



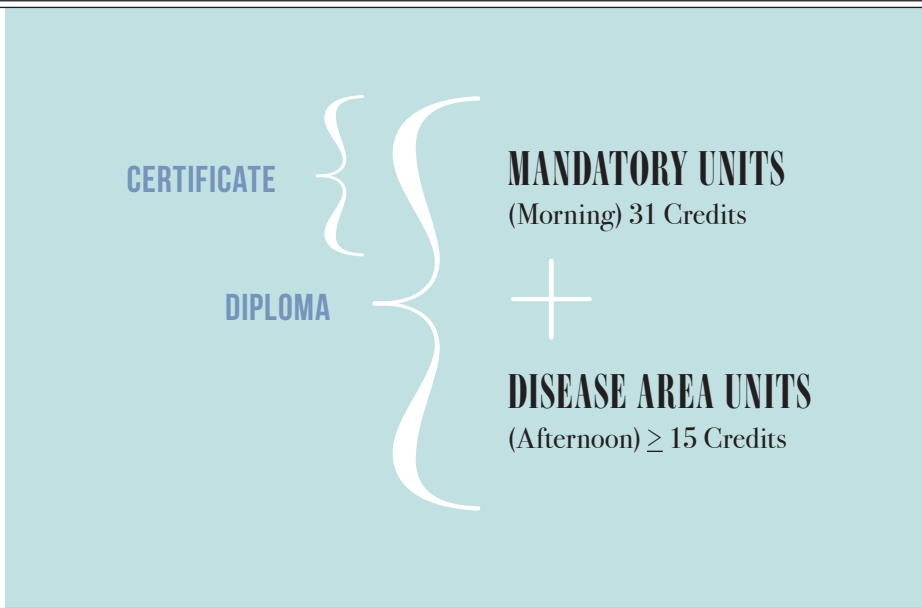
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All in the PREPARATION

The ABPI Medical Representatives exam is an essential part of the professional development of pharmaceutical sales representatives. Here's how to pass with flying colours.

When you are appointed as a Medical Representative or any role which falls within the scope of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) Code of Practice, if your company agrees to abide by the ABPI Code of Practice you will need to prepare for and pass the ABPI exam. You must sit all units of the exam within one year of being employed by your company and you must pass within two years.

The ABPI exam comprises the Certificate (four mandatory units) plus the Diploma (two-three units).



THE MANDATORY UNITS WITHIN THE CERTIFICATE ARE:

Structure of the NHS & Code of Practice

- 5 credits
- 30 questions
- 30 minutes

Human body structure & function 1

- 10 credits
- 40 questions
- 40 minutes

Human body structure & function 2

- 8 credits
- 40 questions
- 40 minutes

Development & use of medicines

- 8 credits
- 45 questions
- 50 minutes

Your company will select your three Diploma units which reflect the company's priorities, though if unit 6 is selected, only one additional unit is required as unit 6 provides double credits. You need to obtain 15 credits for the Diploma.



● Neocortex ● Limbic ● Reptilian

“Create mental associations with mind maps”

GET STARTED

First you need to register as a student with the ABPI and you will then be sent the learning materials. Discuss your preparation for the exam with your manager and book your exam date. Then, working back from that date, prepare your learning schedule. Set yourself milestones by when you will have completed each chapter and book study time in your diary. Stick to your schedule.

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Simplistically you have three brains, reflecting human evolution. We share the reptilian brain at the top of the spinal cord with birds and reptiles and this attends to your survival by controlling hunger, temperature control, fight-or-flight fear responses, defending territory, keeping safe etc.

During evolution, as animals became more complex, the limbic system developed around the reptilian brain to facilitate

emotions, feelings, pleasure, attention and long-term memory. 80% of the brain however comprises the neocortex (cerebrum) which enables us to think, solve problems, translate and support language. If we feel stressed, the reptilian brain becomes more active to ensure our survival, so to engage the cerebrum both whilst studying and in the exam room, we must remain calm, positive and enjoy the experience.

Functionally the brain comprises the conscious mind, which can only deal with 7 +/- 2 pieces of information (George Miller 1956), and the unconscious mind, which has an almost limitless capacity. Clearly therefore, attempting to memorise such a large amount of information will not work. Instead you must absorb and assimilate the knowledge both consciously and unconsciously and a very effective technique is to create mind maps (spider diagrams).

PREPARE FOR SUCCESS

HERE ARE SOME EXAM PREPARATION TIPS:

1.

Speak out loud rather than just reading

2.

Create mental associations with mind maps

3.

The central topic is the starting point for your mind map

4.

Add up to nine branches which your conscious mind can recall with a mnemonic

5.

Add keywords and images

6.

Colour code your branches.

8.



Create crazy associations with the syllabus content

7.



Annotate and highlight your ABPI materials

9.



Watch documentaries or educational TED talks on the topic

10.

Take regular breaks every 45-60 minutes

11.

Have someone else test you

12.

REWARD YOURSELF WITH TREATS

13.

FOCUS ON POSITIVE THOUGHTS

14. Associate learning with people you know, for example people with heart disease, diabetes and so on.

15. Associate learning with your own physiology and personal experience

16. BLOCK DISTRACTING APPS SUCH AS SOCIAL MEDIA



17.



Search for animated explanations on the internet

18.

Create flashcards or cue-cards for testing yourself



19.

Teach yourself or someone else what you have just learned

22.

Consider working with a coach either in a group or one-to-one

20.

Use example questions to reinforce your learning



21.

Draw diagrams to store visual memories; learn 'actively'

23.

Play music (without lyrics) quietly in the background

24.

USE LOTS OF COLOUR WHICH STIMULATES THE UNCONSCIOUS MIND

Taking the exam



Go for a short walk before your exam; exercise can boost your memory



Tell yourself that you have prepared well for this and that you know the answers



Cover the multiple-choice answers with your hand, consider the answer then reveal the choices



If in doubt, go with your 'gut feel' or the first answer that came to you



If you get stuck on a question, move on and return to it later



Answer all of the questions



Remain calm; the Diploma requires cerebral thinking rather than simple factual recall



Remain in the exam room until the end and use this time to go back and check your answers.



Good luck with the exam and every success to you working within this amazing industry. *Phil Yates is Managing Director at Coachwise Consultants Ltd.*

> Go to coachwise.co.uk