1. **What is the Single Accreditation System?** The Single Accreditation System (SAS) is a structure for accrediting graduate medical education resulting from an agreement between the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM). Under this agreement, residency training programs approved by the AOA can become accredited by the ACGME. AOA-approved programs began applying to the ACGME for accreditation July 1, 2015.

2. **How is board certification affected by the SAS?** ABEM eligibility criteria for certification require successful completion of Emergency Medicine (EM) residency training that is accredited by the ACGME or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC). Completing an AOA-approved EM residency training program does not meet ABEM eligibility criteria. When an osteopathic EM program receives initial accreditation from the ACGME, residents who graduate on or after the effective accreditation date will meet ABEM residency training eligibility criteria for initial certification by completing the specified length of training time in the newly accredited program. For more information, please review the policies on EM Residency Training Requirements and EM Resident Transfer.

3. **What is the relationship between the American Osteopathic Board of Emergency Medicine (AOBEM) and ABEM?** ABEM and the AOBEM are distinct and independent organizations. ABEM and the AOBEM exchange information and have discussions about topics of common interest, including the impact of the SAS on certification in Emergency Medicine.

4. **What are the criteria that would allow osteopathic-trained physicians to be certified by ABEM?** The ABEM Board of Directors has approved eligibility criteria that allow physicians who graduate from ACGME-accredited EM programs, including EM programs previously AOA-accredited prior to physicians’ graduation date, to apply for ABEM initial EM certification by completing the specified length of training time in the newly accredited program. For more information, please review the policies on EM Residency Training Requirements and EM Resident Transfer.

5. **I am now training in an AOA-approved Emergency Medicine residency program; will I be able to certify with ABEM?** If the AOA-approved EM program you are training in is ACGME accredited on or before the date you graduate, you will be able to apply for ABEM initial certification via the residency training pathway, provided you meet the basic principles that are stated in the policies on EM Residency Training Requirements and EM Resident Transfer. Refer to FAQ #8.

6. **If I started training in an AOA-approved EM residency program in or after 2015, will I be eligible to be certified by ABEM?** If the AOA-approved EM program, in which you enrolled, applies for ACGME accreditation on or after July 1, 2015, there is no guarantee that it will be ACGME accredited by the time you graduate. However, if it achieves initial ACGME accreditation on or before your graduation date, you will be able to apply to ABEM for EM certification provided you meet the basic principles that are stated in the Policies on EM Residency Training Requirements and EM Resident Transfer. Refer to FAQ #8.
7. If I start training in an AOA-approved, EM residency program and transfer to an EM, ACGME-accredited program, will I be eligible to be certified by ABEM? When a resident transfer occurs from an AOA-approved, EM residency program, to an ACGME-accredited EM program at a different institution, a portion of the training he or she completed in the AOA-approved EM residency program can count toward his or her training requirements in an ACGME-accredited program. See the ABEM policies on EM Residency Training Requirements and EM Resident Transfer. The program director of the ACGME-accredited, EM program to which you are transferring can allow:

- Up to 6 months of credit for 12 through less than 24 months of training you successfully completed in an AOA-approved program
- Up to 12 months of credit for 24 or more months of training you successfully completed in an AOA-approved program.

Twelve months is the maximum amount of equivalent credit ABEM will recognize toward meeting ABEM EM residency training requirements for any combination of training completed prior to entering an ACGME-accredited, EM program.

If you completed less than 6 months of AOA-approved EM training, no credit can be allowed. More than 24 months of AOA-approved training cannot count for more than 12 months of credit.

Training you completed in an AOA-approved program in a specialty other than EM cannot transfer to count toward fulfillment of the ACGME-accredited EM program requirements for purposes of ABEM certification.

A change in EM program status or format due to ACGME initial accreditation is not considered a resident transfer.

8. My current, four-year, AOA-approved, EM residency program is transitioning to a three-year, ACGME-accredited, EM residency program. How much training do I need to complete to fulfill the ABEM eligibility criteria? The total amount of training a resident in this situation must complete depends on how much training he or she has already completed; see the following principles found in the Policy on EM Residency Training Requirements:

Basic Principles

If a four-year EM residency program transitions to a three-year, ACGME-accredited, EM residency program during the period of initial ACGME accreditation, two basic principles apply depending on the resident’s level of training at the time of ACGME initial accreditation:

1. A resident must successfully complete at least four years in the same program, or
2. A resident must successfully complete at least 24 months under the new ACGME-accredited, three-year format

Residents enrolled in programs that transition from a four-year format to an ACGME-accredited, three-year format during the period of initial ACGME accreditation must complete training according to the following requirements:
1. If the physician is in the fourth year of training on the program’s initial ACGME accreditation effective date, he or she must complete the current level of training (four years of total training).

