

OSCE guide

Preparing for your OSCE: -

The Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) consist of 16, five minute clinical scenarios, known as stations. Stations are set up in booths which have an examiner and either an actor playing a patient, or an anatomical model. These stations are patient-centred and each station will assess your ability in one of four major skill areas:

- History taking and diagnosis
- Communication
- Data interpretation
- Clinical examination and practical skills

The OSCE tests you on the conditions optometrists would manage in practice and may include rare but sight threatening conditions..

During the assessment, you must be able to recognise the signs and symptoms + the need to refer the patient if necessary. A different examiner will observe you at each station.

History taking, including diagnosis

You may be asked to take an accurate and relevant history from the patient or a patient's relative (both played by actors) and provide a reasoned differential diagnosis based on the history. Patients may present with a range of conditions such as:

- Blurred vision
- Reduced vision
- Sudden visual loss
- Diplopia
- Red eye
- Headache
- Systemic disease with ocular manifestations

Communication

The types of issues the examiners will be assessing are how you deal with patients including, your communication skills and how well you acknowledge patient concerns. They will also assess you on how you communicate with other healthcare professionals. You may be observed interacting with the patient or a patient's relative and be required too

- Explain how a condition will be treated
- Explain a diagnosis
- Explain a prescription
- Request an emergency referral
- Decide on appropriate management with a patient
- Give advice on the most appropriate optical appliances
- Break bad news

Data interpretation

You'll be required to interpret a variety of clinical data through photographs or videos. These may include visual field plots, charts, results of clinical examinations and clinical signs. You may have to discuss your conclusions or differential diagnoses with a fellow health professional or with the patient or patient's parent. Occasionally this type of station may take the form of a structured oral.

Clinical examination and practical skills

The OSCE will assess your ability in a range of clinical decision-making and management situations. You'll be required to demonstrate your ability to undertake a clinical examination or perform a practical procedure. This may be conducted on an anatomical model if the procedure is invasive or may harm a patient if undertaken repeatedly. These procedures may include:

- Direct ophthalmoscopy
- Indirect ophthalmoscopy
- Cover test and motility
- Focimetry
- Keratometry
- Visual acuity
- Recording a prescription