What is on the MCAT2015 Exam?

A complete (and excellently exhaustive) interactive overview is available on the AAMC website at: https://www.aamc.org/students/services/343550/mcat2015.html
Section 1: Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems

This section is designed to:

- test introductory-level biology, organic chemistry, and inorganic chemistry concepts;
- test biochemistry concepts at the level taught in many colleges and universities in first-semester biochemistry courses;
- test cellular and molecular biology topics at the level taught in many colleges and universities in introductory biology sequences and first-semester biochemistry courses;
- test basic research methods and statistics concepts described by many baccalaureate faculty as important to success in introductory science courses; and
- require you to demonstrate your scientific inquiry and reasoning, research methods, and statistics skills as applied to the natural sciences.

 Discipline:

- First-semester biochemistry, 25%
- Introductory biology, 65%
- General chemistry, 5%
- Organic chemistry, 5%

To drill down into the specifics of this section, including an overview video, check out the foundational concepts here.
Section 2: Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems

This section is designed to:

- test introductory-level biology, organic and inorganic chemistry, and physics concepts;
- test biochemistry concepts at the level taught in many colleges and universities in first-semester biochemistry courses;
- test molecular biology topics at the level taught in many colleges and universities in introductory biology sequences and first-semester biochemistry courses;
- test basic research methods and statistics concepts described by many baccalaureate faculty as important to success in introductory science courses; and
- require you to demonstrate your scientific inquiry and reasoning, research methods, and statistics skills as applied to the natural sciences.

Discipline:

- First-semester biochemistry, 25%
- Introductory biology, 5%
- General chemistry, 30%
- Organic chemistry, 15%
- Introductory physics, 25%

To drill down into the specifics of this section, including an overview video, check out the foundational concepts here.
Section 3: Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior

- This is the only ENTIRELY NEW section.

From the AAMC MCAT Overview:
- The Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior section asks you to solve problems by combining your knowledge of foundational concepts with your scientific inquiry and reasoning skills. *This section tests your understanding of the ways psychological, social, and biological factors influence perceptions and reactions to the world; behavior and behavior change; what people think about themselves and others; the cultural and social differences that influence well-being; and the relationships between social stratification, access to resources, and well-being.*

- The Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior section emphasizes concepts that tomorrow’s doctors need to know in order to serve an increasingly diverse population and have a clear understanding of the impact of behavior on health. Further, it communicates the need for future physicians to be prepared to deal with the human and social issues of medicine.
Section 3: Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior

This section is designed to:

- test psychology, sociology, and biology concepts that provide a solid foundation for learning in medical school about the behavioral and sociocultural determinants of health;
- test concepts taught at many colleges and universities in first-semester psychology and sociology courses;
- test biology concepts that relate to mental processes and behavior that are taught at many colleges and universities in introductory biology;
- test basic research methods and statistics concepts described by many baccalaureate faculty as important to success in introductory science courses; and
- require you to demonstrate your scientific inquiry and reasoning, research methods, and statistics skills as applied to the social and behavioral sciences.

Discipline:*  
- Introductory psychology, 65% **
- Introductory sociology, 30%
- Introductory biology, 5%

To drill down into the specifics of this section, including an overview video, check out the foundational concepts here.
Section 4: Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills

To recap from Part 1, this section is designed to

- test your comprehension, analysis, and reasoning skills by asking you to critically analyze information provided in passages;
- include content from ethics, philosophy, studies of diverse cultures, population health, and a wide range of social sciences and humanities disciplines; and
- provide all the information you need to answer questions in the passages and questions themselves.

To learn more about the specifics of the Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills section, including approximate word counts on passages and the overview video, check out the foundational concepts here.
What is the Goal?

The ultimate goal of the MCAT is to test your scientific inquiry and reasoning skills specifically in:

- Knowledge of Scientific Concepts and Principles
- Scientific Reasoning and Problem Solving
- Reasoning about the Design and Execution of Research
- Data-Based and Statistical Reasoning

Learn more about “How the MCAT2015 Exam Tests Your Knowledge of Foundational Concepts: For the Natural and Social Sciences”
What Courses to take BEFORE attempting the MCAT2015?

