

## Common Assessment Standards for Level 3 Diploma in APT

### Unit APT3.6 – Assist with Post Mortem Examinations

Note: where practice is to be assessed against local SOPs, copies of the relevant documents should be obtained in advance of the assessment visit.

Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<b>Be able to carry out an external examination of a deceased person</b>	
Identify, from external examination of the deceased, gross pathological features that may be related to the cause of death	<p>The Candidate should be able to identify any gross pathological features present on the case in question</p> <p>If there are not sufficient features present, the Candidate should be able to describe any additional gross pathological features that, while may not be present on the case in question, can commonly be found during other examinations</p>
Record marks and injuries on the deceased using correct terminology	<p>The Candidate's method can be as per their usual working practices, as long as the information is technically correct and the meaning is clear</p>
Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<b>Be able to carry out evisceration and dissection of a deceased person under the direction of supervisory staff</b>	
<p>Remove the major organs and structures from the deceased, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Heart and Great Vessels</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lungs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Liver</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spleen</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Kidneys</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bowel</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bladder</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Brain</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prostate/Uterus</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Neck Structures</li> </ul>	<p>The Candidate should effectively identify the body (as per the relevant local SOP, risk assessment, RCPATH guidance and HTA code of practice – any identification must be a robust and cross-checked identification)</p> <p>Unless indicated by history or external examination, the main incision should be as cosmetically discrete as possible (i.e. the extent of the incision should be limited to that strictly necessary to carry out an effective evisceration). The incision may subsequently be extended, if necessary due to a later finding, but only when specifically requested by the Pathologist or to accommodate specific and distinct pathology – ease of evisceration is not a valid reason</p> <p>The Candidate should be able to describe the process they would follow to test for a pneumothorax, if indicated</p> <p>The Candidate should be able to describe what features may suggest the presence of TB, and where in the thoracic cavity the check should be focused</p>

	<p>The Candidate should be able to describe pleural effusion, where in the thoracic cavity it may be found and how to collect and remove it</p> <p>The sternum should be removed without leaving sharp and/or splintered edges, and without damaging underlying structures</p> <p>The carotid arteries should be removed complete with bifurcation (unless a local agreement to preserve them exists. If such an agreement exists, the assessor should confirm this with the Mortuary Manager, Senior APT or Consultant Pathologist)</p> <p>The Candidate should be able to demonstrate and/or describe multiple types of evisceration. Any not type demonstrated should be described</p> <p>The bowel should be removed by dissecting along the mesentery, as close to the bowel as possible, so as to aid further examination if required. The Candidate should explain the rationale behind tying off, or not tying off, the bowel before dissection</p> <p>Scalp and skull should be dissected with sufficient regard to subsequent reconstruction (e.g. leaving enough temporalis muscle to be sutured, cutting a notch whilst opening the skull, etc.)</p> <p>The Candidate should maintain a reasonable standard of cleanliness during the examination (e.g. rinsing the deceased's body regularly to maintain dignity, avoiding spilling excessive fluid onto the floor, etc.)</p> <p>The Candidate should demonstrate safe handling of sharps and other instruments (e.g. awareness of where potentially dangerous tools and equipment are at all times, avoiding risk of injuring others with excessive movement of sharps during dissection, stitching, etc.)</p> <p>The Candidate should demonstrate general safe practice (e.g. not rushing, not impeding others, etc.)</p>
Learning Outcome	Common Standards
Be able to carry out an examination of dissected organs and structures	
Identify any gross pathological features of human organs and structures that may be related to the cause of death	The Candidate should be able to identify relatively basic causes of death, such as mesothelioma, haemopericardium, ruptured AAA, liver cirrhosis, intracranial haemorrhage, ascites, peritonitis, etc.
Record relevant measurements and weights of organs and structures	The Candidate's method can be as per their usual working practices, as long as the information is technically correct and the meaning is clear

Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<p><b>Be able to carry out reconstruction of a deceased person following post-mortem examination</b></p>	
<p>Reconstruct the deceased person following post mortem examination</p>	<p>Excess blood and other body fluids should be removed from the body cavity, as far as practicable</p> <p>Packing should be of an appropriate material (e.g. absorbent paper, cotton wool, inco pad, etc.)</p> <p>Packing should maintain the natural features of the body (i.e. packed with material comparable in size to the structures removed – not too little, not too much)</p> <p>All returned tissue should be contained within an appropriate bag (i.e. a clear viscera bag, NOT a clinical or domestic waste sack). If no suitable bags are available, the Candidate will not be penalised, however, they should be able to demonstrate this, and a note to this effect should be made by the Assessor with the intention of bringing it to the attention of the employer at a later date</p>
<p>Suture relevant incisions in the deceased person</p>	<p>The Candidate should be able to explain that suturing may not be the most appropriate technique (i.e. other methods, such as glue, may be indicated)</p> <p>A suitable needle and cord should be used to suture, depending on the location, type of incision and/or injury being repaired (i.e. in order to keep the suture line as fine and discrete as possible)</p> <p>Sutures should be small, neat and as close together as possible, depending on the condition of the skin being repaired</p> <p>The suture line should not leak fluid once finished. If there is a risk of leakage, it should be sealed with an absorbent or spray dressing</p>

<p>Ensure the deceased person is suitable for viewing by relatives, friends and carers</p>	<p>Any sites of potential leakage (e.g. IV line sites, incisions, injuries, etc.) should be dealt with according to the risk (e.g. how oedematous is the person? Is the defect on the anterior or posterior surface?)</p> <p>The deceased's body should be washed with a suitable cleaning fluid (i.e. not a harsh chemical fluid)</p> <p>The deceased's hair should be washed with a suitable cleaning fluid (ideally shampoo), towel dried and brushed so that it lies neatly</p> <p>A clean sheet / pouch / body bag and shroud should be used for each case</p>
<p><b>Learning Outcome</b></p>	<p><b>Common Standards</b></p>
<p><b>Be able to carry out procedures for tissue retrieval under the direction of supervisory staff</b></p>	
<p>Prepare tissue and organ samples for further analysis</p>	<p>As per the relevant local SOP</p> <p>The Candidate should be able to describe any relevant health &amp; safety considerations</p>
<p>Retrieve tissues from a deceased person for donation or scientific research</p>	<p>As per the relevant local SOP</p> <p>If not observed, the procedure must be described in full, including appropriate reconstruction after retrieval (e.g. after eye retrieval)</p>
<p>Comply with relevant legislation during tissue retrieval</p>	<p>As per the relevant local SOP</p> <p>As per relevant HTA codes of practice</p>
<p>Maintain accurate records of tissue retained for analysis or scientific research</p>	<p>As per the relevant local SOP</p> <p>As per relevant HTA codes of practice</p>
<p>Comply with local tissue retention and disposal policies</p>	<p>As per the relevant local SOP</p>
<p><b>Learning Outcome</b></p>	<p><b>Common Standards</b></p>
<p><b>Understand health and safety, infection control, communication and record keeping requirements for post mortem examinations</b></p>	
<p>Explain why infection control is important during post mortem examinations</p>	<p>As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail</p>

Explain why health and safety is important during post mortem examinations	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail (to include safe practice with sharps, awareness of others, etc.)
State the reasons for accurate recording of information and maintenance of records during post mortem examinations	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Explain why clear communication between team members is important during post mortem examinations	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Explain why infection control is important during post mortem examinations	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail

### Unit APT3.7 – Preparation and Operation of a Mortuary

Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<b>Be able to carry out cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and equipment</b>	
Prepare cleaning, disinfectant and sterilising solutions	As per the manufacturer's instructions and the relevant local SOP. The technique must be safe and effective
Follow standard operating procedure in the cleaning and disinfection of surfaces	As per the manufacturer's instructions and the relevant local SOP. The technique must be safe and effective
Use appropriate techniques to disinfect or sterilise equipment	As per the manufacturer's instructions and the relevant local SOP. The technique must be safe and effective
Ensure disinfected and sterilised equipment is protected from contamination until required	As per the relevant local SOP – the technique must be safe and effective
Prepare cleaning, disinfectant and sterilising solutions	As per the manufacturer's instructions and the relevant local SOP. The technique must be safe and effective
Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<b>Be able to store mortuary equipment and materials</b>	
Follow established procedures for the storage of equipment and materials	As per the manufacturer's instructions and the relevant local SOP. The technique must be safe and effective

