

Description of the EULAR On-line Course on Rheumatic Diseases

Introduction

The EULAR On-Line Course on Rheumatic Diseases (www.eular-onlinecourse.org) is an electronic form of continuous medical education in rheumatology. It is managed by a Scientific Course Committee responsible for controlling the structure and content of the course as well as for ensuring regular quality control and promotion. Yearly updates of all modules are made by a renowned faculty of authors.

The full version of the course covering the whole of rheumatology consists of 42 illustrated modules dedicated to a specific topic. Each module corresponds to approximately five hours working time for the student, totaling around 210 hours of educational training. The course is entirely run through the web and is designed for two years, to end with a final online examination (please note that only **one specific date per year is offered for the exam**) and, if passed, a EULAR Certificate. If the modules are not finished or the exam is not passed after 2 years, the course will automatically stay open for another year and the regular study, module by module, can continue.

The modules need to be studied in sequence one after the other and module exam questions need to be answered before the next module can be started.

Knowledge and skills are targeted at the level felt to be appropriate for the final year of training of a rheumatology trainee. The on-line course was developed with a substantial grant from EULAR, so that the entire course can be offered at EUR 100 per participant.

Module structure and final exam

Each on-line module deals with one particular topic and contains:

- A set of clear learning outcomes
- A written update/review on the topic containing free to be used pictures / figures / tables.
- Key references and a list of additional readings on specific details.
- Two in-depth discussions expanding on relevant clinical problems with an evidence-based discussion.
- Two interactive typical clinical cases with appropriate multiple-choice questions and immediate feedback.
- An assessment section addresses core aspects of the module and needs to be finished (3 tries, if necessary – the 3rd has all answers) before the next module can be started. For all clinical modules, the majority of questions will be case-based. Feedback on the reasoning behind the answer will be made available.
- An opportunity to ask questions to the professor during the first two weeks the module is running.
- These questions and answers will be available to all students as they are added to a module FAQ (frequently asked questions).

The final examination will assess a sample of the learning outcomes from the whole course (90 questions). The examination (to be entered through the student's regular log-in) is run simultaneously only once a year and for all eligible participants (who have completed all modules). It will take 90 minutes.

Derived from the main texts of the online course modules, the EULAR Textbooks are published roughly every 3 years. http://www.eular.org/edu_textbook.cfm

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