

EDITORIAL

EBOD – The european standard examination in Ophthalmology

EBOD (European Board of Ophthalmology Diploma) – is organized by the European Board of Ophthalmology (EBO) and it is under the administration (guidance) of the Education Committee of EBO.

This exam is designed to assess the knowledge and clinical requisite skills needed for delivering high standard ophthalmologic care. The focus of the exam is on the harmonization of ophthalmology training across Europe, by the standards set up by Brussels (Respecting the standards that Brussels imposed).

The first EBOD examination was organized in 1995, in Milan. Thereafter, it took place only in Paris, usually in May, hosted by the French Society of Ophthalmology (SFO) and Thea Laboratories. Candidates from all over Europe register for this exam. The pass rate over the past years has been approximately 90%.

The EBOD Examination is not mandatory in most countries of the European Union. However, some countries like Switzerland and Belgium have replaced their National Specialist Examination with this exam.

The number of candidates who can register for the exam is limited. For a candidate to be eligible to take the EBOD Examination, he has to be a certified Specialist in Ophthalmology or in the last year of residency in a country of the European Union, Norway, Switzerland, Croatia or Turkey. Certified specialists or doctors in their last year of residency that come from other countries are eligible to sit the examination if they have completed additional formal training in the countries listed above.

The internationally recognised diploma, the possibility to interact and share opinions and ideas with ophthalmologists from all over Europe, determines the high number of candidates each year.

The exam consists of two parts: a written paper (MCQ-paper) of 52 questions, representing 40% of the final grade, and an oral examination (Viva voce), representing the remaining 60%.

Negative marking has been adopted for the MCQ paper grading since the 2010 Diploma Examination. This means that a negative mark (-0.5) will be applied in the case of an incorrect, double marked answer (when both true and false are ticked; when true and don't know are ticked; when false and don't know are ticked) or triple marked answered (when all options are ticked). Choosing the 'don't know' option will result in a score of 0 points. One point can be earned for each correct answer. Studies have shown that this type of grading does not affect the pass rate of the candidates, but reduces the frequency of "wild guessing" of the answers.

The Written Paper (MCQ-paper)

There are 52 questions, each containing 5 statements that need to be judged as "true" or "false". The questions cover any basic science, medical or surgical topic relevant to the practice of ophthalmology, particularly in the following fields:

1. Optics, Refraction and Contact Lenses
2. Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
3. External, Corneal and Adnexal disease
4. Glaucoma, Cataract and Refractive Surgery
5. Retina, Vitreous and Uvea
6. Neuro-ophthalmology
7. Orbital Disease and Oculoplastic Surgery
8. General Medicine relevant to Ophthalmology
9. Ophthalmic Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology

10. Pharmacology and Therapeutics

The Oral Examination (Viva voce)

Every candidate will sit on 4 separate sessions, of 15 minutes each, conducted by four panels of two examiners.

The debated subjects are:

1. Optics, Refraction, Strabismus, Pediatric ophthalmology and Neuro-ophthalmology
2. Cornea, External Diseases, Orbit and Ocular Adnexa
3. Glaucoma, Cataract and Refractive Surgery
4. Posterior Segment, Ocular Inflammation and Uveitis

Bibliography

The recommended reading for the EBOD Examination contains Kanski and the AAO (American Association of Ophthalmology) series, Spalton, Atlas of Ophthalmology, Wills Eye Manual and Moorfields Eye Hospital Manual.

Candidates have the right to appeal to the EBO Education Committee if they believe that they have been misjudged. They have to send such appeals within three months of the date of examination. The Education Committee will respond to the Candidate in writing within three months of the receipt of the appeal.

The EBOD diplomas are received at a Diploma Award Ceremony. At this ceremony, in the presence of the Executive Committee of EBO and the Board of Examiners, the candidates who passed the EBO Examination will be presented with their **European Board of Ophthalmology Diploma**, signed by the President and all Vice-Presidents of the Board. Candidates can, and are encouraged to add the title of **Fellow of the European Board of Ophthalmology (FEBO)** after their name.

Every year, the Peter Eustace Medal is also awarded. Awarding a Peter Eustace Medal was established by unanimous decision of General Assembly of the European Board of Ophthalmology (EBO) in Tallinn on 20th June 2010 as a token of appreciation of the efforts of Peter Eustace, who established the first EBO diploma examination in Milan in 1995. This award is given to an ophthalmologist who has devoted long term and exceptional efforts towards upgrading education in ophthalmology in Europe. This year, the medal was awarded to Prof. Marie-Jose Tassignon, MD, PhD, FEBO, current Professor and Head of Ophthalmology at the University Hospital in Antwerp, Belgium, who also served as president of EBO and the ESCRS (European Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons).

In 2015, over 550 candidates from 28 European countries, met in Paris to take part in the EBOD Examination.

For the first time, this year, the exam also included a subspecialty examination in glaucoma, co-organized by Carlo Traverso, President of the European Glaucoma Society. Successful candidates were awarded a diploma: the **Glaucoma Subspecialty EBO Diploma**, as an acknowledgement of their *knowledge and competence in this field*.

From Romania, in the last 6 years, a raising number of candidates set on the EBOD Examination, the pass rate being 100%. However, the number of participants is still below the level of other countries in the area. National Delegates of EBO (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Marian Burcea and Dr. Cornel Stefan) constantly promote the participation of Romanian candidates to this exam.

Romania has a national examiner, so it is possible to facilitate the examination in Romanian.

For more information about registration and general information on the EBOD Examination, visit <http://ebo-online.org/newsite/EBODexam>.

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