



EBOD Exam

Candidate Handbook 2025

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Welcome & Overview

Congratulations on becoming a candidate to sit the European Board of Ophthalmology Diploma Exam in 2025.

This handbook is intended to help you, by providing information about the exam purpose, structure and logistics.

If you have questions, please refer to this handbook. But if your question is not answered here, check the [EBO](https://www.ebo-online.org) website, or contact ebo@ebo-online.org.

General information

The European Board of Ophthalmology Diploma is now an established credential in Europe and worldwide. Those who pass the exam receive a diploma and the right to use the post-nominal title “FEBO” (Fellow of the European Board of Ophthalmology).

The European Board of Ophthalmology (EBO) aims to deliver high quality examinations that are designed to assess knowledge and clinical skills. When designing EBO examinations, the Education Committee upholds the following principles:

1. Protecting standards and harmonisation

The Education committee works closely with National delegates, European societies and other EBO committees to design examinations that reflect the high standards of clinical practice in Ophthalmology across Europe.

The Education Committee supports candidates’ preparation, monitors quality standards of its examinations and ensure that successful candidates are awarded highly regarded qualifications.

2. Maintain knowledge

The Education committee ensures that members involved in writing examination material and external collaborators invited to contribute to writing questions are individuals with appropriate research and/or clinical experience. The Education committee also provides targeted teaching and continuous guidance to examiners and contributors to ensure that their roles are understood and fulfilled.

3. Promote an effective examining system

After appointing examiners or accepting examination materials, the Education Committee constantly reviews its processes for avoiding actual or perceived conflicts of interest in examiners or examination material selection.

4. Ensure fairness and transparency in assessment

The Education Committee plays a vital role in ensuring that examinations are fair, transparent and reliable. Our objective is to design examinations that cover the expected syllabus and examination materials are clear and free from errors. We ensure that marking is completed in a timely manner and it follows consistent and validated rules. We also aim to set pass marks that fairly reflect the level of difficulty of the examination. We validate our outcomes using independent statistical analysis and constantly review and reflect on the delivery of learning outcomes.

However the Education Committee recognises that errors can occur and that on very rare occasions our examinations can be subject to disruptions that may affect candidate performance. To ensure that all candidates are assessed fairly, there is an appeal procedure to allow candidates to appeal against outcomes.

5. Support inclusivity and equity in learning and assessment

The Education Committee constantly monitors the content and delivery of examinations to make them inclusive and reflecting the diversity of the candidates. The Education committee is always reviewing its assessment policies in order to mitigate attainment gaps, and ensure that examinations are aligned with appropriate learning outcomes.

Structure

This exam has two parts:

Part I

Online multiple-choice exam, composed of 30 Multiple-True/ False MCQs and 30 Single Best Answer question types.

Part II

The Viva Voce is a 60-minute interview-based exam in 4 parts. Candidates will be interviewed by 2 experts at each of 4 stations.

Part I: MCQs / SBAs

Key points

- Part I (MCQ/ SBAs) is taken online, using EBO-provided tablets
- Log into the exam platform using your email address and password (sent separately)
- Friday September 26, 09:30 – 11:30
- 30 Multiple True/ False MCQs and 30 Single Best Answer (SBA) MCQs

Content

Part I will consist of 30 Multiple True/False questions and 30 Single Best Answer question types, covering the broad spectrum of general ophthalmology.

Questions will address 10 broad themes

1. Optics, Refraction and Contact Lenses
2. Paediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
3. External, Corneal and Adnexal disease
4. Glaucoma, Cataract and Refractive Surgery
5. Retina, Vitreous and Uvea
6. Neuro-ophthalmology
7. Orbital Disease and Oculoplastic Surgery
8. General Medicine relevant to Ophthalmology
9. Ophthalmic Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology
10. Pharmacology and Therapeutics

Any attempt to copy, capture on camera or distribute material related to the EBO exam questions is prohibited. Candidates found trying to copy or share exam material will be disqualified from the exam.

