

THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

AMERICAN BOARD OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

A. How the Written Examination Fits into the Diplomate Process.

Following the review and acceptance of the candidate's credentials by the American Board of Professional Psychology and the American Board of Forensic Psychology, the written examination is the next step. Upon successful completion of this examination, the candidate is invited to submit two Practice Samples (see below) that will serve as a partial basis for the Oral Examination, the final phase of the process.

The written examination serves to ensure that persons seeking certification in Forensic Psychology possess sufficient breadth of forensic knowledge.

B. Examination Scheduling and Time Limitations

The fee for the written examination is \$200 and must be pre-paid to ABFP. The Candidate must take the written examination within 12 months of being accepted for candidacy. The ABFP Corresponding Secretary is responsible for scheduling, administering, and scoring the examination, and providing results to the Candidate and ABFP Board of Directors.

In order to facilitate administration of the written examination, a number of ABFP Diplomates have agreed to administer the examination in their professional offices. These examination sites are geographically distributed around the country so as to reduce travel costs. Candidates should contact the ABFP Corresponding Secretary to schedule an examination.

Each candidate has three chances to pass the written examination. If a Candidate does not pass the written examination on the first try, a second attempt may be made no earlier than six months and no later than 18 months after the candidate was notified of the results of the first examination. If a Candidate does not pass the written examination on the second attempt, a third attempt may be made no earlier than six months and no later than 18 months after the candidate was notified of the results of the second examination. If the Candidate does not pass the written examination on the third attempt, candidacy is terminated. The psychologist is eligible to reapply for candidacy 12 months after the third examination has been failed.

Once passed, the written examination need only be taken again if the Candidate does not obtain the forensic diploma within four years of passing the written examination (*i.e.*, if the Candidate does not successfully defend two written Practice Samples as part of the oral examination).

C. The Written Examination

This “closed book” examination currently consists of two hundred (200) multiple choice items with a total of four (4) foils per item. At the current time, for any one form of the test, the test consists of “validated items” and “experimental items” which are developed and reviewed on a regular basis to allow for re-examination and creation of alternate forms/versions of the examination. Please note that the format of the examination may be modified at any time.

The Candidate is allowed 3.5 hours to complete the examination, which may be administered individually or in a group setting. The examination score is calculated by identifying the total number of validated items for which correct responses have been identified by the Candidate. Because there is no additional correction or penalty for wrong answers, Candidates are encouraged to answer all items. The Candidate’s performance on the experimental items does not affect his or her test score in any way.

The validated items are distributed equally across eight (8) substantive item categories. These categories were identified by ABFP after review of forensic texts and specialty forensic practice areas endorsed by Forensic Diplomates in the *ABFP Directory*. These eight categories are:

- Ethics, Guidelines, and Professional Issues
- Law, Legal Precedents, Court Rules, and Civil and Criminal Procedure
- Testing and Assessment, Judgment and Bias, and Examination Issues
- Individual Rights and Liberties, Civil Competencies, Substitute Judgment
- Juvenile, Parenting, and Family/Matrimonial Matters
- Personal Injury, Civil Damages, Disability, and Workers Compensation
- Criminal Competence
- Criminal Responsibility

Preparation for the written examination may be facilitated by study of the materials referenced in ABFP’s *Suggested Reading List for Written and Oral Examinations*, which may be found at WWW.ABFP.COM.