

Preface

While preparing recently for the multiple choice component of the European Diploma in Intensive Care (EDIC), I was struck by the fact that there were no dedicated MCQ books available to aid my revision. While intensive care medicine has long formed part of the syllabus for professional examinations in anaesthesia, surgery and medicine in the UK, various standalone qualifications (including the European and UK diplomas) are now available. While currently 'desirable', their possession is likely to become mandatory in the near future for senior trainees; MCQs will remain a tried and tested means of assessing the candidate's knowledge.

The 300 MCQs herein are intended to cover the breadth of knowledge required of the practising intensive care physician. They draw on the Competency-Based Training programme in Intensive Care Medicine (CoBaTrICE) syllabus provided by the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine. Topics include resuscitation, diagnosis, disease management, practical procedures, peri-operative care, ethics and applied basic science. The answer to each question is accompanied by short referenced notes sourced from peer-reviewed journals, educational articles and major critical care textbooks.

I hope this book will be of value not only to those preparing for professional examinations in the specialty, but also to junior intensive care trainees and senior intensive care nurses wishing to expand their knowledge, and to practising intensive care physicians as a teaching aid. In addition, trainees in the specialties mentioned above may also find this book a useful complement to their exam preparation.

I would like to thank both editors, Maire Shelly and Peter Nightingale, for their time and invaluable help in preparing this manuscript. Both are busy intensive care physicians with regional and national responsibilities, and both are EDIC examiners with a major commitment to teaching and training. Many of the questions in this book have been rewritten, had ambiguities removed or been otherwise honed as a result of their careful scrutiny; any remaining errors are my responsibility.

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Foreword

This book marks the beginning of an era! Intensive care medicine is not only included in books of MCQs in anaesthesia, surgery and medicine, it now has a specialty-based MCQ book in its own right.

MCQs are now a fact of life for those sitting undergraduate and postgraduate medical examinations. To be successful it is essential that candidates have a sound knowledge base and practise their technique adequately beforehand. This collection of MCQs has been put together by Dr Steve Benington primarily as an aid for those sitting the European Diploma of Intensive Care (EDIC) but its appeal will undoubtedly be wider. Members of the multidisciplinary team on the ICU, those in other specialties who wish to expand their knowledge and trainers who are helping candidates to prepare for the examination, will all find it invaluable.

It has been our privilege to help him develop this book. We hope the material within will act as a useful guide to the scope and standard of the EDIC and will inspire others to learn more about intensive care medicine.

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How to use this book

Answering the questions

This book contains three 100-question multiple choice papers. Each paper comprises 50 Type 'A' and 50 Type 'K' questions, following the format of the EDIC Part 1 examination. There is no negative marking and therefore every question should be attempted. Under exam conditions a maximum time of three hours is permitted to complete a paper.

Type 'A' questions require the candidate to select the SINGLE best answer from the five options presented. In some cases the other four options are clearly wrong, but in others the distinction will be less clear-cut. The accompanying referenced notes should clarify the reasoning behind the correct answer.

Type 'K' questions consist of a statement followed by four stems, EACH requiring a 'True' or 'False' answer.

Marking the questions

The maximum score for a paper is 100 marks. For Type 'A' questions 1 mark is scored for a correct answer, and 0 for a wrong answer. For Type 'K' questions 1 mark is scored if all four stems are answered correctly, with a half mark if three out of four are correct. No marks are scored if more than one stem is answered incorrectly.

For the EDIC part I examination, the pass mark is set based on the mean and standard deviation of the marks of candidates in any one sitting. Previously this has been around 55-60%. The questions in this book are intended to be of a similar level of difficulty. A candidate scoring over 60% can be confident that they are well-prepared, while a score of 50% or below means further work is required!