2. If the physician is in the third year of training on the program’s initial ACGME accreditation effective date, he or she must complete training at that level under the new ACGME-accredited three-year format, and must also complete at least 12 additional months of training under the new ACGME-accredited, three-year format in the same program (at least four years of total training).

3. If the physician is in the second year of training on the program’s initial ACGME accreditation effective date, he or she must complete training at that level under the new ACGME-accredited, three-year format, and must also complete at least 24 additional months of training under the new ACGME-accredited, three-year format (at least four years of total training).

4. If the physician is in the first year of training on the program’s initial ACGME accreditation effective date, he or she must complete training at that level under the new ACGME-accredited, three-year format, and must also complete at least 24 additional months of training under the new ACGME-accredited, three-year format (at least three years of total training).

The principles no longer apply once an EM residency program has received continued ACGME-accreditation (after successful completion of both the initial ACGME accreditation cycle period and a second RRC site visit by the ACGME Residency Review Committee).

In every training scenario, the program director must ensure that the resident has met all the training requirements of the program. The program director may require training in addition to the minimum amounts specified by ABEM.

9. **My current program is dual-accredited (or “parallel-accredited”) by the ACGME and AOA. Can I be certified by ABEM?** You currently have the option of becoming certified by ABEM, AOBEM, or both.

10. **If the AOA-approved EM residency program in which I am enrolled becomes ACGME accredited while I am still in training, would I be able to take the ABEM In-training Examination (ITE)?** Yes, you may take the examination, so long as the ACGME decision to fully accredit your program is made on or before November 1 of the calendar year preceding an ITE administration (begins the last Tuesday of February); if not, the program may participate in the next available ITE administration. Also, your home residency program must choose to participate in the ABEM ITE. Please review the Policy on In-training Examination Accessibility for more information.

11. **If my AOA-approved EM program becomes ACGME accredited before I graduate, could I be certified in EM by both ABEM and AOBEM?** At this time, there is no prohibition by ABEM on being certified by both boards if you meet the eligibility criteria set forth by ABEM and AOBEM. You are encouraged to inquire with AOBEM about their eligibility criteria.

12. **Can I take the Qualifying (written) Examination while still enrolled in my final year of ACGME-accredited training?** No. One of the eligibility requirements for ABEM certification is graduation from residency training.
13. **If I complete my fellowship training in an AOA-approved subspecialty program, will I be eligible for ABEM subspecialty certification?** No. Completion of an AOA-approved fellowship training program does not meet the eligibility criteria of ABEM-sponsored subspecialties.

14. **Do AOBEM diplomates who complete an ACGME-accredited fellowship have an opportunity to be certified in ABEM-sponsored subspecialties?** Yes, for some subspecialties. The ABEM Board of Directors approved eligibility criteria that will allow AOBEM diplomates to apply for ABEM-sponsored subspecialty certification if all their fellowship training occurs in an ACGME-accredited fellowship on and after July 1, 2015.

AOBEM-certified physicians who complete ACGME-accredited EMS or Medical Toxicology fellowship can apply for ABEM subspecialty certification; emergency physicians who complete fellowship training in Pediatric EM and Sports Medicine can also apply through ABEM.

This provision will be available to AOBEM diplomates who graduate from an ACGME-accredited fellowship before July 1, 2022. The ABEM eligibility criteria do not allow AOBEM diplomates who were enrolled, or who started or graduated from, ACGME-accredited fellowship programs before July 1, 2015, to apply for ABEM subspecialty certification.

15. **If my AOA-approved EM program becomes ACGME-accredited before I graduate, and I then become ABEM certified, what are my options for becoming certified in an ABEM-sponsored subspecialty?** You would be able to become certified in an ABEM-sponsored subspecialty. You must complete fellowship training in an ACGME-accredited program in a subspecialty that ABEM sponsors or co-sponsors. Unlike Emergency Medicine training, you must complete all your fellowship training in an ACGME-accredited fellowship program.

16. **Are these ABEM eligibility criteria subject to change under the SAS?** As ABEM continues to consider the implications of the SAS on board certification, ABEM will continue to review its eligibility criteria and policies. Interested medical students and physicians are encouraged to review these FAQs frequently for potential changes to the ABEM criteria.

ABEM has not yet addressed all the implications of these eligibility criteria and as the SAS evolves, ABEM could further alter its eligibility criteria. Physicians who are considering postgraduate education opportunities should assume that the eligibility criteria are subject to change.

17. **I am AOBEM certified, can I recertify with ABEM?** No, there is no pathway for AOBEM diplomates to certify with ABEM.

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