Retrieve equipment and materials from storage as requested	As per the relevant local SOP
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to store and retrieve records</b>	
Follow established procedures for the storage of records	As per the relevant local SOP and Trust / Council policy
Follow established procedures for the retrieval of records	As per the relevant local SOP and Trust / Council policy
Ensure records are only accessed by authorised staff	As per the relevant local SOP and Trust / Council policy
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to record and carry out appropriate maintenance of mortuary equipment</b>	
Carry out routine maintenance of mortuary equipment	As per the manufacturer's instructions, relevant local SOP and legislation. The technique must be regular, documented and effective (i.e. obviously apparent).
Record relevant details of equipment maintenance	As per the relevant local SOP and Trust / Council policy
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Understand the importance of infection control and record management in the operation of a Mortuary</b>	
Explain the reasons for cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising equipment and surfaces in the mortuary	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
State why information governance is important in a mortuary	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Understand the importance of infection control and record management in the operation of a Mortuary</b>	
Explain the reasons for cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising equipment and surfaces in the mortuary	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail

State why information governance is important in a mortuary	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
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**Unit APT3.8 – Prepare for Post Mortem Examinations**

Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<b>Be able to prepare a deceased person for post mortem examination</b>	
Assess risks to self and others that the deceased may present prior to preparing the body for post mortem examination	As per the relevant local SOP and national guidance (e.g. RCPATH & HSE guidance)
Establish the identity of the deceased	As per the relevant local SOP, risk assessment, RCPATH guidance, and HTA code of practice. Any identification must be an accurate, robust and cross-checked identification (i.e. by two individuals)
Ensure information relating to the deceased is made available to the pathologist	As per the relevant local SOP, and dependent on the type of case (e.g. if it's a hospital PM, the consent form and case notes; if it's a Coroner's PM, the 425 / Police log / GP history)  The Candidate must ensure that any issues flagged during the risk assessment are communicated to the Pathologist (see 1 <sup>st</sup> line in this section)
Prepare the deceased for post mortem examination according to relevant guidelines	As per the relevant local SOP and guidelines (RCPATH, etc.)  The Candidate must ensure that clothing is removed in such a way that the clothing and deceased remain undamaged, and the manual handling risk to them is minimised (e.g. getting help with large deceased, tight clothing or particularly strong rigor mortis)
Learning Outcome	Common Standards
<b>Be able to prepare the mortuary for post mortem examinations</b>	
Identify materials required for the post mortem examination	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Prepare materials required for the future assessment of any samples taken during post mortem examination	As per the relevant local SOP and HTA code of practice (e.g. appropriate containers, safe use of chemicals, accurate labelling, etc.)

Ensure equipment required for the post mortem examination is available and ready for use	As per the relevant local SOP and established practice (i.e. the APTs and Pathologist should have all materials at hand during the PM and not need to search through stored equipment stocks once the examination is underway)
Ensure equipment necessary for the recording of post mortem examination data is available and ready for use	As per the relevant local SOP and established practice (i.e. the APTs and Pathologist should have all materials at hand during the PM and not need to search through stored equipment stocks once the examination is underway)
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Understand the risks to self and others if adequate preparations are not made for a post mortem</b>	
Explain the risks of infection from the body of the deceased during a post mortem and how proper preparation can minimise these risks	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Explain the health and safety risks due to materials and equipment used during a post mortem	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail

