

Multiple Choice Question Format

Questionbank

The purpose of this document is to identify acceptable formats of questions for the Questionbank database.

All questions should be based on the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Exam (MCCQE) format, [Guidelines for the Development of Multiple-Choice Questions](#), to help students prepare for their MCCQE Part I exam. Any question not structured in accordance with that format will require revision or rejection from the database.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

All MCQs should be single best answer, made up of a stem (usually a clinical scenario) with a lead-in question, followed by five response options – one correct or best answer, and four distractors.

Unacceptable:

- Any question whose answers include “none of the above”, or “all of the above”.
- Any question whose answers include a combination of choices, e.g. “a and b”, or “c and d”.
- Questions that say something like “All following statements are true EXCEPT” or “Which of the following is NOT correct?”.
- Any question that includes the use of the words “always” or “never”.
- More or less than five choices.
- Use of acronyms alone. When used, acronyms should be spelled out first and follow in brackets, e.g. “magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)”.

Inadvisable:

- Questions asking for recall of a single fact, e.g. “Which of the following substances is a hormone?”
- Absence of a clinical stem, i.e. questions having only a lead-in such as “Which of the following statements is correct?” or “Which of the following statements is true?”

Acceptable/Preferred:

- Clinical scenarios/vignettes, where questions pertain to a scenario – in most cases these should be clinically based, and a designation of the clinical context should be given.
- The distractors and the correct answer should “look” similar in length and form i.e. if the lead-in asks for the best treatment, include only various treatments among the responses (not diagnoses or other types of elements).
- More than one multiple choice question can be presented following a single clinical stem.

Required:

- Lab values inserted into the body of the questions
- Association of the question with one or more identified learning objectives of the unit/rotation
- Content area
- Brief rationale for the correct and incorrect answers
- Identity of the author of the question