

# IMCAC Policy on Board Examinations & Skill Assessments

**International Medical Competency Accreditation Council (IMCAC)** 

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# Section A – Foundational Framework

#### 1. Introduction

Board Examinations and Skill Assessments form the gold standard of competency validation within the International Medical Competency Accreditation Council (IMCAC) framework. They are not limited to theoretical recall; instead, they represent a comprehensive, multi-dimensional evaluation of a candidate's readiness for medical and clinical practice.

Unlike traditional models, IMCAC assessments combine:

- Cognitive knowledge testing (to ensure mastery of evidence-based medicine).
- Applied skill assessments (simulations, OSCEs, and DOPS for hands-on competence).
- Professional behavior evaluations (ethics, teamwork, communication, and patient safety).
- Reflective practice (portfolios, CPD records, and case-based analyses).

By mapping each examination to the 7-Level Clinical Progression Matrix (CPM), IMCAC ensures a transparent pathway of development — from Fundamental Awareness (Level 1) to Global Excellence & Influence (Level 7) — with each credential representing an independently verified milestone in a professional's journey.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

The IMCAC Board Examinations & Skill Assessments Policy aims to:

- Standardize Examinations Globally
   Create a unified, competency-based examination system across all IMCAC-accredited institutions, reducing regional variations and guaranteeing fairness.
- Ensure Fairness, Reliability, and Transparency
   Maintain independent oversight of examinations, with psychometric validation of written questions, double-blind evaluations for practicals, and transparent reporting of outcomes.
- Validate Competency Beyond Knowledge
   Assess not only clinical theory but also hands-on technical skills, clinical



decision-making, ethics, professionalism, and patient-centered care.

Protect Credential Integrity
 Prevent fraudulent certifications, misconduct, or dilution of IMCAC's global reputation by enforcing strict security protocols and digital verification systems.

Together, these objectives ensure that every IMCAC-certified professional is globally recognized as competent, ethical, and practice-ready.

## 3. Scope & Applicability

This policy applies to:

Institutions
 Universities, medical colleges, training academies, and hospitals accredited by IMCAC to deliver board examinations.

#### Candidates

- Medical professionals (doctors, surgeons, allied health professionals).
- Medical students, residents, and fellows preparing for board-level recognition.
  - Practitioners seeking Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) through structured assessment.

#### Examiners

- Certified faculty and trainers who meet IMCAC's examiner credentialing standards.
- Independent external reviewers engaged for peer-audit and global benchmarking.

## 4. Definitions & Key Terms

- Board Examination → A structured, multi-component assessment conducted by IMCAC or its accredited partners to evaluate competency for certification.
- OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) → A practical exam composed of clinical stations that test hands-on skills, reasoning, and



communication.

- DOPS (Direct Observation of Procedural Skills) → A standardized, workplace-based evaluation of how candidates perform procedures in real or simulated settings.
- Portfolio → A structured digital record of professional learning, including CPD credits, clinical case logs, reflective statements, publications, and supervisor endorsements.
- CPM (Clinical Progression Matrix) → IMCAC's seven-level competency framework guiding exam design, evaluation, and credentialing.

## 5. Guiding Principles

IMCAC examinations are built on the following guiding principles:

- Competency-Based
   Assessment and application manner
  - Assessments are explicitly mapped to CPM milestones, ensuring progressive skill development and lifelong learning validation.
- Fair & Transparent
  - Written exams undergo psychometric validation.
  - Practical exams use pre-validated OSCE/DOPS checklists.
  - Evaluations follow bias-free, standardized rubrics with appeal rights.
- Global Benchmarking

Examination formats, policies, and pass standards are benchmarked against WFME (World Federation for Medical Education), ECFMG (Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates), and WHO workforce education guidelines.

• Ethical & Secure

Integrity of examinations safeguarded through:

- Encrypted digital question banks rotated annually.
- QR-coded certificates and tamper-proof digital verification.
- Strict anti-misconduct policies with penalties for candidates, examiners, and institutions.



