Preparing for Parts 2 and 3 of the ABR Therapeutic Medical Physics Exam

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Overview
- Exam information
- Timing
- Part 2
  - Tools
  - Mindset/Testing tips
- Part 3
  - Tools
  - Mindset/Testing tips

Where are you in the board certification process?
A- Haven’t started yet
B- Done with Part 1, taking Part 2
C- Done with Part 2, taking Part 3
Exam structure

- ABR initial certification
  - 3 Parts:
    - **Part 1** – common to all disciplines, computer-based
      - General: 80 questions, 4hrs
      - Clinical: 75 questions, 1.5hrs
    - **Part 2** – discipline-specific, computer-based
      - Clinical: 80 questions, 4hrs
    - **Part 3** – discipline-specific, oral exam
      - 5 sections, 2.5hrs

Exam information

- **Part 2:**
  - To be eligible, pass part 1 and complete a CAMPEP-accredited residency ([http://www.theabr.org/ic-rp-reg](http://www.theabr.org/ic-rp-reg))
  - 3-6 weeks to get the results
  - Pass/fail
  - Multiple choice questions
    - Quick conceptual questions
    - Short problems

ABR Study Guide

**PART 2: Therapeutic Medical Physics**

- Radiation therapy and planning
- Dose calculations and quality assurance
- Treatment planning for external beam therapy, brachytherapy, and interstitial therapy
- Radiographic planning
- Radiation oncopathology
- Radiobiology:
  - Radiobiological concepts of therapy
  - Radiobiological concepts of tumor biology
  - Radiobiological concepts of normal tissue
- Radiation protection
- Computer-based radiation therapy systems
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http://www.theabr.org/ic-mp-study-guide
Exam information

• Part 3:
  • To be eligible, pass part 2
  • ~1 week to get the results
  • Pass/Conditional Pass (only 1 section failed)/Fail
  • Structure
    • 5 examiners – 30 minutes each
    • Each examiner asks 5 questions

ABR Study Guide

http://www.theabr.org/ic-mp-study-guide

Passing Rates - Part 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Fail</th>
<th>% Pass</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>85.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
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Source: http://www.theabr.org/ic-mp-scoringresults
Passing Rates - Part 3

Timing

- Part 2: August (usually right after residency)
- Part 3: May of following year

When should you start studying?

Part 2 - Clinical, Multiple choice
Tools
- Textbooks, TG reports, ...
- Websites:
  - www.wepassed.com
  - www.abrphysicshelp.com
  - www.arcphysics.net...
- Medphys/MedphysUSA listserv
- AAPM virtual library
- Residency

Mindset/testing tips - Part 2
- Calculator
  - http://www.pearsonvue.com/ABR/
- Answer everything
  - Don’t get stuck – skip and go back
  - Make educated guesses
- Expect the unexpected
- Do as many practice problems as possible
- Know what the reports say – your institution might have different procedures/tolerances

Part 3 - Clinical, Oral
Tools - Concepts

- Residency
- Textbooks, TG reports, ...
  - Use TG Reports to guide your studying - when you come across something you don’t understand, look it up!
- Medphys and MedphysUSA listserv
- AAPM virtual library  (https://www.aapm.org/education/VL/)

Tools - Spoken answers

- **Mock oral exams**
  - End of rotation exams in Residency
  - AAPM local chapters
- **Practice out loud**
  - Talk to yourself, it’s fine.
  - Pinpoint the areas that you need to review
  - Remember there are months between the end of residency and part 3 – keep practicing!!

Mindset/testing tips - Part 3

- **Part 3**
  - Be professional
  - Be confident
  - **DO NOT ARGUE**
  - Be concise
  - **DO NOT MAKE UP ANSWERS**
  - **DO NOT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION**
  - Do not expect feedback from examiners
  - Accept you will not know everything
  - Do not let one question affect your whole exam