

American Board of Ophthalmology

Guide to the Demonstration of Ophthalmic Cognitive Knowledge (DOCK) Examination

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The application period for the September DOCK runs from Feb. – May 1.

Overview

The Demonstration of Ophthalmic Cognitive Knowledge Examination (DOCK) is required for completion of the Maintenance of Certification program.

DOCK is a secure, proctored, 150-item computer-based examination administered at nationally-distributed testing centers for a period of one month each year in September. DOCK is comprised of three 50-item modules: one in Core Ophthalmic Knowledge (knowledge considered fundamental to the practice of ophthalmology regardless of the practice emphasis) and two in practice emphasis areas of your choice selected from the list below. You are required to achieve an overall passing grade based on the combined grades of all three modules.

There are two versions of most practice emphasis modules; however, there is only one version of the Refractive Management/Intervention and Uveitis modules. You can opt to select two modules from one practice emphasis area or one module from two different practice emphasis areas.

DOCK Practice Emphasis Areas

Cataract/Anterior Segment
Comprehensive Ophthalmology
Cornea/External Disease
Glaucoma
Neuro-ophthalmology and Orbit
Oculoplastics and Orbit
Pediatric Ophthalmology/Strabismus
Refractive Management/Intervention
Retina/Vitreous
Uveitis

Exam Content

DOCK is designed to evaluate clinically relevant knowledge important to the delivery of quality eye care. The content of DOCK is based on the Practicing Ophthalmologist Curriculum (POC), an ophthalmic knowledge base developed by ten panels of practicing ophthalmologists under the guidance of the American Academy of Ophthalmology (Academy) that identifies and defines areas of clinically relevant knowledge. The POC is available through the Academy's web site: www.aaopt.org. Version 2.0 of the POC became available for free to AAO members in November 2007. The DOCK and PORT exams for 2008, 2009 and 2010 are based on the POC version 2.0.

Exam Format

All questions in the DOCK are single best answer questions. This is the traditional, most frequently used multiple-choice format. It consists of a statement or question followed by four options that are in alphabetical or logical order. The response options in this format are lettered (eg, A, B, C, D). Examinees are required to select the best answer to the question. Other options may be partially correct, but there is only ONE BEST answer.

Strategies for Answering Single One Best Answer Test Questions

- Read each question carefully. It is important to understand what is being asked.
- Try to generate an answer and then look for it in the option list.
- Alternatively, read each option carefully, eliminating those that are clearly incorrect.
- Of the remaining options, select the one that is most correct.

- If unsure about an answer, it is better to guess since unanswered questions are automatically counted as wrong. Your score on the examination will be based on the number of questions answered correctly. No points will be subtracted for incorrect answers. In other words, there will be no penalty for guessing.

Example Question

1. Which of the following surgical approaches with phacoemulsification results in the highest ultrasound times?

- A. Divide and conquer
- B. Phaco chop
- C. Phaco flip
- D. Pure sculpting

(Answer D)

A DOCK tutorial and practice test will be available on the ABO web site several months prior to the September testing period. The ABO recommends running the DOCK tutorial and taking the sample test questions in order to acquaint yourself with the test software well before your test date. In the actual examination, the questions will be presented one at a time in a format designed for easy on-screen reading, including use of exhibit buttons for some pictorials. The DOCK tutorial will also be available at the testing center at the start of your examination appointment.

Visit the ABO website – www.abop.org -- to review and take the DOCK tutorial.

ACT Test Centers

ACT provides computer-based testing services for academic assessment, professional licensure and certification. The DOCK exam is given at ACT Test Centers in the United States, Puerto Rico and some locations in Canada. These test centers provide the resources necessary for secure administration of the DOCK exam, including video and audio recording and the use of cameras to record the identity of the examinees.

Using ACT's system, eligible diplomates may schedule tests at ACT Centers by internet or phone, a process that typically takes five minutes or less. Internet scheduling provides instant feedback on availability of appointments in the September window. Examinees receive immediate e-mail confirmation of their appointment.

You are required to bring at least one valid photo-bearing, unexpired, government-issued form of identification, such as driver's license or passport, which the test proctor will verify against the name you used to register.

