Exam structure

Type of topics

Revision aids

Myths
FFICM Structure

- Developed to be similar to ANZICS exam
- Primary exam (not yet developed)
  - MCQ- TF/ EMQ/ SBA
- Final exam
  - MCQ
  - SOE/ OSCE
- Optional for Joint ICM trainees
- Requirement for entry into Stage 3 training for Dual ICM trainees
Eligibility

- Registered with FICM as an ICM trainee

- Completed intermediate training (Stage 1 for dual trainees)

- Pass in prior 7 years:
  - Primary FFICM
  - MRCP (UK)
  - MCEM Parts A, B and C
  - Primary FRCA or FCAI
MCQ

- Test of knowledge breadth
- Covers basic sciences and clinical sciences
- Not a test of problem solving
- Stem focusing on a single topic followed by five options which may be TF
- SBA questions consist of a stem, single question and five options.
- NB: With SBA more than one answer may fit but one will be “best”
MCQ

- 90 Questions
  - 60 TF and 30 SBA

- Marking
  - One mark for TF questions
  - Four marks for SBA questions
  - No negative marking

- Pass mark determined by Angoff reference

- Sittings currently in January and July
MCQ revision

- Questions are a mix of those borrowed from FRCA and MRCP plus newly developed
- FICM example questions
  - 3/5 appeared in my exam
- Steve Benington MCQs in Intensive Care book
  - Aimed at EDIC but covers similar themes
  - Problem solving/ data interpretation does not feature in FFICM MCQ
- FFICM MCQ revision book due out January 2015
- Crit IQ website- MCQ question bank
- FRCA MCQs for basic sciences
SOE/ OSCE

- Must be passed within 3 years of passing the MCQ
- Sitting in March/ April and October
- SOE in the morning, OSCE in the afternoon
- You can carry a pass in one of the components (2 years)

Most recent sitting:
- 76% pass rate for OSCE
- 75% pass rate for SOE
- 63% candidates passed both parts
SOE

- 4 stations
- 2 examiners per station with a set of questions each
- 7 minutes per question
- 1 minute between stations
- Question topics displayed on door to station
“Questions are those that might be asked during a ward round or teaching session”

Candidates are all asked the same questions

Same marking as per FRCA
  - Pass = 2
  - Borderline = 1
  - Fail = 0

Pass mark 80 – 85%
SOE topics

- FICM example questions not particularly representative
  - Heliox
  - Principles of antimicrobial therapy

- My experience was combination of
  - Standard “bread and butter” ICM topics
  - Common medical conditions
  - Working through investigation/ differential
  - Obscure “How do I speak for 7 minutes on this?”
OSCE

- 13 stations
  - 12 “Live” and 1 test
- 7 minutes per station
- 1 minute between stations
- Aims to cover a number of ICM problems
OSCE topics

- Data interpretation
  - Largest component of the OSCE
  - Individual stations on ECG interpretation/ CXR interpretation/ acid base analysis
  - ABGs, blood results, ECGs, CXR and CT scans all feature during scenarios throughout

- Review patient history/ management
  - Clinical scenario with investigation results
  - Stroke/ evidence for decompressive craniectomy
  - Liver failure/ King’s criteria
  - Head injury and neuroprotection
  - Burns
OSCE topics

- Perform examination
  - CAM ICU
  - Mannequin based

- Communication skills
  - Breaking bad news to a relative
  - Discuss misplaced NG tube with junior
OSCE topics

- Equipment
  - IABP
  - Minnesota gastric balloon
  - Pulmonary artery catheters

- Resuscitation station
  - Blocked tracheostomy/ CICV
  - PEA arrest
OSCE

- Pass mark determined using Angoff Referencing
- No killer stations
- Most challenging part of the exam
- Consistently weak stations are ECG and x-ray interpretation
Revision aids: Books

- Oh’s Intensive Care Manual
  - Detailed and extensive

- Oxford desk reference
  - Concise overview of most topics

- Examination Intensive Care Medicine
  - Aimed at ANZICS CICM exam
  - Useful for OSCE and some SOE topics
  - CD with summary of ICU literature and overview of equipment
Revision aids: On line

- Crit IQ
  - Aimed at ANZICS CICM exam
  - Modules in ICM topics/ equipment
  - MCQ question bank
  - Data interpretation examples
  - Literature review
  - Expensive (£120/ year)

- PACT modules on line
  - ESICM patient-centred acute training resource
  - ICM modules with MCQs

- Ficm website
  - Examination report (Chairman’s summary)

- Intensive Care Society guidelines (www.ics.ac.uk)
Revision aids: Apps

- ICU trials
  - Key points of landmark ICU trials

- ICU notes
  - Covers limited basic sciences in relation to ICU
  - Extensive DDx lists
  - Investigation/ Management plans
  - ICU drugs in detail

- ICU pearls
  - Random ICU facts and case studies
  - Not structured in any format
Revision aids: Other specialties

- MRCP revision books
  - Radiology for MRCP
  - CXR made easy
  - Rapid review of clinical medicine for MRCP part 2

- ECG made easy series

- FRCA revision books
  - West’s Respiratory physiology/ pathophysiology
Courses available

- ICS FFICM course £170
  - London
  - Morning of lectures, afternoon of viva/OSCE practice

- PINCER course £125
  - Portsmouth
  - Full day of practice OSCEs and SOEs

- Oxford FFICM course £75
  - Oxford
  - Full day practice OSCEs and SOEs

- National Intensive Care Exam Revision Course (Wales) £175
  - Cardiff
  - Lectures and viva practice
FFICM exam myths

- FFICM is an exit exam

- Detailed knowledge of historical ICU literature required

- FFICM is a UK exam
  - English Law e.g. Mental Capacity Act
  - ICNARC not SICSAG
Summary

- Don’t rely on ICU textbooks
- Raid hospital library for MRCP/FRCA revision books
- Remember to cover English law/practice in your revision
- Expect an obscure SOE topic and DON’T PANIC
- Best revision for this exam was experience