



# PSYCHIATRY AND EXAMINATION TESTS

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## **Abstract**

The paper contains our experience with examining the subject of psychiatry by means of tests used in the 1990s of the 20th century at the Department of Psychiatry of the LF MU Brno, the successful passing of which was the necessary condition for granting the credit. At the beginning, the success was approximately at 70%, the unsuccessful students of the test had to repeat it. The situation has evolved in the sense that the lecturers focused on discussing the test questions during the traineeship, and there was less time for practical instruction. We support the idea that the oral test can examine the student's knowledge better and can give the examiner a greater possibility to determine student's ability to synthesize the knowledge. The discussion of supplementary testing all pregraduate students before the oral examination has started. Test questions will have to be drafted simply focusing on the basic knowledge of the subject psychiatry.

**Keywords:** examination test, credit, success

In connection with the widely discussed possibility of electronic testing at faculties of medicine, I would like to mention our experience with examining the subject of psychiatry by means of tests used in the 1990s of the 20th century at the Department of Psychiatry of the LF MU Brno.

During 1990s of the 20th century period we established the successful passing the test as a condition of achieving the credit in the subject of psychiatry. It has to be stated that the examination of psychiatry remained oral and it included a practical part - the examination of the patient.

The questions of the tests were formulated in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry of the 1. FVL UK. After completing the educational stay in psychiatry students were submitted 20 questions, which were different for each run, and the successful passing of which was the necessary condition for granting the credit. At the beginning, the success was approximately at 70%, the unsuccessful students of the test had to repeat it. Of course, the assigned questions were different.



As the percentage of failures was relatively high, the same tests were submitted to the doctors from clinics, mostly already attested. Even our colleagues did not achieve greater success than the undergraduate students.

The situation has evolved in the sense that the lecturers focused on discussing the test questions during the traineeship, and there was less time for practical instruction. In fact, the battery of questions contained a number of "catch questions", which were not essential for mastering the basics of psychiatry, e.g. Capgras syndrome, the term agrypnia, the name of the first head of Sexological Institute in Prague etc. Therefore, at the end of the 1990s, we returned to a practical individual examination of the patient as a condition of getting a credit, and at the same time the practical part of the final examination was cancelled. The cancellation was due to the change of the rigorous examination of psychiatry into an examination according to the new study rules.

As a clinical workplace, we support the idea that the oral test can examine the student's knowledge better and can give the examiner a greater possibility to determine student's ability to synthesize the knowledge, received during the study at the Faculty, in the diagnostic and differentially diagnostic processes. The oral examination can also give the student a chance to complete and/or correct some partial ignorance which would lead to a failure in the test. Finally, we find the personal contact with the examiner as well as and the method of communication extremely important, as communication plays key role in our field and its skills cannot be verified by testing.

According to our experience we discuss of supplementary testing all pregraduate students before the oral examination or at the end of the educational practical part of the subject of psychiatry. Test questions will have to be drafted simply focusing on the basic knowledge of the subject.

However, we are considering a supplementary form of testing when testing English-speaking students who, because of the language barrier, only with difficulties manage examination of patients which is in psychiatry based on an interview. Let me add an interesting detail at the end: since the examination of pharmacology in the form of electronic tests was introduced, students' knowledge of psychotropic drugs, which is essential in psychiatry, has rapidly decreased.



## References

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