These are the minimum Science courses

- General Chemistry
- Organic Chemistry
- Biology 14a (Genetics and Genomics)
- Biology 15b (Cells and Organisms)
- Intro Physics
- Intro Biochem (BCHM 100)
- Statistics (BioStats, PsychStats, or Intro Stats)

Elective Science Courses others have found useful

- Physiology
- Anatomy
- Calculus
- Microbiology
What Courses to take BEFORE attempting the MCAT2015?

**Minimum Social Science Courses**
- Psych 2a: Psychological and Socio-Cultural Perspectives on Health
- OR
- Introductory Psychology
- Introductory Sociology

**A Sampling of Elective Social Science Courses**
- Anth 1a: Introduction to the Comparative Study of Human Societies
- Various HSSP courses including:
  - HSSP 114: Racial/Ethnic and Gender Inequalities in Health and Health Care
  - Anth 164: Medicine and Religion
  - WMGS 106: Women in the Health Care System
Exam Overview by Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th># of Questions</th>
<th>Time Allotted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examinee Agreement</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutorial (optional)</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>95 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break (optional)</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Exam Break (optional)</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>95 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break (optional)</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>95 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Void Question</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction Survey (optional)</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Content Time</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total “Seated” Time*</td>
<td>Approx. 7 hours</td>
<td>33 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total seated time does not include check-in time on arrival at the test center.

More can be found in the [MCAT Essentials PDF](#).
How to Study?

Prep Course? Self-Study? A combination?
How to Study?

Prep-Course

- Need structure to keep you motivated and provide guidance on what to cover?
- Feel like you need help grasping certain aspects of the material?
- Want help understanding the logic/structure of the exam itself?
- Check out the various exam prep companies to determine which is best for you: Kaplan, Princeton Review, Exam Crackers, etc.

Self Study

- Prefer to study alone for exams?
- Feel confident in the material and your grasp on the various concepts?
- Have the internal motivation to set a rigorous study schedule and stick to it?
- Cost a concern?
- You may find self-study is an effective tool for you.
AAMC Resources

A listing of the free and low-cost AAMC MCAT Resources is available online here.
Pre-health Collection in iCollaborative

- The Pre-Health Collection in iCollaborative is a free, open access resource.
- It is organized by the ten foundational concepts tested on the new exam, so you can search based on specific areas that you feel you help with.
- The collection includes more than 400 video tutorials and hundreds of questions; more are being added regularly.
Khan Academy MCAT Video Collection

- With more than 800 free videos and 1,000 review questions, the Khan Academy MCAT Video Collection covers all the content that will be tested on the MCAT2015 exam.

- Visit the MCAT test preparation collection to study the foundational concepts on the exam, dig deeper into the content categories, watch video tutorials, and answer review questions.

- Breaks it down into material for each concept, study tools, etc.
The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam (MCAT2015), Fourth Edition

- The Guide provides detailed information on what is included on the exam, information about registration, what to expect on test day, the score scale, and how your scores will be used in the admission process.

- The guide also includes 120 practice questions—30 from each of the four sections of the exam. These practice questions are available in an online format that simulates the real MCAT exam experience.

The Book AND the Practice Questions are available online for $35.
Almost all of the information in The Official Guide to the MCAT Exam book is available online.

Pre-Health Advising also has a reference copy if students wish to look at it in the AcServ Annex library area (it may not be removed).

You can purchase the same 120 questions from "The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam (MCAT2015), Fourth Edition." These questions are available standalone in an online, MCAT exam format so you may practice answering the questions in the same format as the actual exam.

The Practice Questions are available online for $10.
Official MCAT2015 Sample Test

Practice for the new exam with the Official MCAT2015 Sample Test. This is the first full-length test written by the developers of the actual MCAT exam.