# Section B – Governance & Oversight

#### **6. IMCAC Examination Authority**

The International Medical Competency Accreditation Council (IMCAC) functions as the central authority for examinations worldwide. Its mandate covers:

- Setting Examination Standards: Defining global benchmarks for written, practical, and professional assessments.
- Accrediting Examination Centers: Approving institutions with adequate infrastructure, faculty, and governance to conduct IMCAC exams.
- Certifying Outcomes: Issuing secure, verifiable certifications that indicate the candidate's competency level within the 7-Level Clinical Progression Matrix (CPM).
- Oversight of Fairness: Ensuring integrity, comparability, and transparency in exam processes across all participating countries.

#### 7. Governance Structure & Roles

To guarantee quality and impartiality, IMCAC has a multi-layered governance structure:

- Examinations Committee
  - Oversees all policies related to assessments.
  - Develops exam blueprints, weightage distribution, and pass/fail standards.
  - Approves new examination models in response to evolving global medical needs.
- Question Bank Sub-Committee
  - Develops and maintains validated item banks for MCQs, SAQs, and case scenarios.
  - Conducts psychometric analysis to ensure reliability, difficulty balance, and cultural fairness.
  - Updates questions annually to align with the latest evidence and clinical practices.



- Examiner Training Division
  - Designs examiner credentialing programs.
  - Trains faculty in standardized evaluation methods (OSCE checklists, DOPS rubrics, portfolio grading).
  - o Conducts annual calibration workshops to maintain inter-rater reliability.

## 8. Accountability & Transparency

IMCAC emphasizes open governance and accountability through:

- Public Examination Policies: All exam policies, eligibility criteria, and grading rubrics are published and accessible to stakeholders.
- Annual Examination Report: IMCAC compiles and publishes annual data on:
  - Candidate numbers and pass rates.
  - Audit findings from accredited centers.
  - Identified trends in assessment outcomes.
- Independent Audits: External examiners and reviewers ensure fairness and prevent bias.
- Feedback Loops: Institutions and candidates may provide structured feedback, which is considered in policy revisions.

# Section C - Examination Framework

#### 9. Competency-Based Examination Philosophy

IMCAC examinations are built on the principle that competency is multi-dimensional. Assessments must therefore measure:

- Knowledge (theory, decision-making frameworks).
- Skills (procedural, technical, and clinical reasoning).
- Professional Behavior (communication, ethics, teamwork).



• Adaptability & Reflection (learning from feedback, reflective portfolios).

This ensures examinations reflect real-world practice readiness instead of rote memorization.

#### 10. Examination Levels & Mapping to CPM

Examinations are progressively mapped to IMCAC's 7-Level Clinical Progression Matrix (CPM):

- Level 1–2 (Fundamental Awareness & Clinical Understanding):
   Written theory exams (MCQs, SAQs), basic OSCEs on standard protocols.
- Level 3–4 (Supervised → Independent Clinical Application):
   OSCEs, DOPS, and logbook verification of supervised and independent practice.
- Level 5–6 (System-Level Responsibility & Innovation):
   Leadership audits, system-based projects, quality improvement exercises, research presentations.
- Level 7 (Global Excellence & Influence): International-level viva voce, defense of portfolio, mentorship evidence, and policy engagement review.

#### 11. Examination Types

- Written Examinations
  - Formats: MCQs, SAQs, essays, structured case scenarios.
  - Purpose: Test theoretical grounding, evidence-based reasoning, and analytical skills.
- Practical Examinations
  - Formats: OSCEs, clinical simulations, skill stations, labs.
  - Purpose: Validate procedural accuracy, patient interaction, and emergency readiness.
- Oral/Viva Voce



- Format: Panel-based discussion of clinical cases, ethics dilemmas, and situational challenges.
- Purpose: Assess higher-order reasoning, communication, and professional judgment.

#### Portfolio Assessment

- Contents: CPD logs, reflective practice, case records, research publications.
- Purpose: Evaluate long-term competency, growth, and professional contribution.

#### 12. Skill Assessment Tools & Validation

IMCAC mandates robust validation methods for fairness:

- OSCE Checklists:
  - Pre-defined, structured rubrics to ensure objective marking.
  - Multiple examiners rotate across stations to minimize bias.
- DOPS Forms:
  - Real-world or simulated observation templates documenting procedural steps, safety adherence, and outcome accuracy.
- Case Simulations & Emergency Drills:
  - Role-play scenarios for acute cases (e.g., cardiac arrest, anaphylaxis).
  - Evaluates not just technical skills but teamwork and crisis management.
- Portfolio Verification:
  - Evidence cross-checked with supervisors, journals, or official documents.
  - Random audits ensure authenticity and integrity.



