

Swedish specialist examination in family medicine /general practice (FM/GP)¹. Instructions for candidates 2012.

Summary of the parts of the examination:

Registration	Registration as a candidate by August 29, 2012. Registration form on the SFAM website. An examiner will be appointed during September 2012.
* Portfolio	Sent to examiner by October 1, 2012
* Written test	You will be given the test and write your answers on Monday October 22, 2012, 1pm-4 pm, at your own health clinic. You must submit the name and e-mail address of a local test administrator no later than October 8, 2012.
* Scientific paper	To be delivered by February 1, 2012.
* Practice visit	Done by February 1, 2012.
Finish	May 15-17 2013 at the SFAM national congress in Stockholm

When can you take the exam?

1. If you are still in training (i.e. GP registrar), you can take the exam during your last (fifth) year, and conclude the exam no earlier than six months from the end of your trainee period.
2. If you are already a specialist in family medicine /general practice, you can take the exam at any time, with no upper limit. The part of the tutor can be handled as follows:
 - Ask your former tutor to perform the tasks of the tutor for the exam, i.e. write a tutor's statement for the portfolio and take part in a discussion with your examiner on the day of the practice visit.
 - Ask a colleague who knows you well to perform these tasks.
 - If none of the above is possible, contact your examiner or the examination office, and we will help you solve the problem.

How long time does it take?

You may complete the different parts of the exam during half a year from the autumn of 2012 until the spring of 2013, or you may spread them over two years and finish in the spring of 2014.

¹ Note: this is a voluntary examination, arranged by the Swedish Association of General Practice, SFAM, and it is not required for formal registration of the specialty by the National Board of Health and Welfare.

Examiner

The SFAM exam committee appoints an individual examiner for each candidate, and a co-examiner to assist the examiner. The co-examiner does not take part in the practice visit. An examiner must have at least five years of experience as a specialist in FM/GP with good recommendations from their colleagues, and must have attended the SFAM training course for examiners within the last four years.

Cost

Fee 9,500 SKR (to be revised). As an exam candidate you are exempt from the congress fee for the annual SFAM congress the year you finish the exam, but you will pay for hotel and travel costs.

History

This voluntary exam is arranged by SFAM, the Swedish Association of General Practice, a branch of the [Swedish Society of Medicine](#). The first exam was arranged in 1989 and since 1991 it has been held annually. It has been developed by the SFAM exam committee and consists of several parts. Candidates receive their diplomas at the annual SFAM congress. XX GPs have passed the exam.

Exam office: examen@sfam.se

All documents should be sent by e-mail to examen@sfam.se and to the examiner and co-examiner. For documents that cannot be sent by mail, contact the exam office for advice.

Exam committee president and exam coordinator

Ulf Måwe

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Registration – submit by August 29, 2012.

Registration is on the Internet. See the SFAM home page www.sfam.se, [Formulär & blanketter](#).

Information about your examiner and co-examiner will be sent to you around September 20, 2012. Contact your examiner as soon as possible by e-mail or telephone, to plan the examination process.

The first step of the process is an exchange of personal letters to establish a basis for your cooperation during the process.

Candidate's letter:

Write 1-2 pages including the following information:

1. Short information about your background.

2. Why you have chosen family medicine /general practice as your speciality.
3. Describe a doctor who has been a role model for you, and why.
4. Describe briefly your present work situation, special interests, leadership experience.
5. Why you want to do the exam.

Examiner's and co-examiner's letter:

Same content, with focus on 2 and 4, and reasons for becoming an examiner.

Portfolio – submit by October 1, 2012

A. Summary of competence development.

This is not just a list of all you have done during your trainee period. You should describe and reflect on how you have fulfilled the objectives in the guideline for FP/GM training. You cannot simply copy the portfolio you have collected during your traineeship.

The summary should be 3-5 pages along and contain the following:

1. Personal information

- Name, social registration number
- Work and home addresses, phone numbers, e-mail address
- Year of licence as a physician
- Tutor (if you do not at present have a tutor, see page 1)
- Director of FM/GP training
- Director of your clinic

2. Merits apart from FM/GP

Brief description of merits apart from FM/GP, if relevant.

3. Development of competence in FM/GP

Describe how you have achieved competence in FM/GP.

Use the guidelines with its definition of FM/GP and the description of the main parts of competence:

- Medical competence
- Communicative competence
- Leadership skills
- Scientific competence and competence for quality improvement.

Evaluate the various features of your path to competence in FM/GP. Describe briefly where you worked, what courses, seminars and conferences you attended, and what literature you have read. What was worthwhile, what was not? Did you miss anything?

B. Self evaluation with comments by tutor

Write 2-3 pages to describe aspects of your competence in FM/GP. What have you achieved, what is still missing?

