



ABR MOC and OLA Updates

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AAPM Spring Clinical Meeting 2020
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NOTE

- The information given in this presentation is accurate as of March 31, 2020.
- For the latest information, please visit the ABR website at

www.theabr.org



Topics

1. ABMS and MOC
2. Maintenance of Certification Overview
3. Online Longitudinal Assessment (OLA)
4. OLA Performance Evaluation
5. Becoming an OLA Question Rater
6. Early Statistics
7. Question & Answer



ABMS & MOC



American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

- 1933 – ABMS established by first 4 boards: Ophthalmology, Dermatology, ENT, and OB/Gyn
- 1934 – ABR founded
- 1947 – ABR started examining and certifying certificates
- 1991 – ABR joined ABMS



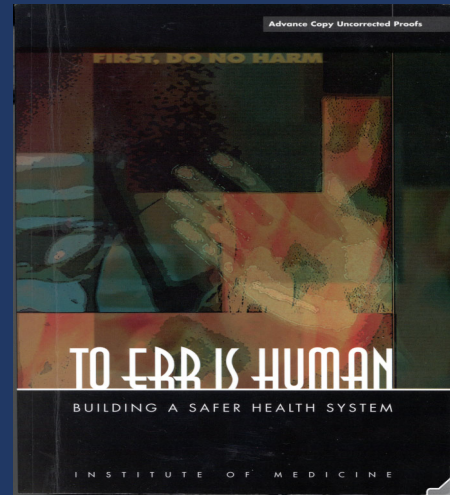
ABMS 24 Member Boards

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| • Allergy and Immunology | • Orthopaedic Surgery |
| • Anesthesiology | • Otolaryngology |
| • Colon & Rectal Surgery | • Pathology |
| • Dermatology | • Pediatrics |
| • Emergency Medicine | • Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation |
| • Family Practice | • Plastic Surgery |
| • Internal Medicine | • Preventive Medicine |
| • Medical Genetics | • Psychiatry & Neurology |
| • Neurological Surgery | • Radiology ← |
| • Nuclear Medicine | • Surgery |
| • Obstetrics & Gynecology | • Thoracic Surgery |
| • Ophthalmology | • Urology |



Maintenance of Certification (MOC)

- Founded out of concern for quality of care and need to set standards
- Ongoing need to monitor and promote quality and safety
 - 44,000 to 98,000 Americans die each year as a result of preventable errors caused by faulty systems or processes used in their care



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ABMS Maintenance of Certification



ABR MOC History

- 1995: ABR started issuing time-limited certificates
- 2000: Member Board Commitment to Maintenance of Certification (MOC)
- 2002: Four components of MOC established
- 2003: ABMS Board of Directors, Officers and Executive Committee Members, ABR board members, and committee volunteers commitment to MOC participation
- 2007 – ABR's first full MOC program went "live"



Specialty certificates issued 2010-2019

Specialty Certifications

YEAR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
Diagnostic Radiology	1,239	1,257	1,328	1,334	125 ¹	1,092	1,273	1,160	1,173	1,103	11,084
Interventional/ Diagnostic Radiology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	256	312	332	900
Medical Physics	204	315	263	266	279	248	242	217	215	239	2,488
Therapeutic ²	[181]	[263]	[232]	[213]	[217]	[211]	[196]	[155]	[166]	[190]	[2,024]
Diagnostic ²	[22]	[41]	[29]	[45]	[54]	[30]	[41]	[52]	[43]	[44]	[401]
Nuclear ²	[1]	[11]	[2]	[8]	[8]	[7]	[5]	[10]	[6]	[5]	[63]
Radiation Oncology	139	148	155	170	164	154	196	194	170	199	1,689
TOTAL	1,582	1,720	1,746	1,770	568¹	1,494	1,711	1,827	1,870	1,873	16,161

1. Because of the transition from the diagnostic radiology (DR) Oral Exam to the DR Certifying Exam, only those who took and passed a DR Oral Exam were certified in 2014. The first DR Certifying Exam was administered in October 2015.

2. Specific specialty of medical physics

MOC Overview



What is MOC?

