

Alberta Licensed Practical Nurses Competence Exam

Examinee Orientation

May 1, 2023

About Touchstone Institute

- We are a non-profit corporation that offers expertise in evaluation and curriculum development to promote public confidence in professional competence in the Canadian workforce.
- We excel in providing competency-based services in support of successful transitions to training and practice that meet professional and societal needs.
- We are supported by expertise in simulation, innovation in exam technology, and robust research-based quality assurance to meet the diverse needs of our clients, stakeholders, and partners.
- We specialize in creating valid and authentic competency-based experiences for internationally educated health professionals.

About the ALPNCE

- > Touchstone Institute partnered with the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) in developing the Alberta Licensed Practical Nurses Competence Exam (ALPNCE)
- > The exam will serve as a step in the LPN registration pathway for those applicants with a nursing credential for whom the CLPNA is seeking evidence of sufficient equivalency or prior learning

Purpose & Assumptions of the Exam

- The Alberta Licensed Practical Nurses Competence Examination is designed to assess current knowledge, skills, and attitudes of those seeking Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) registration within the province of Alberta.
- The exam is designed to assess an applicant's competency level in comparison to that of a recent graduate of a CLPNA approved Practical Nursing Program of Alberta.
- This exam is not intended to replace the national exam, but to serve as a step in the LPN registration pathway for those applicants with a nursing credential for whom the CLPNA is seeking evidence of sufficient equivalency or prior learning.
- The exam is based on the entry-level competencies as outlined in the CLPNA's Competency Profile for Licensed Practical Nurses 5th Edition (2020) document.

Exam Format

→ ALPNCE consists of **two (2)** parts:

1. Knowledge-based Multiple-Choice Question (MCQ) Exam

→ Up to 90 questions, 139 minutes

2. Performance-based Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

→ Up to 10 clinical stations, 130 minutes

→ Examinees rotate through a series of timed stations that simulate clinical interactions with highly trained standardized patients. These interactions are scored by LPN examiners using a standardized rating tool and predefined competencies.

Exam Blueprint

- Examinees are strongly encouraged to read the ALPNCE Blueprint prior to the exam.
- The Blueprint can be found on our website or by clicking [here](#).

Confidentiality

Upon registration for this exam, examinees are expected to read, understand, and sign the Exam Conduct Agreement.

This document confirms examinees will not disseminate or reveal any content of the examination to others. This means exam content **cannot** be discussed or disclosed with others at any time, in any way, even after the exam is over.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- comparing responses with colleagues
- sharing exam content with future examinees
- posting case information or exam questions online

Any breach in confidentiality of exam materials may lead to disciplinary and legal measures.

Please review Touchstone Institute's Ethical Exam Behaviour webpage [here](#).

Professional Conduct

- **Behaviour that disrupts the delivery of the exam** in any way including, but not limited to, challenging site administration staff directives, questioning exam policies and procedures, disruptive comments about the exam, talking to other examinees during the exam, or other behavior that the examination site staff considers disruptive or discourteous to others will be **documented and shared with the Regulator**.
- Examinees who continue to exhibit disruptive behaviour after being warned will be **removed from the exam**.

Exam Day Dress Code

- Examinees are encouraged to dress in comfortable, casual, professional attire.
- Profession-specific clothing is not required as examinees are not scored on how they are dressed.

General Information

Exam Day Registration

Building Entry

- > Do not show up at the exam centre more than 10 minutes before your registration time.
- > Everyone will be required to remain outside the building until a staff member instructs them to enter the building. Participants should dress appropriately for the weather.
- > No one will have access to building washroom facilities until they have entered the exam centre.

Exam Day Registration

- Touchstone Institute reserves the right to **refuse entry** to the exam to those examinees **exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19** or are unwilling to abide by the safety protocols.
- Friends, family members and/or children **will not be allowed** into the exam centre.
- Examinees must arrange for their transportation to meet them outside.

Exam Day Registration

What to Bring to the Exam

- Exam invitation that was emailed to you, either a physical copy or on your mobile device.
- One piece of valid photo ID. Acceptable pieces of photo ID include: a valid passport, a valid driver's license, or a Canadian citizenship or permanent resident card.

