Course content:
This module will address the principles underlying a number of respiratory investigations commonly undertaken in clinical practice. These will include spirometry, PEF monitoring, arterial and capillary blood gas analysis, xray, allergy testing via skin prick testing or Serum IgE and a variety of other tests. These will be discussed within the context of clinical scenarios, and learners will be encouraged to consider investigation results and differential diagnosis in the light of a patient’s clinical presentation in order to confirm an accurate diagnosis. The module will examine all of these, and will seek to provide learners with a critical view of the accuracy and validity of the tests by consideration of the concepts of sensitivity and specificity. Linked to these ideas is the importance of utilising the patient and the patient’s history to both guide the selection of and interpretation of investigation results to reach firm conclusions to inform a diagnosis. The aim of this module is to enable the learner to develop proficiency in the interpretation of common respiratory investigations and critically analyse factors impinging upon the validity and accuracy of these investigations.

Knowledge and understanding:
Successful learners will typically be able to:
1. Demonstrate a robust understanding of the nature of the more common respiratory investigations.
2. Synthesise evidence in order to critically evaluate the validity of common respiratory investigations.

Skills and attributes:
Successful learners will typically be able to:
1. Demonstrate an ability to extrapolate information from the clinical history and assessment in order to predict the findings from selected investigations and suggest further investigations, where necessary.
2. Make critical comments and observations on the selected investigations and results obtained to research an accurate diagnosis.
3. Demonstrate the importance of involving patients in the clinical assessment and decision-making processes.