

# FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

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## Sample SOM SAQs

Candidates should note that the answers to questions were correct at the time the examination question was used but legislation may have subsequently changed such that some questions/answers may not reflect current legislation/practice.

### Mock question 1

You are asked to examine a 28-year-old woman, following an allegation of sexual assault. She tells you that she was raped by her partner, who was under the influence of cocaine at the time.

a. If cocaine is categorised as a CNS stimulant, what category do the following belong?

**5 marks**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Barbituate                          | <i>CNS depressant (1)</i>                       |
| 2. Khat                                | <i>CNS Stimulants (1)</i>                       |
| 3. Amphetamine                         | <i>CNS Stimulants (1)</i>                       |
| 4. LSD (9d-lysergic acid diethylamide) | <i>Drugs that alter perceptual function (1)</i> |
| 5. Cannabis                            | <i>Drugs that alter perceptual function (1)</i> |

b. What is the legal classification of cocaine and what is the Act that classifies it?

**2 marks**

*Cocaine is a Class A drug (1) under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971(1)*

c. List **three** physical signs of cocaine intoxication.

**3 marks**

- Tachycardia (1)*
- Sweating (1)*
- Dilated pupils (1)*
- Hyperthermia (1)*
- Increased respiration (1)*
- Increased blood pressure (1)*

d. List **three** possible behavioural effects of cocaine use.

**3 marks**

*Impulsiveness (1)*

*Aggressiveness (1)*

*Increased libido (1)*

*Paranoia (1)*

*Delusions (1)*

e. How is cocaine converted to crack cocaine?

**2 marks**

*Crack cocaine is produced when cocaine hydrochloride is dissolved in water and heated with a chemical reagent such as baking soda to free the alkaloid from the salt.*

f. Give a brief definition of “excited delirium”.

**1 mark**

*Excited delirium is a syndrome comprising hyperthermia, delirium, respiratory arrest and death, which can occur in users of cocaine and amphetamines.*

g. Briefly explain the forensic significance of excited delirium.

**2 marks**

*Individuals are highly agitated and paranoid and can die suddenly. This can be a risk for detainees in police custody, and if this condition is suspected then immediate transfer to hospital is indicated.*

The complainant tells you that her partner uses cocaine frequently, and has been physically violent towards her on many occasions.

h. List **three** questions you should ask her in your risk assessment.

**3 marks**

*Is the violence escalating? (1)*

*Are there children in the family and if so have they witnessed the violence? (1)*

*Is Laura aware of help available, such as an independent Domestic Violence advisor, women’s refuges? (1)*

*Has she thought about an exit plan or strategy to escape? (1)*

The complainant tells you she has two young children who have been in the room during the last few times her partner has hit her. She is aware of sources of help but does not want to access these at this time. She does not want anyone to be informed of the domestic violence and asks you not to tell anyone.

- i. Should you respect her wishes of confidentiality? Yes or No.

**2 marks**

*No*

- j. What should you do? Briefly explain reasons for your chosen course of action.

**2 marks**

*Refer to child protection / social services (1)*

*You cannot keep this information to yourself because you have a statutory duty to share this information under the Children Act. Because the welfare of the children is paramount, you must contact the Child Protection Team. (1)*

- k. At the time the complainant presents to the police and the doctor, she may be suffering from acute psychological trauma. Give **two** examples of how this might affect how the situation should be handled.

**2 marks**

*Acute trauma can affect recall and so full accounts should not be taken immediately (1)*

*Acute trauma can influence the way a person presents to the professionals, and professionals should be aware that there is no "normal" way that a woman will behave after being raped. (1)*

- l. List **four** features of post- traumatic stress disorder.

**4 marks**

*Nightmares (1)*

*Intrusive thoughts (1)*

*Flashbacks (1)*

*Numbing of emotions (1)*

*Avoidance behavior (1)*

## Mock question 2

You have just examined a 6-year-old boy because of allegations that he may have been sexually abused. You find several anal warts.

- a. Confidentiality is not absolute. List **five** reasons why information can be disclosed by a doctor to a third party.

**5 marks**

*The person with parental responsibility consents (1)*

*It is required by law (1)*

*It is justified in the public interest (1)*

*By order of a presiding officer of a Court (1)*

*To protect the child (1)*

- b. What is the causative agent of ano-genital warts?

**1 mark**

*The Human Papilloma virus.*

- c. List **four** proposed mechanisms for acquisition:

**4 marks**

*Vertical transmission from infected mother (1)*

*Autoinoculation from non-genital warts (1)*

*Hetero-inoculation (contact between the ano-genital region and infected second party or contaminated objects) (1)*

*Sexual (1)*

- d. Which would be the most likely cause in this case and give **three** reasons why.

**4 marks**

*Sexual (1)*

*Currently evidence only exists for perinatal or sexual transmission (1)*

*Unlikely vertical transmission in view of age though precise cut off age below which is assumed to occur is unclear (1)*

*Only evidence from single cases for autoinoculation (1)*

- e. What **four** possible screening tests for sexually transmitted infections would you consider when examining the patient?

**4 marks**

*If urethral discharge then meatal swab (1)*

*Urine sample for chlamydia and gonorrhoea (1)*

*Rectal swab for chlamydia and gonorrhoea (1)*

*If oral assault suspected then pharyngeal swab for chlamydia and gonorrhoea;*

*Blood for HIV, HBV, HCV and syphilis (1)*

- f. List **three** pieces of information that must be noted to ensure chain of evidence when submitting any samples taken.

**3 marks**

*Date and time sample taken (1)*

*Date and time sample handed over (1)*

*Name of person who took sample (1)*

*Name of person to whom sample handed over (1)*

*Nature of sample (1)*

*Name (or other identifying method) from whom sample is taken (1)*

- g. List five ano-genital findings that may mimic abuse in pre-pubertal children.

**5 marks**

*Anal fissure due to other mechanisms (1)*

*Skin tags (1)*

*Accidental straddle injuries (1)*

*Congenital failure of fusion of median raphe (1)*

*Perianal Crohn's disease (1)*

*Lichen sclerosis et atrophicus (1)*

*Urethral prolapse, caruncle (1)*

- h. For the following terms, give both a medical definition and an explanation in lay terms.

**6 marks**

- i. Anal canal

*Medical: the terminal part of the large intestine extending from the rectum to the anal orifice (1)*

*Lay: back passage (1)*

ii. Anal fissure

*Medical: a break in the perianal skin which radiates out from the anal orifice (1)*

*Lay: a crack or split in the opening of the back passage (1)*

iii. Perineum

*Medical: the area between the posterior fourchette and the anus in a girl and between the base of the penis and the anus in a boy (1)*

*Lay: the area between the front and back passage in a girl and the area between the willy and the back passage in a boy (1)*