

# Arab Board of Clinical Pathology

## 1- GENERAL STRUCTURE OF THE EXAM

The Arab Board of Clinical Pathology was recently established in 2018. The exam consists of two parts, I and II.

Two *Part I* assessments will be held in May and November of each year.

*Part II* is traditionally held in November.

*Part I* and *II* assessments can be held in any country if the number of applicants justifies setting a center.

The exam material consists of Multiple-choice Questions (MCQs) and cases that have been contributed by several training centers across the region. Such cases are selected only for this exam and are not used for any other local exam. This is to ensure fair balanced testing environment to all candidates.

## 2- SUGGESTED COMPOSITION OF THE EXAM

### Part I Assessment Structure:

This is a written exam that consists of theory paper containing 120 Type A (single best answer) MCQs. Time allocated to each question is 1.25 minute. 100 MCQs are text-based and 20 are image-based. Each question traditionally contains a clinical scenario (vignette) of major relevance to modern Laboratory Medicine practice. Majority of clinical vignettes are long scenarios that include clinical data, lab tests, radiology findings, results of molecular tests, histochemical and immunohistochemical (IHC) staining, etc.

**Questions may address any of the following themes:**

- *General principles of Laboratory Medicine (Henry's: Clinical Diagnosis and Management by Laboratory Methods)*
- *Hematopathology*
- *Clinical Chemistry*
- *Medical Microbiology*
- *Cytogenetics*
- *Laboratory Management*
- *Molecular Pathology*
- *Medical Genetics*
- *Flow Cytometry*
- *Immunology*
- *Toxicology*
- *Hematology*
- *Coagulation*
- *Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine*

This exam paper is online and it is downloaded on the PC at the Examination Center few hours before the exam starts. Candidates enter their answers online and resulting data is accumulated and stored. The passing score set by the Board is 60%. Question response is carefully analyzed post-exam for quality e.g. distribution of difficulty, easiness, and discrimination factor. Questions that exhibit any abnormal response are reviewed, re-edited or totally deleted from the question bank.

Topic and areas of knowledge in Part I Theory paper	Number of questions	Percentage
<i>General principles of Laboratory Medicine</i>	16	13
<i>Laboratory Management</i>	8	7
<i>Clinical Chemistry, Toxicology and TDM</i>	18	14
<i>Medical Microbiology</i>	14	12
<i>Cytogenetics and Medical Genetics</i>	10	8
<i>Hematopathology and Flow Cytometry</i>	16	13
<i>Molecular Pathology</i>	8	7
<i>Hematology and Coagulation</i>	14	12
<i>Immunology and Serology</i>	8	7
<i>Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine</i>	8	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Distribution of MCQs in Part I Exam by area of knowledge.**

### **Part II Assessment Structure:**

Part II consists of two parts, a *theory paper* and a *clinical scenario (practical)* part.

This exam part is intended to confirm that clinical pathologists at the end of training (4-5 years) are ready for independent practice. The degree awarded grants its holder the right to practice at the level of a junior consultant in Laboratory Medicine in all Arab countries. Local training and certifying bodies do exist in several Arab countries. Residents have the choice of acquiring the local or Arab Board degree. Many opt to obtain both.

Part II will have to do with specialty discipline as well. For example, for the year 2021, we will be providing a ***CP-General Part II exam*** and a ***CP-Hematology Part II exam***. For subsequent years, other specialty areas will be covered.

#### **A. CP-General Part II Exam:**

- ***Part II Theory Paper:***

The theory paper consists of 120 Type A single best answer MCQ questions. 90 MCQs are text-based and 30 are image-based or related to short cases. Each question traditionally contains a clinical scenario (vignette) of practical relevance to modern clinical pathology practice. Time allocated to each question is 1.25 minute.

Out of the 120 questions, 40 will cover Laboratory General aspects like Quality Management, Quality Assurance, Accreditation, Instrumentation, Quality Control and Validation procedures, etc. The remaining 80 questions will cover the different specialties of Clinical Pathology (Please refer to below table).

<b>Topic and areas of knowledge in Part II Theory paper</b>	<b>Number of questions</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>General principles of Laboratory Medicine</i>	<b>40</b>	<b>34</b>
<i>Clinical Chemistry, Toxicology and TDM</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Medical Microbiology</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Cytogenetics and Medical Genetics</i>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Hematopathology and Flow Cytometry</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Molecular Pathology</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Hematology and Coagulation</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Immunology and Serology</i>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

**Distribution of MCQs in CP-General Part II Exam (*Theory paper*) by area of knowledge.**

This exam paper is online and it is downloaded on the PC at the Examination Center few hours before the exam starts. Candidates enter their answers online and resulting data is accumulated and stored. The passing score set by Board is 50%. Question response is carefully analyzed post-exam for quality e.g. distribution of difficulty, easiness, and discrimination factor. Questions that exhibit any abnormal response are reviewed, re-edited or totally deleted from the question bank.