- Part 1: Professionalism and Professional Standing
 - Valid and unrestricted license (FL, HI, NY, TX) *or*
 - Professional standing attestation
- Part 2: Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment
 - At least 75 category 1 CE (25 SA-CE) in the previous 3 years
- Part 3: Assessment of Knowledge, Judgement & Skills
 - ABR OLA or traditional exam once every 5 years
- Part 4: Improvement in Medical Practice
 - Practice Quality Improvement, (PQI) or participatory activities



Meeting MOC Requirements

10-Year Cycle System



Continuous Certification

Part 1: Valid licensure or attestation

Part 2: 250 CE and 20 SAMs every 10 years

Part 3: Exam every 10 years

Part 4: 3 projects every 10 years

Part 1: Valid licensure or attestation

Part 2: 75 CE, including 25 SA-CE in previous 3 years

Part 3: Pass OLA performance evaluation at the most recent annual review or have passed a traditional exam in previous 5 years

Part 4: 1 PQI project/activity every 3 years



Continuous Certification Basics

- All diplomates who are participating in MOC follow the continuous certification requirements.
- MOC participation attestation is completed annually.
- All ABR certificates issued 2012 and beyond are continuous.
- Ongoing validity of continuous certificates depends on meeting MOC requirements.



MOC Annual Review

MOC Element	Compliance Requirement
Professionalism and Professional Standing	Valid, unrestricted license (FL, HI, NY, TX) or professional standing attestation
CE	At least 75 Category 1 CE credits in previous 3 years
Self-Assessment CE (SA-CE)	At least 25 of the 75 Category 1 CE credits must be SA-CE.
Assessment of Knowledge, Judgement and Skills	Pass most recent OLA performance evaluation or have passed a traditional exam in previous 5 years
Improvement in Medical Practice	Completed at least 1 PQI project or Participatory Activity in previous 3 years
Fees	Current with MOC fees



Online Longitudinal Assessment (OLA)



Summative vs Formative Assessment

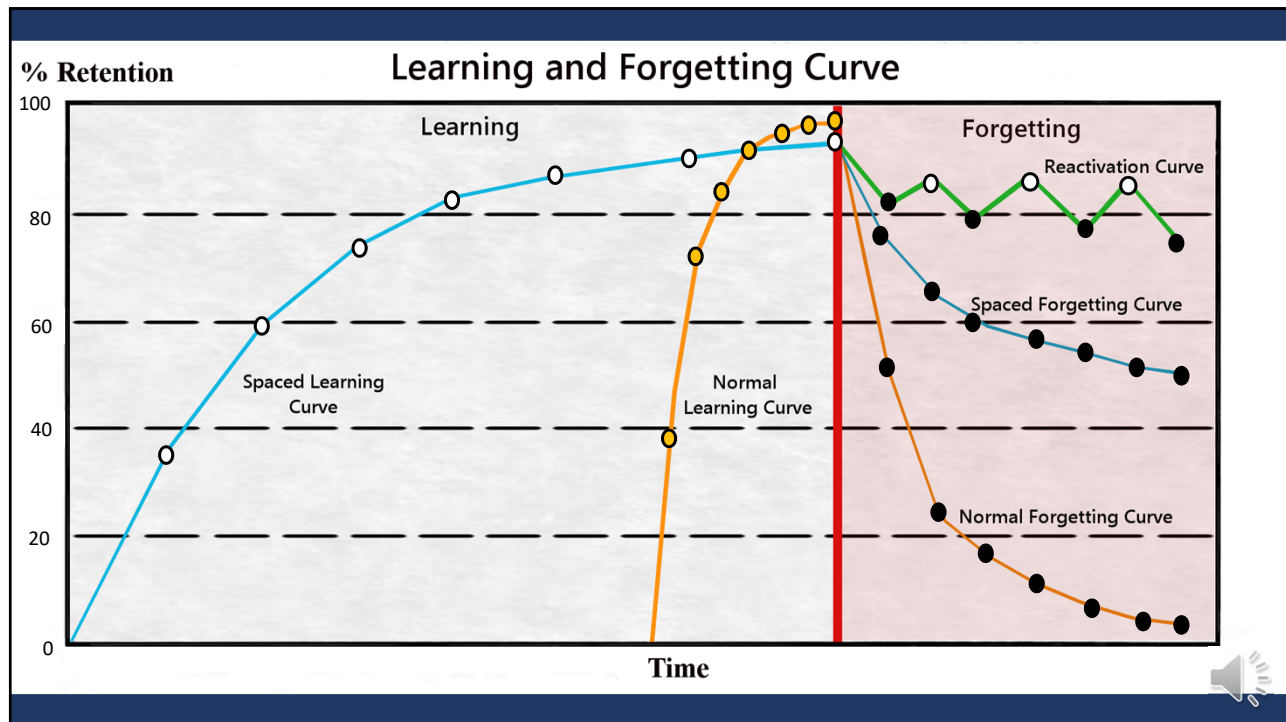
- Summative assessment
 - Evaluate performance against a standard
 - Usually “high stakes”
 - Primary responsibility of ABMS boards
- Formative assessment
 - Monitor learning by providing ongoing feedback
 - Identify gaps to guide learning
 - Often “low stakes”
 - Domain of CME providers
- ABMS boards moving to a hybrid model - summative assessment with formative features



