



American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Inc.

A Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)

Instructions for the 2016 Psychiatry Certification Examination

Examination Format

The 2016 Psychiatry Certification Examination is comprised of 480 questions: 120 questions in Part A (Basic Concepts in Psychiatry), 120 questions in Part B (Neurology and Neurosciences), and 240 questions in Part C (Clinical Psychiatry). Please review the Content Specifications [on the website](#) for each Part's detailed topic specifications.

At the beginning of the examination, there is a nondisclosure agreement (NDA) that candidates must sign, followed by on-screen instructions. At the conclusion of the examination, there is a five-minute end-of-examination survey.

During the examination, there are 50 minutes of pooled break time available for use. Break time can be accessed during the optional breaks that are offered between each section. Candidates can use as much or as little break time as they see fit during any given optional break (lunch time is included as part of the pooled break time); however, please note that if you exhaust the entire amount of pooled break time (50 minutes) before the end of the examination, any time spent on subsequent breaks will decrease your available remaining examination time. To monitor the amount of break time taken and/or remaining, candidates should pay close attention to the Total Break Time Remaining field displayed on the break screens. If a negative number is displayed in the Total Break Time Remaining field, then the allotted break time has been exhausted and your examination will have the amount of time displayed deducted from your overall examination time. Candidates are expected to manage the pace and timing of the examination themselves. Allotted time for the entire examination, including NDA, instructions and survey, totals nine-and-one-half hours. The 2016 Psychiatry Certification Examination Format table below demonstrates the examination delivery structure.

2016 Psychiatry Certification Examination Format

	Section	No. of Questions	No. of Vignettes w/ Videos	No. of Audio Clips	Content	Format
5 Min	Nondisclosure Agreement					
	On-Screen Tutorial/ Instructions					
510 Min - Test Time 50 Min - Pooled Break Time	1	55-65	7	0	Part C	Vignette
	Optional Break*					
	2	55-65	NA	NA	Parts A and B	Stand-alone
	Optional Break*					
	3	50-60	3	0	Part C	Vignette
	Optional Break*					
	4	50-60	NA	NA	Parts A and B	Stand-alone
	Optional Break*					
	5	55-65	4	0	Part C	Vignette
	Optional Break*					
	6	55-65	NA	NA	Parts A and B	Stand-alone
	Optional Break*					
	7	50-60	3-7	0-1	Part C	Vignette
	Optional Break*					
8	50-60	NA	NA	Parts A and B	Stand-alone	
5 Min	End-of-Examination Survey					

*This is part of the pooled break time. A proctor must log candidates in after breaks. Candidates must be signed in and out each time they enter and leave the testing room.

Question Type and Review

There are two types of questions in the 2016 Psychiatry Certification Examination: stand-alone and vignette. *Stand-alone* questions are one-best-answer multiple-choice questions that are not associated with any other questions. Part A and Part B questions are all stand-alone questions. For *vignette* questions, there are typically two to ten multiple-choice questions linked to a common case that may be presented in a video clip, which may vary in length from one to four minutes, an audio clip, or in a text vignette. The video and audio clip questions require the use of headphones to be provided by Pearson VUE. Some vignette questions require more than one answer. For these questions, the required number of answers must be provided in order to advance to the next question. The ABPN does not give partial credit for vignette questions. For any question that requires more than one answer, candidates must provide all required answers correctly in order to obtain full credit. Part C questions are all vignette questions.

Vignette questions cannot be flagged for review because answers to already-answered questions may be revealed in subsequent questions. Once a candidate has answered a question, the candidate cannot go back to the question, and must completely answer the displayed question before moving on to the next question. Stand-alone multiple-choice questions can be flagged for review or skipped, but after logging out of a section a candidate *cannot* review questions in that section again.

Scoring

In addition to subtest scores, candidates will receive a total percent correct score (percentage of items answered correctly, rounded to the nearest whole number). An acceptable level of performance must be achieved on the total score to pass the examination. The standards are not norm-referenced; there is no predefined passing rate for any group of candidates.

Items that may be included in the examination solely for research or pretesting purposes will not be included in the candidates' scores.

No candidate is expected to obtain a perfect score. However, in the opinion of the ABPN, each candidate should have some degree of familiarity with the subject matter of each question. Even though the candidate may be in doubt about the correct answer to a particular question, he or she should answer every question. This will increase the likelihood that the candidate's examination score will reflect the breadth of his or her knowledge of the field. There is no penalty for guessing.

Examination Functions

To familiarize candidates with the examination functions, several examination screenshots with explanations are provided [here](#). In addition to the general functions, such as Time Remaining and Number of Questions, please pay special attention to the functions for video fast forward and rewind, Comment, Scratch Pad, Highlight, Strikethrough, Flag for Review, Drug List/Tutorial, Navigator, and functions related to vignette questions.