Important Information

- Examinees will not be admitted to the examination after registration has closed.
- The exam centre is a fragrance-free centre. Examinees should refrain from wearing cologne, after-shave, perfume scented oils and/or similar products.
- Breakfast will not be served to examinees. Before presenting at the assessment centre, please ensure that you have eaten enough food to get through the morning. Examinees will be provided with a lunch consisting of a sandwich, water, and a granola bar. It is recommended that those who have dietary restrictions or allergies to confirm lunch arrangements with Touchstone Institute ahead of time.

Exam Day Registration

Secure Storage of Personal Belongings

- > **Upon entry** to the registration area, examinees will be asked to place all their personal belongings in a plastic bag that will have their name on it.
- > This bag will be sealed and stored in a secure area until the end of the exam.
- > Examinees are asked to **refrain from bringing** any unnecessary belongings with them to the exam, including profession-specific equipment.

Exam Prohibited Items

→ The following items **must** be left at registration:

- ✗ Any electronic devices (i.e. smartphones, watches of any kind, tablets, computers)
- ✗ Personal bags, wallets, purses, keys
- ✗ Paper, pens, pencils
- ✗ Books, notebooks
- ✗ Food, drinks

Exam Permitted Items

→ Examinees may have the following items with them during the exam and DO NOT require written permission in advance:

- ✓ 2-3 Tissues
- ✓ Cough drops, mints, gum (in a clear plastic bag, unwrapped)
- ✓ Lip balm
- ✓ Hair ties
- ✓ Medication needed for a medical condition
- ✓ Menstrual products

Present these items to exam staff for inspection while at registration.

Exam Permitted Items

→ Examinees may use the following items at the exam centre but must **notify Touchstone Institute in advance**. Some items may require written permission from Touchstone Institute:

- ✓ Mobility aids (wheelchair, scooter, chair)
- ✓ Medical assistive equipment
- ✓ Medical devices that require transmitting technology
- ✓ Breast pump

If you have received written permission for your item, please present it while at registration.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

→ COVID-19 safety protocols have been implemented to support examinee safety while at the exam centre:

- COVID-19 Screening – verbal questionnaire at the point of registration
- Wearing a face mask for the duration of time at the exam centre
- Physical distancing when possible

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

Hand Hygiene

- Hand hygiene will be strictly enforced.
- Examinees will be required to use alcohol-based hand sanitizer **at the beginning of every OSCE Station.**
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be prominently displayed in all locations where examinees are expected to use it. This includes, but is not limited to, at sign-in/sign-out desks, in every OSCE station room, and in different sections of the exam floor.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

Non-Compliance of COVID-19 Safety Protocols

- > All safety protocols will be monitored by examiners, site staff and standardized patients. Any violations of the COVID-19 safety protocols will be documented in an incident report and reported to the Touchstone Institute staff.
- > Violations include, but are not limited to:
 - Not wearing mask
 - Not adhering to physical distancing
 - Not performing hand hygiene
 - Engaging in physical touch beyond that which is required to complete the exam

COVID-19 Exam Content

- > There is **no** COVID-19 content in this exam.
- > Examinees will **not** be scored on their knowledge of COVID-19.
- > Examinees should assume COVID-19 is **not** a factor in any exam content, questions or scenarios. It does not need to be considered, and no screening needs to be completed.

Exam Incident Reporting

- > Any examinee who feels they **may have been disadvantaged** during their examination must notify a member of staff and complete an incident report **before leaving** the exam centre. This will allow site staff to gather the examinee's account of the incident while it is fresh in their mind.
- > Site staff may also ask examiners, standardized patients or relevant staff to complete an incident report to assist with the investigation process.
- > Emails from examinees requesting to submit an incident report after leaving the exam centre will **not** be considered for investigation.
- > Examinees who have completed an incident report can expect to receive an email outlining a resolution within eight (8) weeks of the examination date.