# Section D – Examination Administration

#### 13. Eligibility & Application Process

IMCAC enforces strict eligibility criteria to maintain the integrity of its credentials:

- Completion of Accredited Training: Candidates must have successfully completed an IMCAC-accredited program or equivalent, as verified by transcripts and training logs.
- Online Application Submission: Applications must be submitted via the official IMCAC Examination Portal. Required documents include:
  - Proof of accredited training completion.
  - Updated CV and professional license/registration (if applicable).
  - Supervisor or institutional endorsement letter.
- Application Review: The Examinations Committee verifies eligibility, completeness of documents, and payment of applicable fees before confirmation.
- Special Considerations: Requests for accommodations (disability, language support, etc.) must be filed during application and are reviewed confidentially by the Ethics & Professional Conduct Committee.

## 14. Examination Conduct & Integrity Standards

Examination sessions are conducted under principles of neutrality, fairness, and transparency:

- Neutral Venues: Examinations must be held at IMCAC-accredited test centers or approved online platforms, free from conflicts of interest.
- Randomized Question Allocation: Secure software ensures random distribution of questions across candidates to reduce predictability.
- Monitoring & Proctoring: Onsite invigilators and/or digital proctoring tools supervise examinations to prevent malpractice.
- Zero-Tolerance for Misconduct: Any attempt at cheating, impersonation, or unauthorized material use leads to immediate disqualification and possible suspension from future exams.



#### 15. Digital & Remote Examination Guidelines

To ensure global access, IMCAC authorizes digital examinations under strict protocols:

- Secure Platforms: Exams are hosted on IMCAC's Learning & Assessment Management System (LAMS), equipped with data encryption and two-factor authentication.
- Al-Powered Proctoring: Video and screen monitoring software detect suspicious behavior, flagging potential misconduct.
- Identity Verification: Candidates must present government-issued ID before exam start; biometric authentication may be required for high-stakes exams.
- Technical Contingencies: Backup servers and rescheduling policies are in place for legitimate connectivity failures, with detailed incident logs reviewed by IMCAC.

## 16. Examination Security & Confidentiality

Safeguarding the integrity of IMCAC examinations is paramount:

- Question Bank Security:
  - Stored in encrypted digital vaults.
  - Rotated annually with 30% minimum replacement of items.
- Examiner Confidentiality:
  - All examiners must sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs).
  - Breach of confidentiality results in permanent removal from examiner pool.
- Candidate Data Protection:
  - Exam scripts, recordings, and results are stored for 5 years.
  - GDPR and HIPAA compliance observed for international candidates.

# Section E – Evaluation & Outcomes



#### 17. Assessment Criteria & Scoring Framework

IMCAC adopts a weighted evaluation model to ensure balanced testing of knowledge, skills, and professionalism:

- Written Examinations (40%) → Assesses theoretical knowledge, evidence-based reasoning, and analytical capability.
- OSCE/DOPS (40%) → Evaluates procedural accuracy, patient safety, communication, and decision-making.
- Oral/Viva & Professionalism (20%) → Assesses ethical reasoning, leadership, reflective practice, and ability to justify clinical choices.

Scoring is standardized with validated rubrics and psychometric calibration.

## 18. Competency Milestones & Pass/Fail Standards

- Domain-Specific Passing: Candidates must pass each domain independently;
   failure in one cannot be compensated by high scores in another.
- Minimum Standard:
  - Overall Score: ≥60%.
  - Domain Thresholds: ≥50% in each of the three domains (written, practical, oral/professional).
- Competency Mapping: Scores are directly linked to CPM levels, providing candidates with feedback on their progression.
- Distinctions: Candidates scoring ≥85% overall may be awarded "Honors" or "With Distinction."

#### 19. Feedback & Remediation Policy

IMCAC promotes constructive feedback and pathways for improvement:

- Structured Feedback Reports: Unsuccessful candidates receive detailed reports highlighting weak domains, competency gaps, and recommended remedial steps.
- Retake Opportunities:



- Maximum two retakes allowed within 18 months of the initial attempt.
- Candidates must demonstrate evidence of remedial training before retaking.
- Institutional Responsibility: Accredited institutions are required to provide mentorship and remedial training modules for candidates who fail.

