



THE SPECIALTY BOARD OF INTERNAL MEDICINE

THE CERTIFYING EXAMINATION FOR DIPLOMATE IN INTERNAL MEDICINE

***** CODE OF PROCEDURES *****

(Revised August 2015)

I. IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Date of examination is set on the 1st Sunday of March.
2. Deadline for submission of application form and complete requirements is January 31.
3. Documents can be submitted personally to the PCP Office at One San Miguel or by courier postmarked on or before January 15.
4. Incomplete documents will **NOT** be processed.
5. Only those candidates who have submitted the complete requirements and have been approved by the PSBIM will be allowed to take the examination.
6. Venue will be announced by January 31.

II. QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE CERTIFYING EXAMINATIONS:

A. Residency Training:

1. To qualify for the PSBIM examination, a candidate must have completed an approved residency training program in Internal Medicine in a PCP-accredited training hospital. The minimum number of years of residency training in Internal Medicine is three (3) years.
 - 1.1. Foreign Medical Graduates must have completed an approved residency training program in Internal Medicine in the country of origin.
2. For a candidate who graduated earlier than October 1 of the year prior to the examination, the requirement as proof of completion of residency training is a **certified true copy** of the **Diploma**. The minimum authorized signatories of the diploma are: **Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director** of the hospital. The certified true copy must come from the authorized office and duly signed by the designated officer/s of the training center.
3. For a candidate whose graduation is between October 1 of the year prior to the examination and January 31 of the same year of the examination and intending to take the PSBIM examination of that year, but whose Diploma may not be available by January 31 (deadline for submission of complete documents), a **letter certifying to the Completion of Residency Training in Internal Medicine** duly signed by the Chair and Training Officer of the Department of Medicine and duly designated office of the Administration (Medical Director or Chief of Clinics or Chair of the Department of Education and Training) will be accepted. The diploma must however, be submitted when applying for the oath taking for Diplomates in the same year.
4. Training in more than one Institution:

A resident-in-training may be allowed to transfer from one PCP-accredited training program to another, provided the following provisions are met:

 - 4.1. Institution A (where the resident came from) issues a **letter certifying** that the resident has satisfactorily completed either Year Level I and/or Year Level II residency training program. It must be addressed to institution B (the accepting Institution). The signatories of the letter of certification must include the Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director. The inclusive dates of completion of training must be clearly indicated. Such letter of certification must be submitted to institution B before the actual start of training to the next year level of the resident.
 - 4.2. The resident is responsible for securing and submitting the letter of certification to Institution B.

- 4.3. The 'certified true copies' of the above certificate/s (completion of Year Level/s I/II) and the Diploma (final completion of residency training) shall be submitted to the PSBIM upon application to take the examination.
- 4.4. Foreign medical graduates trained in accredited foreign Internal Medicine training programs must submit:
 - 4.4.1. Certification of Completion of Training in Internal Medicine duly signed by the Program Director of the Training Institution
 - 4.4.2. Certificate of good moral character from the Training Institution of origin
 - 4.4.3. Diploma of the degree Doctor of Medicine or equivalent degree recognized by his/her country of origin.
 - 4.4.4. Original and certified true copies of Birth Certificate, National ID number and travel documents as applicable.
5. The candidates and designated officials of the institution (Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director) are responsible for informing the PSBIM of any changes in the candidates' qualifications that would affect his/her eligibility to take the written examination. In such cases, the candidate must make the proper withdrawal from the examination in accordance with the policies concerning examination fees.

The PSBIM reserves the right to disqualify the application or nullify the examination results of any candidate who is found to be deficient in his/her qualifications to take the written examination.

B. Certification of Clinical Competence

1. Since 2005, PCP training institutions were given the responsibility of evaluating the clinical competence of the residents through oral examinations (panel or Objective Systematic Clinical Examination or OSCE), as specified in the Manual of Residency Training Program and Accreditation Process in Internal Medicine in the Philippines.
 - 1.1. Graduates before 2005 whose training institutions have closed and who need to undergo evaluation of clinical competence will be referred to another institution by the PSBIM.
 - 1.2. Graduates of foreign accredited IM residency training programs must pass the evaluation for clinical competence from an accredited PCP training institution to be assigned by PSBIM. These candidates shall notify the PSBIM through a letter to the chair, not later than June 30 of the year prior the examination.
 - 1.3. Exceptions to the above policies will be deliberated and decided upon by the PSBIM.