Exam Incident Reporting

Exam Discontinuation

- If examinees begin to feel unwell during the exam, they should notify exam staff immediately.
- If examinees have started the exam and do not wish to continue or are unable to, exam staff will document their early departure in an incident report before leaving the exam centre.
- The incident report will be shared with the regulator.
- Examinees will be required to sign an exam discontinuation waiver.

Designated Space and Washrooms

- All examinees must remain in their designated rooms during breaks throughout the day.
- Exam staff will organize movement of participants to and from the exam areas.
- Washroom breaks are expected to occur before and after the exam administrations.
- Washroom use **is allowed during the exam** but must be facilitated by exam staff.
- Examinees **will not be given additional time** to make up for washroom breaks.

Building Evacuation

--->If an emergency occurs during the exam, examinees should:

- **Remain** calm.
- **Follow** instructions from exam staff who will escort them out of the building to a safe holding area.
- **Bring** exam notebook with you.
- **Remain silent and** do not share exam content with other examinees while outside of the exam space, as per the Exam Conduct Agreement.

Leaving Exam Site: Sign-Out Procedure

Examinees must follow directions from exam staff who will take them to an area to complete the sign-out procedure and collect their personal belongings.


- Examinees will hand in their OSCE notebook with all the pages intact and any pencils they may have in their possession.
- Once examinees have handed in all materials, site staff will sign them out and they may leave the building.
- Reminder: examinees must continue to comply with physical distancing measures at all times.

Knowledge-based Multiple-Choice Questionnaire (MCQ)

Knowledge-based MCQ

- > The knowledge-based component comprises of up to 90 scenario-based multiple-choice questions targeting the application and interpretation of knowledge across six major competencies.
- > Read the questions carefully.
- > **You may write in your MCQ booklet BUT all answers must be placed on the bubble sheet. The MCQ booklet is not scored.**

Knowledge-based MCQ

- Examinees will capture their MCQ answers using a scantron sheet. Examinees will be given a demonstration on how to complete the sheet prior to their exam.
- Record your answer to each question by filling in the corresponding bubble with a pencil ●
- To change an answer, completely erase the bubble.
- The following marks CANNOT be scanned - 
- If you fill in more than one bubble for a question, you will be scored **ZERO** for that question.
- When the staff gives the signal, you will have up to 154 minutes to complete the MCQ examination.



Performance-based Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)

OSCE Orientation

- > An Objective Structured Clinical Examination or OSCE is a popular form of exam that allows for the direct observation of clinical skills within a “real-patient” simulated setting.
- > Examinees rotate through a series of timed, simulated stations while interacting with standardized patients. These interactions are scored by trained examiners using a standardized rating tool and pre-defined competencies.
- > Rigorous training procedures, together with the highly standardized environment in which the exam takes place, promotes objective examiner scoring behaviour, which in turn leads to highly reliable examinee results.

Exam Notebook and QR Code

- > Examinees will be provided with a notebook containing 12 blank pages for use during the OSCE.
- > Examinees should ensure their notebook contains the following information:
 - Name and registration number on the front cover
 - The correct number of pages
 - A QR code on the back cover
 - Examinee signature on the front cover

Exam Notebook and QR Code

- > Examinee notebooks will need to be turned in at the end of the exam with all pages accounted for.
- > **Do not rip pages out of the notebook.**
- > Examinees will also receive two (2) pencils to use during the OSCE.
- > If another pencil is required during the exam, examinees must ask exam staff who will be positioned outside the OSCE stations in the hallway.