Taking the online exam (Part I: MCQ)

Part I (MCQs) will be conducted **at 09:30 CEST and last for 2 hours**. The exam timing is automated on the Speedwell eSystem, so all candidates will have exactly 2 hours to complete the exam.

You have been sent a link to access a sample exam on the Speedwell eSystem. This will let you log in, and see how the questions look and how you answer them. The scores are not kept and do not represent the exam content. The purpose of this test exam is so you can log in before exam day, and familiarise yourself with the exam platform interface.

On the morning of the Part I: MCQ exam

Please arrive at the Estrel Conference Centre (Estrel Berlin, Sonnenallee 225, 12057 Berlin) for **registration between 07:00 and 09:00**.

Signage will indicate the registration and exam areas.

You are **not allowed** to bring any reference materials or books (including dictionaries) into the exam.

When you finish the exam, you will need to click "Finish" in the Speedwell eSystem to save your answers. If you run out of time, the system will save your answers automatically and then close.

Scoring & Standard Setting

There are 180 items to be answered in 2 hours.

For the 30 Multiple True/False questions (150 items):

- Each question will have a stem / context-setting statement and a question, followed by 5 statements.
- You will indicate which statements are TRUE or FALSE from a dropdown list beside each statement.

The 30 Single Best Answer (SBA) exam ask you to identify the best response to a question or clinical scenario. Some questions will be matters of factual knowledge, others will present a clinical scenario, which you must interpret and then answer – for example, a diagnosis, appropriate treatment, knowledge of prognosis, etc. Each question will have a stem / context-setting statement and a question, followed by 4 statements.

- You select the option (check the box) that best answers the question.

Scoring

- Each correct answer is awarded 1 point
- An incorrect answer is not penalised

Standard Setting

All candidates' scores are considered when setting the standard to pass Part I of the exam. The **average score minus one standard deviation is assigned a numerical grade of 6** (this is the passing grade). All candidates are then assigned a grade based on how their score compares with this score, in steps of half a standard deviation.

Candidates must pass the MCQ section to pass the exam.

Part II: Viva Voce

Key points

- In-person, interview based exam
- Friday September 26th, 2025, in one hour between 13:30 and 18:30 (specific time will be sent to you)
- 4 interviews ("stations"), each covering 2 cases
- You will be interviewed by 2 examiners at each station
- Arrive at the waiting area 30 minutes before your assigned exam time
- Discussions will be based on cases presented to you
- All interviews are conducted in parallel, the end of each interview time (and the exam) will be signalled to the whole room
- Start at your "starting station", and move to the next station in alphabetical order (e.g. if you start at B, you will attend in the order: B→C→D→A)

Content

The viva voce is interview-based. You will be asked to discuss 8 cases in 4 stations (2 cases per station).

Each station interview will be based on two cases (one case per subject area) and will last 15 minutes (7.5 mins per case). The stations are:

| Station | Subject 1 | Subject 2 |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A | Strabismus | Neuro-Ophthalmology |
| B | Ocular Surface & Cornea | Oculoplastics & Orbit |
| C | Glaucoma | Cataract and Refractive Surgery |
| D | Retina | Uveitis |

The purpose of this section is to evaluate your higher-order thinking in terms of clinical decision making and patient management.

You will be given a time to attend your viva voce. **Please arrive only when specified in the communication you receive regarding the viva voce exam.**

You will be assigned a “starting station” (where you will have your first interview). All candidates will have 15 minutes at each station. This will cover discussion of 2 cases (7.5 minutes discussion time per case).

You proceed to the next station in alphabetical order once this interview finishes. For example, if you start at station B, you proceed through the exam as follows: Station B → Station C → Station D → Station A.

The end of each interview will be signalled to the whole room. **Do not move from your station until the end of the interview time.** If you are still in discussion **at the end of the interview time, you must stop talking and move to the next station** (the examiners will know you have been told to stop talking, it will not negatively affect your mark).

After one hour (four 15-minute interviews) the Part II exam will conclude for you. You must leave the exam room and not discuss the exam with those coming in or others who have not sat the exam. Failure to comply with this may result in disqualification.

