

FBI Laboratory Practices for Oral Board Exercises

1 Purpose

These practices establish the requirements and procedures for Oral Board exercises. These exercises test a trainee's ability to demonstrate knowledge in areas such as scientific theories; limitations of the science, discipline, and/or category(ies) of testing; technical procedures; examination processes and analyses; and resulting opinions/interpretations, as applicable to a trainee's job duties.

2 Scope

These practices apply to FBI Laboratory personnel who are training to become forensic examiners; personnel who facilitate, record, and/or review training; and other personnel who are directed by Unit Chiefs and/or Executive Management to participate in an oral board exercise(s). If a training program requires an oral board exercise for personnel other than forensic examiners, these practices may be followed, or a level 2 document will define the requirements and procedures for the oral board.

3 Practices

3.1 Establishing Oral Board Exercises

The trainee must successfully complete the appropriate number of oral board exercises that cover the expertise in each discipline and/or category(ies) of testing as required by the trainee's training plan. See the Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM) - Practices for the Forensic Examiner Training Program for information regarding the process for establishing and modifying the required number of oral board exercises in the trainee's training plan.

3.1.1 Knowledge of administrative practices and job duties can be covered in conjunction with a subject-matter oral board exercise.

3.1.2 The Training Program Manager (TPM) and Technical Leader will determine the applicable discipline and/or category(ies) of testing to be covered in each oral board exercise.

3.1.3 A written summary of expectations will be provided to the trainee by the TPM a minimum of 30 calendar days prior to each exercise. The summary of expectations must include:

- Objectives of the oral board exercise.
- Topic areas that will be covered.
- Suggested preparation for the oral board exercise.

- An evaluation plan outlining trainee proficiency and rating requirements to successfully complete the exercise.

3.1.4 The TPM will ensure preparation for each oral board exercise includes a practice session using the scoring guide provided in the *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet (7-266)* (Appendix A). Participants in the practice session will ensure feedback and suggestions for improvement are provided. This session may be audio recorded and available for review by the trainee. Any audio recordings of practice sessions are not required to be retained within the trainee's training record.

3.1.4.1 Additional practice oral board sessions may be added at any time during the training program to assist the trainee with oral board preparation.

3.2 Coordinating Oral Board Exercises

3.2.1 Prior to the oral board exercise, the *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet* will be prepared. The *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet* must contain the oral board questions, summary answers, an area for notes on answers given, an area to capture follow-up questions asked of the trainee, and identification of any critical points of failure. The *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet* may be designed to fit the needs of the exercise, to include the use of supplemental pages.

3.2.2 The TPM will ensure the coordination of each oral board exercise. The coordination of the exercise will encompass identifying, reserving, and arranging an appropriate space for the oral board and for oral boards for forensic examiner trainees, notifying the Forensic Examiner Training Program Manager (FETPM) of the exercise date. Additionally, the TPM will ensure the exercise will be audio recorded.

3.3 Evaluating Oral Board Exercises

Each oral board exercise will be evaluated by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) panel selected by the trainee's TPM, Unit Chief, and/or Technical Leader. The panel will consist of three SMEs, when practicable. The TPM may request the assistance of non-FBI Laboratory SMEs.

3.3.1 Each SME panel member will complete an *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet* in its entirety immediately after the completion of the exercise.

3.3.2 Each SME panel member will provide their *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet* to the TPM or designee. The TPM or designee will use the *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Tally Form (7-286)* (Appendix B) to record the ratings and overall calculated result of the exercise. Successful completion of the exercise will be determined in accordance with the defined evaluation plan with a grade of 80% or higher achieved in the exercise.

3.4 Post-Exercise Requirements

3.4.1 The TPM will ensure the *Oral Board Evaluator Score Sheets* are reviewed with the trainee. The trainee will sign the *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Tally Form* to record the review.

3.4.2 The TPM will ensure all audio recordings of oral board exercises are maintained within the trainee's training record.

3.4.2.1 Upon a trainee's request, a copy of the audio recording of the oral board exercise will be provided for the trainee's review.

3.4.2.2 If the trainee discontinues the training program or is removed from the training program; the audio recording will be maintained within the trainee's training record.

3.4.3 If the trainee successfully completes the oral board exercise, the TPM will ensure this is recorded in the trainee's training record.

3.4.4 If the trainee fails to successfully complete an oral board exercise, the FETPM will notify the Quality Manager in writing within one calendar day. If the FETPM is not present, the TPM will notify the Quality Manager in writing within one calendar day.

3.4.5 The FETPM will coordinate and serve on the Root Cause Panel.

3.4.5.1 All members from the SME panel, and other training personnel as requested by the FETPM, will serve on the Root Cause Panel.

3.4.5.2 The Quality Manager will ensure a facilitator is selected to serve on the Root Cause Panel.

3.4.6 The Root Cause Panel will meet within seven calendar days to determine the root cause(s) of the trainee's failure of the oral board exercise.

3.4.7 The Root Cause Panel will interview the trainee and discuss the *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheets* to assist in determining the root cause(s) of the failure.

3.4.8 After determining the root cause(s), the Root Cause Panel will propose a remediation plan to the trainee, and the trainee's Unit Chief, the TPM, and the Technical Leader. The facilitator will record the root cause(s) and remediation plan in a *Corrective Action Request (7-254)* according to the LOM - Practices for Addressing a Nonconformity.

3.5 Establishing Repeat Oral Board Exercises

3.5.1 The trainee will have a second opportunity to complete the oral board exercise. The *Corrective Action Request* must be closed prior to the second attempt at the exercise. The

repeated exercise will be conducted in the same discipline(s) and/or category(ies) of testing, although different questions may be asked.

3.5.2 If the trainee fails to successfully complete a second attempt at the same oral board exercise, the trainee will be removed from the training program.

4 Records

The following records are generated and permanently retained in the trainee's training record as a result of these practices:

- Summary of expectations for each oral board exercise.
- *Oral Board Exercise- Evaluator Score Tally Form.*
- Audio recording of each oral board exercise.
- If applicable, a copy of any *Corrective Action Request* and corresponding records.

The *Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheets* will be retained electronically in the Laboratory Division training portal.

5 References

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision

ISO/IEC 17025 - General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017.

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 - Forensic Science Testing and Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Requirements (AR 3125), ANAB, Milwaukee, WI, April 29, 2019.

ISO/IEC 17020 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2012

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
9	06/03/19	Revised evaluation form and renamed to <i>Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet</i> in Appendix A. Added <i>Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Tally Form</i> in Appendix B. In section 3.1.4, clarified that each oral board exercise includes a practice session and added a requirement to use the scoring guidelines. Added section 3.2.1 describing preparation of the <i>Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet</i> . In section 3.2.2, added requirement to notify the FETPM of oral boards for FETs. Added requirement for a minimum 80% grade in section 3.3.2. In section 3.4.1, added requirement for trainee to sign the tally form to record the review of evaluations. Modified section 3.4.5.2 so that Quality Manager ensures selection of facilitator. Updated records in section 4 to reflect revision of forms. Updated list of references in section 5.
10	12/21/20	Minor edits throughout for clarity. 1 – SOP to technical procedure 5 – added LOM and ISO/IEC 17020

Approval

Redacted - Signatures on File

Laboratory Director

Date: 12/18/2020

Quality Manager

Date: 12/18/2020

Appendix A: FBI Laboratory Oral Board Exercise - Evaluator Score Sheet (7-266)

Redacted - Form on File

Appendix B: *FBI Laboratory Oral Board Exercise – Evaluator Score Tally Form (7-286)*

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