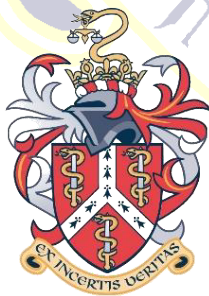




Diploma of Legal Medicine and Membership of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (MFFLM) Syllabus



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Introduction

This syllabus outlines the areas of knowledge and understanding covered in the Diploma of Legal Medicine (DLM) and the Part 1 Membership of the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (MFFLM) examination. It also covers the and Part 2 MFFLM examination in General Forensic Medicine (GFM) and the Part 2 MFFLM examination in Sexual Offence Medicine (SOM).

The DLM/Part 1 MFFLM examination is common, whether in General Forensic Medicine, Sexual Offence Medicine or Medico/Dento-Legal Medicine, and the Chief Examiner's Committee believe it is important that all candidates have a thorough understanding of medical law and ethics.

The DLM/Part 1 examination aims to encourage candidates to read widely on Medico-Legal and ethical issues outside of their day-to-day practice as a basis for further professional development and later specialisation.

The syllabus describes broadly the areas of knowledge expected of candidates to pass the examination: it is not to be taken as exhaustive or inclusive. Not every area of the syllabus will be tested at each examination diet and the absence of a topic does not guarantee that it will not be included in the examination paper. Candidates can expect the majority of questions to relate to the broad areas specified.

The examination covers all jurisdictions within the United Kingdom (UK). The syllabus will highlight this in some of the areas where the differences between jurisdictions are of particular importance, however candidates should be aware that this principle applies throughout the DLM/MFFLM examination.

Schedule 1: Syllabus for Part 1 Examination

1. Structure of Healthcare in the United Kingdom

Candidates should have an understanding of the structure and organisation of healthcare in the UK including¹:

- 1.1 Structure of the NHS and the differences due to devolved government in the 4 jurisdictions;
- 1.2 Independent contractor status of GMS GPs, GDS GDPs PMS GPs;
- 1.3 GP & GDP Performer's Lists;
- 1.4 Private medical/dental practice;
- 1.5 NHS indemnity and other indemnity/insurance arrangements;
- 1.6 Clinical governance;
- 1.7 Issues of access to healthcare; and
- 1.8 The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence and the Scottish Medicines Consortium.

This is intended as a guide to candidates with respect to the level at which the subjects are likely to be examined. Thus, for example, only a basic knowledge and understanding is required of "philosophical medical ethics", whereas a detailed knowledge and understanding of "Consent" is required

2. Regulation of Healthcare Professionals

- 2.1 The General Medical Council, the General Dental Council, the Health and Care Professions Council, The Nursing & Midwifery Council and others.
 - 2.1.1 Candidates should have an understanding of the structure and functions of the regulatory bodies, including:
 - 2.1.2 Composition
 - 2.1.3 Fitness to practise procedures
 - 2.1.4 Candidates should have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the ethical guidance published by the regulatory bodies (including the GMC's "Good Medical Practice" and all supporting ethical guidance – see also "Medical Ethics in Practice").

3. Sources of Law and Legal Systems

Candidates should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the sources of law in the UK and of the legal systems of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Examples of question topics might include:

- 3.1 The structure and functions of the main courts in the jurisdictions
- 3.2 The legislative process
- 3.3 The effect of judicial precedent/case law
- 3.4 European Union law

¹ The sections refer to either:

- understanding of a subject
- A "basic" knowledge and understanding of a subject or
- A "detailed" knowledge and understanding of a subject

3.5 Human Rights legislation

4. Criminal Law

Candidates should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the structure and function of the criminal law in the UK jurisdictions, particularly in relation to those areas where this may be relevant to medical practice. Examples of question topics might include:

- 4.1 Police powers
- 4.2 Principles of the law of gross negligence manslaughter, including corporate manslaughter and
- 4.3 Sexual offences
- 4.4 Road traffic legislation
- 4.5 Drug offences
- 4.6 Assault and offences against the person

5. Civil Law

Candidates should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the structure and function of the civil law in the UK jurisdictions and a more detailed knowledge and understanding of the law relating to medical negligence and medical injuries. Examples of question topics might include:

- 5.1 Duty of care in the law of negligence
- 5.2 Tests for medical negligence
- 5.3 Failure to warn of risks
- 5.4 Actions for assault or trespass to the person
- 5.5 Principles of causation
- 5.6 Civil procedure
- 5.7 Damages.

