

KIMS Examinations Policies and Procedures for Residency and Fellowship Programs

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the KIMS Examinations Policies and Procedures is to:

- 1.1.1. Describe the examinations process in place for all Residency and Fellowship Programs conducted by KIMS.
- 1.1.2. Ensure that examinations are consistent with program goals and objectives of postgraduate medical education as defined by KIMS.

1.2. Acronyms:

- 1.2.1. KIMS - Kuwait Institute for Medical Specializations.
- 1.1.1. ITER - In-training Evaluation Report.
- 1.1.2. FITER - Final In-Training Evaluation Report.

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. Residency

Residency is a five years specialty training program that is completed after one year of internship following medical school. These programs offer supervised and specific training for the resident in their chosen specialty.

1.2.2. Fellowship

Fellowship is a three years sub-specialty training program that is completed after Residency. These programs offer supervised and specific training for the fellow in their chosen sub-specialty.

1.2.3. Program Examinations Committee

Program Examinations Committee are specific examinations committee for a Residency or a Fellowship Program.

1.2.4. Certification

Certification in a residency or fellowship will be granted upon the satisfactory completion of all credentials, training, and examination requirements. KIMS Certification confirms that specialist physicians and surgeons have met KIMS standards and training requirements.

2. Program Examinations Committee

- 2.1.** Program Committees must constitute Program Examinations Committee for their Programs and designate a Chair of the Program Examinations Committee.
- 2.2.** Chief of Program Examinations Committee shall have a term for three years which can be renewed once.
- 2.3.** Chief of Program Examinations Committee must not be a member of the Post graduate Training Committee.
- 2.4.** The eligibility criteria for Chief of Program Examinations Committee shall be:
 - 2.4.1.** Minimum two years of experience as an examiner,
 - 2.4.2.** Active contributor of assessment items,
 - 2.4.3.** Excellent clinician involved in clinical teaching,
 - 2.4.4.** Participation in basic and advanced level workshops on Assessment,
 - 2.4.5.** Good skills in MS Word and Excel.
- 2.5.** The eligibility criteria for a member of Program Examinations Committee shall be:
 - 2.5.1.** Minimum one year of experience as an examiner,
 - 2.5.2.** Active contributor of assessment items,
 - 2.5.3.** Excellent clinician involved in clinical teaching,
 - 2.5.4.** Participation in basic and advanced level workshops on Assessment,
 - 2.5.5.** Good skills in MS Word and Excel.
- 2.6.** Program Examinations Committee shall have minimum 3 to maximum 9 members.
- 2.7.** Program Examinations Committee of each Program is responsible for:
 - 2.7.1.** conduct of examinations in coordination with the KIMS Examinations Office,
 - 2.7.2.** development of table of specifications and all components of exams,
 - 2.7.3.** banking of questions and cases in coordination with KIMS Examinations Office,
 - 2.7.4.** formation and supervision of Program Examinations sub-committees,
 - 2.7.5.** security and confidentiality of all components of exams,
 - 2.7.6.** compilation of results and psychometric analysis in coordination with KIMS Examinations Office,
 - 2.7.7.** selection and supervision of exam authors, examiners and invigilators,
 - 2.7.8.** orientation of authors, examiners and invigilators to the relevant policies and procedures,
 - 2.7.9.** assurance of fairness in all components and processes of examinations,
 - 2.7.10.** any other specifics stated in KIMS Examinations Policies and Procedures.

3. Examinations Appeals Committee

- 3.1.** Examinations Appeals Committee must be constituted by the Secretary General of KIMS.
- 3.2.** Examinations Appeals Committee shall respond to requests regarding eligibility, examinations process and results.
- 3.3.** Examinations Appeals Committee must be allowed access to information regarding eligibility, examinations process and results during a review process.

4. Role of Examinations

- 4.1.** Part 1 Exam is one of the prerequisite for Final Exam for Residency Programs.
- 4.2.** Final Exam is a certifying exam and it leads to Certification.

5. Eligibility for Examinations

- 5.1.** Eligibility criteria for Part I Residency Exam include:
 - 5.1.1.** Two successful ITERs of initial two years of residency training,
 - 5.1.2.** Completion of minimum 21 months of residency training.
- 5.2.** Eligibility criteria for Final Residency Exam include:
 - 5.2.1.** Success in part I exam within past three years,
 - 5.2.2.** Successful FITER,
 - 5.2.3.** Minimum 52 months of residency training.
- 5.3.** Eligibility criteria for Final Fellowship Exam include:
 - 5.3.1.** Successful FITER,
 - 5.3.2.** Minimum 30 months of fellowship training.

