

# Non-destructive testing in DNB/MD examination

Dear Sir,

I was delighted and, indeed, a little surprised to read the article “Why examiners should not forget to be decent human beings.”<sup>[1]</sup> The article was an unequivocal and bold criticism of the questionable ways of some examiners. This is a pertinent issue not only in radiology but also in all fields where there are student–teacher interactions. So far, we all have turned a blind eye toward this problem; this article takes the first step toward improving examination conditions by acknowledging the existence of the problem. I personally had the privilege of being examined by kind and professional examiner nevertheless, I wish to share my views on methods to improve the quality of practical examinations which may provide a fair chance for every student to excel in their examinations. These suggestions, if implemented, will make the examination process more objective and uninfluenced by the whims or the mood of the examiner.

Ideally, multiple in-training assessments as opposed to a one-time examination should be used to measure the worthiness of a candidate.<sup>[2]</sup> Our examination system at present offers the student only a single opportunity for demonstrating his/her knowledge and qualifying for the degree. It is unfair to expect the student to listen to the adverse remarks of the examiner and still perform optimally. The examination is an interaction where the candidate is judged by a stranger (read examiner) and any harsh remarks and/or gestures may escalate the stress levels of the examinee.

It is essential to document the examination proceedings, preferably through video recording. This will make the process available for assessment later, and thus help

improve the quality of the examination. It will also help the examination board to audit for consistency in terms of the duration of the session for each candidate, the number of questions asked, and the level of difficulty of the questions. The process of monitoring will automatically enforce professional behaviour and ensure politeness on the part of the examiner. Also, the pattern of questioning should be such that the questions gradually increase in complexity; the examination should not start with a baffling question.

## 360° Evaluation

Examinations are just one part of the larger game called life. It is common for such “malignant personalities” to tread all over the rights of residents in teaching institutions. Feedback from staff, nurses, residents, and technologists should be an essential part of the grievance redressal mechanism and should be given due consideration when assessing the professionalism of an individual.

To conclude, at the end of the examination, the candidate should feel that he/she has earned his/her success in an examination, and in case he/she fails to make the grade, should realize the reason for this. The imaging technology we use today was once developed for non-destructive testing of matter.<sup>[3]</sup> I hope this will remain true to its name in the near future when it comes to testing the students’ knowledge as well.

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