Standardized Patients

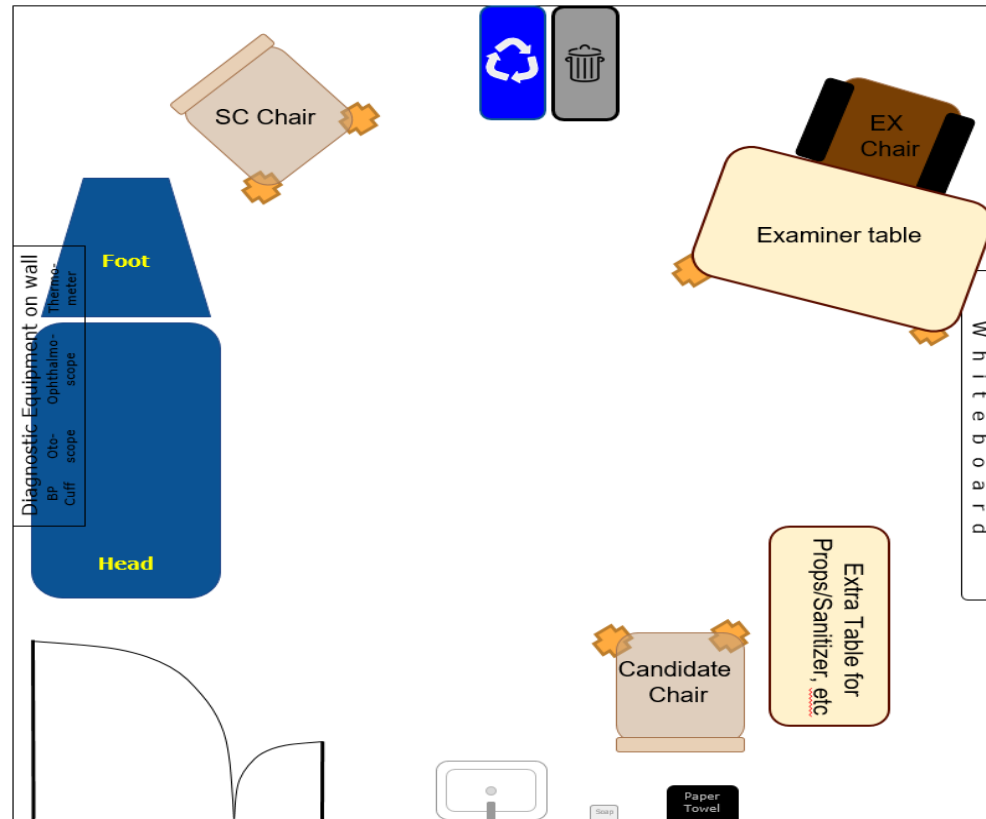
- The standardized patients used in the stations have been trained to portray a real patient.
- A standardized patient is an actor trained to replicate a patient's signs and symptoms in a reliable and consistent manner.
- Examinees should treat them as they would a real patient in a real clinical environment.

OSCE Rooms

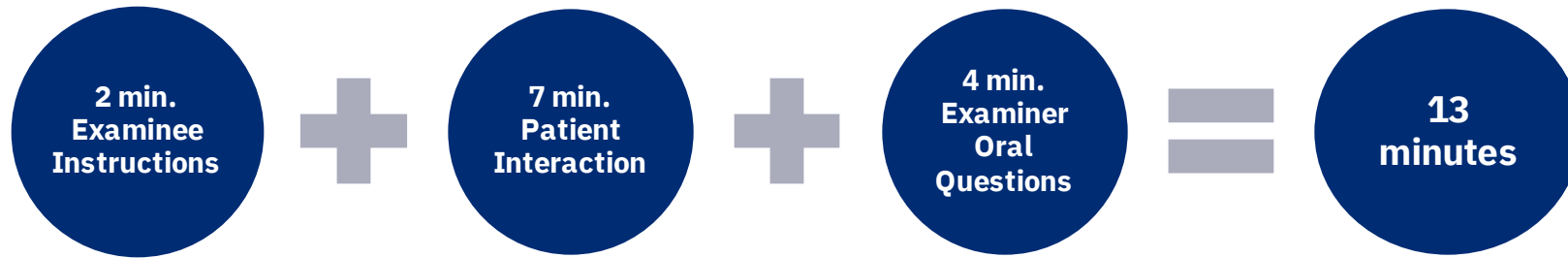
→ **Inside the OSCE room, examinees will find the following:**

1. Standardized Patient
2. Examiner
3. Hand Sanitizer
4. Medical gloves
5. Digital Clock
6. Props related to the station scenario that are for examinee use or comment on
7. Examinee Instructions

Sample Room Set Up



OSCE Components and Timing



The 10 OSCE stations consist of three distinct components as indicated in the image above.

