

**Iraqi Board for Medical
Specializations**

**The Scientific Council of
Pathology
(Forensic Medicine)**



**المجلس العراقي للاختصاصات
الطبية**

**المجلس العلمي لعلم الامراض
(اختصاص الطب العدلي)**

In The name Of God, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

**The Academic and Training Curriculum for the Specialty of
Forensic Medicine**

Introduction:

Forensic medicine is that branch of medicine that studies and treats (in the sense that it deals with) the medical aspect of cases and incidents presented to the judicial and investigative authorities (whether related to dead or living persons, laboratory specimens, or others). It links medicine and law and is one of the pillars of crime detection and prevention in service to society.

The importance of forensic medicine is evident in the facts it reveals through examinations of the corpses, the living persons, and others to serve justice in identifying the nature of accidents, crimes, and transgressions, and providing statistics and information that assist the investigative and judicial authorities in their work in order to detect these crimes and protect society from them, in addition to other services provided to society through various forensic medical examinations, such as estimating ages, proving or denying filiation, and identifying unknown persons.

Forensic medicine researches and the results of its examinations serve other medical branches by, for example identifying complications of various injuries and causes of death.

Vision:

The forensic medicine curriculum explains that it is one of the branches of pathology that employs medical knowledge in the service of justice and law.

Goal and message:

Improving the forensic medical services provided to the Iraqi community through the qualification and graduation of specialized doctors who are loaded with the forensic medical knowledge required locally and internationally accepted; in all professional aspects, and who are qualified in all professional and ethical aspects to bear this grave responsibility.

Educational objectives:

The curriculum aims to achieve the following:

- 1- Encouraging new doctors to join this specialty through the strength of its scientific curriculum and the social importance of this specialty.
- 2- Preparing specialist doctors in this important field who are able to deal correctly with all forensic medical cases, which include examining the corpses, forensic medical cases of the living persons, and other duties, in accordance with the medicolegal system followed in Iraq, which is similar to the continental system, and in accordance with Iraqi laws, and in a manner consistent with professional behavioral principles of medicine.
- 3- Completing the achievement of the second objective above requires preparing students in this specialty to write various specialized forensic medical reports

including autopsy reports, reports of sexual assaults and external trauma, for example.

4- Due to the relationship of forensic medicine with pathology, anatomy, toxicology, and other basic and clinical medical sciences, as well as the principles of criminal law, the curriculum included theoretical lectures and practical sessions, seminars, and other educational means such as scientific films and field visits to help understanding and assimilation all sciences related to medicolegal practice.

Learning and training sites:

1-The Iraqi Board for Medical Specializations

2-Department of Pathology and Forensic Medicine / College of Medicine / University of Baghdad

2-Department of Pathology and Forensic Medicine / College of Medicine / Al-Nahrain University

4-Medicolegal Directorate of Baghdad (MLD).

Duration of Study and General Outlook of the Curriculum:

It takes four full calendar years to complete the cognitive, professional, behavioral and legal preparation for doctors specializing in forensic medicine. Table No. (1) Shows the distribution of topics over the four years of curriculum.

Table (1) General distribution of the training and academic topics of the whole curriculum