6. Philosophical Medical Ethics

Candidates should have a basic knowledge and understanding of the main philosophical approaches to medical ethics including:

- 6.1 Utilitarianism
- 6.2 Deontological systems
- 6.3 Principle-based systems and of the core principles to be found in most principle-based systems of medical ethics:
 - Beneficence
 - Non-maleficence
 - Respect for autonomy
 - Justice.

7. Medical Ethics in Practice

Candidates should have an understanding of the regulatory bodies' ethical guidance

including the GMC's Good Medical Practice. Examples of question topics might include:

- 7.1 GMC, GDC and NMC probity requirements
- 7.2 Sharing information with and working with colleagues
- 7.3 Responding to concerns about colleagues.

8. Consent

Candidates should have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the law and ethics relating to consent for medical treatment including:

- 8.1 Regulatory bodies' and NHS guidance
- 8.2 Requirements for consent to be valid
- 8.3 Forms of consent
- 8.4 Consent and mentally incapacitated adults (including consent given by others e.g. welfare attorneys).

9. Confidentiality

Candidates should have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the law and ethics governing the duty of confidentiality, including:

- 9.1 Legal basis
- 9.2 GMC, GDC and NMC guidance²
- 9.3 Disclosures required by law
- 9.4 Disclosures in the public interest
- 9.5 Data protection legislation
- 9.6 Patients' rights of access to health records and medical reports
- 9.7 Confidentiality and mentally incapacitated adults
- 9.8 Confidentiality after death

10. Children and Young People

- 10.1 Candidates should have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the law of consent as it applies to children and young people including:

- 10.1.1 Differences between the UK jurisdictions
- 10.1.2 Competence to consent
- 10.1.3 Refusal of treatment by children and/or parents
- 10.1.4 Parental responsibility
- 10.1.5 16 –18-year-olds
- 10.1.6 GMC, GDC and NMC guidance

- 10.2 Candidates should have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the legal and ethical requirements of confidentiality in relation to young people. Examples of question topics might include:

- 10.2.1 Parental requests for information

² Note that GMC consent and confidentiality in children is included in "Protecting Children and Young People" and "0-18 years: guidance for all doctors"

- 10.2.2 Disclosure in the public interest
- 10.2.3 Requests for information about children and young people under data protection legislation
- 10.3 Candidates should have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the legal and ethical principles involved in child safeguarding issues. Topics for questions might include:
 - 10.3.1 Relevant legislation and government guidance;
 - 10.3.2 GMC, GDC and NMC guidance;
 - 10.3.3 Sources of advice and assistance;
 - 10.3.4 Role of the social work department;
 - 10.3.5 Confidentiality; and
 - 10.3.6 Child safeguarding procedures.

11. Death and Dying

Candidates should have an understanding of the legal and ethical issues surrounding death including:

- 11.1 Definition of death
- 11.2 Death certification and cremation
- 11.3 The role of the coroner and the structure and function of inquests
- 11.4 Fatal Accident Inquiries in Scotland
- 11.5 Withholding and withdrawing life prolonging treatment
- 11.6 Patient refusal of life-prolonging treatment
- 11.7 Advance directives
- 11.8 Euthanasia and assisted suicide
- 11.9 Organ donation
- 11.10 Retention of organs and tissue
- 11.11 Medical examiners and medical reviewers (Scotland)

12. Mental Health Law

Candidates should have an understanding of the applicable mental health law (including mental capacity and related legislation) and Codes of Practice in the UK jurisdictions. Examples of question topics might include:

- 12.1 Detention under the mental health acts
- 12.2 Detention of mentally incapacitated adults
- 12.3 Community treatment orders
- 12.4 Treatment without consent
- 12.5 Vulnerable adults.