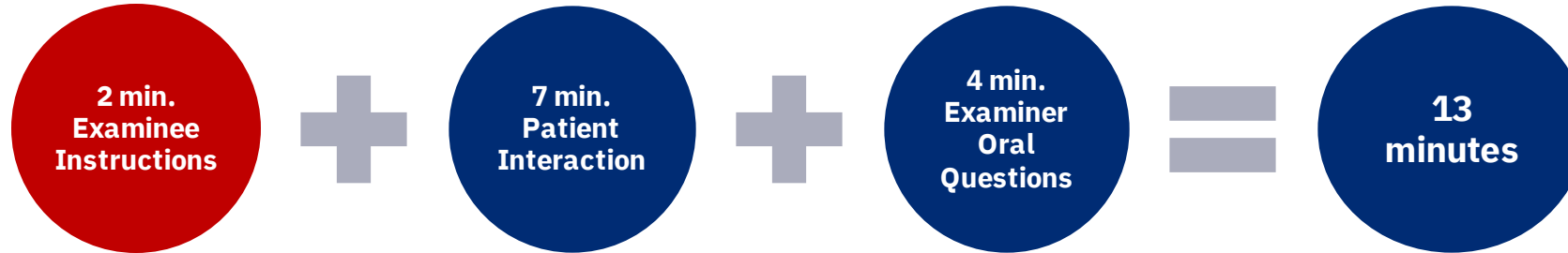
Each component will be explained in the following slides.

There are 10 OSCE Stations and 2 Rest Stations

Rest Stations will not have an examiner or standardized client in the room. Rest stations have been set for logistical purposes.

The administration and timing of the station components are directed by a series of audio announcements.

Examinee Instructions



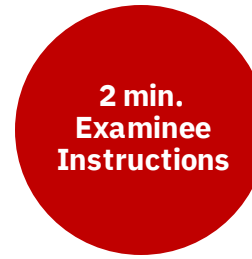
→ **Examinee Instructions (2 minutes):** The time allotted for examinees to read the Examinee Instructions before entering the room.

→ At the start of the exam the following announcement will be heard:

" The Exam will now commence. You may begin reading your instructions."

→ During this component, examinees read and familiarize themselves with the requested station challenge as outlined in the Examinee Instructions posted on the outside of the room.

Examinee Instructions



- A copy of the Examinee Instructions is also available in the room for reference at any point during the interaction.
- The Examinee Instructions may include information about the patient such as their name and age.
- Examinees may make notes in the booklet provided to them on exam day.
- An announcement will indicate when examinees may enter the station to begin their interaction with standardized patient.

Examinee Instructions

2 min.
Examinee
Instructions

This is a sample of Examinee Instructions which will be available outside and inside each OSCE station.

Task and timing details

Examinees can use their notebooks to take down case information

Reminder to verbalize your interaction

Station 1

Instructions to Examinee

65-year-old Bonnie fell at home yesterday.

She is now complaining of left arm pain.

You will have **seven (7) minutes** to:

- **Obtain a history of the pain**
- **Complete a focused physical assessment of the arm**
- **Respond appropriately to the assessment findings**

1. An x-ray report is available for review
2. An image of the arm is available for review

PLEASE NOTE:

As you proceed with the physical assessment, **EXPLAIN TO THE EXAMINER** what you would do and **DESCRIBE ANY FINDINGS.**