This exam paper has a weight of 40%.

• ***Part II Clinical Scenario Practical Paper:***

This exam consists of 50 clinical case scenarios in the form of scanned microscopic slides (virtual), microbiological plates, flow cytometry cases, DNA sequences, and other resources representing variable disciplines of Laboratory Medicine in an integrated setting. This means that every case should consist of multiple aspects of the laboratory to test the graduating or practicing clinical pathologist's broad understanding of the correlation of different laboratory results in finalizing a diagnosis for a clinical case.

Cases are accumulated from various centers and are reviewed by the exam committee for quality, diagnostic value and level of difficulty for candidates. An MCQ paper containing 75 (Type A, single best response) relating to the 50 cases will be submitted. The duration of the exam is 3 hours.

This exam paper is online and it is downloaded on the PC at the Examination Center few hours before the exam starts. Candidates enter their answers online and resulting data is accumulated and stored. The passing score set by Board is 50% Question response is carefully analyzed post-exam for quality e.g. distribution of difficulty, easiness, and discrimination factor. Questions that exhibit any abnormal response are reviewed, re-edited or totally deleted from the question bank.

This exam paper has a weight of 60%.

The total passing score for Part II exam (Theory & Practical) is 60%

## **B. CP-Specialty Directed Part II Exam: (Hematology)**

- ***Part II Theory Paper:***

The theory paper consists of 120 Type A single best answer MCQ questions. 90 MCQs are text-based and 30 are image-based or related to short cases. Each question traditionally contains a clinical scenario (vignette) of practical relevance to modern clinical pathology practice. Time allocated to each question is 1.25 minute.

Out of the 120 questions, 40 will cover Laboratory General aspects like Quality Management, Quality Assurance, Accreditation, Instrumentation, Quality Control and Validation procedures, etc. The remaining 80 questions will cover the different aspects of the specialty itself. For example, for 2021, the chosen specialty was Hematology. Therefore, 80 questions covering Hematology and Hematopathology will be provided (Please refer to below table).

<b>Topic and areas of knowledge in Part II Theory paper</b>	<b>Number of questions</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>General principles of Laboratory Medicine</i>	<b>40</b>	<b>33</b>
<i>Hematopathology and Flow Cytometry</i>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Molecular Pathology, Medical Genetics and Cytogenetics</i>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Hematology and Coagulation</i>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine, Immunology</i>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Distribution of MCQs in CP-Specialty Directed Part II Exam (*Theory paper*) by area of knowledge (For 2021, Example is for Hematology/Hematopathology).**

This exam paper is online and it is downloaded on the PC at the Examination Center few hours before the exam starts. Candidates enter their answers online and resulting data is accumulated and stored. The passing score set by Board is 50%. Question response is carefully analyzed post-exam for quality e.g. distribution of difficulty, easiness, and discrimination factor. Questions that exhibit any abnormal response are reviewed, re-edited or totally deleted from the question bank.

This exam paper has a weight of 40%

- ***Part II Clinical Scenario Practical Paper:***

This exam consists of 35 clinical case scenarios in the form of scanned microscopic slides (virtual), flow Cytometry cases, DNA sequences, and other resources focusing mainly on the specialty discipline (For 2021, it will be mainly in Hematology and Hematopathology). This means that every case should consist of multiple aspects of the laboratory to test the graduating or practicing clinical pathologist's understanding of the correlation of different laboratory results in finalizing a diagnosis for a clinical case as per the directed specialty.

Cases are accumulated from various centers and are reviewed by the exam committee for quality, diagnostic value and level of difficulty for candidates. An MCQ paper containing 60 (Type A, single best response) relating to the 35 cases will be submitted. The duration of the exam is 3 hours.

This exam paper is online and it is downloaded on the PC at the Examination Center few hours before the exam starts. Candidates enter their answers online and resulting data is accumulated and stored. The passing score set by the Board is 50%. Question response is

carefully analyzed post-exam for quality e.g. distribution of difficulty, easiness, and discrimination factor. Questions that exhibit any abnormal response are reviewed, re-edited or totally deleted from the question bank.

This exam paper has a weight of 60%.

The total passing score for Part II exam (Theory & Practical) is 60%.