

# Standards for European Examinations

Albert Mifsud

CESMA meeting  
Brussels  
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# Why are standards needed?

A standard is a document that establishes an agreed way of doing something

- Establish a consistent approach to a project
- Simplify and facilitate project development
- Enable external bodies to have confidence in the project
- Lead to quality improvement

# Objective of standards

- To support high quality examinations
- To provide a framework for quality assurance of medical specialists trained in Europe
- To provide a robust system that can support the EU directive on professional mobility
- Ultimately contribute to patient care

# Development of Standards

2021: CESMA Executive accepted a proposal to develop Standards for UEMS examinations

Document 1: Standards for European examinations

Lead: Albert Mifsud

Document 2: Guidance on appraisal process by CESMA

Lead: Danny Mathysen

# History

- First version written June 2021
- Iterative review, following comments from:
  - CESMA Exec (circulated x4)
  - CESMA membership (circulated x3)
  - Discussed at CESMA meeting (Dec '22)
  - Working Group (est. Feb '23)
- Consideration of all comments and reviewed with V.Kusek and D.Mathysen

# Working Group on CESMA Examination Standards document



Danny Mathysen  
CESMA Exec



Andrew Brittlebank,  
Psychiatry



Vesna Kusec,  
Laboratory Medicine



Albert Mifsud  
CESMA Exec



David Rozsa,  
EPNIC



Shruti Sharma  
EJD, PGT



Julie-Lyn Noel,  
Eurospine

# Key points

- These are Standards on how a good exam should be organised & run
- Scope is limited to exams not the whole of assessment
- Without detailed Standards it is not possible to assess / appraise an examination
- Once Standards are in place, and appraisals are being undertaken effectively, the process should be termed Accreditation

# Standards design

- Based on International Standards Organisation (ISO) methodology
- Informed by ISO/IEC 17000 standards series

The image shows a screenshot of the CENELEC website. At the top left is the CENELEC logo. To its right is a navigation menu with the following items: EUROPEAN STANDARDIZATION, GET INVOLVED, AREAS OF WORK, and NEWS AND EVENTS. Below the navigation is a large banner with a blue background. The banner features the text "EUROPEAN STANDARDIZATION" in a small white box, followed by "ISO and IEC" in large white letters. The banner also contains several chemical structures and a network diagram. Below the banner is a horizontal menu with the following items: CEN and CENELEC, European Standards, Strategy 2030, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), International Cooperation, and IPR and Patents. At the bottom of the page are three buttons: "ISO and IEC", "Global Outreach", and "European Standards Adoption".



# Document content

- 1 Forward
- 2 Introduction
- 3 Scope
- 4 Corporate arrangements
- 5 The Examination
- 6 Application for the examination
- 7 The ETR
- 8 Examination design
- 9 Question design and examination bank
- 10 Examination delivery
- 11 Psychometric analysis
- 12 Appeals

# Main outcome of consultation

- Increase flexibility
- Make document more accessible
- Reconsider criteria for admission to UEMS examinations and award of Diplomas / Fellowship

All have been taken on board and addressed, or noted as discussion points

# Current status

- Final Document has been ready for consideration by CESMA membership and Executive for some time
  - Outstanding issues to be resolved
- Once approved by CESMA membership, requires ratification at UEMS Council

# Outstanding issues: organisational

- Should CESMA ONLY approve examinations offered EXCLUSIVELY to medical doctors (para.1.2)
- MUST ETR be UEMS approved (para.7.1)  
If not, how do we assess quality of ETR?

# Outstanding issues: standard

- Should examinations be set to European standards?  
If yes, should all examiners be practising in UEMS full or associate member state?

# Outstanding issues: eligibility

- Should UEMS exams be open to candidates from non-UEMS member states (para.6.4b)?
- What eligibility criteria should be required of candidates training outside UEMS members states
- What minimum evidence of compliance with criteria be acceptable?

# Outstanding issues: conflict of interest

- Can Examiners / Exam Committee members deliver courses designed or marketed to pass the exam?  
(para.4.8a,b,c)

# Outstanding issues: reasonable accommodations

- Should Exam Committees be required to consider requests for reasonable accommodations?

NB: this is required in EU Employment Law

Legal opinion may be required



# Outstanding issues: security

- In view of high risk of cheating, can UEMS approve remote delivery of examinations? (para.10.4)
- For exams delivered remotely, can mitigations around use of anchor questions be established (para.9.4).
- How can identity be established unequivocally in remotely-delivered exams

# Outstanding issues: outcome

- Agree criteria for award of Diploma (para.1.5)
- Agree criteria for award of Fellowship (para.1.6)

Note current UEMS position is described in Glasgow Declaration

# Outstanding issues: outcome of CESMA review

- Should we change name of examination appraisal to examination accreditation?  
(para.1.3)  
Or certification?

# Guidance on appraisal process

- Document current processes for
  - Applications for exam appraisals
  - Communication between Exam Committees and CESMA
  - Arrangements pre-appraisal
  - Conduct of appraisals
  - Report content and delivery
- Responsibilities of Applicant Exam Committees