

Ochsner Clinical School
USMLE Step 2CK Study Plan
Revised 10/1/2021
Office of Student Affairs

Bottom Line

1. The best study approaches for Step 2CK are (1) continuous study for shelf exams during third year rotations, and (2) USMLE world resource and question banks
2. Take the CK exam between years 3 and 4 if possible; if not, no later than May 1st
3. Focused and well-organized students do best. Take notes during study and review these notes the week prior to the CK exam
4. Take your study plan seriously from day 1 of year 3 and review many questions.

Introduction

The CK exam is a clinically focused, multiple choice exam that can be taken locally at the Prometric site. Quoting directly from the USMLE website: *“Step 2 CK assesses an examinee’s ability to apply medical knowledge, skills, and understanding of clinical science essential for the provision of patient care under supervision and includes emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention. Step 2 CK ensures that due attention is devoted to principles of clinical sciences and basic patient-centered skills that provide the foundation for the safe and competent practice of medicine under supervision.”* That underlined portion appears to be new this year. This study guide is based on advice from class of 2021 Ochsner Clinical School students who scored highly.

The USMLE website (www.usmle.org) and the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates website (www.ecfmq.org) are good resources to learn about this exam and your situation as a University of Queensland/Ochsner Clinical School student. Step 2CK can be taken any time after the end of third year but should be taken before May 1st of your fourth year.

Successful students uniformly advise that you should take CK between years 3 and 4, if you are ready to pass at that time.

Study resources

Recommended resources

1. USMLE World – 6-month subscription provided by OCS. This resource provides excellent explanatory material.
2. End-of-rotation shelf exams – take these seriously and cover pertinent step material on every rotation during your third year.

3. Online Med Ed videos (www.onlinemeded.org). This resource contains short videos applicable to both “the boards and the wards.” During your intensive study after the third year, consider reviewing weakest topics or those covered at the beginning of your third year.
4. AMBOSS is new to the list of recommended resources for 2021. AMBOSS has an option to do an end of year custom step 2 study plan that includes questions from the most common topics. It may be good to use a mixture of AMBOSS and UWorld questions, giving a variety of question types to properly prepare.

Other resources

1. Rotation-specific resources:
 - a. Step Up to Medicine (IM) and IM Essentials by ACP online. More of CK is IM than anything else.
 - b. Case files for all rotations
 - c. UWorld and ACOG questions for OBGYN
 - d. Blueprints and PreTest for pediatrics
 - e. First Aid Psychiatry
 - f. Pestana for Surgery Shelf
2. Osmosis (www.osmosis.org) contains more videos now. Very comprehensive clinical reasoning videos
3. Sketchy Medical, Pharm, and Path
4. Divine Intervention podcasts can be high yield. View the military episode b/c there will be military-related questions.
5. ANKI flashcards
6. Doctors in Training (DIT) videos.
7. Master The Boards

Question Banks:

1. USMLE World - A smartphone app allows you to do questions during your downtime. Complete ALL of these questions – be sure to understand the reasoning behind all correct and incorrect answers. Do at least 1 pass. Do the questions in a “timed” mode, especially if you struggled with time management for step 1. Consider completing 40-60 questions per day.
2. AMBOSS question bank.
3. USMLE World Biostatistics Subject Review - A quick and easy resource to use to review this material. A great way to get easy points on the examination. 90-day subscription costs \$25.

Practice Tests:

1. UWorld Self-Assessment was highly rated by students, who said results from this exam were within +/- 2 points of CK score.
2. NBME practice exam. Consider doing the practice exams with your mask on! Use these earlier in your dedicated study to get your timing down and to point

out areas to focus study. Results from NBME 4 are the most predictive (+/- 10 points final CK score).

3. DO NOT ALLOW yourself to become dependent on practice tests.

Timeline for Study

Throughout third year: Take shelf examinations seriously and prepare diligently with rotation-specific materials. Complete relevant questions in UWorld while on the corresponding rotation. Doing this will pace you for completion of the entire question bank by the end of your third year.

Students recommended around 3-4 weeks of dedicated study but advised that you should know yourself. If you did not work on CK during your third year, you might need extra time.

End of third year: NBME practice examination to determine your readiness and prioritize areas for study.

Between third/fourth year: Concentrate on USMLE World question bank as your principal resource, including reading/understanding the rationale for all correct and incorrect answers. Again, we highly recommend taking CK during this time period if you are prepared to pass.

April of your fourth year: Take NBME practice examinations under simulated exam conditions with your mask on. Take UWorld 8-hour simulated examination to ensure you have the stamina for the exam.

No later than **May 1st**: Sit for the CK examination.

Pointers for CK

Most students require 2-4 months to prepare adequately for CK. We cannot stress enough how important it is that you study well during your rotations and perform well on Shelf exams. They make a huge difference on how confident you will be and how long you need to study.

CK scores usually return around 2 weeks after completing the exam. CK examinees testing late June through late August 2022 will probably experience much longer delays. In 2021, no scores were reported between June 28th and Aug 25th. Thus, if a student took the exam on June 29th, they got their score report on Aug 25th.

Factors determining appropriate timing for you to sit for CK

1. When are you doing away rotations? Don't take the exam then.
2. Personal insights (from practice examinations) of your readiness
3. Take CK prior to May 1st.

Consider taking a short practice exam at your chosen Prometrics testing center about a week prior to the exam so that you can familiarize yourself with the site, testing conditions and identification requirements at the site.

Incorporate exercise, rest and good nutrition during your study preparations. Relax the day prior to the exam. Don't cram on that day – you risk overly stressing yourself.

Plan for nutrition and fluids during the exam. This exam is longer than step 1. Think positively! You passed step 1, and now you're going to do well on CK.