

Guidelines on the conduct of clinical examinations

Guidelines to students

1. General

Candidates should note that by registering to appear for the examinations of the MBBS degree programme, they are deemed to have understood and agreed to comply by the Bye Laws, Regulations, examination regulations and other related documents of the Faculty of Medicine and the University of Colombo. Candidates must cooperate with the Faculty in the conduct of the clinical examinations.

Compared to written examinations, clinical examinations for medical degrees often use human subjects (healthy humans or patients). Candidates should be courteous towards all the patients and the staff who are involved in facilitating the examination process

2. Types of clinical examinations

These include the long cases, short cases, viva voce examinations, objective structured practical examinations (OSPE) and objective structured clinical examinations (OSCE). These examinations are often conducted by Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Psychiatry Department of the Faculty. However such examinations may be conducted by other departments and modules also. The long cases and short cases use human subjects. The OSPE and OSCE examinations may also use human subjects.

3. Intimation to students

Information about the examinations will be displayed in the general or examination notice boards and/or in the department notice boards. The notices will intimate the stream, module, subject, examination component (long case, viva vice etc), dates, venues, times, groups, index numbers etc. It will be the responsibility of the candidates to read the notices and follow the instructions.

While every attempt will be made to inform the students well in advance, in some instances such early intimation may not be possible.

4. Format of the examinations

This information can be obtained from the respective departments. It is expected that the students are aware of the format. Any changes to the previous practice will be intimated to the students.

5. Out of bounds period

Notice about duration of “out of bounds” and the wards which will be out of bounds for medical students will be displayed at least 1 week before start of the clinical examination.

6. Attendance

Candidates have to report to the respective venue about 15 minutes in advance. Candidates are advised to allow for any transport delays when planning time of arrival at the venue. Family and friends accompanying candidates will not be permitted to enter the examination venue.

7. Dress

Dress and appearance are an important aspect of professionalism. For the clinical examinations the candidates should dress in a smart and conservative manner. For long and short cases and viva voce examinations, for male candidates, white trousers, shirt with tie and white overcoat is recommended. For females an appropriate dress (skirt and blouse or saree) with a white overcoat is recommended. Students have to display their index number pinned on the outer top attire.

8. What to bring?

The candidate should attend the examination with the admission card and an identity card. Where relevant they should also bring material needed to perform a clinical examination such as

the stethoscope and a tendon hammer. Basic equipment will also be provided in the examination area.

9. What to do on arriving at the examination venue?

Candidates should assemble outside the examination venue. Upon receiving instruction from the staff they will enter the designated area (waiting room) and stay quiet, awaiting further instruction. At the beginning of the examination candidates will be briefed by a member of the academic staff and students should listen carefully and follow the instructions. If written instructions are provided candidates are expected follow them. If a candidate is uncertain about any instruction or question, he/she should get it clarified immediately.

10. Expected behaviour

All candidates must comply with the instructions of the clinical examination staff during examinations. Failure to do so will constitute a breach of examination procedures and may result in action being taken against the candidate concerned.

Candidates are expected to conduct themselves courteously in examinations, communication and in personal contact with patients, parents, by-standees, academic and support staff and the examiners. Candidates whose conduct is disruptive, or is considered by the academic staff to have been outside the bounds of reasonable and decent behaviour may forfeit their eligibility to sit the current and future examinations.

Candidates in clinical examinations are expected to observe fully the confidentiality of subjects who participate in the examination and should not discuss the personal details of the consultations outside the examination area at any time, with any person.

11. What should not be brought to the examination areas?

Candidates should not be carrying communication equipment and other gadgets that can help them improperly in the examination. These include cellular phones, tablets, smart watches, notebooks, laptops and others. If you have brought them hand them over to designated staff. Candidates found to be giving, receiving or recording information during the examinations will be considered as committing examination offences. **Immaterial of whether these equipments have been used or not it will be an offence to be found with such equipment in the examination areas.**

Textbooks, personal notes should not be brought to the examination areas. Candidates are not permitted to have their bags and/or other personal items at their desks during the examination. The Faculty staff cannot be responsible for the safety of the material brought to the examination hall.

12. After the exam

Candidates are expected to leave the examination venue (and the respective hospital) soon after their examination is over.

13. What not to do?

Do not resort to, or aid and abet in activities falling under the category of examination offences. In the clinical examinations such activities include trying to get prior information about the questions, cases, passing such information to other candidates etc.

Avoid discussing patients with other candidates who may attend the clinical examination centre in the future. Patients are rotated and, in some cases, alternative conditions are examined in patients with multiple clinical signs. **Any candidate who attempts to formulate a diagnosis or management on the basis of information provided by other candidates, without having properly examined the patient, is likely to compromise their assessment.**

It is strictly forbidden for candidates to talk or attempt in any way to communicate with other candidates while the exam is in progress. Toilet breaks are permitted during the examination, but, in an effort to minimise disruption, candidates are requested to visit the toilet before the exam commences. Candidates visiting the toilet during the exam will be escorted by an invigilator.

Any written papers should be handed over to designated academic staff before leaving the examination venue.

14. Changes to time tables

Candidates requesting changes to the timings of the clinical examinations are not entertained for minor reasons. However requests may be considered for genuine reasons (e.g. being in hospital with dengue). Requests for such changes should be addressed to the Dean with a copy to the respective Heads of Departments. Students should avoid visiting examination areas / examination unit requesting to change/exchange the timings of their clinical examination.

15. Being absent

Any student who is unable to attend the clinical examinations due to sickness should follow the laid down procedure about medical leave (see Handbook). They should also inform the Dean and the Head of the relevant Department in writing.

16. Breaches of procedure

Any candidate found in breach of above guidelines or misbehaving in any way, will be reported to the authorities for possible disciplinary action. A candidate who attempts to compromise the examination procedures may forfeit his/her eligibility to proceed with the examination. Action may be taken against any candidate found to be selling or offering for sale material or details purporting to be examination content. The Faculty and the University will investigate thoroughly a complaint or adverse report concerning any candidate sitting a Faculty examination, and

disciplinary action may be taken. Such disciplinary action may result in suspension from the said examination, future examinations. If an infringement is deemed to be particularly severe, the candidate concerned may be permanently debarred from entering any future examinations.
