

EAACI Examination in Allergology and Clinical Immunology June 7th, 2008 – Barcelona

The first European examination in Allergology and Clinical Immunology took place at the EAACI meeting in Barcelona on 7 June 2008.

40 candidates participated, 22 women and 18 men. On average, 63.3 % of the possible 100 points were achieved with a standard deviation of 11.5 % and a range between 32.0 % and 84.0 %. The standard (cut-off point) was set at 54 points (correct answers). 85 % of the candidates were successful.

The quality of the examination (i. e. its internal consistency) was high, the measurement reliability (Cronbach-Alpha) was 0.88. (0.8 would be the internationally required minimum for high stakes examinations.)

On average, 63.3 % of the possible 100 points were achieved. With a passing score of 54 points, 6 candidates of totally 40 failed the examination. 70 % of the candidates thought that the examination was difficult or very difficult, but some of them stated that the examination was helpful to get to know gaps in their knowledge.

The longer a candidate worked as licensed physician, the less difficult he estimated the examination. Although Allergologists / Clinical Immunologists performed not significantly better than the trainees or other specialists (in the overall examination as well as in the different blueprint themes), experienced Allergologists / Clinical Immunologists showed better performance than less experienced ones.

50 % of the candidates evaluated the relevance of this examination as limited for their daily clinical practice. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that this examination was a knowledge test and intended to assess mainly factual knowledge. The prevalence of factual knowledge is reflected by the analysis of different job positions of the candidates: Specialists working in an academic setting were on average significantly better than candidates working mainly in a private practice.

For most of the candidates, the examination language English is not their first language. Thus, 20 % of the candidates stated that they had some or even a lot of difficulties to read and understand the examination questions. In fact, the less language difficulties a candidate had, the better he performed.

For all analyses, one should keep in mind the fact that there were only 40 candidates. The analyses will become more reliable when there are more candidates involved. Thus, also the high internal consistency (Cronbach-Alpha) should be interpreted with care. With more candidates, this value could have been lower.