Why ABR OLA?

- To improve the formative aspects of assessment
- Focus on a more convenient assessment approach
 - While maintaining a rigorous evaluation of diplomate knowledge
 - Support continuous professional development through lifelong learning
- Target for OLA content – Walking Around Knowledge
 - The type of questions you may get from colleagues, referring MDs, trainees, patients





OLA Launch Timing by Specialty

2019:

Diagnostic Radiology

Diagnostic Radiology Subspecialties (Neuro, Nuclear, Peds)

2020:

Medical Physics

Interventional Radiology/Diagnostic Radiology (IR/DR)

Radiation Oncology

How Will ABR OLA Be Better For Me?

- OLA eliminates the need for, and the cost of, travel
- It does not require you to study
- It requires very little time away from your practice
- It offers immediate feedback with rationale and references
- Incorrect answers are followed-up with similar question a few weeks later*
 - No Variants for NMP OLA
- It is more focused and relevant to your daily practice
- It is designed to be a gradual, non-stressful experience
- It is flexible – within broad guidelines you decide how often to engage with OLA

* Due to a lower number of NMP Diplomates, there are some differences for NMP OLA



I Have Questions About OLA

- How will I know I have questions to answer?
 - You will receive a weekly email reminder with a link to your OLA home page
 - On your homepage you will see how many questions are available
- How many questions do I have to answer?
 - 52 question per year
 - OLA will deliver 2 question opportunities per week* (available for 4 weeks)
 - 1 question opportunity per week for NMP OLA
 - OLA will store up to 8 questions*
 - 4 questions stored (4 week “shelf life”) for NMP OLA
- What if a question is not relevant to my practice?
 - You can decline to answer up to 10 questions per year without penalty*
 - No Declines for NMP OLA

* Due to a lower number of NMP Diplomates, there are some differences for NMP OLA



I Have Questions About OLA, (cont.)

- Are questions timed?
 - Yes. Questions are either 1-minute or 3-minutes
- How should I prepare for OLA?
 - Study should not be required. OLA is not an exam, it's an assessment of your every day knowledge which occurs over several years
- Weekly questions? What if I need time off?
 - OLA is flexible and designed to allow you up to 6 months off every year*
 - For NMP OLA questions must be answered within 4 weeks, before they expire

* Due to a lower number of NMP Diplomates, there are some differences for NMP OLA



I Have Questions About OLA, (cont.)

- What if I only want to be reminded once a month, or not at all?
 - You can change your communication preferences in your OLA preferences
- Do I need to enroll in OLA if I'm already in MOC?
 - No. If you are currently participating in MOC, you will be automatically enrolled in OLA
- Are there technical requirements for the device I use?
 - Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Internet Explorer and Microsoft Edge
 - Minimum display resolution of 1024x768

Not meant to be used
with cell phones at
this time.