13. Prescribing

Candidates should have an understanding of the Medico-Legal issues relating to prescribing medicines. Examples of question topics might include:

- 13.1 GMC GDC and NMC guidance on prescribing
- 13.2 Medico-Legal issues involved in prescribing controlled drugs (including regulatory

requirements)

13.3 Medico-Legal issues involved in unlicensed and off label prescribing.

14. Report Writing and Giving Evidence

14.1 Statement writing

14.2 Principles and uses of Peer Review.

14.3 Rules of evidence

14.4 The Professional and the Expert Witness

14.5 Criminal and Civil Procedures Rules

Schedule 2: Syllabus for Part 2 MFFLM GFM

No syllabus can be comprehensive. Hence the syllabus is indicative of those areas of knowledge with which you are expected to be familiar but is not intended to be exhaustive or to exclude other items of knowledge which are of similar relevance. You can expect, however, that the majority of questions will test knowledge in the broad areas specified.

1. Consent, Confidentiality & Ethics

Candidates should have a broad understanding of the differences between therapeutic and forensic consent, interview techniques, record keeping and documentation.

Examples of questions topic might include:

- 1.1 Gillick competence and related case law
- 1.2 Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children
- 1.3 Temporary loss of capacity and how this may impact on a decision to examine

2. Injury

Injuries and their interpretation are a fundamental part of clinical forensic medicine. It is important you understand the epidemiology of injury and the physiology of wound healing and are able to document, classify and interpret different types of injuries. In addition, you should have a clear understanding of the significance or otherwise of the absence of injuries. You should also be familiar with aspects of torture, restraint, elder abuse, defence injuries, self-inflicted injuries, and non-accidental injury.

Examples of questions might include:

- 2.1 Classification of the common types of injury
- 2.2 Documentation and management of injuries, including photo documentation
- 2.3 Use of restraint
- 2.4 Elder abuse
- 2.5 Interpersonal violence

3. Mental Health Law

Mental health problems occur frequently. You should be familiar with the relevant mental health legislation and definitions, the relationships with substance misuse, and how to assess risk.

Examples of questions might include:

- 3.1 The commonly used Mental Health Act sections
- 3.2 Assessment of self-harm risk
- 3.3 Pre-release risk assessment

4. Forensic Science & Toxicology

Forensic science is making an increasing contribution to clinical forensic medicine. You should be familiar with methods of forensic sampling, analysis and interpretation of different forensic samples including hair, blood, urine, etc. In addition, you should understand the principles behind the use of DNA and its limitations and how to take steps to reduce contamination.

Examples of questions might include:

- 4.1 The types of samples taken from an assailant of an alleged sexual assault
- 4.2 Persistence data
- 4.3 It is important you understand the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of commonly used prescribed drugs and drugs of misuse and their criminal relevance as well as having knowledge of the types and presentations of common poisons.
- 4.4 Examples of questions might include:
- 4.5 The clinical effects of cocaine
- 4.6 The effect of cannabis on driving
- 4.7 The management of alcohol and opiate withdrawal

5. Custodial Medicine

You should understand the guidance and the legislation relating to detention of persons in custody, the spectrum of illness and disease found in that environment, and the examination, assessment and management (including prescribing) of persons detained in custody.

Examples of questions might include:

- 5.1 Fitness to interview
- 5.2 Management of persons detained under the Terrorism Act
- 5.3 Near misses in custody
- 5.4 Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children
- 5.5 Management of substance misuse in detainees in custody
- 5.6 Administration of medication in custody
- 5.7 Conflict resolution and personal safety

You should understand the science behind road traffic legislation and the common defences for failure to provide samples of breath, blood and urine. You should have knowledge of fitness to drive, and the types of injuries sustained in road traffic accidents.

Examples of questions might include:

- 5.8 Failure to provide evidential specimens
- 5.9 Assessment under section 4 of the Road Traffic Act
- 5.10 Knowledge of sexual offences is important, and you must understand the legislation relating to sexual offences, male and female genital anatomy, and how to examine a suspect of an alleged sexual assault.
- 5.11 Examples of questions might include:
- 5.12 The type of injuries associated with a sexual assault.

6. Forensic Pathology and Crime Scene Investigation

Assessing a scene of death is an important part of a forensic physician's duties. You should have knowledge of the changes that take place in the body after death, how the time of death can be estimated, mechanisms of death and the principles of an autopsy and the different techniques used in mass disaster situations.

