

# Some tips on how to answer multiple-choice questions (MCQs)



M. Alegre

malegre@unav.es

Associate Professor of Neurology, Facultad de  
Medicina

Universidad de Navarra

Member of the EBN/EAN Examination Committee

# General Advise

- The more you prepare yourself, the more these tips will help you. Follow the instructions on [www.uems-neuroboard.org](http://www.uems-neuroboard.org)
- Be aware of the fact that the closed book part contains questions related to the guidelines offered on the website.

# About MCQ exams

- Multiple-choice questions: several possible answers, only one is the most correct one.
- There is a correction for guessing (see next slide). This implies there is no punishment for incorrect answers
- MCQ exams have a high number of questions (50-200) to get a reliable result and in order to give the candidate fair chance.
- Time is quite limited (usually around 1 min/question)

# Correction for guessing

- In a series of questions with  $n$  options, the guessing rate equals to  $1/n$ , so 25% for 4-option questions etc.
- In a series of 100 5-option questions, the number of questions to be answered correctly by chance statistically equals 20.
- This implies that 20 correctly answered questions result in a 0-score on a scale of 1-10, 40 correct answers in a 2.5, 60 in a 5, 80 in a 7.5, 100 in a 10 etc.

# Some facts about MCQ exams

- MCQ exams are more objective towards the candidate.
- Poorly constructed questions may force the candidate in a wrong direction and this will appear in the statistical analysis.
- Questions with poor statistical features will be eliminated in order not to disadvantage the candidates.

# Self Knowledge

Answering MCQs is a specific ability that is not equally developed in every student.

Therefore: ask yourself:

- Am I good answering MCQs?  
(If your answer is YES, you may not need this presentation)
- How fast am I answering MCQs?
- Am I conservative or bold?
- Do I feel assertive or uncertain?
- Do I easily get confused with complex questions?

# Reading questions

- Read the question with care.
- Ask yourself “What are they asking me to answer?”.
- Then think of your answer first before reading the options
- Finally look for your answer in the options.
- In case of open book exams: only consult your reference sources if you do not feel certain. Most open book questions can be answered without using books so do not lose time with looking up everything!

# If your answer is not in the options

- Re-read the question and confirm that you have correctly understood it.
- Look for any plausible answer (even if it is not the best possible one).
- If no answer is plausible, you may ask the invigilator.
- Remind: statistically bad questions indicate that many students feel misled and will be removed from the exam afterward.
- You can leave the question for later: never get stuck, keep moving.



# Some tactical considerations 1

- First go through the exam and answer the questions you are (pretty) sure of the answer straight away.
- Do not change these answers anymore or only by high exception. Intuition is usually subconscious knowledge: your first answer is usually the correct one.
- If you are unsure about the right answer, see if you can discard one or more of the options and then make a guess between the remaining options. Do not leave the question open for later. If possible, mark these questions to get back to them later on.

# Some tactical considerations 2

- If you are bad on time: prioritize faster questions. All questions have the same value, so do not lose too much time on complex questions if that prevents you from answering other simpler ones.
- If you detect that you are making repetitive mistakes during the exam: maybe you should take a little rest (breathe, relax for a minute).
- The final review is useful to detect unnoticed errors, and to answer/re-think those questions that you left in the first round for later.

# Controlling timing

- Final reviews are not mandatory. Relax.
- You should write the answers in the answer sheet or in the computer program immediately; do not leave that task for the end.
- Check intermediate waypoints (where should I be after 20-40-60 minutes, or what time should I have consumed after 20-40-60 questions...)
- If you finish early: deliver your exam after ONE final review. Do not review your answers once and again...

# Further reading

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tips for answering multiple choice questions



Alle

Afbeeldingen

Video's

Nieuws

Shopping

Meer

Tools

Ongeveer 3.230.000.000 resultaten (0,57 seconden)

- Five Tips to Ace Your Multiple Choice Exams. ...
- Read the questions carefully. Make sure you understand what the question is asking.  
...
- Answer the question without looking at the options. ...
- Eliminate the incorrect options. ...
- Answer all the questions. ...
- Manage your time. ...
- More resources for multiple choice questions.

<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca> > pdf > tip\_sheets\_study

[Five Tips to Ace Your Multiple Choice Exams - University of ...](#)