

# INFORMATION REGARDING THE CCSE EXAM FROM MEDICAL STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

CCSE exam is also taken by medical students at the University of Iceland. They were kind enough to answer our questions regarding the CCSE exam.

## 1. How is the exam implemented in your curriculum?

We take the exam as the last thing we do in our 6-year medical education. We get 4 weeks off our usual studies to prepare. Some only used these 4 weeks, but some people had started 1-2 weeks before. We get some credit for taking it, and in our education we are obligated to take it.

## 2. How do you prepare for the CCSE exam?

We are a group of approximately 50 students who graduate every year from the medical department in the University of Iceland and we all use the same method. We use a Q&A-bank called UWorld to prepare for the exam. This is the same question bank that the American students use to prepare for the USMLE test. Most of us actually just use the Q&A-bank and nothing else, some people might use their own notes that they have made through the years as well. But using the Q&A-bank has shown to be the most efficient way. Other Q&A banks do exist but we all agree about UWorld being the best bank.

## 3. What is the literature for the exam?

The literature is all in the bank - it includes over 2200 Q&As and explanations. It takes many weeks to get through all the literature (that's why most of us doesn't use much else to study). The questions are divided into specialties and sub-specialties. The biggest focus is on internal medicine, as it is in the test.

Here is the link to the Q&A bank:

[https://www.uworld.com/Step2CK/Step2CK\\_qbank.aspx](https://www.uworld.com/Step2CK/Step2CK_qbank.aspx)

One of the great things with the bank is that the questions look almost the same as the questions in the CCSE test. In the USA the world Q&A bank is mostly used to prepare the students for the USMLE tests. The template you see in the uworld bank is exactly like it is in the USMLE test. The template in the CCSE test is very alike.

Here is a link to the sample questions – gives you a good idea how the test looks like: <https://www.uworld.com/Step2CK/Demo/Step2Test.html>. When you answer one question you will get the statistic on how many answered with choice a), b), c) etc. And finally you will get an explanation for all the choices. The explanations are usually that detailed so most students think it is enough reading though them instead of reading all the books and glossary again.

**4. Does your Faculty/University provide for the literature?**

Our University doesn't pay it for us, we have to pay it all by ourselves. Although the cost is rather high (60-day account costs 199\$) we all agreed that it was worth it. The Q&A bank is definitely the easiest way to go to study for the CCSE exam.

**5. How long does it take to prepare for the exam?**

Most of us took 5-6 weeks to study for the exam.

**6. How does the exam look like (from an examinee prospective)?**

The exam itself is in 4 parts, and each part is one hour, so that makes a 4-hour program.

The most important thing for the exam day is to be well slept. We started the exam at 1pm - I do neither recommend study in the morning nor study late the night before. And eat well before the exam!

We didn't get any pause during the exam, except we had time left in the part we were. Each part consists of 46 questions, so you only have like 1 min and 20 secs for each question - so you have to think fast, and if you don't know the answer right away, check some answer, mark the question and continue with the exam, you can always go back (in the part that you are in).

**7. Any tips and tricks you're willing to share (regarding the preparation and the actual exam).**

- a. The CCSE exam is the last exam and last project we do in our basic medical education - after that we graduate. So I would recommend taking the exam as late as you can in your studies - so that you have been through the most of the curriculum.
- b. You can't lose points by answering the wrong answer, so always guess, even if you have no idea what is the answer.
- c. When you are studying in the Uworld bank the most important thing is to do some questions of all specialities and sub-specialities. It's not necessary to read and study every 2200 question that is in the bank (most people don't even have time to finish them all) but then it's important to organise yourself and do something of everything.