

**The British Occupational Hygiene Society  
Faculty of Occupational Hygiene**

**Requirements for Practical Assessments on Proficiency Module**

**P403 – Asbestos Fibre Counting (PCM)**

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**General:**

1. The course provider is responsible for providing suitable facilities for the practical assessment for the Proficiency Module Fibre Counting including all safety provisions.
2. The whole practical assessment is an examination and therefore must take place at the date, time and location declared. Unapproved changes may result in the examination being declared void. Candidates may have access to relevant reference material during the examination but must not be allowed to communicate with each other.
3. The room in which the examination is conducted must be suitable for the purpose.
4. The examination must be supervised by an approved assessor(s) who must check that the facilities and equipment provided are fully adequate for the practical assessment. Microscopes, air sampling equipment (e.g. sampling pumps, heads and filter ) and filter clearing equipment (acetone vaporiser) must be available with all relevant components (e.g. filters, Acetone, GTA, flat-headed tweezer, clean filters, coverslips & slides etc) and be suitable for the requirements of this assessment.
5. All candidates must demonstrate their capability to set-up the equipment for air sampling (i.e. a clean filter correctly mounted in a sampling head and the setting and measurement of a suitable flow of air) and then to mount and clear filters for counting. The assessor must record their performance against a marking schedule.
6. The assessor is required to confirm that the microscope has been set up correctly by the candidate and is being used properly.
7. The candidate's ability to carry out all relevant calculations must also be assessed.
8. Assessors must ensure that candidates complete and sign the Practical Assessment Attendance Form before the examination begins. This form must be returned to the BOHS office within five working days of the date of the examination.
9. On completion of the examination candidates must be instructed to put their Candidate Practical Assessment Answer Forms into the envelope provided, and hand that envelope to the Assessor, who will in turn forward them to BOHS within five working days of the date of the assessment. The slides to be returned to the address designated within two working days of the date of the assessment.
10. Marking is carried out against a full and detailed marking scheme.
11. The WHO counting rules according to HSG248 must be utilized.

**Safety Responsibility:**

12. The assessor is responsible for the safety arrangements during the practical examination and must satisfy him/herself that all arrangements are adequate and that they are observed by all those present.

**Slides:**

13. Slides will be provided by BOHS and should arrive with the course provider about one week before the examination date. The sample slides will arrive in a single padded envelope

containing a box with eight slides. Each slide is labelled with its RICE round and sample number or other identification.

14. Each set of sample slides is suitable for situations where up to eight candidates are being examined at the same time, and will contain two of each slide designated as <<63.7, <63.7, >63.7 and >>63.7 fibres/mm<sup>2</sup>, which are the appropriate diversity to test the candidates' abilities.
15. Where more than eight candidates are being examined at the same time then a second set of samples will need to be supplied when ever possible.
16. Where more than one set of samples is being used at the same time or in successive sessions, assessors must ensure that the samples used by individual candidates belong to one sample set only and record this on the Practical Assessment Attendance Form. The mixing of sample sets must not be allowed to occur as this could lead to candidates not being tested across the full range of samples and thus their results being declared void.
17. The outer envelope(s) will be labelled with the date of the examination and should not be opened until the examination commences and in the presence of the candidates.

**Security:**

18. As the sample slides provided are HSL listed samples, assessors and candidates must, therefore, not have access during the practical examination to any HSL records.
19. Where the candidates are split into two or more groups and they are to be examined sequentially, arrangements must be made to ensure that sample numbers and other information are not passed from group to group.
20. Where groups are examined on different days then, to maintain security, a different set of samples must be used. The BOHS office will need to be advised of this in advance so that multiple sets of sample slides can be provided. These will be labelled for the relevant dates.