

ABFP ORAL EXAMINATION

FORMS BOOKLET

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY, INC. (ABFP)

(REVISED 03/25/2014)

ABFP ORAL EXAMINATION SCORING PROCEDURE

THREE MAJOR SCALES:

A Certificate in Forensic Psychology is awarded by ABPP/ABFP to individuals who possess a high level of professional competence and maturity, with the ability to articulate an explicit and coherent rationale for their work in forensic psychology. Successful Candidates will demonstrate the requisite knowledge, skills, attitude, and values detailed within the ABFP document entitled “[Core Competencies in Forensic Psychology](#).” In addition, they will act with constant alertness to the ethical issues involved in forensic psychological practice, and evidence both breadth and depth concerning their high degree of skill, knowledge, and proficiency (which is a higher standard than that of practicing “competently”). To make this determination, Candidates are scored on three Scales:

- I. Ethical Standards**
- II. Quality of Practice**
- III. Knowledge of Forensic Areas**

I. Ethical Standards: On this Scale, Candidates are rated on their knowledge and application of ethical standards and practice guidelines. For example, Candidates are expected to adhere to APA’s *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* and to practice within the scope of APA’s *Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology* and other applicable practice guidelines.

II. Quality of Practice: This Scale contains two Subscales: one for each of the areas of practice covered by the Practice Samples. Subscale IIA covers the first Practice Sample, and Subscale IIB covers the second Practice Sample. Scores are based on responses to questions concerning each of the Practice Samples. Specifically, Candidates are judged on the quality of their clinical (when appropriate) and forensic practice.

III. Knowledge of Forensic Areas: This Scale contains two Subscales: one for each of the areas of practice covered by the Practice Samples. Subscale IIIA covers the first Practice Sample, and Subscale IIIB covers the second Practice Sample. Scores are based on responses to questions concerning each of the Practice Samples. Specifically, Candidates are judged on the breadth and depth of their knowledge of each of the two forensic areas, as evidenced by familiarity with case law, statutes, and the relevant literature.

Scoring

Each Scale or Subscale has a range of 1-9:

- 1 - 3 = Fail
- 4 - 6 = Borderline
- 7 - 9 = Pass

To score each Scale and Subscale, first determine a general range of performance (i.e., Pass, Fail, or Borderline).

After the range is chosen, determine whether performance is low, medium, or high within that range. For example, Candidates whose performance is judged to be “low Borderline” would receive a score of 4 for the Scale or Subscale in question.

FIRST BALLOT

Each Examiner independently fills out a First Ballot prior to any discussion with the other Examiners.

Candidates are scored on Scale I (“Ethics”); Subscales IIA and IIB (“Quality of Practice” for each Practice Sample), which are combined for a score on Scale II; and Subscales IIIA and IIIB (“Knowledge of Forensic Areas” for each Practice Sample), which are combined for a score on Scale III.

Next to the score for each Scale (I, II, and III), also circle the letter equivalent: “P” for Pass, “B” for Borderline, and “F” for Fail.

The Chair then totals the scores of each of the three Examiners on the form entitled “Chair’s Summary of Balloting.” If Candidates receive passing scores on *each* of Scales I, II, and III (i.e., 21 or above on Scale I **and** 42 or above on Scale II **and** 42 or above on Scale III), then they have passed the oral examination.

If Candidates receive failing scores on *each* of Scales I, II, and III (i.e., 9 or below on Scale I **and** 18 or below on Scale II **and** 18 or below on Scale III), then they have failed the examination.

Absent a “Clear Pass” or a “Clear Fail” after the First Ballot, a Second Ballot will be necessary.

SECOND BALLOT

If a Second Ballot is necessary, it follows a discussion among the Examiners.

During this discussion, the Examiners should explain their scores and offer their assessments of the Candidate’s strengths and weaknesses. The Examiners then fill out the Second Ballot, using the same scoring system as for the First Ballot.

The Chair then totals the scores of each of the three Examiners on the page entitled “Chair’s Summary of Balloting.”

