

Oklahoma State Board of Examiners of Psychologists

Oral Examination Information for Health Service Psychologist Candidates

AUTHORITY

Section 1365 of the Psychologist Licensing Act provides that the Board shall administer examinations to qualified applicants at least once a year. The Board shall determine the subject and scope of the examinations. Written examinations may be supplemented by such oral examinations as the Board shall determine. Section 575:10-1-2, (I) of the Rules of the Board provides that the full examination for licensure shall consist of three component examinations: objective (Examination for the Professional Practice of Psychology - EPPP), jurisprudence, and oral examination.

In order to maintain examination security, candidates are not allowed to bring any personal items, e.g. books, purse, briefcase, into the examination room. These items may be left with Board staff and retrieved following completion of the oral examination.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORAL EXAMINATION

The oral examination is administered in June and December of each year. All members of the Examination Committee are licensed psychologists in the State of Oklahoma who have received specific training in the conduct of the oral examination.

The oral examination is designed to take 60 to 75 minutes. The examination will be recorded in the event review is necessary.

Candidates will be asked to review and respond to a vignette based upon a hypothetical case. This vignette can be referred to at anytime during the examination. Candidates may make written notes during the examination on paper provided by the Examination Committee. Candidates will be given a copy of the questions, one question on each page.

The questions will be read to the candidates by a member of the Examination Committee. It is important to focus on the specific information asked in each question. All answers should be complete and address all elements of the question. It is the quality and not the quantity of answers that is being assessed during the examination. It may be helpful to approach the vignette as if it is a presentation of an actual patient.

DESIGN OF THE ORAL EXAMINATION

The design and scoring methodology for the oral examination is based on sound psychometric principles in accordance with the “Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing” published by the American Psychological Association. The oral examination has eight equally-weighted subject matter areas.

Candidates are asked to apply their knowledge and experience to the problem presented in the vignette in response to standardized questions asked by the examiners. Standardized evaluation procedures have been developed and refined.

Candidates should be prepared to respond to issues which legitimately test the knowledge base required for a generic license. This is standard procedure in professional licensing examinations wherein examinees are required to identify and address practice issues which may not be a focal area of practice after licensure.

The oral examination is designed to complement the national objective examination (EPPP) in that it provides candidates with an opportunity to demonstrate integrated thought and verbal expression along with other skills and professional knowledge.

CONTENT OF THE STANDARD ORAL EXAMINATION

The oral examination covers eight content areas which reflect current competencies in the practice of psychology. It is important that candidates be familiar with community standards of practice and research findings in all eight content areas.

THE EIGHT CONTENT AREAS

1. Problem Identification/Diagnosis

This content area is designed to assess candidates’ ability to conceptualize and articulate a case formulation consistent with the data.

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to apply diagnostic nomenclature and criteria in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), and to utilize relevant data to formulate differential diagnoses.

2. Assessment and Evaluation

This content area is designed to assess candidates’ ability to gather and use information (tests, observations, clinical interviews, collateral sources, and context) to evaluate the patient’s functioning, including cognitive, affective, and interpersonal strengths and weaknesses.

Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of assessment models, psychometric theory, test construction, and statistical procedures used in test development. The ability to interpret psychometric test results in the context of other clinical data will be evaluated.

Candidates should be able to integrate findings, explain any apparent inconsistencies in the clinical data, and present a comprehensive description of the patient.

3. Treatment Planning, Implementation, and Outcome Assessment

This content area is designed to test candidates' ability to develop and implement a treatment plan that is consistent with the case formulation, sensitive to the patient's needs and values, theoretically based, empirically justified, and designed to resolve the problem(s).

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to integrate and coordinate services from other care providers and community resources into an overall intervention plan.

4. Crisis Evaluation/Treatment/Management

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to respond to critical situations in a manner that protects the safety and welfare of the patient and the community.

5. Human Diversity

This content area is designed to test candidates' knowledge of and sensitivity to issues of diversity and their impact on the practice of psychology.

Candidates should demonstrate understanding of how diversity can affect human development, interpersonal interactions, social and economic systems, and other factors related to assessment, diagnosis and intervention.

6. Professional Ethics and Standards

This content area is designed to test candidates' knowledge of professional ethics and the ability to integrate ethics and standards into professional conduct and practice.

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge of the American Psychological Association (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) Code of Conduct, the Federal Health

Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy and security regulations, and any specific practice guidelines that are relevant.

7. Legal and Regulatory Mandates

This content area is designed to test candidates' knowledge of federal, state and local laws and regulations related to the professional practice of psychology.

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to identify situations that may require action mandated by law.

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to take actions required by statutes and regulations to protect the safety and welfare of the patient and the community.

8. Professional Limitations and Judgments

This content area is designed to test candidates' awareness of personal and professional competencies and limitations.

Candidates should demonstrate sensitivity to the impact of personal problems and conflicts that hinder clinical judgment and the understanding of how to resolve them.

Candidates should demonstrate the importance of practicing within the scope of their education, training, skills, knowledge and experience.

ORAL EXAMINATION SCORING SYSTEM

The eight content areas of the oral examination are weighted equally and are scored on a five-point rating scale. The scoring system is fully compensatory, which means that a high score in one content area will offset a low score in another content area. Forty is the maximum score that can be earned.

Each examiner will score the examination independently. A score of 24 or greater by each individual examiner is passing. Candidates receiving a passing score from a majority of the examiners shall have passed the oral examination.

The scoring system is designed as follows:

- 5 – Superior
- 4 – Highly Effective
- 3 – Acceptable
- 2 – Highly Ineffective
- 1 – Incompetent

EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE

All candidates will receive their average score on each of the eight content areas within 14 days following the date of the examination.

All passing candidates who receive an average score of less than “3” in any content area are strongly encouraged to examine this area for a deficiency in their knowledge. Clearly, the lower the average score, the greater the probability that it represents a content area that is in need of remediation. This remediation could include additional formal course work, continuing education, supervised experience, or a combination of these approaches. A Resource Person is assigned by the Board and will be available to discuss these and other options as appropriate.