



Hong Kong Institution of Physicists in Medicine
香港醫學物理學院

A Scheme for Professional Certification of Medical Physicists

1. Background

To be able to practice independently, medical physicists, like other professionals must have the required level of competence, professional ethic and integrity quite apart from having a high standard of education and clinical training. Such education, training and certification are clearly specified by statutory international and professional organizations, including International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Organization for Medical Physics (IOMP), and European Commission (EC). Medical physicists in some countries have implemented professional registration systems as a mean for ensuring standard of practice of the profession. Countries that do not have such a system in place, developing countries in particular are developing ways and means of testing physicists for professional competency. A common approach to professional registration is the system of peer certification, a system as proposed by International Medical Physics Certification Board (IMPCB) (<http://www.impcb.org>). At the first AGM held on 1 February 2013, HKIPM Council approved the setting up of a Certification Board to implement and manage a professional certification scheme for members. The certification system as detailed below is proposed by the Board for endorsement by Council.

2. The Proposal

The Certification Board (hereafter referred as the Board) shall organize and implement a professional certification scheme for medical physicists practicing in the medical sectors. The roles and responsibilities of the Board shall include:

- (a) To develop standards and procedures for the certification of medical physicists practicing in medicine.
- (b) To establish the requirements that medical physicist has to meet in order to be eligible for taking the certification examinations in the field of medical physics.
- (c) To conduct certification examinations.

- (d) To grant and issue certificates to medical physicists who have fulfilled all the requirements for professional certification as defined in this proposal.
- (e) To maintain a registry of medical physicists certified by the Board under this scheme.

3. The Certification Process

3.1 Certification by Examination

- (a) The Board will offer certification by examination for eligible candidates. Upon successfully passing the examinations as specified below, candidates may be granted a certificate for the status of certified medical physicists.
- (b) The board examination model as proposed by IMPCB (<http://www.impcb.org/model-program>) is adopted.

3.2 Inaugural certification

- (a) A one-time inaugural certification without examination may be offered to eligible members of HKIPM. Members who have been granted professional certification in either Radiotherapy Physics or Imaging Physics by a certification body which is recognized by HKIPM may apply.
- (b) All applications for the one-time inauguration certification shall reach the Secretary of HKIPM on or before the application deadline 31 December 2013.

4. Certification Examination Format

The certification examination shall consist of three parts as detailed below.

- (a) Part I is designed to test the knowledge of the candidate in fundamental aspects of medical physics (General Medical Physics).
- (b) Part II is designed to determine the knowledge and competence of the candidate in a specialty area of medical physics, (such as Radiation Oncology Physics or Medical Imaging Physics)
- (c) Part III is designed to determine the candidate's knowledge, competence and fitness to practice clinical medical physics in a designated sub-specialty (Radiation Oncology Physics or Medical Imaging Physics).

5 Eligibility for Certification Examination

A candidate shall fulfill the requirements as stated in (a) to (c) below before

he/she is allowed to sit for a particular part of the certification examinations.

- (a) Eligibility for Part I Written Certification Examination (General Medical Physics)
 - (i) Education – graduation from a university with an advanced degree (Masters or Doctorate) in physics, medical physics or an equivalent degree in an appropriate physical or engineering science discipline.
 - (ii) Professional Training – Not required

- (b) Eligibility for Part II Written Certification Examination (Medical Physics Specialty)
 - (i) The candidate shall be a practicing medical physicist, and
 - (ii) Education – requirements as specified above for Part I Board examination, and
 - (iii) Professional Training – two years full-time equivalent training preceding the date of application for examination. The training should be carried out under the guidance of a certified medical physicist specializing in the same sub-field or under the guidance of a qualified individual with a level of professional experience and expertise equivalent to that of a certified medical physicist.

- (c) Eligibility for Part III Oral Certification Examination (Medical Physics Specialty)
 - (i) The candidate shall be a practicing medical physicist, and
 - (ii) Has successfully passed Part I and Part II Board examinations.

6 Re-examination

- (a) A candidate who fails to pass any Part of the three-part examination may petition to be re-examined in that Part within 1 (one) year from the previous attempt.

- (b) If any Part of the examination has been taken unsuccessfully three times, the candidate should be required to reapply for the entire sequence of examinations.

7 Exemptions for Certification Examination

- (a) A member who is certified (after the application deadline for inaugural certification) by another professional certification body which is recognized by HKIPM may be granted professional certification in a relevant

sub-specialty as specified in 4 above on condition that the member passes a professional interview conducted by the Board.

- (b) Applicants who have passed one or more parts of the certification examinations conducted by another certification body which is recognized by HKIPM may be exempted from taking the equivalent part or parts of the certification examination.
- (c) Application for exemption shall be considered by the Board on a case by case basis.

8 Continuing Professional Development

To maintain a HKIPM Board certificate, a certified medical physicist must satisfy the continuing professional development (CPD) requirements as defined by the Institution.