

# What the U.S. BMET Board of Examiners Look for in a Journal

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In order to keep your certification active after taking one of the examinations, you need a Continuing Practice Journal. Maintaining a journal allows you to record classes, courses, and meetings you have attended (related to biomedical or clinical engineering) to demonstrate your continued professional development and enhancement. This article is designed to provide an inside view of what the members of the U.S. BMET Board of Examiners look for in a journal.

There are six categories within the journal to record activities and acquire points. Each category has a maximum allowable point value (see Table 1). It is recommended that if you have more than the maximum points in any one category, you still submit them in case some of the points you entered are not approved by Board members.

The first category deals with academic courses that are related directly to the biomedical or clinical engineering professions. The introduction on the journal outlines the types of courses that are allowed and the point values given for both teaching and attending those courses. Transcripts may be requested by the Board for verification of classes. The second category covers publications or presentations that are related to the field and are taught or written by the certificant. The titles of categories three, four, and five should be self explanatory and are again related to our field (see Table 1). Category six offers the opportunity to

gain points for activities that may not fall under the previous five. Further information on what each category requires can be found in the renewal journal paperwork. Remember that all points claimed on the journal are subject to Board approval.

## The Good

There are a variety of ways to get points. The first is to be active in the profession. Do not passively assume that since you have taken the certification exam and passed that you are certified for life. To renew your certification every three years, you need to only get a total of 15 points from all six categories. A helpful hint is to take advantage of the electronic version of the journal. The online version allows you to efficiently log your activities so you do not forget them.

Category/Title	Max Points
I. Courses . . . . .	10
II. Publications/Presentations . . . . .	10
III. Professional Society	
Participation/Memberships . . . . .	10
IV. Self Study . . . . .	10
V. Work Experience (full & part time) . . . . .	4
VI. Miscellaneous & Other Activities . . . . .	10

**Table 1.** Categories found in the Continuing Practice Journal.

The Board of Examiners, the United States Certification Commission (USCC) and the International Certification Commission (ICC) work hard to make certification an achievement that separates and elevates those who strive to succeed a step ahead of the rest. Being certified is an accomplishment and when you pass your examination, you should feel proud. But that is only the beginning. Taking relevant courses to advance your career and being a part of organizations that put biomedical and clinical engineers in the spotlight help

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everyone in the field. When you complete your journal, remember that the supervisor's signature can show your employer how much dedication you are giving to your profession.

**The Bad**

Completing a journal that asks for specific information can be daunting at times. What most do not understand is that simply filling in the blanks does not complete a journal. There are many acceptable entries that are allowed while others are not. A few examples that are not acceptable include safety committee, value analysis, or any other hospital meeting attendance. These generally are considered part of the job. This is not designed to split hairs, but rather to maintain focus on professional development.

Another common mistake is to not assign the appropriate points to the line item submitted. Teaching a course has more points assigned than attending a class. Make sure when completing the journal that you enter the points you deserve. In addition, ensure that when you take points for a category that all requirements have been met. A good example for this is often seen under category IV. In order to get points for self study, you need to put the appropriate hours for each category. Do not forget to claim the points for reading relevant magazines, journals, and books that relate to our field. If questions should arise, you can reach the Board through the ICC e-mail address [certifications@aami.org](mailto:certifications@aami.org).

**The Ugly**

The worst thing you can do is to submit a journal with only 15 points. If during the review process any of your points are not awarded, you can potentially lose your standing as an active certificant. Help is available if you are finding it difficult to obtain needed points by contacting the Board via e-mail ([certifications@aami.org](mailto:certifications@aami.org)). Some suggestions are writing exam questions or even articles for trade magazines.

Board members will make every effort to ensure that your journals meet the necessary requirements; however, you need to play an active part in the process. You need to return voice mails, messages, and e-mails in order to keep what you have rightfully attained. Failure to do so can delay the process and conclude in a denial of points. With that being said you have the option to appeal or challenge the Board on any decision it makes.

**Conclusion**

The members of the U.S. BMET Board of Examiners are certified like you. They need to comply with the certification renewal requirements, prepare and submit journals, send in the payment, and stick to the deadlines. The Board of Examiners is also the responsible body of the certification process. As with any organization, they have been given a task to ensure that the standards are maintained in order to give our profession the prestige it deserves. In order to complete this trust, they need to be selective of the submissions given by the renewing certificants to ensure that the standard is held high. The Board will work with each person submitting their journals to guarantee that the process is consistent and fair. They are here to help you. ■

**What Points Can You Claim?**

- 1) You attended an in-service for a ventilator within your facility. Do you:
  - a) Claim two points for Vocational/Technical Course under category I.
  - b) Claim ½ point for a Workshop under category I.
  - c) Claim ½ point for other relevant technical sessions under category I.
  - d) Claim no points (not accepted by the Board).
- 2) You watched a one hour video tape on servicing defibrillators. Do you:
  - a) Claim two points for Vocational/Technical Course under category I.
  - b) Claim one point for watching 10 hours of video tapes under category IV.
  - c) Claim 0.1 for watching video tapes under category IV.
  - d) Claim no points (not accepted by the Board).
- 3) Over the past three years, you have had a full-time job at a hospital and run a part-time repair service for home health equipment rental centers. Do You:
  - a) Claim four-and-a-half points for your full and part time employment under category V.
  - b) Claim four points for your full and part time employment under category V.
  - c) Claim three points for your full time position only under category V.
  - d) Claim no points (not accepted by the Board).

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