## 20. Certification & Credentialing

Successful candidates receive internationally recognized IMCAC credentials:

- Certificates:
  - Feature the IMCAC seal, candidate details, and verified CPM level achieved.
  - Embedded QR codes enable instant digital verification.
- Digital Badges:
  - Issued through IMCAC's credentialing platform.
  - Can be added to LinkedIn profiles, e-portfolios, and digital resumes.
- Credential Validity:
  - Certifications are valid for 3 years, renewable through CPD compliance and portfolio review.

# Section F - Quality Assurance & Audits

## 21. Examiner Qualifications & Training

To maintain reliability and fairness across examinations, IMCAC enforces strict examiner standards:

- Clinical/Academic Experience: Examiners must have a minimum of 5 years of proven experience in clinical practice or academic teaching relevant to the specialty.
- IMCAC Examiner Training Program: All examiners must complete a standardized training and calibration program covering:



- Competency-based assessment principles.
- Use of OSCE/DOPS checklists.
- Bias prevention and ethical obligations.
- o Data confidentiality and exam security.
- Continuous CPD Requirement: Examiners must renew their certification every 3 years, with documented CPD credits in assessment and education.
- **Conflict of Interest Declarations:** Examiners must disclose any institutional or personal ties to candidates or training providers before each exam cycle.

#### 22. Examination Standardization & Benchmarking

IMCAC examinations must be consistent across all regions and aligned with global best practices:

#### Psychometric Validation:

- All question items (MCQs, SAQs, OSCE stations) undergo item analysis (difficulty index, discrimination index, reliability testing).
- Poor-performing or biased items are eliminated.

#### Global Benchmarking:

- Exams are benchmarked against WFME, ECFMG, ACGME, and WHO standards.
- Comparative analysis ensures that IMCAC-certified candidates meet or exceed international thresholds.
- Blueprinting: Each exam is based on a structured blueprint that specifies weightage per competency domain, ensuring balance and fairness.

#### 23. Internal & External Moderation

To guarantee integrity, every IMCAC examination undergoes dual moderation:

#### • Internal Moderation:

Conducted by the IMCAC Examinations Committee.



Reviews exam scripts, scoring rubrics, and consistency across examiners.

#### External Moderation:

- At least one independent external examiner is appointed for each major exam.
- Written exams are subject to double-blind marking, ensuring anonymity of both candidates and examiners.
- OSCE/DOPS results are validated by a second reviewer for consistency.

## 24. Continuous Review & Policy Updates

IMCAC operates a dynamic feedback and review cycle:

- Annual Examination Performance Report:
  - Includes pass/fail rates, candidate demographics, item performance, and examiner feedback.
  - Used to identify systemic issues or curriculum gaps.
- Stakeholder Consultation: Feedback from institutions, trainers, and candidates is incorporated into exam reforms.
- Policy Review Cycle: IMCAC revises its examination policies every 3 years or sooner if significant medical or educational changes arise.

# Section G - Compliance & Enforcement

## 25. Institutional Obligations

Accredited examination centers and institutions must:

- Comply with IMCAC Protocols: Follow all administrative, security, and assessment guidelines.
- **Submit Reports:** Provide detailed exam results, attendance logs, and examiner evaluations within **30 days** of exam completion.
- Maintain Infrastructure: Ensure secure venues, simulation labs, and IT systems meet IMCAC standards.



• **Facilitate Transparency:** Allow audits, inspections, and third-party evaluations when required.

#### 26. Candidate Responsibilities

All candidates appearing for IMCAC examinations are bound by the following obligations:

- Adherence to Codes of Conduct: Candidates must comply with all exam regulations, including punctuality, ethical behavior, and honesty.
- **Accurate Documentation:** Candidates must ensure the authenticity of submitted credentials (training records, CPD portfolio, licenses).
- Respect for Confidentiality: Exam content must not be recorded, shared, or replicated in any form.

#### 27. Penalties for Misconduct & Malpractice

IMCAC enforces a tiered disciplinary system:

- Minor Breach (e.g., talking in exam hall): Written warning and monitoring in future attempts.
- Major Breach (e.g., impersonation, unauthorized devices): Exam annulled, suspension from IMCAC exams for 1–3 years.
- Severe Breach (e.g., falsification of documents, collusion, large-scale cheating):
  - Permanent disgualification from all IMCAC certifications.
  - Blacklisting of institutions if systemic involvement is proven.