6. Examinations Timelines

- 6.1.** Timelines for examinations must be developed by KIMS Examinations Office for each academic year and must be communicated to all Chairs of Program Examinations Committees.
- 6.2.** Chairs of Program Examinations Committee shall meet the timelines for Examinations announced by KIMS.
- 6.3.** Programs in collaboration with international bodies shall run in compliance to their international agreements and shall submit their calendars to KIMS Examinations Office one year in advance.

7. Examinations Registration

- 7.1. Chairs of Program Examinations Committees must send a list of candidates eligible to challenge KIMS examinations every academic year before the deadline provided by KIMS Examinations Office.
- 7.2. Examination registrations must be only available to candidates who have been ruled eligible for examinations.
- 7.3. Candidates who intend to register for examinations must bring the following documents to the KIMS Examinations Office:
 - 7.3.1. Original Civil ID
 - 7.3.2. Two recent photographs on specifications stipulated by the KIMS Examinations Office.
- 7.4. Once registered in the KIMS Examinations Office, the candidates must receive a KIMS Examinations Registration Letter for the respective year.
- 7.5. A candidate can opt not to register for an exam, only once in the entire period of training.
- 7.6. A candidate opting not to register for an exam must submit an approved request from the Chair of Program Examinations Committee to KIMS Examinations Office.
- 7.7. Any further requests on exemption from registration can only be approved by the KIMS Examinations Appeals Committee.

8. Timeline for Examinations Registration

- 8.1. A timeline for examinations registration must be announced by the KIMS Examinations Office and it must be communicated to all eligible candidates by Chairs of Program Examinations Committee.
- 8.2. Late registrations must have a formal approval from the Chair of Program Examinations Committee and must be submitted to KIMS Examinations Office.

9. Examinations Dates and Time

- 9.1. Part 1 and Final exams shall be administered once per year.
- 9.2. All exams shall be conducted at the end of the academic calendar.
- 9.3. Examination dates and reporting time for all components of their respective exams must be provided in the Examinations Registration Letter issued to candidates.
- 9.4. Examination dates and time can change without prior notice.
- 9.5. A change in dates and time for the written exams must be communicated to candidates by KIMS Examinations Office.
- 9.6. A change in dates and time for the Oral, Viva, OSCE, OSPE or Clinical Examinations must be communicated to the candidates by the corresponding Chairs of Program Examinations Committees and the KIMS Examinations Office must be notified.

10. Examinations Venue

- 10.1.** Examinations may be held in various venues across Kuwait.
- 10.2.** Examination venues for all the components of their respective exams must be provided in the Examinations Registration Letter issued to candidates.
- 10.3.** A change in venue for the written exams must be communicated to the candidates by the KIMS Examinations Office.
- 10.4.** A change in venue for the Oral, Viva, OSCE, OSPE or Clinical Examinations must be communicated to the candidates by the corresponding Chair of the Program Examinations Committee.

11. Examinations Format

- 11.1.** A Table of Specifications (Blueprint) shall be developed for each exam by the Program Examinations Committee and shall be submitted to the KIMS Examinations Office.
- 11.2.** KIMS examinations incorporate written and clinical components that may include MCQs, SAQs, Oral, OSCEs, Practical or other examination methods.
- 11.3.** Information about the examination format of each Residency and Fellowship Training Program must be communicated one year in advance to the candidates every academic year by the corresponding Chair of the Program Examinations Committee.

12. Exam author, clinical examiner and invigilator

- 12.1.** Criteria for exam author includes:
 - 12.1.1.** Shall be a clinical tutor,
 - 12.1.2.** Shall be a competent clinician with Evidence Based Medical Practice,
 - 12.1.3.** Must be approved by the Program Examinations Committee,
 - 12.1.4.** Shall have completed basic workshops on Assessment,
 - 12.1.5.** Shall be efficient in MSWord.