- Generalist perspective
- Continuity in patient-doctor relationship
- Consultation skills
- Biomedical knowledge
- Searching for knowledge and facts
- Documentation skills
- Handling technical appliances at your clinic
- Leadership and organisational skills
- Relations with co-workers and social authorities
- Special interests, special assignments

What are your strengths?

What aspects would you like to develop further?

Comments by tutor.

The candidate's tutor will write a separate document with comments on the candidate's self evaluation and description of the tutorial process and send to the exam office examen@sfam.se
This should be done in dialogue with the candidate.

If you do not at present have a tutor, see page 1 for solutions

C. Description of tutoring

Write 1-2 pages about the way tutoring took place. Emphasis should be on the following:

- Extent and content of the tutoring sessions as well as day-to-day need for support.
- How has development of thinking as a GP been stimulated?
- What role did your tutor have in consultation training?
- To what extent have you been able to influence your work situation, training and patient continuity?
- Who tutored your scientific project? How was that tutoring designed?
- What would you like to change for the next trainee?

Contact persons Portfolio:

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Fränsta vårdcentral

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Leadership

Leadership is an important part of working as a GP. In the exam leadership skills and leadership training are assessed in all four parts

The **portfolio** should include a description of your theoretical and practical leadership training, and how you view your competence as a leader.

The **practice day** provides an opportunity to discuss your leadership experiences and assess your leadership skills.

Items in the **written test** may touch on leadership.

The **scientific project** is in itself a task that requires leadership skills. The theme of the project may also concern leadership.

See also the appendix about leadership at www.sfam.se – the page about "specialistexamen".

Contact persons Leadership:

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Written test – Monday October 22, 2012, 1pm – 4 pm.

Submit name of local test administrator to examen@sfam.se by **October 8**.

The written test is held nationally on the same day and time. You take the test at your home clinic. You appoint a test administrator, who may be your tutor, a receptionist or some other person at your clinic. The task of the test administrator is to receive the test, sent in advance by e-mail, to print it out and give you at the appropriate time, to make sure the time limit is kept, and to send your written answers (5 copies on paper) to the exam office by ordinary mail. Instructions to the test administrator will be sent by email.

Submit the name, e-mail address, postal address and phone number of the test administrator to examen@sfam.se by **October 8**.

Your answers should be typed on a computer, if at all possible. Six copies should be printed, one to be kept by the candidate, **five copies** to be sent by ordinary mail to the exam office. The test administrator will be informed of the postal address. Handwritten answers may be accepted if written in legible longhand. If so, the original and four copies are sent to the exam office, the candidate keeps one copy.

Format of the written test

The written test consists of a number of situations from an ordinary general practice setting. You are asked to describe how you would handle them at your own practice – how you assess the situation and what action you take. You should also describe the reasons for your assessment and decisions. Your answers should demonstrate the knowledge required by a specialist in FM/GP and also the perspective of thought relevant to a GP setting, such as generalist viewpoint, patient centred approach, long-term prevention aspects, ethical aspects, priorities, how you act as a GP in comparison to other specialties, etc.

On the SFAM homepage, www.sfam.se, you will find tests given in the past to see the kind of issues you will face. Examples of good answers by former candidates are also to be found there.

Result of written test ready by the end of November 2012.

Your answers will be assessed by a group of examiners, each of whom is responsible for one of the items. The exam office will inform you of your result. You will later discuss your answers with your personal examiner. A seminar on the written exam is given in connection with the final day of the exam before the diploma ceremony.

Contact persons Written test

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Scientific project – submit by February, 2013

Format and content of the project

The project must be relevant to the field of FM/GP. It may concern clinical, organisational or educational issues. It may be a part of quality work at the clinic. It may take the form of a literature survey, a case study, a survey, an audit, a study of a diagnosis or a group of patients, etc. It should correspond to 7.5 university credits (i.e., take approximately five weeks full time).

Further reading about scientific projects and papers may be found on the SFAM home page in the document [Skrivande allmänläkare](#), Supplement 1/2000 to the SFAM journal AllmänMedicin. Instructions for assessment of the scientific paper will also be found there

Format of the paper

The paper should be approximately 10 pages long (3000 – 4000 words). Appendices may be added, e.g., survey questions.

The title page should contain the **title** of the project, date (year), and name and affiliation of the author(s) and the project tutor.

The **abstract (max 250 words)** should be written on a separate page. It will be published in the conference program for the annual SFAM congress where the project will be presented.

The layout should be typographically legible. Divide the text into paragraphs of medium length, and use subtitles. Limit the number of tables and graphs and make them well legible

Submit the paper as one single document in Word or pdf format. Send by e-mail to the exam office, examen@sfam.se and to your examiner and co-examiner.

Assessment of project

Your examiner will read and assess your project in consultation with your co-examiner. You will receive a written assessment. If in doubt, your examiner will consult the contact persons for this part of the exam (see below). Instructions for the examiner may be found in a separate document on the SFAM home page, www.sfam.se.