Scan QR code for OLA FAQs

Getting Started
Answering OLA Questions
Scoring and Performance Evaluation
OLA & Subspecialty Certificates
Technical Requirements

<https://www.theabr.org/online-longitudinal-assessment-ola#ola-faqs>



OLA Performance Evaluation



When Will My Performance Be Evaluated?

- Your performance will appear on your OLA dashboard once you've answered 52 calibrated questions (see next slide)
- Performance Evaluation Timing
 - After you have answered 200 calibrated questions
 - Evaluations each year thereafter



Need 52 calibrated items – Calibrated means

- 1) the item has had a minimum number of responses, and
- 2) the item has received a minimum number of question ratings.

What happens after you have completed 52 calibrated items?

You get an assessment on dashboard saying:

- meeting performance standard
- Not meeting performance standard

Only after 200 questions (need stats) are answered will you see

- Meeting MOC requirements
- Not meeting MOC requirements

How is the Passing Standard Set?

- OLA is criterion referenced
 - OLA is not graded on a curve
 - Each question is evaluated individually and the aggregate rating for your 200 questions is the passing standard
- Participating as a question rater
 - Watch an online video which explains the question rating process
 - Take a short quiz



How Do I Remediate if I Am Not Passing?

There are two ways:

1. Answer more OLA questions

- If you answer additional OLA questions and if your performance meets or exceeds the passing standard at any time over the 12 months between annual reviews, your MOC status will immediately change from “Not Meeting” to “Meeting” the requirements for MOC.

2. Pass a traditional exam

- If you prefer, you can take and pass a traditional exam (oral exam). Doing so will ensure your MOC Part 3 status will remain “Meeting” for five years. Also, after passing an exam, OLA will be re-set and any previous scoring deficit will be removed.



Becoming an OLA Question Rater



What is an OLA question rater?

- Question raters set the passing standard for every OLA question
- Any diplomate participating in OLA has the option to participate in the question rating process.
- It takes less than 5 minutes to complete the question rater training and become an OLA question rater.
- Currently, 37% of medical physicists have opted to serve as a question rater



How do I become a question rater?

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theABR myABR Latest News Need Help?

My Dashboard My OLA History

Dashboard

My OLA

Available Questions
0 EXPIRING SUNDAY

[Answer Now](#)

Practice Profile
Therapeutic Medical Physics

Therapeutic Medical Physics

OLA Resources

[Practice Questions](#)
[Question Rating Training](#)

Rate OLA Questions in 3 Easy Steps

All diplomates participating in MOC are eligible to rate OLA questions after training.

1. Watch a short video
2. Answer a quiz to complete training
3. Rate questions on the OLA survey

[Get Started](#)

OLA Annual Progress

0 Answered To Date

52 Required by Dec 31, 2020

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Rating A Question

After answering each OLA question you will see the feedback screen

Answering #3 records your question rating

Thank you for helping establish the OLA passing standard

To Improve Your OLA Experience, Tell Us What You Think [Skip](#)

- How **confident** are you in your answer?

☐ Not Confident
 ☐ Somewhat Confident
 ☐ Neutral
 ☐ Confident
 ☐ Very Confident
- How **relevant** is this question to your daily practice?

☐ Irrelevant
 ☐ Somewhat Irrelevant
 ☐ Neutral
 ☐ Somewhat Relevant
 ☐ Relevant
- Would a **minimally competent medical physicist** with training in this area know the answer to this question? [Refresh Training](#)

☐ Yes
 ☐ No

Add Feedback

Type your comment...

[Submit](#)

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DR OLA Statistics: 2019



Diplomate Feedback on OLA: 2019

- ~24k comments received to date
- Positive comments on question content, images, references, and rationale
- Sufficient # of images to answer question (enough/not enough)
- Image quality (good/bad)
- Specific clinical feedback based on diplomate experience/opinion (I do/don't do x)
- Comments about proportion of clinical content within a clinical profile area
- Need more time to answer
- This is fun and I'm learning something!