The Chair will note that *the numerical criteria for passing the examination itself are different for the Second Ballot*. In addition, on the Second Ballot summary, the Chair records in the rightmost column the number of passing scores (P) awarded by each Examiner. This is designed to guard against a spurious “Fail”; that is, if two Examiners each award 3 passes (i.e., they award a “Pass” for each of the three Scales), then the Candidate passes even if the third Examiner awarded a lower score.

COMMUNICATION OF A CANDIDATE'S PERFORMANCE

It is inappropriate for an Examiner to communicate with other people as to the performance of Candidates and as to whether they have passed or failed. The policy adopted by the Board is that if inquiries are made as to the status of a person, the reply concerns whether the person is or is not a Specialist, and no further information is provided. The Chair should inform the Candidate at the end of the examination that the notification of “Pass” or “Fail” will come from the American Board of

Professional Psychology, after the ABFP Board of Directors has made the final decision. This process normally takes about four to six weeks.

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FIRST BALLOT

CANDIDATE _____ DATE _____

EXAMINER _____

Please complete this ballot prior to any discussion among the Examiners.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

Scale I _____ (also circle one: P B F)

QUALITY OF PRACTICE

Subscale IIA – Practice Sample 1 _____

Subscale IIB – Practice Sample 2 _____

Scale II (total of IIA plus IIB) _____ (also circle one: P B F)

KNOWLEDGE OF FORENSIC AREAS

Subscale IIIA – Practice Sample 1 _____

Subscale IIIB – Practice Sample 2 _____

Scale III (total of IIIA plus IIIB) _____ (also circle one: P B F)

For Scale I:

Pass = 7 or above; Borderline = 4-6; Fail = 3 or below

For Scales II and III:

Pass = 14 or above; Borderline = 7-13; Fail = 6 or below

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SECOND BALLOT

CANDIDATE _____ DATE _____

EXAMINER _____

To be completed, following discussion among the Examiners, only if the Candidate has not "Clearly Passed" or "Clearly Failed" on the First Ballot.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

Scale I _____ (also circle one: P B F)

QUALITY OF PRACTICE

Subscale IIA – Practice Sample 1 _____

Subscale IIB – Practice Sample 2 _____

Scale II (total of IIA plus IIB) _____ (also circle one: P B F)

KNOWLEDGE OF FORENSIC AREAS

Subscale IIIA – Practice Sample 1 _____

Subscale IIIB – Practice Sample 2 _____

Scale III (total of IIIA plus IIIB) _____ (also circle one: P B F)

For Scale I:

Pass = 7 or above; Borderline = 4-6; Fail = 3 or below

For Scales II and III:

Pass = 14 or above; Borderline = 7-13; Fail = 6 or below

**ABFP ORAL EXAMINATION
CHAIR'S SUMMARY OF BALLOTING**

CANDIDATE: _____ DATE: _____

FIRST BALLOT

	Examiner #1	Examiner #2	Examiner #3	TOTALS
Scale I	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____
Scale II	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____
Scale III	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____

Please indicate numbers on each line as well as letter equivalents (P, B or F).

Criteria for the First Ballot are based on the *totals* for each scale: “Clearly Pass”: 21 or above on Scale I **and** 42 or above on Scale II **and** 42 or above on Scale III. “Clearly Fail”: 9 or below on Scale I **and** 18 or below on Scale II **and** 18 or below on Scale III. Otherwise, a Second Ballot is necessary, after discussion among the Examiners.

SECOND BALLOT

	Examiner #1	Examiner #2	Examiner #3	TOTALS
Scale I	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____
Scale II	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____
Scale III	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____ ()	_____

Please indicate numbers on each line as well as letter equivalents (P, B or F).

Criteria for the Second Ballot are based on the *totals* for each scale: “Pass”: if Total Scale I is 21 or higher **and** Total Scale II is 36 or higher **and** Total Scale III is 36 or higher; **or** if two Examiners each awarded 3 Passes (P). Otherwise, the Candidate has failed the examination.

Signatures:

Chair: _____ Co-Examiner: _____
 Co-Examiner: _____