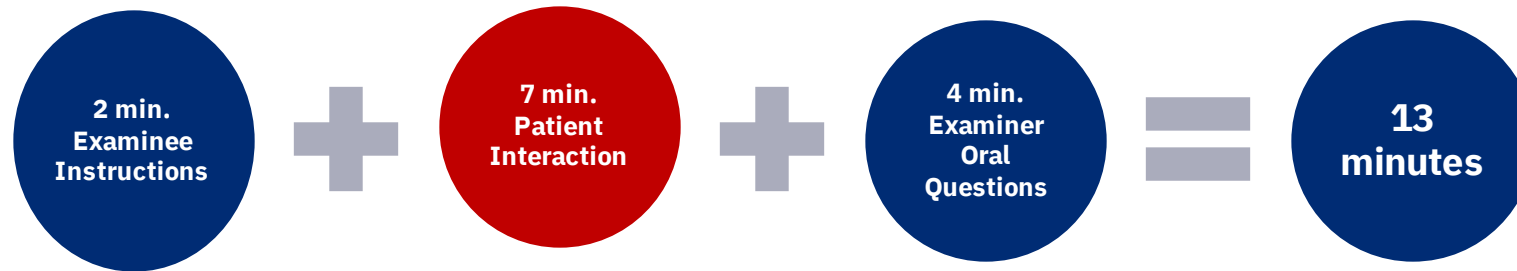
- At the **seven (7) minute** mark, you will have **four (4) minutes to answer the examiner's questions** related to the scenario.
- You have **eleven (11) minutes** for this station.

Case description

List of props available in the station

Additional timing information pertaining to the oral question component

Patient Interaction



- **Patient Interaction (7 minutes):** The time allotted for examinees to interact with the standardized patient to complete the station tasks.
- At the start of the Patient Interaction, the following announcement will be heard to instruct the examinee to enter the room.

“You may enter the station and begin your activity for Round (number).”
- Upon entering the room, examinees will remain within the designated area and present their QR code for scanning by the examiner.
- Once examinees have been successfully scanned, they will immediately begin the interaction with the standardized patient.

Patient Interaction

7 min.
Patient
Interaction

Physical Assessment

Help the examiner score you by:

- > Telling the examiner what you are doing. Verbalize aloud to the standardized patient (SP) and examiner each action they intend to take while you are conducting your physical examination.
- > Report any findings. Examiners cannot give credit for inspection unless you verbally state what you are inspecting and any findings. Report findings that are normal
- > Not all stations will require a physical assessment. The Examinee Instructions will outline when it is necessary.

Patient Interaction

7 min.
Patient
Interaction

→ Include all steps leading up to the actual assessment, for example:

→ Washing hands before touching the patient. You will be expected to use the hand sanitizer which is available in every station.

→ Exposing only what is necessary to assess and position the patient.

Not all stations will require you to perform a physical assessment. The Examinee Instructions will state when it is necessary.

Patient Interaction

7 min.
Patient
Interaction

Examiners may intervene by:

Asking examinees to re-read the instructions

→ The intent is to save examinees time by refocusing on the task

Provide examinees with results or information

→ The examiner will provide the results if they are directed to do so on their scoring sheet and only after the examinee has described the examination maneuver correctly:

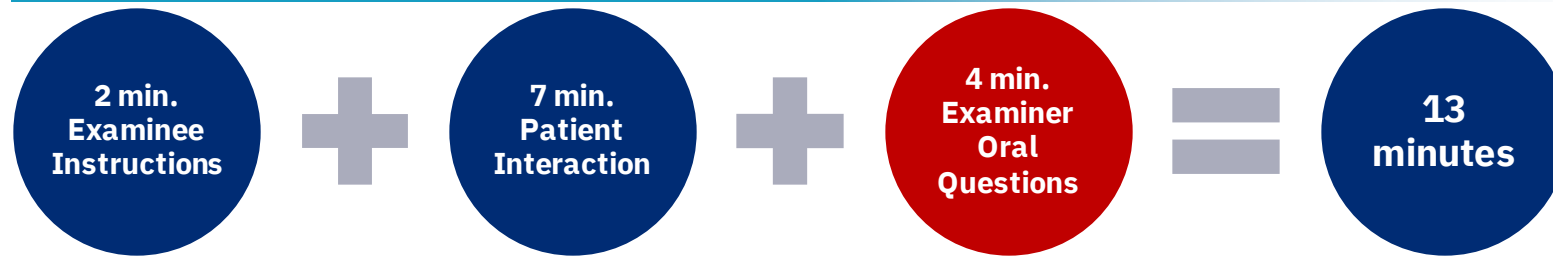
→ i.e., blood pressure results or vital signs

→ **Examiners have been trained not to interact with examinees outside of asking them the scripted questions. Examinees should not interpret this as unfriendly or intimidating.**

→ Before the end of the patient interaction component, examinees are given a one-minute warning to indicate the need to wrap up the interaction. The following announcement will be heard before the end of the Patient Interaction:

"You have one minute remaining with the patient."

