



Advice on obtaining qualifications in clinical forensic medicine

Jan 2018 Review date Jan 2021 – check www.fflm.ac.uk for latest update

The medico-legal guidelines and recommendations published by the Faculty are for general information only. Appropriate specific advice should be sought from your medical defence organisation or professional association. The Faculty has one or more senior representatives of the MDOs on its Board, but for the avoidance of doubt, endorsement of the medico-legal guidelines or recommendations published by the Faculty has not been sought from any of the medical defence organisations.

Introduction

The Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (FFLM) Quality Standards in Forensic Medicine (FFLM, 2016) recommend that all trainees should consider further academic qualifications in forensic medicine (as applicable) and should obtain the FFLM Licentiate qualification within three years or the FFLM Membership qualification within five years of commencing work in this field.

In relation to continuing professional development the FFLM fully supports the GMC requirements for Revalidation. Forensic Physicians should practice in accordance with FFLM Core Competencies for Re-licensing/Revalidation (October 2008).

It is essential that forensic physicians have an annual appraisal by a trained medical appraiser that covers their full scope of practice. For doctors working with portfolio careers the appraisal should be robust in covering the forensic aspects of their work. Furthermore forensic physicians should complete an average of 50 credits (representing 50 hours of CPD activity) each year and achieve a minimum of 250 credits over each 5-year cycle. For doctors working with portfolio careers the content of the 50 credits should reflect the areas of work and personal development plan appropriately.

Studying for a qualification in clinical forensic medicine will fulfil many of the above criteria and lead to excellence in clinical practice and the opportunities to provide an independent opinion to relevant authorities such as, for example, the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and defence, in the increasingly complex field of clinical forensic medicine.

Membership of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine – MFFLM (GFM) (SOM)

The first full Membership exam (MFFLM) was completed in April 2010. Starting in October 2009 the exam was set up for Forensic Physicians of both disciplines – General Forensic Medicine (GFM) and Sexual Offence Medicine (SOM), and for Medico-Legal Advisors. It is hoped that the exam will become compulsory for those who wish to pursue a career in forensic and legal medicine in the United Kingdom at consultant level.

Doctors who pass the exam will have the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes to practise as independent practitioners within the speciality of forensic and legal medicine.

To be eligible to sit the exam candidates must have been working in the speciality for three years (within the past 5 years).

The exam consists of two parts. The part 1 is a knowledge-based test covering medical law and ethics, testing factual knowledge. The part 1 Examination has one-paper in a best of five format (where the candidate is asked to select the best answer from five possible answers).

The part 2 written exam tests the application of knowledge to problems in modified short answers. All Candidates will have a 2.5 hour paper with 8 compulsory questions.

The Observed Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) and the Observed Structured Practical Examination (OSPE) assesses the ability to integrate and apply clinical, professional, communication and practical skills appropriate for forensic and legal medicine. It simulates patient/client consultations that are relevant to forensic and legal medicine using simulated patients/clients. A range of scenarios drawn from forensic and legal practice are used and each consultation is marked by a different assessor. The role of the patient/client is taken by a trained role-player. The OSCE/OSPE is composed of 8-14 stations for each of the specialties (general forensic medicine and sexual offence medicine) over a period of a minimum of 2hrs.

Candidates in General Forensic Medicine (GFM) and Sexual Offence Medicine (SOM) will have a specialty specific question paper and clinical examination. Candidates wishing to gain qualification in more than one specialty will have to sit the question papers and attend the clinical examinations specific for their choice.

Candidates wishing to take the exam should carefully study the regulations. A detailed syllabus has been published outlining the areas of knowledge and understanding required for both parts of the exam; the part 2 syllabus is different for each of the three disciplines. For details see our website: fflm.ac.uk/exams/mfflm/

To read a candidates' experience of the examination please see: *My MFFLM Experience – General Forensic Medicine by Dr Anna Wiles*

Individuals who wish to sit the exam are encouraged to become affiliates of the FFLM. To apply, please go to: fflm.ac.uk/faculty/application/



Licentiate of the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine – LFFLM (GFM) (SOM formerly the DFCASA)

The Licentiate (GFM) was instituted by the Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine (FFLM) in 2014.

LFFLM (GFM) – This examination is open to doctors and other health care professionals (nurses and paramedics) working in the field of forensic medicine.

LFFLM (SOM) There are 3 options for this examination:

1. LFFLM (SOM), which is available to doctors only;
2. LFFLM (SOM) (a) (adults only), which is available to both doctors and nurses;
3. LFFLM (SOM) (c) (children only), which is available to doctors only.

The Examination for the Licentiate is divided into two parts:

Part 1 is designed to assess a candidate's knowledge and understanding of general forensic medicine and/or sexual offence medicine with a Single Best Answer (SBA) paper. This will consist of a 3 hour examination in a best-of-five format (where the candidate is asked to select the best answer from five possible answers).

Part 2 is a clinical competency assessment. All Candidates will complete a Compendium of Validated Experience (COVE) and a Case Portfolio. Candidates will also have to complete a series of OSCEs.

Candidates wishing to take the exam should carefully study the regulations. A detailed syllabus has been published outlining the areas of knowledge and understanding for both parts of the exam.

GFM: fflm.ac.uk/exams/lfflmgfm/

SOM: [LFFLM-SOM Regulations, syllabus and information for candidates](#)

Diploma of Legal Medicine (DLM)

The DLM commenced in 2014 and the aim of the examination is to demonstrate those persons who have a detailed knowledge of the specialty of legal medicine.

