

My FFICM preparations

I sat Part 1 in Jan 2015 and Part 2 in March 2015. I definitely found the exam a challenge to study for, mostly due to the lack of available resources at the time and the ridiculously large scope of the curriculum. Sadly, the curriculum remains somewhat obtuse and utterly vast, with a surprisingly detailed focus on surgical topics, as well as medicine and your more predictable ICU fare.

For the MCQs:

I had sat my MRCP in the past, so I used banks of free MRCP questions online (such as ReviseMRCP.com and Passmedicine.com) as a refresher which was actually really useful. I also went through the RCoA question bank and did every vaguely relevant question I could find...twice!

Books wise I used 'Multiple True False questions for the FFICM' by Bellchambers et al, and 'Critical Care MCQS - A Companion for Intensive Care Exams' by Lobaz et al, but again this was purely because they were the only ones available at the time. I note the first has particularly poor reviews on Amazon, whereas the second is thought to be very useful. ICU Textbooks in general are out of date by the time they're published, so don't waste your money on them.

I actually much preferred to use the critIQ website, which is an Australian resource, but very good and very relevant. It's fairly expensive. It also has excellent data interpretation quizzes for OSCE revision later on. I also paid for the ESICM 'pact modules' which were in general very useful. It seems you can access them on NHS computers for free, but you have to be an ESICM member to access them at home.

For the OSCE / VIVA:

I used the ICMtrials app (very useful, and only about £3) and subscribed to PulmCCM and Critical Care Reviews and www.thebottomline.co.uk, which are all free.

I can't recommend the Sunderland prep course highly enough (<http://www.iccueducation.org.uk>)

It was simply the closest course to Scotland but I'm really pleased I did it. The morning started off with a hot topics session, followed by a full OSCE run through and two full VIVA run throughs (one where you participate, and one where you observe).

Other useful resources include:

- CEACCP articles
- BTS guidelines
- NICE guidelines
- ESPEN guidelines
- KDIGO
- FICM critical eye for analysis of previous sittings and results
- JICS
- www.intensivecarenetwork.com (podcasts – for when you can't face reading any more)
- Lifeinthefastlane.com (although bear in mind that a lot of the FOAMed resources are anecdote and opinion based as opposed to strictly factual / evidence based)

- ccforum.biomedcentral.com

In summary:

It's not fun, but try not to feel defeated!

Just scan over these resources I've suggested and pick your favourites in terms of content / style

Do as many MCQs as you possibly can

Study with others in order to keep your sanity, and share resources to limit the costs

After the exam, please share your questions with the SICS trainee committee so we can build a substantial question bank over time

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