

How to Clear PLAB 2019

Crucial Tips to Pass UK PLAB Examination

PLAB-UK stands for Professional and Linguistic assessments Board Test in United Kingdom and is a necessary or pre-requisite for international medical graduates if they aim or intend to seek job opportunities in the UK.

However, recent migration rules have made it highly difficult for non-EU doctors to get good and secure job opportunities in the NHS UK, many doctors are still aiming for UK job opportunities by undertaking PLAB examination conducted by the General Medical Council of UK.

What is the Structure of PLAB Exam?

The PLAB exam consist of 2 sections viz. Part I and Part II. The Part I is a written paper having 200 questions including Extended Matching Questions (EMQ) and Single Best Response (SBR) question. The proportion of each type might vary but according to the GMC web site, in most instances, the number of SBR questions would not exceed 30% of the total questions. The paper will be for 3 hours.

PLAB Part II includes 14 Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) stations that would be designed to assess basic medical skills aiming for safe practice of medicine in UK. Each station would be for 5 minutes with an extra station added for statistical purposes as per the GMC website, although its marks are not considered in for the final results.

PLAB Part I will be held in several different centers worldwide while PLAB Part II will only be held in Manchester, UK. At the same time, although a candidate can sit for Part I for unlimited number of attempts, they will only be allowed to sit for the Part II for only 4 attempts.

What is the Preparation Needed for PLAB Test?

PLAB examination would require basic medical knowledge and extensive text books reading is recommended. The suggested textbooks are Oxford Handbook of clinical medicine and Oxford handbook of clinical specialities. In order to practice the answers for PLAB Part I questions, the PLAB digest is highly helpful. For PLAB part I, at least 2 to 3 months preparation is required in order to succeed.

PLAB part II requires referring books like PLAB made easy and London PLAB along with good clinical skills, better communication ability and good command in the English language. The candidate must prepare about the same duration for PLAB Part II as well.

What Are the Measures That Can Be Used to Pass PLAB?

It is important to get an overall idea about the structure of the paper, group study is a good idea and also advantageous. Having a group to study and discuss would be rather advantageous and such groups exist virtually in many of the PLAB forums. Go through these forums and while studying the recommended books, skim through the past questions or sample questions and try to answer them within the allocated time period to feel the rush in doing Part I. Solve all the queries that you come across with your study partners, with a person who had undergone the PLAB exam or with an expert who is known about the subject matter. Study only the relevant areas as it would not be possible to assess all the content in the referenced books.

You can apply the same method for Part II and this time; make sure you do practice your skills as if in an OSCE situation before going to the exam.

How to Score Good in PLAB?

The examination tests the ability to apply knowledge to the care of patients rather than how well you can remember and recite facts. All the questions are regarding the current best practices and you must answer them with regards to the published evidence and not as per your local arrangements.

What Does the Exam Cover?

PLAB Test covers everything a UK trained doctor might expect to see on the first day of Foundation Year Two (F2). The ability to apply knowledge to clinical situations is tested in PLAB Part 1. In PLAB Part 2, clinical and communication skills are tested.

Everything in the OSCE comes from the PLAB that sets out the scope and content of the test regarding the topics, skills and procedures that a doctor who passes the test would need to know and be able to do.

Everything cannot be tested on the blueprint, so sampling grid (pdf) is used to assure that each exam is consistent and testing is done across a wide range of content.

The National Health Service (NHS): Most doctors in the UK work in the NHS besides other employers, familiarity is not an issue but what is important is to test to see whether the doctor is fit to practise in the UK and when an examiner marks your performance in a station, they will be looking to see whether the way, patients are treated are in line with the GMC publication Good medical practice and its supporting guidance.

The examiner expects the doctor to have upto date knowledge with the latest evidence to formulate the management plan for a patient. UK evidence-based guidelines on the most trusted ways to diagnose, treat and prevent disease and ill health here are as follows:

- The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE)
- The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)

Implication of Guidelines in exam are as follows: For example, in a station involving a child with a non-accidental injury, It is expected that the doctor know that the child may need to be

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removed from those suspected of causing the injury. The procedures for doing this is also expected and the doctor must alert the child protection team.

Discussions & Questions