Years of the study	Required courses and duration of each		
1st Grade	1st of Oct. to 30th of Sept. Theoretical lectures and practical sessions distributed over the days of the week include forensic medicine, general pathology, and an important part of systemic pathology, which is the part associated with forensic medical work, as well as anatomy.		
2nd Grade	1st course: 6 months 1st. Oct.-31th. Mar.	2nd course: 3 months 1st. Apr.-30th. Jun.	3rd. course: 3 months 1st. Jul.-30th. Sept.
	Forensic medicine: Examination of the corpses in the autopsy hall, and examination of the living persons MLD.	Toxicology: Practical training in the labs of MLD	Practical training in surgical histopathology in the educational labs of Medical City in Baghdad
	The second grade also includes theoretical lectures about Forensic Sciences at a rate of one day per week throughout the year. The details are presented below.		
3rd. Grade	1st course: 3 months 1st. Oct.-31th. Dec.	2nd course: 6 months 1st. Jan.-30th. Jun.	3rd. course: 3 months 1st. Jul.-30th. Sept.
	Forensic labs: Serology, DNA, and Paternity lab.	Forensic medicine: Examination of the corpses in the autopsy hall, and examination of the living persons MLD.	Forensic histopathology: Practical training at MLD labs.
	The third grade includes preparing a research thesis on one of the medicolegal topics		
4th. Grade	1st course: 6 months 1st. Oct.-31th. Mar.	2nd course: 3 months 1st. Apr.-30th. Jun.	3rd. course: 3 months 1st. Jul.-30th. Sept.
	Forensic medicine: Examination of the corpses in the autopsy hall, and examination of the living persons. In addition to examining cases of mass graves at MLD.	Forensic histopathology: Practical training at MLD labs.	Miscellaneous topics (lectures, discussions, and field visits that include various specialties related to forensic medicine, such as psychiatry, plastic surgery, and dermatology and venereology).

Note: The training in forensic medicine in the table above includes writing of various medicolegal reports specially autopsy reports

Assessment strategy for the students of the first grade:

The theoretical lectures and practical sessions are distributed over the days of the week. There is a preliminary exam at the end of the first grade; theoretical in each main topic for 3-hour on separate days that includes 50 marks for essay questions and the same for multiple choices questions (MCQs) for each main topic (Table 2); As well as practical exams. The final total mark is the average of both the theoretical and practical exams; the passing mark is not less than 70%, and not less than 60% in either the theoretical or practical exam.

Table (2) Topic titles for the first grade, along with the units and number of MCQs.

Titles of Forensic Medicine subjects	Credits and number of MCQs.	Titles of General+ systemic Pathology subjects	Credits and number of MCQs.	Titles of Anatomy subjects	Credits and number of MCQs.
1-Introduction to Forensic Medicine	4, 2	1-Introduction and lab techniques.	4, 2	1-Applied anatomy of upper limbs	16, 8
2-Diagnosis of death and estimation of postmortem interval.	8, 4	2-Cell injuries and death (necrosis)	8, 4	2-Applied anatomy of lower limbs	16, 8
3-Wounds from forensic aspects.	8, 4	3-Growth disorders.	8, 4	3-Applied anatomy of thorax	16, 8
4-Reginal injuries (Head, neck, etc.)	8, 4	4-Inflammation	8, 4	4-Applied anatomy of abdomen and pelvis	16, 8
5-Firearms and explosion injuries.	8, 4	5-Healing and repair	8, 4	5-Applied Anatomy of Head and Neck	16, 8
6-Transportation injuries	4, 2	6-Hemodynamic disorders and homeostasis.	8, 4	6-Applied Neuroanatomy	20, 10
7-Burns and scalds	4, 2	7-Neoplasia and carcinogenesis	8, 4		
8-Electrical injuries	4, 2	8-Immunity disorders	4, 2		

9-Mechanical asphyxia	8, 4	9-Genetic diseases.	4, 2		
10-Drowning and immersion death	8, 4	10-Cytopathology	4, 2		
11-Deaths associated with pregnancy, labour, and abortion	4, 2	11-Pathology of cardiovascular system	8, 4		
12-Deaths associated with surgical procedures.	4, 2	12-Pathology of respiratory system	8, 4		
13-Neglect, Starvation, hypothermia, and Dysbaric fatalities with barotrauma.	4, 2	13-Pathology of nervous system	8, 4		
14-Forensic dentistry for pathologist.	8, 4	14-Pathology of other body systems	8, 4		
15-Forensic pediatrics.	8, 4	15-Sudden and natural deaths.	4, 2		
16-Sexual offences.	8, 4				
Total	100, 50		100, 50		100, 50

Other notes regarding the first grade:

1-There is a continuous assessment of students during the first grade in and all subsequent grades, which includes formative and real tests, quizzes, and the student's participation in attending and preparing seminars and various

discussions; they are counted with the mark of the oral exams included in the practical exam and have a score of no less than 10.

