

Guide to the New MCAT*

Beginning in 2015

Format

The new MCAT will consist of four sections.

1. *Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems* (65 questions/95 minutes)
2. *Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems* (65 questions/95 minutes)
3. *Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior* (65 questions/95 minutes)
4. *Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills* (60 questions/90 minutes)

Total Questions: 255

Total Test Time: 6.25 hours

Sections

Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems

- This section will require the combination of biological and biochemical concepts with scientific inquiry, reasoning, research, and statistics skills to solve problems.
- Concepts tested: biology, physiology, organic chemistry, biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology

Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems

- This section requires the combination of mechanical, physical, and biochemical concepts function of human tissues, organs, and organ systems. Knowledge of basic mechanisms is required.
- Concepts tested: general chemistry, physics, biochemistry, cellular biology, physiology

Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior

- This section will test important psychology and sociology concepts, as well as biological concepts, and how they relate to mental processes and behavior. This section was added in order for students to recognize the socio-cultural and behavioral determinants of health.
- Concepts tested: psychology, sociology, biology

Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills

- This section will be very similar to the verbal reasoning section on the old MCAT. This section will ask you to critically analyze and apply information from a wide range of social sciences and humanities disciplines. Specific preparation of these concepts is not required for this section.

How Will These Sections be Tested?

The first three sections of the test will be organized around three types of questions:

1. Foundational Concepts – the “big Ideas” in the sciences that provide the foundation for learning in medical school
2. Content Categories – the topics and subtopics that are needed to understand foundational concepts
3. Scientific Inquiry and Reasoning Skills – the inquiry and reasoning skills that are required to solve scientific problems.

*Adapted from *Preview Guide for MCAT²⁰¹⁵* by the AAMC, November 2011