given

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) classification
- Identifying non-physical exposures
- Interpretation of spirometry

Other comments
- Some candidates were confused between IARC and ILO
- Use a systematic approach to answering questions
- When asked to discuss, give more details.

EBA 2

Candidates performed well in the following areas:
- Systematic approach to identifying hazards
- Knowledge of temperature as a hazard

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:
- Interpretation of biological monitoring
- Lack of familiarity with safety data sheet (SDS)
- Lack of systematic approach to controls

Other comments
- Gain familiarity with SDS
- Practice presenting data/biological monitoring results
- Be systematic.

OSCE 1

Candidates performed well in the following areas:
- Medical history taking
- Communication skills
- Interaction with patient was generally good

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:
- Occupational/workplace history not detailed enough
- Understanding the issues of a remote site and difficulty with sick workers on how they will be evacuated

Other comments
- Gain more knowledge/understanding in mining industry
- Ask more questions related to occupational history.

OSCE 2

Candidates performed well in the following areas:
- Empathy for patient
- General history taking
- Professionalism

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:
- No exploration or lack of depth in understanding the workplace and tasks required
- Environmental and psychological environment for patient returning to work
- Impact of the injury on returning to work
- Limited function assessment.

Clinical Case 1

Candidates performed well in the following areas:
- Systematic approach to examination
- Approach to patients and gaining consent

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:
- Interpretation of and summarising of clinical findings to synthesise provisional diagnoses
- Most candidates missed passive range of movement in examination

Other comments
- Candidate should approach patients clinical problems with an open mind, not a predetermined diagnosis and try to fit clinical findings to that diagnosis.

Clinical Case 2

Candidates performed well in the following areas:
- Interaction with patients, professional

Candidates performed poorly in the following areas:
- Not quite disciplined in terms of periphery to centre hands then conjunctivae, jugular venous pressure, carotid – occasionally back tracked/duplicated
- Examination accuracy
- Synthesis and presentation of findings

Other comments
- Practice focused examinations based on the patient's presentation and what you find during the physical examination
- Ask for assistance with in room equipment (bed, blood pressure) if required.