The DLM examination has a one-paper format. The paper consists of 150 best of-five multiple-choice questions. Candidates have three hours to complete it. Candidates are tested on a wide range of topics in Legal Medicine as set out in the published Syllabus – Schedule 1:

[DLM Regulations, syllabus and information for candidates](#)

A registered medical practitioner who obtains a distinction will be offered exemption from the Part 1 Membership of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (MFFLM) Examination for a period of three years.

Postgraduate Certificate – Advanced Forensic Practice (Sexual Assault or Custody)

Postgraduate Diploma – Advanced Forensic Practice (Sexual Assault and/or Custody)

Masters in Advanced Forensic Practice (Sexual Assault and/or Custody)

The United Kingdom Association of Forensic Nurses & Paramedics (UKAFN) has developed advanced standards for education and training in forensic practice (ASET) and is now able to offer education providers the opportunity to develop and deliver courses that meet the ASET standards under licence.

This means that while education providers can still be innovative and create their own course, successful students will be leaving with a recognised qualification by a Professional Organisation.

The core elements of an UKAFN ASET accredited course are:

- Completion of the UKAFN competency document in either custody or sexual assault
- Students are assessed by providing written and oral evidence for court
- Courses meeting these standards are underpinned by theoretical aspects of forensic practice
- Students successfully completing courses meeting the ASET standards and approved by UKAFN, will receive a UKAFN ASET certificate
- Accredited at Postgraduate Level

Staffordshire University is the first Higher Education Institution to offer a UKAFN ASET Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Forensic Practice in either Custody or Sexual Assault. These courses also offer progression onto a Postgraduate Diploma and full Master Degrees.

For more information:

ukafn.org/pgcpgdmsc-advanced-forensic-practice-sexual-assault-custody-aset/

www.staffs.ac.uk/study/

For further details contact:

Margaret Bannerman
Course Leader
Staffordshire University
Centre of Excellence in Healthcare Education
Blackheath Lane
Stafford ST18 0YB
Email: marg.bannerman@staffs.ac.uk
Tel: 01785 353852



From November 2017 The Faculty Board agreed that the UKAFN ASET can be badged by the FFLM. Also candidates who hold the ASET in custody and/or sexual offence medicine will be exempt from having to provide a COVE and will be required to provide a Case Portfolio of five mandatory cases only and will not have to pay a fee for assessment. Candidates will still be required to sit the SBA paper and sit the OSCE and pay the relevant fees. See *The Convergence of the ASET and the LFFLM*

Diploma in Forensic Medical Sciences (DipFMS)

This examination was initiated by the University of Glasgow in 1987 but, with some adaptation, was transferred to the Society of Apothecaries in 1997. It is open to medical practitioners as well as non-graduates with an interest in the field, including other healthcare professionals, lawyers and police, provided they have successfully completed a nine month part time course (Course in Forensic Medical Sciences). The course currently runs in both Glasgow and London over three academic terms (one evening per week), with both venues now also having an online option.

The examination comprises submission of a dissertation on a specified topic, plus a three hour written paper taken in June.

For details of the examination contact:
Society of Apothecaries
www.apothecaries.org
Tel: 0207 236 1180

For details of the courses contact:

London:

Mr Adam Konstanciak, Course Administrator
Email: info@afma.org.uk

Recommended Societies

The Medico-Legal Society

Medico Legal Society Membership Admin
The Medical Society of London, 11 Chandos Street,
Cavendish Square, London W1G 9EB
Email: medicolegalsoc@btconnect.com

The British Academy of Forensic Sciences (BAFS)

Applications for BAFS Membership and Enquiries please visit the website:
www.bafs.org.uk

The Royal Society of Medicine Section of Clinical Forensic and Legal Medicine

www.rsm.ac.uk
1 Wimpole Street, London W1M 8AE
Tel: 44 (0)20 7290 2991

The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences

www.csofs.org

Copthall Bridge House, Station Bridge, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 1SP

Tel: +44 (0)1423 790 391

Email: info@csofs.org

Journals

The Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine, formerly the Journal of Clinical Forensic Medicine

Medico-Legal Journal (Journal of the Medico-Legal Society)

Medicine Science and the Law (Journal of the BAFS)

Science and Justice (Journal of the FSS)

Recommended reading

See the FFLM suggested reading list on the web site for a comprehensive list of recommended publications.

DLM and Part 1 MFFLM Suggested Reading List

Part 2 MFFLM (GFM) and LFFLM (GFM) Suggested Reading List

Sexual Offences Medicine LFFLM (SOM) and Part 2 MFFLM (SOM) Suggested Reading List

Recommended courses

MFFLM & LFFLM Part 2 Examination Revision Day (GFM)
January

MFFLM & LFFLM Part 2 Examination Revision Day (SOM)
December

DLM and MFFLM Part 1 Revision Day (September)

For more information: www.fflm.ac.uk/events

Recommended E-learning/Webinars

There is an e-learning course run by the FFLM & The University of Ulster
www.fflm.ac.uk/e-learning/

There are a number of webinars available via the FFLM website:
www.fflm.ac.uk/e-learning/webinars/
VIMEO Channel: www.fflm.ac.uk/e-learning/vimeo-channel/

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on behalf of the of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine

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Send any feedback and comments to forensic.medicine@fflm.ac.uk