If your paper has already been approved by a research unit of your county or by a university department of FM/GP, it will be regarded as approved for the exam, provided it has relevance for the field of FM/GP. In that case, you must send a certificate of such approval to the exam office, examen@sfam.se.

Seminar presentation of the project

At the SFAM national congress you will present your project at a seminar, provided your project has been approved by your examiner.

Several projects will be presented simultaneously in parallel sessions. You will get 10 minutes for your presentation. Then a scientifically qualified moderator will give comments in dialogue with you, and finally the audience will have an opportunity to ask questions. Read more in [Skrivande allmänläkare](#) at the SFAM home page.

Contact persons Scientific project

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Practice day –no later than February 1, 2013

The practice day gives your examiner a chance to see you in an everyday practice situation at your own clinic. The major part of the day consists of sit-in on patient consultations. The examiner also meets your tutor and the director of your practice together with you.

Before the practice day

- Contact your examiner as soon as possible to arrange a date for the practice day. Make sure your tutor and the director of your practice will be able to be present and take part.
- No later than four weeks before the practice day, send video recorded patient consultations and patient notes to your examiner and co-examiner, according to instructions below. Note that you must check with your examiners that your video format is compatible with their technical equipment. See the appendix Video ethics and video technique at the SFAM home page.

Video recording of patient consultations

- **Record** consultations at your clinic. Ask your patient if your recordings may be used for the exam, and, if you find it appropriate,, also if they may be used for the training of examiners. You will get your recordings back after the practice day, if nothing else is agreed. For tips about

ethics and video technique, see the appendix Video ethics and video technique at the SFAM home page.

- From your recordings, choose **2 - 4 consultations** of **maximum 60 minutes in total**. If possible, include both planned and acute visits. If your set of recordings contains more than four consultations, note which ones you want your examiner to assess.
- Do not give names of the patients but note their gender, age and the length of each consultation.
- Write a short evaluation of how you handled each consultation on the form in the appendix Egenvärdering video (*Self evaluation video.*)

Patient notes and other medical documentation

Along with the videos, send copies of patient notes and documents to your examiner and co-examiner according to the following instructions:

Note – the patient notes should be anonymized. Note age and gender but do not include name or social registration number.

You should include:

1. **Patient notes from each recorded consultation**
2. **Additional notes from other patients to make sure that you have included:**
 - 2 acute cases
 - 2 long term cases with notes from a series of visits to you (at least two planned visits). Include lab results, lists of medication, letters of referral, letter to the patient, certificates, relevant to those visits.
 - A major certificate, i.e. one for long-term sick leave benefits or early pension. -
 - A letter of referral to another specialist (not just X-ray or other medical service).

This means that you will need to include notes from some patients who were not in the video recordings. If you have problems meeting all these criteria, contact your examiner.

Practice day schedule

The practice day activities will take six to eight hours. The day will include:

- **Introduction.** Get to know each other, show your examiner around the clinic.
- **Sit-in.** 4 – 6 patients, both acute and planned. Assessment will be according to the appendix *Bedömning av konsultation (Assessment of consultation)* on www.sfam.se, the specialist exam page.
- **Dialogue** with your tutor and with the director of your practice. If you do not have a tutor, see page 1 for advice.
- **Feedback** from your examiner about the sit-in consultations and dialogue about some of the other aspects of FM/GP competence assessed in the other parts of the exam – portfolio, video, patient notes, leadership, scientific project, written test.
- **Summary.** Mutual evaluation of the day.

The dialogues and conversations during the practice day are a part of the exam. The examiner summarises at the end of the day, but no final assessment is given at that time. Before final assessment of the practice day, the examiner consults the co-examiner, who has seen the videos and read the portfolio. The examiner writes a report according to instructions given on the SFAM home page. The report is sent to the candidate within three weeks of the practice day.

Contact persons Practice day

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Approval

When all four parts of the exam – portfolio, written test, scientific paper, and practice day – are approved, the exam is finished and approved.

Grades given are **passed** or **not yet passed**. No other grades are given. A candidate who does not get a pass grade on any part of the exam may retake that part the following year without paying a new fee. N

Grand finale

at the annual SFAM national congress, to be held next time in Stockholm, 15-17 May 2013

The exam ends with meetings for the candidates at the annual SFAM national congress, including a seminar on the items of the written test and a feedback meeting for candidates and representatives of the SFAM exam committee, and individual final meetings between candidates and examiners. Candidates, who have now passed the exam, present their projects in parallel seminars at the congress, and a diploma ceremony is held at the congress banquet.

Information about the congress will be posted on the SFAM home page www.sfam.se.

Translation by Karin Lindhagen, Lars Ryding and Iona Heath, summer 2012.