Scoring & Standard Setting

For the viva voce, standardised cases are used. Examiners are provided specific questions and model answers for each case. You will then be assessed based on how well you answer, compared to the model answer. All scores in the viva voce are considered when setting the standard to pass. The **average score minus one standard deviation is assigned a numerical grade of 6** (this is the passing grade). All candidates are then assigned a grade based on how their score compares with this score, in steps of half a standard deviation. However, the Education Committee reserves the right to use “Raw scores” (to not rescale the scores as described, but use the direct scores awarded by examiners) in the standard setting process, under the guidance of a statistician.

Results

The “raw scores” of MCQs and Viva Voce / Clinical Cases will be **scaled from 1 – 10**.

For each part (MCQ, each of the four Viva Voce / Clinical Case Stations) the **rescaled score of 6 is the passing mark**.

The MCQ and Viva Voce / Clinical Case rescaled scores will be put through the original algorithm, which gives **40% weight to the MCQ score and 60% weight to**

the Viva Voce/ Clinical Cases: $0.4 * \text{MCQ} + (0.15 * \text{Station A Score}) + (0.15 * \text{Station B Score}) + (0.15 * \text{Station C Score}) + (0.15 * \text{Station D Score})$

To pass, the result of this algorithm must be 6 or above.

Candidates should score at least 6 in all the sections but may score lower than 6 in one Viva Voce / Clinical Case section if the candidate's MCQ score is over 6, and their overall score is over 6.

RULES OF THE EXAM

MCQ Section

You are not allowed to bring any reference materials (books, dictionaries, notes), or digital devices (phones, tablets, smartwatches into the exam area). Before the exam starts, you will be asked to **turn off your phone, and put it in your bag or coat**. You will be told where to put your coat and bag for the duration of the MCQ section of the exam.

You may not enter the exam area after 10:00am. If you arrive after this time, you have missed the exam.

Once you are in the exam area, you may not leave before 10:00am. After 11:00am, candidates must remain in place until the official end of the exam time (11:30am), to avoid distracting other candidates who are still working.

Once you are seated:

- Do not log into the Speedwell eSystem until you are instructed to do so.
- Do not click the "Take" button to start the exam until you are instructed to do so.
- The exam timer will start when you see your first question. The exam will last 120 minutes (2 hours).

You must remain silent during the MCQ section of the exam. If you need to use the restroom, raise your hand and wait for an invigilator to come to you.

You must not attempt to communicate with other candidates during the exam.

Once you finish your exam, log out of the Speedwell eSystem platform. If your belongings have been placed in the room during the exam period, please collect them before you leave.

Please follow the directions of invigilators and other exam officials at all times.

Viva Voce Section

You are not allowed to bring any reference materials (books, dictionaries, notes), or digital devices (phones, tablets, smartwatches into the exam area). Before the exam starts, you will be asked to turn off your phone, and put it in your bag or coat. You will be told where to put your coat and bag for the duration of the viva voce section of the exam.

Each candidate will undergo 4 interviews. Each interview will be conducted by two examiners. You will be asked to discuss standardised clinical cases. All those being examined at the same time will be interviewed about the same case. Candidates may not bring reference materials, books or mobile devices/ tablets to their exam. They must discuss each case with their examiners, without reference to any supporting material or tools.

Candidates will be assigned a time for their viva voce. You must attend the exam at this time. If you are late, you may not be allowed into the exam room. **Schedule changes will not be made on the day of the exam.**

The examiners have been selected by EBO based on their experience and knowledge. EBO will accept their judgement in scoring decisions.

Candidates move between exam stations. They must **move quickly and quietly from one station to the next as the interview time ends**. An audible signal will be used to let you know when the exam time ends. **Do not move station while other interviews are still underway.**

At the end of the exam, candidates must leave the exam room quickly and quietly. Do not talk to other candidates while you are in the exam room. When you leave, do not communicate with other candidates who may be coming into the exam. Discussion between candidates as one leaves and another enters may be considered an attempt to “cheat” the exam, and thus lead to disqualification.

Estrel Floor Plan
Exam is in Estrel SAAL
(Estrel Hall)