Important Information

- In late June, you will receive an email from ACT, the DOCK testing vendor, on how to schedule your September DOCK examination at an ACT Center testing location. Because personalized information necessary to schedule a test appointment will be sent via email, it is important that you add the email domain of ABO@ACT.org to your safe senders list. The earlier you schedule your appointment, the more likely you are to receive your preferred test

location. You will not be able to schedule or change a site 48 hours prior to the exam. You will receive email confirmation of your appointment.

- **ACT Center Locations** – ACT publishes all of its test center locations at: www.act.org/actcenters/index.html. However, some centers are not viable options for our examinations. Centers are located throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, with up to six specially-arranged test centers in Canada.
- **Tutorial and Sample Items** – As of six months before the September testing window, a DOCK tutorial, which includes a practice test with 20 sample questions, will be available on the ABO web site. The ABO recommends running the DOCK tutorial and taking the sample test questions in order to acquaint yourself with the test software well before your test date. In the actual examination, the questions will be presented one at a time in a format designed for easy on-screen reading, including use of exhibit buttons for some pictorials. The DOCK tutorial will also be available at the testing center at the start of your examination appointment.
- **Exam Non-Disclosure and Agreement Policy Reminder** - You are not permitted to give or receive assistance during the examination. All ABO examinations and examination materials are confidential and are protected by copyright law. You are prohibited from disclosing, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting any ABO examination or examination materials, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, verbal, written or by memory, electronic or mechanical, for any purpose. Failure to comply with these rules could ultimately prohibit you from maintaining certification.
- **Results** will be mailed approximately eight weeks from the last day of the testing window of the examination.
- **Keep the ABO Office Current with Your Address** – The current mailing address on file with the ABO office (the address to which this mailing has been sent) is the address to which your DOCK examination results will be sent. You may update your address online with us by going to the ABO website www.abop.org, log on using your username and password and update your Profile. All results are mailed from the Board office on the same day by first class mail. No results will be given by phone, fax, email or special delivery. Please remember to keep the ABO office current with your email and mailing address.

Taking DOCK

You are required to bring an unexpired, U.S. or Canadian (in English) government issued form of identification (such as a drivers license or passport) that includes both your photograph and signature to gain admittance to the test center. This identification must match your first and last name as it appears on your ABO MOC Status Page. The only acceptable difference would be the presence of a middle name, middle initial or suffix on one document and its absence on the other. You will not be admitted to the test without this ID. Additionally, all candidates will be photographed at the site.

You should arrive at the test center 30 minutes before your scheduled test time on your test day. If you arrive late, you may not be admitted. If you arrive more than 30 minutes after your scheduled test time, you will not be admitted. In that event, you must pay a \$100 fee to ACT to reschedule your test. Your rescheduled test date must fall within your assigned eligibility period: September 1-30.

Please note that textbooks, notes, calculators or slide rules are not permitted in the examination room. The test center will provide you with scratch paper which must be returned at the end of your examination session. All personal belongings, cellular telephones, pagers, wallets, food and beverages, will be placed in a small locker or put in a secure place at the test site. Only an analog watch (without readouts) can be worn at your workstation.

Upon arrival at the test center, you must present the required identification, sign a test center log, be photographed, and store your personal belongings in your assigned locker. Test center staff will escort you to your assigned testing station and provide brief instructions on use of the computer equipment.

The total examination appointment time is 3 ½ hours (3 hours of test time, with remaining time allowed for check-in, check-out, and seating procedures). This includes verification of examinee ID, sign-in, launching of the test, review and navigation through untimed tutorial before the test, optional breaks between exam modules, sign-out after the test, and vacation of the testing room. When an exam module closes, you may not return to it. Should you require an unscheduled break during the examination, the exam clock does not stop. Due to security, one candidate will be excused at a time with a sign-in and sign-out time sheet

Rescheduling Test Dates

If you are unable to keep your test appointment on the scheduled date or at the scheduled location, you may change your date or center by contacting ACT (1-800-205-6366).

There is a \$100 fee assessed if you fail to appear for a scheduled exam or you cancel the appointment within 2 business days of the examination. When calling ACT, you must speak with a representative. Leaving a voicemail message does not satisfy the requirement to provide advance notice. If you provide less than two business days notice, ACT will charge you a \$100 fee to reschedule your test date. Your rescheduled test date must be before October 1.