

Purpose	<p>An occupational analysis (or job analysis) defines a profession in terms of the actual tasks that new licensees must be able to perform safely and competently at the time of licensure. In order to develop a licensing examination that is fair, job-related, and legally defensible, it must be based solidly upon what licensees actually do on the job. The occupational analysis should be reviewed routinely every five to seven years to verify that it accurately describes current practice.</p>
Process	<p>Typically, the process begins by selecting and interviewing a sample of licensees who accurately represent the geographic, ethnic, gender, experience, and practice specialty mix of the profession. During the interview, they identify the tasks that they perform within major categories of their profession and the knowledge required to perform those tasks. A committee of subject matter experts meets to finalize the task and knowledge statements, and develop a questionnaire. The questionnaire is sent to a representative sample of licensed practitioners. The data are analyzed, and the results are used to update the description of practice and/or develop a content outline.</p>
Content Outline	<p>The content outline specifies the tasks and knowledge that a newly licensed practitioner is expected to master by the time of licensure, and identifies the relative weight or percentage of each major subject area to be assessed in an examination. The content outline is used to develop questions for and validate new examinations.</p>
Content Validation Strategy	<p>In order for an examination to be valid, it must be empirically linked to the content outline of a recent occupational analysis. The Office of Professional Examination Services recommends that occupational analyses be validated no less than every five to seven years.</p>
Legal Standards and Guidelines	<p>A number of statutes, standards, and professional guidelines set criteria for the licensing process in California. These include the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, the Federal Uniform Guidelines for Employee Selection Procedures, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, California Government Code section 12944 of the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, Business and Professions Code section 139, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended.</p>
Contact	<p>To learn more about these and other examination-related services, please contact the Office of Professional Examination Services at (916) 575-7240.</p>