C. Examination Fees:

1. The written certifying examination fee is Php 5,000.00. This amount is subject to change, upon recommendation of the PSBIM and approval of the PCP Board of Regents.
 - 1.1. Graduates of foreign IM training programs, shall pay the following fees: (subject to change upon recommendation of the PSBIM and approval of the Board of Regents)

Foreign Medical Graduates/ Graduates of foreign accredited IM training Programs:

Clinical Competence Examination	US\$ 200.00
Written Examination	US\$ 500.00

2. Policies concerning examination fees
 - 2.1. As a general rule, no refunds are allowed.
 - 2.2. If for justifiable reasons, a candidate is unable to take the written examination, he must state in writing (addressed to PSBIM chair) the reason/s for the withdrawal and must be submitted not later than three (3) weeks before the scheduled date of the examination. The examination fee shall then be credited to future application to take the PSBIM examinations and is valid only for **a period of two years.**

- 2.3. Failure to formally withdraw from an examination will automatically cause forfeiture of the payment.
- 2.4. In the event of change in examination fees, the prevailing fee at the time of application for the PSBIM examination shall apply, as long as the examination is taken within the year of application. The new fees applies to applicants who fall under Section 2.2., and will pay the difference, in addition to the paid previous amount.
- 2.5. Candidates who fail to show up on the examination date without prior written notice will automatically forfeit the payment of the examination fee.

D. Submission of Application for the Diplomate Certifying Examination:

1. The application form and complete requirements for the examination can be submitted in person at the PCP Office at One San Miguel or by courier on or before January 31. Applications sent by courier must be postmarked on or before January 15.
2. The Secretariat shall ascertain the completeness of the application form and all of the requirements.
3. Within the 1st week of February, PSBIM will send (by email and courier) the list of the candidates for the PSBIM Examination to the institution where the candidates graduated, addressed to the Chair, Training Officer and Medical Director. The institution must write back to PSBIM (both email and courier) on or before February 20 stating whether the candidate is qualified or still have deficiencies and therefore is not qualified to take the examination.
4. Candidates shall be informed of the approval or disapproval of his application via email and must acknowledge receipt of such communication by email as well.

III. Time Limitations/Retakes for the Examination:

1. All candidates must submit the complete requirements regardless of the number of times he/she had taken the examination.
2. Graduates of accredited training institutions before 2005 with no certification in clinical competence, and are in any of the following situations: a) has the intention to take the exam for the 1st time or re-take it; b) is in active practice in Internal Medicine in the Philippines for at least 5 years; can ask for an endorsement letter from the chair of a training institution or PCP chapter president in the area of practice. The endorsement letter must confirm the competent practice of the candidate. The endorsement letter will take the place of the clinical competence evaluation.
3. There is no limit to the number of times a candidate may take the examination.

IV. SCHEMA OF THE WRITTEN CERTIFYING EXAMINATION:

A. Nature of the Examination

The Written Examination is the final step to certification as Diplomate in Internal Medicine. The Written Examination tests for understanding of clinically relevant concepts in Internal Medicine. This requires recall of updated medical information necessary to understand the concepts. Principles derived from such concepts are also tested in application to patient-problems for diagnosis and treatment.

B. Scope of the written examination

1. Subjects in Internal Medicine shall be categorized into:
 - 1.1. Category I (40%)
 - 1.1.1. Cardiology
 - 1.1.2. Infectious Diseases
 - 1.1.3. Pulmonary Medicine
 - 1.2. Category II (30%)

- 1.2.1. Gastroenterology
 - 1.2.2. Nephrology
 - 1.2.3. Endocrinology
 - 1.3. Category III (20%)
 - 1.3.1. Hematology
 - 1.3.2. Neurology
 - 1.3.3. Medical Oncology
 - 1.4. Category IV (10%)
 - 1.4.1. Dermatology
 - 1.4.2. Rheumatology
 - 1.4.3. Clinical Allergology and Immunology
2. There shall be a total of 360 QUESTIONS allocated thus:
- 2.1. Category I - a total of 144 questions shall be allotted to this category or 48 questions for each of the 3 sub-specialties.
 - 2.2. Category II - a total of 108 questions shall be allotted to this category or 36 questions for each of the 3 sub-specialties.
Category III - a total of 72 questions shall be allotted to this category or 24 questions for each of the 3 sub-specialties.
 - 2.3. Category IV - a total of 36 questions shall be allotted to this category or 12 questions each for Clinical Allergy and Immunology, Dermatology and Rheumatology. (Note: Re-distribution of questions as approved by PSBIM on June 22, 2002 will take effect in January 2004.

C. References

- 1.1. **The official textbook reference of the Written Certifying Examinations is the latest edition of Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine.**
- 1.2. **Additional references include current published Clinical Practice Guidelines and recommendations from the PCP Subspecialty Societies and similar Institution – WHO, Center for Disease Control (CDC) on the diagnosis and therapeutics.**
- 1.3. **These references shall have been uploaded in the PCP website at least 6 months prior to the PSBIM examinations.**

Revised by the PSBIM and approved by the PCP Board of Regents on 20 August 2015:

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