As of 12/31/19



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DR OLA Statistics: 2019

- Over 17k (97%) diplomates answered at least one OLA question
- Over 1.19 million OLA questions answered
- 83% completed their OLA annual progress requirement
- Less than 3% of all questions viewed have been declined
- 34% have participated in the OLA rating process
- Question response time:
 - 60 second questions: 29 second response average
 - 180 second questions: 45 second response average

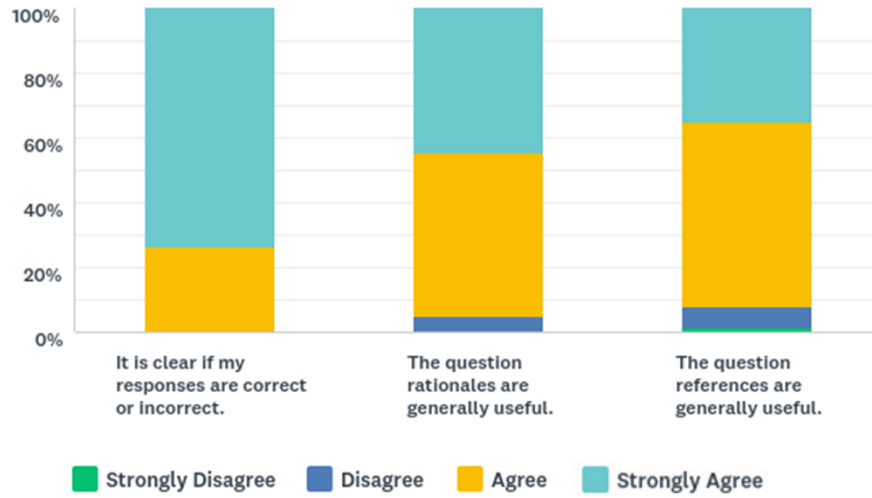
As of 12/31/19



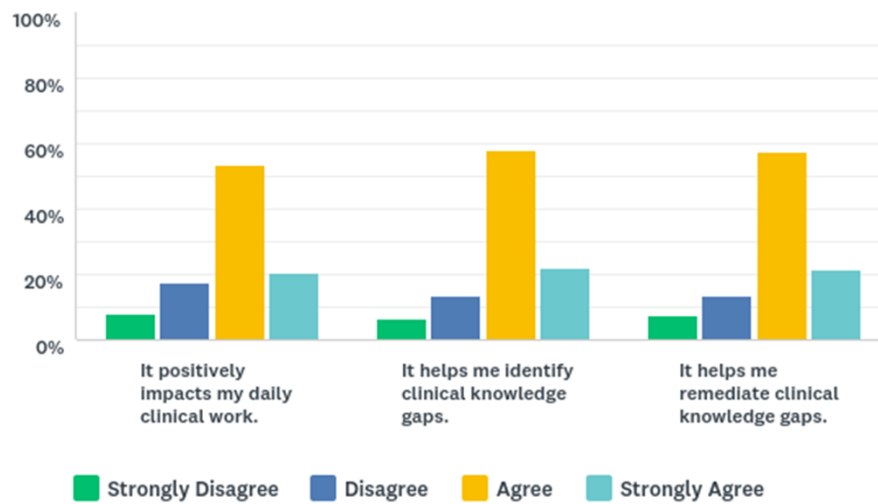
Q1 Where do you answer OLA questions?



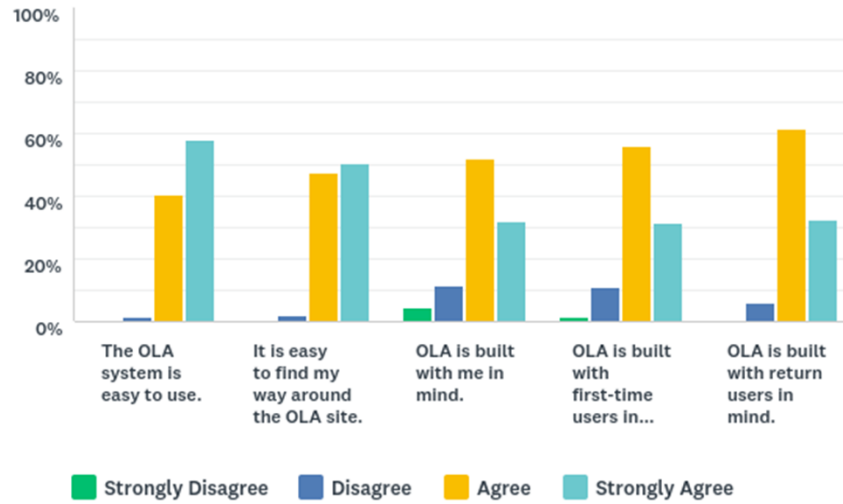
Q5 After I answer my questions:



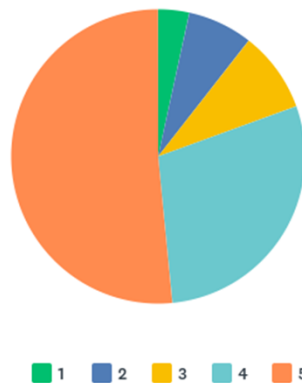
Q6 Regarding my OLA participation:



Q8 The statements below are about your satisfaction with OLA.



Q9 Finally, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being best), what is your overall satisfaction with OLA?



Overall = 4.2

OLA Enhancements Beginning 2020

- Addition of emergency radiology practice profile area
- More time for selected questions
- Reduction in SA-CME requirements for OLA participation
- Ability to modify frequency of OLA emails
- Performance feedback



Early OLA Statistics: Medical Physics



Early OLA Statistics

- Over 3,200 (94.2%) diplomates have answered at least one OLA question
- Over 46k OLA questions have been answered
- Less than 3% of all questions viewed have been declined
- 37% have volunteered to participate in the OLA question rating process



Feedback MP OLA (preliminary)

- Over 2,600 comments
- “Very practical question!”
- “Great question.”
- “Good to have regulatory questions like this.”
- “Very good. Relevant question for clinical physicist.”
- “Anyone should know this.”
- “Very relevant and very applicable to practice.”



MP OLA Comments

- “This is a pretty vague and subjective question that doesn't have much of anything to do with my practice as a clinical medical physicist.”
- “Do not do brachytherapy at the moment.”
- “The answer options for the question are poorly worded...”
- “Got mixed up thinking about...”
- “This is not a 1 minute type question...”
- “Really weird and vague answer...”
- “I've never done HDR PBI...”
- “This question is subjective...”



What's going to change?

- We have made changes based on DR feedback that is beneficial to all
- Few changes anticipated at this point
- The interface for dual-boarded Physicists will be improved
- It is still very early, maybe reevaluate again in Fall
- Evolving product



ABR Certification Managers



- We are here to help!
- Team of ABR staff available Mon-Fri from 7:00am-4:30pm AZ time
- 85% of issues resolved with a single interaction



Volunteer Opportunities with the ABR

- Eligible one year after certified
- Item writers – Written, OLA
- Oral Examiner
- Angoff committee members
- SAM reviewers
- Advisory committee members
- Board members



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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-american-board-of-radiology/>



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QUESTIONS?

Please contact an ABR Certification Manager at:

information@theABR.org

or

(520) 790-2900



Audience Questions

“ABR MOC and OLA Update” presentation
AAPM Spring Clinical Meeting
Sunday, April 5, 2020

Questions answered during the Q&A session:

- For PQI activity, can you please give us examples on clinical activities that can be considered as PQIs?
- Would like more information on the part 4 requirements. The projects and what may be accepted as a physicist who works more in industry doing support and education.
 - For PQI activities, see link <https://www.theabr.org/medical-physics/maintenance-of-certification/medical-practice-improvement/participatory-activities>
- Did the ABR MOC speaker just say there will be a change to the number of SA-CME credits needed? From 25 to 15, per 3 years? My coworkers and I on our group chat are confused and think that is breaking news. Thanks!
 - Yes. Those diplomates completing the OLA annual progress requirement will only need to complete 15 SA-CE credits. This will show up when you are completing your annual MOC attestation after participating for 1 year. Blog link: <https://www.theabr.org/blogs/reaching-ola-progress-requirement-offsets-some-sa-cme-credits>
- If the OLA is intended to not be stressful, why is the time to answer a question so short?
- Why can't you increase the time to answer questions to 3 minutes, if it's just lifelong learning. This reduces pressure on people while answering questions.
 - All OLA committees have determined standards for the length of time available for questions. A question with a relatively simple stem and options has a 1-minute length of time, and a question with a more complicated stem, a simple calculation, or images has a 3-minute length of time. There needs to be some time limit in order to assess knowledge. Blog link: <https://www.theabr.org/blogs/some-ola-questions-will-offer-extended-response-time-in-2020>
- Is the OLA passing standard based on the number of questions answered correctly or a percentage of questions answered correctly?
- What will the OLA passing level be?
 - The passing standard is criterion referenced; OLA is not graded on a curve. The passing standard for each OLA question is established individually, and the aggregate rating for your 200 questions defines your passing standard. For example, if 10 question raters review a question and 7 believe a minimally competent physicist would get that question correct, that question receives a score of 0.7. This is done for all questions, so there is a range of question

scores. This information is aggregated for all questions answered by a diplomate and then used to set the passing standard for that diplomate.

- I have seen questions where the answers are demonstrably incorrect and most recently the options did not appear next to the radio buttons. When this happens and we communicate with the ABR, I have not seen any communication back addressing these concerns. Complaints submitted do not get a receipt, and in one case the same incorrect question appeared weeks later with the same incorrect "correct" answer. What is our recourse?
 - For technical problems with any OLA question, please contact an ABR Certification Manager and they will assist. They can be reached at information@theabr.org or (520) 790-2900. For content-related issues, please leave comments on the feedback form. The feedback is compiled anonymously and provided to the specific exam committee to improve the questions. The OLA feedback is not used for ABR personnel to contact diplomates directly.

Questions not answered during the Q&A session:

- Can a volunteer position within ABR count as a PQI (part 4) project?
 - No. Currently there is no mechanism to allow an ABR volunteer to use volunteer time and effort as part of the Part 4 PQI requirement. The ABR is working to allow CME credit to be offered to committee members for some aspects of the item writing cycle.
- Suggest offering some incentive for question writers. A lot of work goes into this.
 - There have been discussions to allow CME credit to be granted for some aspects of item writing.
- What is the Angoff committee?
 - The Angoff committee is a group of ABR volunteers from several Part 1 and Part 2 written exam committees that come together to perform the Angoff process for the Part 1 and Part 2 exams. Angoff is the process by which the cut score is determined for Part 1 and Part 2 exams. Committee members review each question (similar to the question rating process in OLA) and determine whether they believe a minimally competent medical physicist *would* get a particular question correct.
- If I answer 52 questions, do I need to continue with the OLA questions?
 - After you answer 52 questions in a given year, you will have met your annual progress requirement and you do not need to answer any more questions that year. Blog link: <https://www.theabr.org/blogs/take-a-break-or-press-on-its-users-choice-with-ola>
- What are the pros and cons of answering 104 questions/year?

- The sooner you answer 52 calibrated questions, the sooner you will have an idea of whether you are meeting the passing standard, which will be displayed on your OLA Dashboard. After you answer 200 calibrated questions, your Part 3 OLA performance will be evaluated. If you answer 104 questions per year, your OLA performance evaluation will occur in approximately 2 years. If you answer 52 questions per year, your OLA performance evaluation will occur in approximately 4 years.
- Every OLA presentation generates questions about the passing level, and each time the presenter does a “hand waving” explanation about question weighting, etc. Why not just publish the algorithm using standard mathematical notation? We’re all physicists, we could understand that.
 - The passing standard is criterion referenced; OLA is not graded on a curve. The passing standard for each OLA question is established individually and the aggregate rating for your 200 questions defines your passing standard.
- Is there a way to make up for questions missed due to technical difficulties?
 - Yes. Please contact an ABR Certification Manager and they will assist. They can be reached at information@theabr.org or (520) 790-2900.
- How is ABR handling people with disabilities to allow extra time on the exam?
 - The ABR has options for accommodating those with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please contact an ABR Certification Manager for more information about how to request accommodations at information@theabr.org or (520) 790-2900.
- Can we get links to PDFs of the references for OLA questions? I haven't been able to access some references because I or my hospital doesn't own rights to access. For example, some text-book references.
 - We encourage our volunteer committee members to select common references that are accessible in the public domain without the need for a subscription or login. This isn't always possible, but something that we strive for. References are also available in the My OLA History section.
- I wish there were resources for people who want to better prepare themselves. We're not supposed to study, but what would we study if we wanted to? It feels a little like there's nothing I can do to help myself.
 - There is no published study material for OLA questions. As mentioned above, exam committee members are encouraged to create questions at the level of “walking-around knowledge” from references common in the general practice of medical physics. A review of the references cited for OLA questions already viewed may provide an indication of the level and type of references used by the OLA committees. Blog link: <https://www.theabr.org/blogs/walking-around-knowledge-what-is-it>

