

SSRMP Certification in Medical Physics: Frequently Asked Questions (regarding new applications)

1. Where do I find detailed information?

On the internet <http://ssrpm.ch/certification-for-medical-physicists/rules/>

2. What are the minimum qualifications?

A B.Sc in physics or equivalent and a M.Sc in natural science. The final decision on the acceptance of the curriculum rest with the certification commission.

3. Which subtypes of the Certification exist?

There are at present two types:

- Medical Radiation Physics (radiation oncology, diagnostic radiology, nuclear medicine): this is required by law to take over responsibility for medical physics in radiation oncology.
- Medical Imaging: does not require practical experience in radiation oncology, but more extensive knowledge especially in diagnostic radiology employing non-ionising radiation. Additional types may be defined whenever considered necessary.

4. What do I have to submit with my application?

- Curriculum Vitae with emphasis on your university based studies and practical experience.
- Copies of degree certificates (diploma, B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D., foreign certification ...).
- Agreement by a "Medical Physics Expert" (medical physicist with SSRMP certification and at least 5 years post-certification experience), preferably supervising you directly, to act as "mentor".
- A plan for your further studies and training.

5. How long do my further studies and practical training last?

Three years: this three-year-period starts with the date of your application! During this period your mentor is required to submit a detailed annual report on what you have done in the report year, and are planning to do in the following year.

6. Can previous practical experience be counted towards these 3 years?

If practical experience in a relevant area was gained prior to the application, this may be counted towards the required 3 years with a maximum of 50% of the actual time but a minimum of 1 year under the supervision of a mentor is mandatory. For this the mentor has to summarize previous experience in a table, together with an assessment of the relevance.

7. Do I have to attend a specified University Course on Medical Physics?

No. The extent of the theoretical knowledge required is described in a syllabus. These topics are examined in the written part of the examination.

ETH Zürich offers a "Master of Advanced Studies ETH in Medical Physics". This course includes the topics required for the SSRMP Certification; candidates successfully completing course type A therefore do not have to sit for the written part of the examination.

8. How do I apply for the examination?

Once the practical experience of 3 years has been gained, you may apply to sit for the exams. Exams are usually organised once a year in October or November. The application has to include:

- The mentor reports (unless already submitted previously).

- The certificate of a BAG approved course on radiation protection. In the case of foreign courses a confirmation from BAG that this education is to be considered equivalent. As of 2008 the person to contact at BAG is Nicolas Stritt (Nicolas.Stritt@bag.admin.ch).

- The certificate of "Master of Advanced Studies ETH in Medical Physics" (if applicable) and any other certificate of further studies (unless already submitted previously).

- A written work ("SSRMP diploma work") on a topic from your specialisation area of medical physics (see Point 9)

- An indication what your specialist area (Spezialgebiet / domaine de spécialité) and your optional areas (Wahlgebiet / domaines à option) are.

You will get informed in spring of any given year whether you qualify to sit the exam in autumn - if in doubt: ask the president of the certification commission. You will then have to confirm that you are actually interested.

9. What are the requirements for the "SSRMP diploma work"?

Different types of written work may be submitted:

- Students of the "Master of Advanced Studies ETH in Medical Physics" will usually submit their Master thesis.

- Articles in peer reviewed journals, with the candidate being the major contributor.

- Proffered papers presented at a conference with extended conference proceedings (like SSRMP).

- Proffered papers presented at other conferences, as long as the abstract is further elaborated (at least 6 pages).

- Internal reports or texts written especially for the purpose of the SSRMP Certification. Note that this "SSRMP diploma work" is to be submitted prior to the exam, as especially the last two types have to be evaluated by the exam commission as part of the examination.

10. What are the fees - and when do I have to pay?

The detailed table is available online (URL see question 1). The fee is collected to cover the cost of organising the examination, and has to be paid prior to the exam (and independent of the outcome of the exam).

11. I am just short of 3 years at the examination date - can I still sit for the exam?

If you are less than 6 months short, it is still possible to sit for the exam. The certificate will, however, be issued after completion of the 3-year period and after receiving the final report of the mentor.

12. I hold a foreign Certification in Medical Physics - is this considered equivalent?

If you hold a foreign Certification, and fulfil the entrance criteria (item 2 above), additional practical experience may not be required, but you will have to pass the oral exams.

13. For how long is the Certification valid?

For 5 years. During this time period you have to work in the field of Medical Physics (at least for part of the time) and have to collect "educational credits", e.g. by attending conferences or engaging in other activities of continued professional development.