Guidelines for the drafting and selection of Multiple-Choice Exam questions

Art. 1 Principles

1 These guidelines regulate the selection and drafting procedure for the multiple-choice exam questions of the Master of Medicine of the USI Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.

2 The drafting of the multiple-choice exam questions and their implementation comply with the principles, provisions and operating methods set out by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) and the Institut für Medizinische Lehre (IML) of Bern with regard to the federal written examinations for human medicine.

Art. 2 Multiple-choice written exam

1 The multiple-choice written exam (MC Exam) is a test in which the knowledge and skills acquired during the previous semester are assessed.

2 Starting from the second semester, the skills acquired in all previous semesters are also assessed.

3 The drafting of the MC Exam questions is the responsibility of each course director, whereas the "transversal" disciplinary topics are drafted in collaboration with the designated teachers.

4 The Exam Board (EB) approves the questions selected for the examinations.

5 A MC Exam lasting a maximum of 4 and a half hours is organised for each semester.

6 The assessment and pass criteria of the MC Exam are defined by the EB.

7 The assessment of the MC Exam questions may be performed by a third-party specialised institute.
In order to move on to the next year of studies, the average of the 2 semester MC Exam are taken into consideration. In the case where this average does meet the minimum pass requirements, the student can take an annual MC Exam (covering the subjects studied in the autumn semester and in the spring semester) in the recovery (re-sit) session.

The academic year can be repeated a maximum of two times. Failing for a third time will result in the definitive expulsion of the student from medical studies at any Swiss university.

An academic year can be repeated a maximum of once without having taken Exam.

The MC Exam are in English.

The written examination is performed on special tablets used only for the MC Exam configured according to the instructions of the IML of Bern.

Art. 3 Evaluation system

The MC Exam are assessed using a numerical scale. The numerical scale goes from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 10, with half-point increments (0.5); 6 is the pass mark.

The ECTS credits corresponding to each examined teaching unit are acquired when the average mark of the semester MC Exam is 6 or higher.

Art. 4 Examination sessions

There are 3 examination sessions for each academic year:
- two ordinary sessions (one per semester);
- one recovery (re-sit) session.

The ordinary session is held at the end of each semester (winter and summer), whereas there is a recovery (re-sit) session prior to the start of the winter semester.

Art. 5 Registration for MC Exam

In order to register for the MC Exam a student must be duly enrolled in the Faculty, have paid tuition fees for the semester according to the University’s Admission and Matriculation Regulations, and satisfy the terms and conditions set out in the present Regulations.

Applications for registration must be sent to the Faculty secretariat no later than the closing date and in the format requested by the latter.
The Faculty secretariat is responsible for checking the validity of the application and, if need be, will inform students of any impediment. Each student is nonetheless personally responsible for meeting the official deadlines indicated in the study plan and in the present Guidelines.

If a student has registered or has been admitted or taken an examination without being entitled to do so, the exam will be annulled by the secretariat at the time of registration of the grade.

**Art. 6 Withdrawal from the MC Exam**

1. A student is entitled to withdraw from an examination up to 5 days before the date scheduled for that examination. The notification must be made in writing (via email or post) and addressed to the Faculty secretariat. In this case, the registration is cancelled and treated as if it had never been made. If notification is by post, the applicable date is that of the postmark, whereas if it is by email, the applicable date is that of its transmission.

2. A student who fails to attend or to complete an examination without valid justification is considered to have failed that examination.

3. Any justification is considered only if it is submitted by the student to the Faculty secretariat in writing within 10 days from the examination in question. The reason for the absence must be serious (major health problems or other severe impediment) and the student must be able to provide proper evidence. The Examination Board may ask for more in-depth information regarding the justification or a medical certificate, and, if necessary, may consult a trusted physician.

**Art. 7 Final Master’s Exam**

1. The final Master's examination will take place during the summer session of the third year of the Master’s programme and consists of a MC Exam to test students' knowledge of the entire Master's curriculum and a 12-station OSCE.

2. The final Master’s Exam can be retaken a maximum of twice in the exam sessions of the following years.

3. Students must pass the final Master’s Exam in order to enrol for the Federal Exam.

**Art. 9 Drafting of the MC Exam questions**

1. If requested by the professors, training sessions may be organised for the drafting of the MC Exam questions. The training materials are sent to all those who are interested.
The MC Exam questions are managed and organised within a programme created by the IML called MEASURED, which can be accessed by course directors and by the person appointed by the USI Faculty of Biomedical Sciences to manage the procedure.

Approximately 80% of type A questions and 20% of Kprime questions are required for the preparation of the MC Exam (reference art.1, paragraph 2).

Each teacher that gives face-to-face lectures is required to provide two MC questions for each teaching hour.

The subject of the questions is the topics dealt with during the lectures.

The MC questions are in English.

The MC Exam questions are managed through the MEASURED programme, which notifies the lecturers of the deadlines for handing-in the questions and calls for the questions to be entered in the system within the defined time limits.

Art. 10 Protection of the exam questions

Given the prevailing public interest in providing reliable and valid examinations, it is prohibited to collect or disclose exam questions.

Any written or digital recording of examination questions during the exam will result in the failure of that examination.

The collection or disclosure of examination questions after the exam may be punished with disciplinary measures.

The EB may also request the Rector to expel the student from one or more semesters or to expel them completely from the programme.

Art. 11 The Exam Board

The Exam Board (EB) is made up of 4 full professors that are course directors, the head of OSCE Exam and the Examinations Officer (EO) who chairs the board. The Board defines the exam programme in all its details and in the first instance decides on any disputes relating to the examinations.

The EB usually meets at least three months prior to the date of the MC Exam.
Art. 10 Security and Confidentiality

1 All those involved directly or indirectly in the activities described in these Guidelines are obliged to comply with professional secrecy and confidentiality obligations.

2 The MEASURED programme created by the IML of Bern guarantees the strictest confidentiality of the MC Exam questions.

3 The USI Faculty of Biomedical Sciences undertakes to keep the questions in its possession secure and confidential.

Art. 11 Effectiveness

These Guidelines, approved by the Council of Professors on 31 August 2020, shall enter into force immediately.

DISCLAIMER:

These Guidelines for the drafting and selection of Multiple-Choice Exam questions have been drawn up in Italian. A non-legally binding English translation has been provided for information purposes only. The Italian version shall prevail over the English translation.