## 28. Appeals & Re-Evaluation

IMCAC ensures due process for candidates and institutions:

- **Filing an Appeal:** Appeals must be submitted within **30 days** of results or disciplinary decision, with supporting documentation.
- Review by Ethics & Appeals Committee: Independent panel reviews evidence, examiner reports, and candidate submissions.
- Re-Evaluation Options:



- Written exams may undergo a second blind marking.
- o OSCE/DOPS results may be reassessed via recorded video (if available).
- **Final Decision:** The IMCAC Governing Board issues a binding decision within **60** days of appeal submission.

# **Section H – Annexures & Templates**

## Annexure 1: Examination Application Form

(Applicable for both online and paper-based submission)

#### **Candidate Information**

Full Name:
<ul> <li>Date of Birth:</li> <li>Nationality:</li> <li>Medical Registration / License No:</li> <li>Email:</li> </ul>
Phone:
Program Details     Accredited Institution:     Training Program Completed:
Dates of Training:
CPM Level Applied For:
Attachments Required  Copy of valid medical license  Proof of IMCAC-accredited training completion  Supervisor/Institution endorsement letter



<ul><li>□ CPD Portfolio (if applicable for Level 5+)</li><li>□ Identity Proof (passport/national ID)</li></ul>
Declaration I hereby declare that the information provided is accurate, and I agree to comply with IMCAC's rules and regulations.  Signature: Date:
Annexure 2: Candidate Code of Conduct Declaration
I,, agree to uphold the following standards during IMCAC examinations:
<ul> <li>I will not engage in cheating, impersonation, or unauthorized communication.</li> <li>I will not disclose or replicate examination content.</li> </ul>
I will comply with examiner instructions and security protocols.
I acknowledge that misconduct may result in annulment of my exam and permanent disqualification.
Signature: Date:

# **Annexure 3: Sample Examination Blueprint**

Domain	Assessment Tool	Weightag e	CPM Level
Medical Knowledge	MCQs / SAQs	25%	1–2
Clinical Reasoning	OSCE Stations	20%	2–3
Procedural Skills	DOPS / Simulation	20%	3–4
Professionalism	Viva Voce	15%	4–5
Research/Leadershi	Portfolio Review	20%	5–7

Note: Blueprints are tailored per specialty and updated annually.

# **Annexure 4: OSCE/DOPS Checklist Template**



Date:	
Performed Correctly	Comments
Yes / No	
	Performed Correctly Yes / No

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Domain	Evidence Required	Score (1–5)	Comments
CPD Activities	Certificates, attendance logs		
Clinical Case Logs	Verified patient/procedure records		
Research &	Indexed papers, presentations,		_
Publications	innovations		_
Leadership/Teaching	Letters of appointment, course reports	<del></del>	
Reflective Practice	Self-reflection essays, supervisor		
	notes		_



Total Score: / 25 → Pass/Fail:		
Annexure 6: Candidate Feedback F	orm	
Candidate ID: Exam Date:		
Exam Organization     □ Excellent □ Good □ Fair □ Poor		
2. Exam Content Relevance		,
□ Excellent □ Good □ Fair □ Poor		
3. Clarity of Instructions		
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor		
4. Fairness & Transparency		
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor		
F. August for Improvement (or on an and od).		<b>/</b>
5. Areas for Improvement (open-ended):		
Annexure 7: Examiner Self-Audit C	hecklist	
Examinar	Data	
Examiner:	Date:	
Criteria	Yes/N	Note
	0	s
Completed IMCAC Examiner Training		
Reviewed exam blueprint before assessment		
Used standardized rubrics consistently		
Declared conflicts of interest		
Maintained impartiality and professionalism		
Submitted evaluations within 7 days		

# **Annexure 8: Certificate of IMCAC Board Certification**



# **Certificate of Achievement**

This certifies that <b>Dr./Mr./Ms.</b>	
·	CAC Board Examination & Skill Assessment mapped to the IMCAC Clinical Progression Matrix
(CPM), Level	
Awarded on:	
IMCAC Certificate ID:	_(QR Code for verification)
Signed:	(Chair, IMCAC Examinations Committee)
Official Seal of IMCAC	



