



Policy on Participation in Examination Preparation Activities

BACKGROUND

Individuals who support ABEM's activities may be asked to participate in an activity that would present a conflict of interest with their ABEM activities. The following policy is intended to guide current directors, all ABEM-appointed representatives to subspecialty subboards or examination committees, examination item writers, and oral examiners when faced with decisions about participating in examination preparation activities.

POLICY

It is the policy of ABEM that current directors, ABEM-appointed subspecialty representatives, item writers, and oral examiners may not participate in the preparation or execution of any board preparation courses, lectures, or publications advertised or designed to prepare diplomates or residents to take the following ABEM examinations: Qualifying, Oral Certification, ConCert™, or any ABEM subspecialty certification or recertification examination activity for which ABEM diplomates are eligible. This policy includes any oral examinations that simulate the ABEM Oral Certification Examination, including those in residency programs, and any other activities related to those oral examinations. This policy is binding during the actual time of service to the Board and for two years thereafter. If requested by an ABEM-appointed subspecialty representative, item writer, or oral examiner, the end of his or her "actual time of service" can be defined as the last exposure he or she had to examination materials.

Current directors and item writers may not participate in the preparation or execution of any board preparation courses, lectures, or publications advertised or designed to prepare diplomates or residents for Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment (LLSA) tests. This policy is binding during the actual time of service to the Board and for two years thereafter.

Board volunteers or former volunteers who knowingly violate any aspect of this policy will be subject to penalties up to and including permanent prohibition from involvement with ABEM. Penalties will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

No item- or case-specific information related to ABEM examination programs may ever be disclosed to another source, including board preparation courses. Board volunteers or former volunteers who do so are in violation of the ABEM Policy on Examination Irregularities and are subject to the provisions and sanctions of that policy.

PROCEDURES

Review the following criteria to determine if a board preparation course, lecture, publication, or other oral examination would be covered by this policy. If any one of the following criteria applies, the ABEM Policy on Conflict of Interest would apply.

For oral examiners and ABEM-appointed subspecialty representatives:

- Advertising is directed to initial certification, ConCert™, or ABEM subspecialty examination candidates

- Advertising identifies faculty credentials relative to knowledge of initial certification, ConCert™, or ABEM subspecialty examinations
- Initial certification, ConCert™, or ABEM subspecialty examination test-taking strategies are referred to or presented
- The content or participant outcomes are referenced to initial certification, ConCert™, or ABEM subspecialty examinations

For current directors and item writers for all examinations:

- Advertising is directed to initial certification, ConCert™, LLSA, or ABEM subspecialty examination candidates
- Advertising identifies faculty credentials relative to knowledge of initial certification, ConCert™, LLSA, or ABEM subspecialty examinations
- Initial certification, ConCert™, LLSA, or ABEM subspecialty examination test-taking strategies are referred to or presented
- The content or participant outcomes are referenced to initial certification, ConCert™, LLSA, or ABEM subspecialty examinations

EXCEPTIONS

Oral examiners and ABEM-appointed subspecialty representatives may participate in board preparation courses and other activities directed specifically at the LLSA component of the ABEM Maintenance of Certification (ABEM MOC) Program. The Board may approve, on a case-by-case basis, an exception for former volunteers to participate in board preparation courses and other related activities for newly approved subspecialties and Focused Practice designations with no waiting time, for a period lasting three years after the first examination administration.

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