Examiner Oral Questions



Examiner Oral Questions (4 minutes): The time allotted for examinees to answer a series of oral questions asked one at a time by the examiner.

→ At the start of the examiner oral questions component, the following announcement will be heard:

"There are 4 minutes remaining in this station."

→ At this point, the examinee is required to immediately stop all interaction with the standardized patient. The examiner will say:

"Please stop. You have four minutes to answer (number) questions."

Examiner Oral Questions

4 min.
Examiner
Oral
Questions

→ Examiner questions assess examinees on the following:

- Nursing Diagnosis
- Planning and Implementation
- Evaluation
- Communication and Collaborative Practice: Conflict Management
- Safety: Workplace Safety

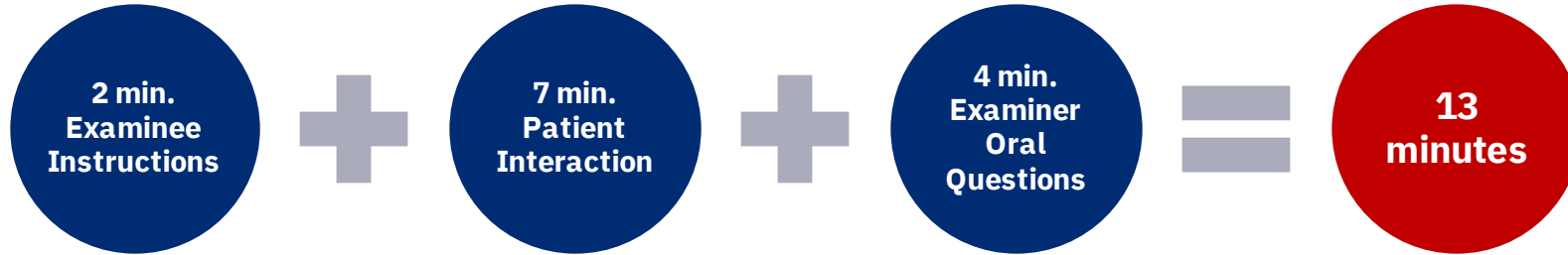
Examiner Oral Questions

4 min.
Examiner
Oral
Questions

Maintaining the standardized format of the examination requires the examiner to:

- Ask examinees the questions exactly as they are written
 - **Not** to provide any content clarification of the question
- Examinees may ask examiners to repeat the current question as many times as they require.
- Examinees are **not** permitted to ask the examiner questions during the station.
- Examinees **cannot** go back to a previous question and provide additional information.
- If examinees have skipped a question or answered it and moved on to the next, they may **not go back** and answer the previous question.

Time is Up



→ At the end of the 13 minutes, the following announcement will be heard, indicating the end of the station:

"Time is up. Examinees, please exit the station . Move to the next station and begin reading your instructions"

Examinees will be asked to leave the station immediately and move to the next station to begin reading the Examinee Instructions for the next station.

Helpful OSCE Tips

- Upon entering the station, examinees must show the back cover of their notebook to the examiner so the QR code can be scanned.
- In the event that the QR code does not scan, the examiner will ask for the examinee's first name, last name and registration number which can be found on the front of their notebook.

OSCE Reminders

- > Examinee Instructions are posted outside & inside each station.
- > Read the Examinee Instructions carefully and pay attention to the statement that explains the task.
- > Credit is given for tasks that are completed satisfactorily.
- > Verbalize each step of any physical assessment while doing them.
- > Treat the standardized patient as a real patient.
- > Remain in the station until you hear the announcement to leave
- > Support staff are there to support and guide you from station to station.
- > Try to relax and stay focused on the examination.

Thank You

Our Vision

Public
confidence in
professional
competence.

Our Mission

To excel in providing competency
assessment and education
services that meet professional
and societal needs.

TOUCHSTONE
INSTITUTE
COMPETENCY EVALUATION EXPERTS