



Australasian College
for Emergency Medicine

Studying for examinations

Emergency Medicine Certificate, Diploma
and Advanced Diploma

Oct 2023
acem.org.au

Background

This document aims to assist EMC, EMD and EMAD trainees and Primary Supervisors with important information and study tips regarding the examinations, which are a major component of the EMC, EMD and EMAD training programs.

Contact

If you have any concerns or queries not addressed by this guide, please speak to your primary supervisor or contact the ACEM EMCD team.

+61 3 8679 8872

emcd@acem.org.au

Examination questions

Number, duration and standard setting

Program	Number of questions	Duration
Emergency Medicine Certificate	80	90 minutes
Emergency Medicine Diploma	80	90 minutes
Emergency Medicine Advanced Diploma	50	60 minutes

The passing score of the examinations will be determined by a standard setting process. Standard setting is done by Diplomates, Advanced Diplomates and FACEMs who are in active clinical practice and have specific training in standard setting.

Style

Each examination comprises Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs). Most questions commence with a clinical scenario or vignette, followed by a stem/lead-in question, and four options of which the one best option is to be selected as per the example below. Some questions may not include a vignette, however, still comprise a lead-in question and options.

Worked example (question layout)

Vignette / clinical scenario

A 55-year-old male presents with swelling and redness to his lower left leg. His observations are:

- Temp 37.8°C
- HR 90bpm
- 140/70 mmHg
- 20 RR
- 95% SaO₂ on room air

Stem/lead-in question

What features on assessment most necessitate admission?

- a** Anaphylaxis to penicillin
- b** Insulin dependent diabetes
- c Lower leg crepitus** (*single best option*)
- d** Suspicion of DVT

The following are some examples of stem/lead-in questions

- Which of the following is the most appropriate investigation for this patient?
- Which of the following is the most appropriate initial treatment for this patient?
- What is the most appropriate next step in the management for this patient?
- What is the most likely diagnosis in this case?
- Which of the following management options has priority?
- What of the following do the results of this test indicate?
- Which of the following outlines the most appropriate approach to this scenario?

All themes in each of the curricula are examinable. This includes questions related to non-medical expertise themes, including (but not limited to) the following.

EMC

- Legal issues and forensic medicine
- Communication

EMD

- Professional and ethical practice
- Management of the daily emergency

EMAD

- Choosing wisely
- Quality assurance, improvement and innovation
- Collaboration with community and hospital

Studying

Examination questions are developed drawing upon the relevant curriculum. As such, trainees are required to combine the knowledge, understanding and skills they develop through 'on-the-floor' training and experience, interaction and consultation with their supervisors, and self-directed learning, in order to best prepare for an examination. ACEM's online modules and resources remain important learning support tools; trainees are strongly advised to continue to use these to support their preparation for the examinations.

Knowledge and skills required

It is expected that before attempting an examination, the trainee will be confident with their knowledge, understanding and skills as articulated in the learning objectives of the curriculum.

Given the nested nature of the curricula, the knowledge, understanding and skills of the programs build upon each other. Hence, the knowledge, understanding and skills of the Emergency Medicine Advanced Diploma (EMAD) is built on and assumes the knowledge, understanding and skills outlined in the Emergency Medicine Diploma (EMD) and Emergency Medicine Certificate (EMC) curricula. Similarly, the EMD is built on, and assumes the knowledge and skills outlined in the EMC curriculum.

Resources to prepare

It is imperative that the candidates guide their study for the examinations by using and referring to the learning objectives in the curricula.

To study for their examinations, candidates should use:

- the curricula
- learning support resources, including:
 - recommended texts
 - eLearning modules for [EMC](#), [EMD](#) and [EMAD](#)
 - list of recommended additional resources and publications (EMCD curricula, p.19)
- relevant clinical guidelines
- on-the-floor training and experience
- feedback from other assessments, such as WBAs and reflection meetings.

Suggested steps to study for the examinations

All EMC, EMD and EMAD trainees, are strongly encouraged to take the following steps to support the preparation for their examination.

Step 1

Refer to the learning objectives in the curriculum of the program you are undertaking. For example, if you are undertaking the EMC, refer to the EMC section of the curriculum. The examination you will be completing will be developed based on these learning objectives.

The EMC, EMD and EMAD curricula can be accessed [here](#).

Step 2

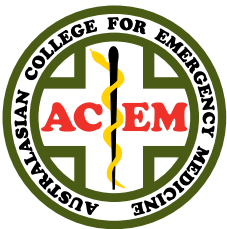
Ensure that you acquire the knowledge and skills detailed in the curricula by:

- a** Accessing the curricula [here](#)
- b** Accessing the eLearning modules, recommended texts and additional resources suggested [here](#) on the ACEM Educational Resources website. (Note: These resources are organised by the themes in the revised curricula.)
- c** On-the-floor training and experience.
- d** Advice and information provided by Primary Supervisors and Direct Clinical Supervisors.
- e** Feedback from other assessments such as WBAs or Reflection meetings.
- f** Relevant guidelines.
- g** Researching other relevant resources.

Self-directed learning is important. It requires a trainee to identify their own learning needs through a combination of self-reflection and discussion with supervisors, mentors, peers and others with whom they have worked and who can provide informed feedback. The trainee should then undertake independent learning activities targeted to specific learning needs, further self-reflection and accept ongoing feedback until the learning needs are addressed and understanding is consolidated.

These self-directed learning activities may include (but are not limited to):

- reading recommended texts and journal articles;
- researching specific topics online;
- completing the recommended online modules on the ACEM Educational Resources website ([here](#)); and
- participating in targeted simulation-based training.



Australasian College for Emergency Medicine

34 Jeffcott Street
West Melbourne VIC 3003
Australia
+61 3 9320 0444
admin@acem.org.au

acem.org.au