### Unit APT3.9 – Team Working

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to participate in planning the work of a team</b>	
Describe roles and contributions of team members	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Identify the aims and objectives of the team	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Plan activities with the team in order to meet the aims and objectives	As per established practice (e.g. daily briefing, team 'huddle'). The Assessor will establish with the Candidate's Mentor in advance how effective planning is achieved
Agree timescales for completion of activities	As per established practice (e.g. daily briefing, team 'huddle'). The Candidate's contribution to this process will be assessed
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to carry out own role as part of a team</b>	

Organise own work in order to meet agreed aims and objectives on time	The Candidate's performance against the plan agreed during any workload planning activity will be assessed
Monitor own progress towards meeting aims and objectives	The Candidate's capacity for autonomous working and self-reflection will be assessed
Take appropriate action if aims and objectives are unlikely to be met within agreed timescales	The Candidate's awareness, self-reflection and knowledge of how and when to escalate will be assessed
Evaluate own contribution to the work of the team	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to communicate effectively with other team members</b>	
Clarify own role and the role of others in meeting the team's aims and objectives	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Inform other team members of own progress towards aims and objectives	The Candidate's capacity for autonomous working and self-reflection, and their knowledge of how and when to escalate will be assessed
Give advice to team members if requested to enable them to meet their aims and objectives	The Candidate's ability to dispense advice commensurate with their level of qualification, or to refer upwards if necessary, will be assessed
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Understand the importance of team work and communication</b>	
Explain why team work is important in an organisation	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Explain how effective communication aids the work of a team	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail

### Unit APT3.11 – Viewing of the Deceased

<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to prepare a deceased person for viewing</b>	

Confirm the identity of the deceased person for viewing	<p>The Candidate should understand that the term ‘viewing’, although predominantly related to viewing of the deceased by friends and family, may refer to viewing of the deceased by Medical Doctors, Pathologists, Funeral Directors, etc.</p> <p>As per the relevant local SOP, risk assessment and HTA code of practice. Any identification must be a robust and cross-checked identification (i.e. by two individuals)</p>
Check that there are no restrictions on the viewing of the body by relatives, friends and carers, to include restrictions due to disfigurement and risk of infection	To be established by a review of the history. The Candidate’s ability to appropriately judge and communicate any issues will be assessed. The situation may require detailed discussion with the visitor to prepare them
Follow established procedures in preparing the deceased for viewing	<p>As per the relevant local SOP</p> <p>The deceased should be well presented, fully covered in an appropriate sheet or pall, with their hair brushed, eyes closed, dentures in place and their mouth closed as far as possible without resorting to invasive procedures. Marks or wounds should be covered or camouflaged as far as reasonably practicable</p>
Take account of any religious and/or cultural requirements when preparing the deceased for viewing	As per the relevant local SOP and available characteristic-specific guidance
Take appropriate protective measures when preparing the deceased for viewing	As per the relevant local SOP, established practice and the features of the case (e.g. gloves as minimum)
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Be able to provide support to relatives, friends and carers when viewing the deceased</b>	
Confirm the identity of relatives, friends and carers prior to allowing the viewing to take place	<p>Liaise with Bereavement Support and/or the Coroner’s Office – do the visitor(s) have the NOK’s permission to view?</p> <p>The confirmation should be proactive (e.g. saying “can I confirm who you’ve come to visit?” instead of “are you here to see Mr. Bloggs?”)</p>
Communicate appropriate information in a sensitive manner	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Follow established procedures when conducting the viewing of the deceased	As per the relevant local SOP

Advise relatives, friends and carers appropriately with regard to after death procedures	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Refer relatives, friends and carers to additional sources of support and guidance as required	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Common Standards</b>
<b>Understand why rigorous procedures have been developed for viewing of the deceased</b>	
Explain why it is important to check the identity of the deceased, relatives, friends and carers prior to the viewing of a body	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Outline why it is important to take account of any religious or cultural considerations when preparing a body for viewing	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail
Explain the rationale of any protective measures taken during the preparation of a body for viewing	As per the learning outcome, as long as the information given is accurate and explained in sufficient detail