OSCE checklist for neonatal resuscitation

An OSCE checklist for neonatal resuscitation in the UK style follows the sequence of preparing, drying and keeping the baby warm, assessing, opening the airway, giving inflation breaths, reassessing the heart rate, and starting compressions only if needed. Calling for help is part of every step.

OSCE checklist for neonatal resuscitation: steps to practise

1. Before the birth, check the warm area, equipment, oxygen and suction, and know who is in the team.
2. Note the time of birth, then dry the baby and remove wet towels, cover the head and keep the baby warm.
3. Assess tone, breathing and heart rate. Call for help if it is not breathing well.
4. Open the airway with the head in a neutral position, and use a jaw thrust if needed.
5. Give 5 inflation breaths with a mask and look for chest movement.
6. If the chest does not move, recheck the position, the mask seal and the airway, and try again.
7. Reassess the heart rate. If it rises, continue to support breathing until the baby breathes alone.
8. If the heart rate stays below 60 per minute after at least 30 seconds of effective ventilation, start chest compressions at 3 compressions to 1 breath, and increase oxygen to 100%.
9. Reassess often, adjust oxygen and give drugs only as your guideline says, and keep calling for senior help.
10. Keep the parents informed, record the times, and hand over clearly.

What candidates commonly forget

- Drying and warmth before anything else.
- Checking the chest moves with each breath.
- Calling for help early, not late.
- Recording times accurately.

- Speaking to the parents.

Local policy comes first

This is our own practice checklist. Your college, hospital or country may do some steps differently. Where local policy and this list disagree, follow local policy. UK, European, American and WHO newborn guidelines differ in detail, such as inflation breaths and starting oxygen. Use the one your exam follows. You can practise with an AI patient, and try one station free with no sign-up. See also the general OSCE nursing checklist.

Common questions

What is the first step in neonatal resuscitation?

Drying and keeping the baby warm, then assessing tone, breathing and heart rate.

When do I start chest compressions?

When the heart rate remains below 60 per minute after at least 30 seconds of effective ventilation. Check the guideline your exam uses.

How do I know the breaths are working?

The chest moves and the heart rate rises.

Sources

- Resuscitation Council UK: newborn resuscitation and support of transition of infants at birth
- European Resuscitation Council Guidelines 2025: newborn resuscitation
- WHO guidelines on basic newborn resuscitation

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.