This online 230-question test allows you to:

- Get a simulated test experience with the same type and number of questions as the actual exam
- Customize how you want to practice by checking your answers question-by-question, taking the entire practice test untimed, or simulating a timed MCAT exam
- Identify patterns in your test-taking skills with the Why Did I Miss This Question feature
- Find out how many correct answers you got in each of the four sections
- Highlight words or phrases that you want to review later
- Navigate the test efficiently using the review screen buttons to go back to skipped and marked questions
- Review the correct answers for each question. Get a breakdown of the questions by foundational concept, content category, scientific inquiry and reasoning skill, and discipline area

The sample test is available for $25; your purchase allows you to take the test up to 20 times.
Official MCAT® Question Packs

- The MCAT Question Packs allow you to choose the subject areas you want to focus on.
- There are 6 Question Packs available individually for $15 each.
- You can purchase all 6 Question Packs (720 questions total) for $72 (a 20% discount).
- The questions are all real MCAT questions used on previous exams and selected as relevant to the MCAT2015 exam.

- Official MCAT Biology Question Pack, Volume 1
- Official MCAT Biology Question Pack, Volume 2
- Official MCAT Chemistry Question Pack
- Official MCAT Physics Question Pack
- Official MCAT Critical Analysis and Reasoning Question Pack, Volume 1
- Official MCAT Critical Analysis and Reasoning Question Pack, Volume 2
Official MCAT2015 Practice Test #1

- Available in Fall 2015, a second full-length will be released.

- The 230 question test will be the first practice test to offer scoring information.

- Check back at the [AAMC MCAT Preparation site](https://www.aamc.org) in the fall for the release.
Scores

Scoring, Range, Score Reports, and how Medical Schools expect to use the new scores in this cycle.
Overview

- Watch the [MCAT2015 Score Scale for Students](#) video
How is it scored?

# Sample Score Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Confidence Band</th>
<th>Percentile Rank of Score</th>
<th>Score Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>124 → 126</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>118 → 125 → 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>126 → 128</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>118 → 125 → 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>129 → 131</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>118 → 125 → 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>123 → 125</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>118 → 125 → 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCAT Total Score</strong></td>
<td><strong>506</strong></td>
<td><strong>504 → 508</strong></td>
<td><strong>76%</strong></td>
<td><strong>118 → 125 → 132</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

1. Test scores, like other measurements, are not perfectly precise. The confidence bands around test scores mark the ranges in which the test taker’s true scores likely lie. The diamond shapes and shading indicate that the test taker’s true score is more likely to be in the center of the confidence bands than at the ends.

2. The percentile ranks of scores are the percentages of test takers who received the same score or lower scores.

3. For the four sections, the score profile shows a test taker’s strengths and weaknesses.

https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/scores/418642/understanding-your-mcat-scores.html
Components of the Score Report

Percentile Ranks
0 Percentile ranks show how your scores compare to other examinees who took the new version of the MCAT as you. You will receive percentile ranks for each individual section score and for your overall total score.

Confidence Bands
0 Confidence bands show the accuracy of your section and total scores. Similar to the past version of the MCAT exam and other standardized tests, scores from the MCAT exam will not be perfectly precise. Scores can be affected or influenced by many factors. Confidence bands mark the ranges in which your "true scores" likely lie. Confidence bands help signal the inaccuracy of test scores and are intended to discourage distinctions between applicants with similar scores.

Score Profiles
0 Score profiles are included to show you your strengths and weaknesses across all four sections of the exam. This section of the score report can be used to help you determine areas to focus on, should you decide to retake the exam.

https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/scores/418642/understanding-your-mcat-scores.html
How will MCAT2015 scores be used?

- We expect Percentile Rank to be utilized by medical schools in evaluating applicants this year (with both old and new MCAT scores being used by applicants).

- If a school’s average MCAT fell into the 90% on the old MCAT, we would expect them to look for the 90% to about their average on the new MCAT.
What does this mean?

- In 2013, the midpoint (50%) on the old MCAT was between a 25 and a 26. For the MCAT2015 the midpoint (50%) will be set at a 500.

- In 2013, the 90% was equivalent to a 33 (90.6%). We do not yet know what this will be on the MCAT2015.

- Differences: The old exam was based on 3 sections, the new exam will include all 4 sections so the percentile is not directly equivalent.
Questions?

Contact Pre-Health Advising

Misty Huacuja-LaPointe, Director
Abby Voss, Assistant Director
Nicole Labrecque, Department Coordinator

pha@brandeis.edu
For appointments call Academic Services at 781-736-3470
or book online!

Quick Questions Drop-in Appointments
Monday – Friday, 1:30-2:30pm