

American Board of Emergency Medicine

In-training Examination
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

- 1. What is the appropriate use of In-training Examination scores?** The only validated use of In-training Examination scores is to provide one piece of information to EM residents and their faculty to determine the residents' degree of preparedness for taking the ABEM Qualifying Examination.
- 2. Are my residents allowed to discuss the content of ABEM's In-training Examination?** No. ABEM policy no longer allows for any discussion of ITE content following examination administration. Doing so constitutes an irregularity under ABEM's Policy on In-training Examination Irregularities. Exposed examination content undermines the In-training Examination's ability to accurately predict outcomes on the Qualifying Examination.
- 3. How is the reported In-training Examination score determined?** The total number of items a resident correctly answered is calculated. A statistical process called equating is then used to adjust and scale the scores to ensure that scores reflect the same level of ability across examination administration years.
- 4. How is the percent chance of passing the ABEM Qualifying Examination calculated?** ABEM annually conducts research using the In-training Examination to predict performance on the Qualifying Examination. The result is an indicator to residents and faculty of whether a resident is on target to pass the Qualifying Examination the first time they take it. The results of this analysis are contained in the individual resident reports and in the report titled *Summary of Residents Taking The 2026 In-Training Examination by EM Residency Training Level*. Models are tailored to each level within program formats PGY 1-3 and PGY 1-4 and therefore are not comparable.
- 5. Why is some information missing on my resident's score report?** Residents in combined training programs, advance match residents, and residents in international programs represent groups too small and diverse to provide useful comparison data, such as the percentile ranks and the percent passing the Qualifying Examination. Programs that fall within these categories are provided with the *Summary of PGY 1-3 Residents Taking the 2026 In-training Examination by EM Residency Training Level*. ABEM suggests using your knowledge of the resident's training curriculum to pick an appropriate comparison level for your resident.
- 6. What is the standard error of measurement?** Every examination score is comprised of both information about a resident's ability and some error. This error can come from the test's quality or external factors like a resident's preparedness or current health. ABEM calculates the amount of error using the standard error of measurement (SEM). SEM is calculated using reliability statistics and score variability. SEM can be used to understand the magnitude of error in a resident's score.
- 7. How is percentile rank calculated?** The percentile rank is calculated for each score by adding the percent of residents at each EM residency training level who achieve that score or less. A difference in one percentile can mean a difference in several score points for high and low scores achieved by few residents. On the other hand, a difference in several percentiles can mean a difference of only one score point in the middle of the score range where several residents might score.
- 8. Why are there so many messages in the reports about promoting my program?** Over the past few years, ABEM has become aware of several instances in which residency program faculty have used In-training Examination feedback to claim that their program has been "highly ranked" by

ABEM. ABEM has never ranked resident training programs and believes that ranking programs is not in the best interest of the specialty.

In addition, programs should be aware that ABEM privacy rules require the resident's written permission before sharing scores outside the program. The scores are kept in confidence between the program director and the resident, unless the resident grants permission to share their score.

- 9. Who do I talk to if I have a question about my reports?** If you have any questions about your reports, please feel free to contact the Scoring Team by email at ScoringTeam@abem.org.

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