

الهيئة السعودية للتخصصات الصحية
Saudi Commission for Health Specialties



Saudi Public Health Licensure Examination (SPHLE)

EXAMINATION CONTENT GUIDELINE



EXAMINATION MODEL

General Rules

What are Licensure Examinations?

Licensure Examinations are assessments to ensure that the incompetence of healthcare practitioners will not harm the public. It assesses the ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles that constitute the basis of safe and effective healthcare.

What is Saudi Public Health Licensure Examination (SPHLE)?

The SPHLE is an exam that assesses the readiness of Public Health Specialists to practice. It consists of 200 MCQs, which may include up to 10% pilot questions in addition. It is divided into two parts of 100 questions (+/-10), each with a time allocation of 120 minutes for each part. There is a scheduled 30-minute break between the two parts. These questions have four to five options from which the candidate will choose one best answer.

The examination language is English, and it shall contain recall questions that test knowledge and questions with scenarios that test other skills (interpretation, analysis, decision making, reasoning, and problem-solving).

How is the SPHLE pass score established?

In the final quarter of 2022, the SCFHS will conduct a rigorous standard-setting exercise to assign a cut score on the reporting scale of 200-800.

Note: The test will start to be conducted in March 2023.

Example of exam items:



Note: All the below examples do not present the exam content, they are only to show the items layouts.)

#1:

A patient is diagnosed with measles, the host is a human susceptible to measles infection. The agent is a highly infectious virus that can produce serious diseases in humans.

What is the environment for measles, based on the triad of factors?

- A. It is a population of unvaccinated individuals
- B. It is a population of vaccinated individuals
- C. It is the under five years children
- D. It is low immune population

#2:

A farmer presented to a Family Medicine Clinic complaining of numbness in both hands. He used to drink water from a well and work with fertilizer. Physical examination showed hyperkeratosis in both hands and feet as well as a rash on his back.

Which of the following is the most likely cause?

- A. leukomelanosis
- B. Arsenic poisoning
- C. Drug-related reaction
- D. Allergic contact dermatitis

#3:

A new scabies outbreak was discovered in a slum population. A public health officer was appointed to teach them about using Permethrin to control this outbreak.

What is the most effective teaching method?

- A. Lecture
- B. Roleplay
- C. Flashcards
- D. Demonstration

What is a test blueprint, and what is its purpose?

A test blueprint is a document that reflects the content of a specialty licensure examination. The blueprint is the plan used for "building" the exam. The purpose of the blueprint is to ensure including questions related to what is expected to know.

Saudi Public Health Licensure Examination Blueprint

Section	Competency
Foundations of biological and life sciences (5%)	Understand the basic sciences and key concepts underlying human health and disease processes. This includes but is not limited to host susceptibility, genetic factors, immunological responses, agent virulence, and treatment resistance
	Provide a biological description of the major causes of communicable and non-communicable diseases and their determinants
Fundamentals of public health (20%)	Understand the history and philosophy of public health
	Explain the core values and concepts of public health. This includes but is not limited to population focus, prevention orientation, social justice, life course perspective, and health equity
	Identify the core functions of public health and the essential public health services
	Indicate the differences in public health priorities at national and international levels
	Identify key influences on global health trends and practices
	Explain the role of globalization on disease control and prevention
	Identify public health problems/needs relevant to the population by assessing existing data, prioritizing identified needs, and examining needed areas for intervention
	Understand the fundamental elements of project/intervention implementation, including planning, assessment, and evaluation to detect, prevent, and control health-related issues
Biostatistics (10%)	Explain how health determinants (biological, behavioral, psychological, cultural, social, genetic, political, and economic factors) can impact human health and contribute to health disparities
	Apply the basic statistical concepts and methods of research analysis
	Implement statistical tests used for public health research, policy, and practice
	Interpret basic results of data analysis for public health research, policy, and practice
	Understand the role that public health plays in disaster prevention and management

Environmental and occupational health (15%)	Identify the effects of environmental and occupational exposures on human health, population health, and their contributions to health outcomes
	Recognize common environmental health policies for air, food, water, and waste management.
	Identify environmental and occupational risks, and assess and participate in surveillance systems.
Epidemiology (20%)	Explain the basic principles of epidemiology and its applications, including the distribution of major human diseases and their underlying etiologies
	Describe various levels of prevention of diseases
	Recognize the major causes of morbidity and mortality in the Saudi community compared to the international community
	Identify the differences in epidemiologic causation models in studying communicable vs. non-communicable diseases
	Understand different types of infection transmission and the implementation of universal precautions
	Explain the outbreak investigation steps
	Recognize the impact of social disparities and communicable and non-communicable diseases on health
	Identify the basic concepts, methods, tools, and analysis for quantitative and qualitative data used in public health studies and the concepts of surveillance systems
	Apply various research principle designs to health-related topics
	Explain the evidence-based approaches and their importance in public health practice
Health policy, management, and economics (15%)	Apply abstract reasoning to communicate public health research results to public and professional audiences
	Calculate and interpret the epidemiological measures of effect, impact, morbidity, and mortality
	Understand the basic concepts of health economics
	Understand the building blocks of healthcare and public health systems
	Identify the basic components of the health system in Saudi Arabia
	Assess public policy issues concerning access, quality, and cost while considering health outcomes
Health policy, management, and economics (15%)	Understand the basic concepts of quality management, clinical governance, and patient safety
	Identify the relevant legal and ethical considerations related to public health



	Explain the roles, influences, and responsibilities of the different agencies and sectors of government toward healthcare and population health
	Evaluate the impact of public health policies on health outcomes
	Recognize priority health problems to be addressed in public health projects and programs
Social and behavioral sciences, health communication, and health promotion (15%)	Identify the common health behavior theories and models used as strategies in changing population behavior
	Understand the basic concepts of public health-specific communication, including technical and professional writing, mass media, and electronic technology
	Use health-need assessment to identify needs, i.e., social, environmental, economic, and other determinants required for public health promotion and intervention
	Explain the main processes of developing and implementing a public health project/program




Note: Blueprint distributions of the examination may differ up to +/-5% in each level.



References

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 **Note:** This list is intended for use as a study aid only. SCFHS does not intend the list to imply endorsement of these specific references, nor are the exam questions necessarily taken from these sources.