Examples of questions might include:

- 6.1 Causes of deaths in custody
- 6.2 The role of the doctor at a scene of death
- 6.3 The investigation of sudden unexplained deaths

7. The Medical Witness

Giving evidence in Court is an important part of the role of the forensic physician. You should therefore have a good understanding of record keeping and documentation, statement and report writing, pre-trial preparation and court appearance.

Examples of questions might include:

- 7.1 Writing a statement
- 7.2 The process and uses of Peer Review
- 7.3 The difference between an expert witness of fact and an expert witness of opinion.

Schedule 3: Syllabus for Part 2 MFFLM SOM

No syllabus can be comprehensive. Hence the syllabus is indicative of those areas of knowledge with which you are expected to be familiar but is not intended to be exhaustive or to exclude other items of knowledge which are of similar relevance. You can expect, however, that the majority of questions will test knowledge in the broad areas specified.

1. Consent Confidentiality & Ethics

You should have a broad understanding of the differences between therapeutic and forensic consent, interview techniques, record keeping and documentation.

Examples of questions topic might include:

- Gillick competence and related case law
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children
- Temporary loss of capacity and how this may impact on a decision to examine

2. Injury

Injuries and their interpretation are a fundamental part of clinical forensic medicine. It is important you understand the epidemiology of injury and the physiology of wound healing and are able to document, classify and interpret different types of injuries. In addition, you should have a clear understanding of the significance or otherwise of the absence of injuries. You should also be familiar with aspects of torture, restraint, elder abuse, defence injuries, self-inflicted injuries, and non-accidental injury.

Examples of questions might include:

- Classification of the common types of injury
- Documentation and management of injuries, including photo documentation
- Use of restraint
- Elder abuse
- Interpersonal violence

3. Mental Health Law

Mental health problems occur frequently. You should be familiar with the relevant mental health legislation and definitions, the relationships with substance misuse, and how to assess risk.

Examples of questions might include:

- The commonly used Mental Health Act sections
- Assessment of self-harm and suicide risk

4. Forensic Science & Toxicology

Forensic science is making an increasing contribution to clinical forensic medicine. You should be familiar with methods of forensic sampling, analysis and interpretation of different forensic samples including hair, blood, urine, etc. In addition, you should understand the principles behind the use of DNA and its limitations and how to take steps to reduce contamination.

Examples of questions might include:

- The types of samples taken from a complainant of an alleged sexual assault
- Persistence data

It is important you understand the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of commonly used prescribed drugs and drugs of abuse and their criminal relevance as well as having knowledge of the types and presentations of common poisons.

Examples of questions might include:

- The clinical effects of cocaine
- The management of alcohol and opiate withdrawal

5. Adult Sexual Offences

Knowledge of sexual offences is crucially important and you must understand the guidance and the legislation relating to sexual offences, male and female genital anatomy and how to examine a victim of an alleged sexual assault and the principles of post assault management.

Examples of questions might include:

- The type of injuries associated with a sexual assault
- Psychological response to rape
- Emergency contraception
- Management of sexually transmitted infections
- Indications for PEPSE
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults

6. Paediatrics

Examining children who may have been abused is part of the role of the forensic physician. You should have a detailed knowledge of male and female genital anatomy at different ages and the changes that can occur in abuse.

Examples of questions might include:

- The different types of hymen
- Genital injuries including hymenal injuries and anal findings in alleged penetration

Child safeguarding is crucial to the safe care of children. You should be familiar with the principles of information sharing, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and have

knowledge of the different types of child abuse including physical, sexual, emotional abuse

and neglect as well as factitious and fabricated illness. Examples of questions might include:

- Disclosure of confidential medical information
- Management of suspected child exploitation

7. The Medical Witness

Giving evidence in Court is an important part of the role of the forensic physician. You should therefore have a good understanding of record keeping and documentation, statement and report writing, pre-trial preparation and court appearance.

Examples of questions might include:

- Writing a statement

- The process and uses of Peer Review
- The difference between an expert witness of fact and an expert witness of opinion.