- 12.2.** Criteria for clinical examiner includes:
 - 12.2.1.** Shall be a clinical tutor,
 - 12.2.2.** Must be an exam author,
 - 12.2.3.** Shall be a competent clinician with Evidence Based Medical Practice,
 - 12.2.4.** Must be approved by the Program Examinations Committee,
 - 12.2.5.** Shall have completed basic workshops on Assessment,
 - 12.2.6.** Shall be efficient in MSWord.

12.3. Criteria for invigilator includes:

12.3.1. Must be approved by the Program Examinations Committee or Head of KIMS Examinations Office.

13. Candidates with Special Needs, Conditions or Disabilities

13.1. KIMS shall accommodate candidates with special needs, conditions or disabilities, except where such accommodation would not impose undue hardship on KIMS Examinations Office. Applicants with special needs, conditions or disabilities that require particular consideration must notify in writing to the KIMS Examinations Office at the time of registration for exams.

13.2. Candidates with special needs, conditions or disabilities, must ensure that the KIMS Examinations Office receives appropriate documentation supporting the request for accommodation in sufficient detail to allow KIMS to assess request for accommodation and make suitable arrangements.

14. Examinations Language

14.1. KIMS examinations are offered in English. Some competencies, as identified by the Program Examinations Committees, might require an assessment in Arabic.

14.2. Candidates must ensure that they have reasonable fluency, written and oral, in English.

15. Examinations Decisions

15.1. A candidate must sit all components of an exam together and must pass all components in order to pass the Exam.

15.2. All aspects of and decisions on Examinations shall be based on Best Evidence Medical Education.

15.3. Residency and Fellowship Programs shall have a marking system based on their psychometric approaches.

15.4. Residency and Fellowship Programs shall have standard setting based on their psychometric approaches.

15.5. All Exam results must be approved by the Secretary General of KIMS.

16. Question Bank

- 16.1.** All questions (for e.g., MCQs, OSCEs, SAQs and Structured Oral Questions) shall be secured in a centralized Question Bank.
- 16.2.** Questions stored in Question Bank must have been reviewed by the discipline experts in Residency and Fellowship Programs and accepted for use in examinations.
- 16.3.** Program Examinations Committee shall extract questions from the Question Bank for an exam based on Table of Specifications.
- 16.4.** Chairs of Program Examinations Committee shall arrange exam paper review meeting before submission of the final paper to the KIMS Examinations Office.
- 16.5.** No changes shall be allowed in the Examination Paper (content and sequence) after the paper has been submitted to the KIMS Examinations Office.
- 16.6.** Questions in the Question Bank must not leave the KIMS Examinations Office in any form except as a part of an exam paper.
- 16.7.** Personal Computer hosting the Question Bank must not be connected to any network.
- 16.8.** Personal Computer hosting the Question Bank must have a restricted access and it should be located in a room with restricted access.
- 16.9.** A back-up of Question Bank must be kept in a restricted hard disk locked in a fire resistant safe inside the restricted access KIMS Examinations Office.
- 16.10.** Programs that use OSCE as an assessment tool shall develop Standardized Patient Bank.

17. Exam Papers

- 17.1.** Written Exam Papers shall be submitted by Chairs of Program Examinations Committees to KIMS Examinations Office in line with the Examinations Timelines.
- 17.2.** Printing of Exam Papers must be done under the supervision of the Chair of Program Examinations Committee in KIMS Examinations Office in line with the Examinations timelines announced by KIMS Examinations Office.
- 17.3.** Exam Papers must be stored in sealed envelope/s signed by corresponding Chair of Program Examinations Committee.
- 17.4.** Sealed envelope/s carrying Exam Papers must be stored in restricted locker inside the restricted room in KIMS Examinations Office.
- 17.5.** Sealed envelope/s carrying Exam Papers must not leave KIMS Examinations Office before the scheduled time of the corresponding exam.

18. Examinations Logistics

- 18.1.** The KIMS Examinations Office staff must prepare the final list for student attendance of the examination and get it reviewed by the Chair of Program Examination Committees.
- 18.2.** The Chair of Program Examination Committees shall design seating arrangements, and assign invigilation duties.
- 18.3.** In order to avoid errors, the Chair of the Program Examination Committee shall communicate with the KIMS Examinations Office to check details of the exams.
- 18.4.** On the day of examination the Invigilation staff shall reach the venue at least 15 minutes before the reporting time announced to candidates.
- 18.5.** The Chair of Program Examinations Committee or designee receiving the exam papers in sealed envelope/s must count the papers after opening the seal at the venue and must sign a receipt letter for the KIMS Examinations Office.
- 18.6.** After the exam is finished the KIMS Examinations Office staff must count all the exam papers and answer sheets and must seal them in envelope/s and take the signature of the Chair of Program Examinations Committee or designee on a corresponding receipt at the venue.