- Is it common to get questions about specialty procedures that may not be common in many clinics (for example, proton questions or gamma knife questions)? Is the expectation that these questions will be skipped?
 - OLA questions should be at the level of “walking-around knowledge” for all diplomates and not only those familiar with specialty procedures. While not all sites will offer all clinical procedures, common clinical procedures available at most sites may be appropriate as OLA questions.
- What happens when I run out of my 10 declines and then I am presented with a question that is not within my daily practice?
 - In this situation, you should choose the answer you think is most likely to be correct. If you do not submit an answer, the question will be scored as incorrect.
- I have submitted feedback after questions, yet have not been contacted by ABR. Why ask for feedback if you are not going to follow-up?
 - The feedback is compiled anonymously and provided to the specific exam committee to improve the questions. The OLA feedback is not used for ABR personnel to contact diplomates directly.
- I have seen this on almost every question I have answered so far: “This question was removed from scoring because it did not perform to ABR standards. You have received credit for your answer and progress toward your OLA annual progress requirement.” What does this really mean?
 - All OLA questions are reviewed to ensure they are performing to the highest standards. If a question is not meeting these performance standards, it will be suspended. After a question is suspended, it is no longer available to be presented to diplomates, is sent to the appropriate OLA committee for review and may be retired. If the question is retired, it is removed from OLA scoring. You receive credit for your answer and progress toward your OLA annual progress requirement.
- What about ABR certification before MOC? The ABR does not list certified physicists as certified.
 - The ABR website lists all certified medical physicists regardless of MOC participation. There was an issue a few months ago with the CRCPD QMP registry, which only showed physicists participating in MOC and not lifetime certificate holders who were not participating in MOC. That issue should now be resolved.
- Can a person not required to do MOC and OLA because they were certified prior to it being required sign up to do the OLA questions? I think it would be useful for those of us who don't need OLA but who would like to use the questions for learning and fun.
 - A diplomate not required to participate in MOC may choose to voluntarily participate in MOC. For someone to have a status of “Meeting MOC

Requirements,” they must maintain all parts of MOC, including Part 3. It is not possible to sign up to answer OLA questions without full participation in the MOC process.

- I have recently been thinking about moving to more part-time or PRN. How will that affect my MOC? As long as I keep up with my requirements, do I need to work full time or work at all to maintain my board certification?
 - There are no employment requirements to participate in MOC. You can continue to participate if your employment is part-time or PRN.
- For question raters, can you clarify what a minimally trained physicist "in this area" means? Specifically, does “in this area” mean the area the question is related to or the general practice of MP?
 - A “minimally competent physicist with training in this area” means training in the general practice of medical physics in the areas of radiation therapy, diagnostic radiology or nuclear medicine, and not training in subfields of those areas.
- If the new OLA has reduced travel and cost of annual exam, will I see a reduction in ABR annual fee?
 - “Reduced travel” refers to diplomates not needing to travel to take exams. There is not a significant difference in the cost to produce OLA questions compared with the 10-year MOC exam.
- Can it be anticipated that ABR plans to evaluate what is involved in clinical MP practice for sending questions to avoid declines?
 - A Practice Analysis Survey is conducted every three years to evaluate the clinical domain of each area. This and OLA feedback about relevance are some of the tools used to help determine what is the most appropriate content to include.