

The American Board of Forensic Anthropology (A.B.F.A.) Certification Examination General Guidelines:

- The A.B.F.A. certification examination consists of a multiple choice examination and a practical examination.
- The examination is given on the Monday of the week of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Science.
- The examination will begin at 8:00 a.m. and will end at 6:00 p.m.
- The examinee will have lunch in the examination area. The Examination Committee will arrange for lunch for the examinees (at the cost of the A.B.F.A.).
- The examination will begin with the multiple choice examination.
- The examinee will be permitted to take as much time as necessary to finish the multiple choice examination. Once completed, the examinee will not be permitted to return to the multiple choice examination. The remainder of the time will be spent on the practical examination.
- Examinees must have a thorough working knowledge of the discipline. Examinees are not permitted to bring reference materials to the examination. During the practical examination, examinees will have access to age determination standards and casts and other suitable materials and instruments deemed appropriate by the Examination Committee.
- The examination will be administered in an area that provides a secure and otherwise appropriate environment for the written and practical portions of the exam. The Vice President will communicate details with applicants approved to sit for the exam during the year prior and is responsible for proctoring the examination.

The Multiple Choice Examination

- This portion of the examination will consist of approximately 100 multiple choice questions.
- The questions will test the examinees knowledge and comprehension of forensic anthropology.
- The examinee shall be familiar with the forensic anthropology literature. This literature would include, but is not limited to, pertinent forensic journals and texts which are applicable to the practicing forensic anthropologist. While the examinee must be well-versed in current literature, seminal works should not be ignored.
- Sections of examination will include history, methods – general and specific, dental, radiographic and case-based applications.

The Practical Examination

- This portion of the examination will consist of at least 20 but not more than 25 separate hands-on stations.
- The examinee must attempt to complete all stations.
- The examinee may answer the stations in any order, but he/she must be cognizant of the progress of fellow examinees.

- Each station will provide the necessary equipment, standards, and guidance to complete the station.
- Do only what each station asks.
- The examination will assess your ability to apply your specific body of knowledge/skills to actual skeletal, dental, and, in some instances, radiographs.
- The stations will test the examinees competence in areas such as the determination of age, ancestry, sex, and stature; craniometrics; dental development; dental charting; minimum number of individuals; trauma (providing a differential diagnosis); pathology (providing a differential diagnosis); human vs. nonhuman; FORDISC 3; burning, taphonomy, and/or radiological assessment. The test could involve these examples, but is not limited to them.
- The examinee will demonstrate critical reasoning, appropriate methods, and experience to reach an organized, synthetic answer to each question.

Scoring The Examinations

- Both the multiple choice and practical examination will be graded by the Examination Committee.
- The Examination Committee shall consist of at least three members of the ABFA board.
- Each examination/examinee is given a number and the identity of any one examination/examinee is known only to the Vice President, who does not score the examination.
- The Examination Committee will grade the examination before the end of the week of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Science. After the Board of Director's meeting the Vice President will be responsible for informing examinees the results.
- The Examination Committee will have constructed grading guidelines for each of the practical examination questions. Grading guidelines will allow for multiple graders to apply the same criteria and standards to produce a standardized, objective evaluation of the examinees. Numerical weights will be applied to each practical station. More weight will be placed on those stations involving the most fundamental tests/methods (age, sex, ancestry, stature, human vs. non-human) performed regularly by forensic anthropologists.
- A minimum score of 80% is required to pass for each portion of the examination.

Reviewing the Exam

- Examinees will be allowed to view photographs of the practical exam at the conclusion, if they wish. The grading guideline will be provided.
- Persons interested in taking the exam in the future will also be allowed to briefly view photographs of the stations with permission of the Vice President.