19. Candidate's Conduct

- 19.1.** An absence from an exam or its component after registration for examinations in KIMS Examinations Office shall be considered as a 'Failed' attempt.
- 19.2.** Candidates must present their Civil ID and KIMS Examinations Registration Letter to the staff at the Registration Desk at the venue of the exam.
- 19.3.** Impersonation or false identity will be subject to applicable government rules.
- 19.4.** Candidates arriving at the exam venue Registration Desk half an hour after the start of examinations shall NOT be allowed to attempt the exam.
- 19.5.** Specific instructions shall be provided on the day of the exam which will require a strict compliance.
- 19.6.** Candidates shall not bring electronic devices, books or notes to the examination premises.
- 19.7.** Smoking is not allowed in the examination premises.
- 19.8.** Candidates must not give or obtain unauthorized information or aid during an exam.
- 19.9.** Candidates must not look at the examination materials of others.
- 19.10.** Candidates must not take any component of an exam outside the examination premises in any form.
- 19.11.** Candidates must not talk to each other inside the examination premises.
- 19.12.** Candidates must not engage in any disruptive behavior.

- 19.13.** Candidates shall be allowed to leave the examination premises half an hour after the start of examinations.
- 19.14.** Non-compliance with any of the above shall be considered a misconduct subject to disciplinary action by the invigilator varying from verbal warning to a written report with required implications to the Head of KIMS Examinations Office.
- 19.15.** If the candidate is requested to leave the examination premises by the invigilator with an approval from the Head of KIMS Examinations Office, then it must be complied.

20. Preparation of Results

- 20.1.** KIMS Examinations Office shall scan OMR response sheets and shall verify the output by manual checking of random samples of OMR response sheets.
- 20.2.** Compiled marks of OSCEs, SAQs, Oral examinations shall be submitted in a USB drive with a signed hard copy from the Chair of Program Examinations Committee.
- 20.3.** Results must be printed and signed by Chair of Program Examinations Committee and the KIMS Head of Examinations Office in the results meeting.

21. Results Meeting

- 21.1.** Results meeting must be conducted at the completion of all components of Residency and Fellowship Examinations.
- 21.2.** Results meeting must be attended by the Chair of Program Examinations Committee and the KIMS Head of Examinations Office.
- 21.3.** Results meeting shall be attended by the external examiners and members of the Program Examinations Committee.
- 21.4.** The Chair of Program and Program Director shall not be a part of the Results meeting.

22. Declaration of Results

- 22.1.** KIMS Examinations Office will upload the results on its Examinations website.
- 22.2.** Results will be disclosed to the candidates, individually, confidentially, through a password restricted access, ONLY through KIMS Examinations website.

23. Exam Attempts

- 23.1.** Residents shall be allowed two attempts to Part 1 Exam.
- 23.2.** Residents must get an approval from the Program Examinations Committee in order to get a third attempt to Part 1 Exam.
- 23.3.** Residents and Fellows shall be allowed two attempts to Final Exam.

- 23.4.** Residents and Fellows must get an approval from the Program Examinations Committee in order to get a third attempt to Final Exam.
- 23.5.** Candidates failing an exam in the maximum of three attempts will be expelled from the Program.

24. Scrutiny of results

- 24.1.** Any request for scrutiny of results shall be submitted to the KIMS Examinations Office within four weeks of declaration of the results.
- 24.2.** Candidates must not be allowed access to scores or scored component of an exam.

25. Notification of Errors

- 25.1.** Chair of Program Examinations Committee must notify in writing to the Head of KIMS Examinations Office about any errors detected in the scores after the declaration of results.

26. Storage

- 26.1.** Printed exam questions papers will be destroyed, shredded or incinerated, after the respective exam.
- 26.2.** Response sheets (MCQs and Essays of certifying exams) must be retained in KIMS Examinations Office for three years.
- 26.3.** Soft copies of exam scores shall be stored for six years.