2- The practical exams are independent for each of the three main topics and consist of an oral exam with an appropriate practical exam (slides, pictures, specimens, or corpses). Each of the two exams is worth half the final practical marks.

3- Paying attention to the Logbook from the time of joining the study until its end. The Logbook includes all events and activities by name, date, and the signature of one of the supervising professors.

Details of the curriculum, and assessment strategy for the students of the second grade:

Learning and training of students will be as stated in Table (1); Details of the forensic sciences topic are in Table (3):

Table (3): Details of the forensic sciences topic in the second grade

Title of subjects	Top details	Number of credits
1-Analytic Chemistry	Introduction and general principles. Equipment. Reagents, and lab techniques.	10
2-Forensic Toxicology	Introduction. Classification of poisons. Factors affecting the action of poisons. Samples taken from living persons and corpses. Study of various poisoning cases (poisonous gases, alcohol, pesticides, heavy metals) as well as narcotics and addiction.	20
3-Criminal Law	General principles of criminal law and its relationship with medical practice. The relationship of awareness and will with criminal responsibility. Crimes against the human body and life. The criminal responsibility of the doctor	10

	and the role of his reports and experience in criminal proof.	
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4-Medical Ethics	An introduction to ethics and medical ethics and its history. The basic principles of medicine. The doctor's relationship with the patient, society and professional colleagues. The ethics of medical research and laboratory investigations. Medical liability. Medical writings, certificates and reports specially the medicolegal ones.	20
5-Forensic Genetics	DNA and paternity	10
6-Criminal Evidence and Investigations	Crime scene investigation. Collection and preserving of samples. Forensic photography.	15
7-Forensic Anthropology and Identification	Identification of living and dead bodies. Skeletal remains. Mass disasters and Mass Graves. Stains: blood, semen and others. Finger print and iris recognition.	10
8-Miscellaneous: Forensic Archeology, taphonomy, and others.		5
Total		100

Other notes regarding the second grade:

Forensic sciences are included in the intermediate exam in the third grade.

Details of the curriculum, and assessment strategy in the third grade:

Learning and training of students will be as shown in Table (1). The third grade is characterized by:

- 1-The intermediate exam is mandatory to enter the final exam in the fourth stage.
- 2- Conducting a research thesis and then discussing it in the fourth stage, which is also mandatory for entering the final exam.

Details of the curriculum, and assessment strategy in the fourth grade:

Learning and training of students will be as shown in Table (1).

The final exam takes place at the end of the fourth stage and consists of a theoretical exam with two papers, the first in MCQs consisting of 120 questions, and the second in essay questions. Both papers include all subjects taken in the four years of study. Passing the theoretical exam is mandatory to enter the practical exam, and the passing mark in the theoretical exam is not less than 70%, and not less than 60% in either paper.

The practical exam consists of an autopsy exam for a forensic case (60%), with an anatomical report written and discussed in an oral exam. The exam also includes pictures and slides from pathology and forensic medicine, each of which has (20%) of total practical marks. The practical exams passing mark is not less than 60%. The final passing mark (theoretical and practical) should not be less than 70%, so that the student will succeed and obtain a fellowship from the Iraqi Council in the specialty of pathology / forensic medicine.

Concluding remarks:

- 1- The laws and instructions of the Iraqi Council for Medical Specialties are applied to the number of examination attempts for the primary, intermediate and final examinations, and to the requirements for student dismissal.
- 2-Qualified and reputable professors from all the specialties mentioned above participate in teaching and training students of forensic medicine specialty.
- 3-The approved references are among the best and most important for each topic. They are Determined by topic professors and to be reviewed and updated constantly.

From God Almighty, the success

**Professors of forensic medicine / Scientific Council of Pathology / The Iraqi
Board of Medical Specializations**

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