

Taking the Exam

Follow the tips in “Before You Take the Exam” to help you study and prepare for the exam. Then, when the big day comes, follow the tips below to make sure you pass the exam. These suggestions are designed to help you focus on applying your knowledge and experience to answering the questions, rather than being distracted or overwhelmed by the stress of taking the test.

What to Bring

- » Be sure to bring your authorization letter from PMI to the test site, as well as two forms of ID with exactly the same name you entered on the exam application.
- » Make sure you are comfortable during the exam. Wear layered clothing and bring a sweater to sit on, in case the chairs are uncomfortable.
- » Bring snacks! Bring lunch! You won't be able to bring food into the exam room, but you might want to eat something just before taking the exam to keep from getting hungry. You don't need the distraction of hunger pains when taking the exam.

Before You Start

- » You will be given scratch paper and pencils (and possibly earplugs or headphones) before starting the exam. You can use the scratch paper to jot down anything you want to remember during the exam, to free up your mind to focus on the questions.
- » If you need more scratch paper during the exam, the testing center will require you to hand in your used scratch paper. However, this is unlikely to be an issue for the PMI-ACP exam since there will be few (if any) questions that involve formulas or calculation.
- » If your exam is given on a computer, you will have the chance to do a 15-minute computer tutorial before starting the exam. Even if you don't think you need it, it's a good idea to take advantage of this opportunity to become familiar with the computer and its commands.

How the Exam Will Work

- » During the exam, you will see one question on the screen at a time. You can answer a question and/or mark it to return to it later. You will be able to move back and forth through the questions during the exam.
- » The exam doesn't adapt to your answers. The questions will be selected when your exam starts, and they won't change after that.
- » The PMI-ACP exam won't include many questions that require calculations. But if it is needed, you will have access a calculator. Some test sites provide physical calculators; if you are taking the exam on a computer, the calculator is likely to be online or included with each question that requires a calculation.

Stay Calm and Carry On

- » Smile! Smiling relieves stress and makes you feel more confident.
- » Before you start, take a moment to remind yourself of your test-taking quirks and the strategies you have come up with for dealing with them.
- » Use deep-breathing techniques to control your stress and help yourself relax. This can be as simple as taking five deep breaths, which will provide more oxygen to your brain. This is particularly helpful to do before the exam, if you are very nervous, or during the exam, if you notice yourself reading the same question two or three times.
- » Focus on one question at a time—be sure to stay focused on the current question. If you're still thinking about question 20 when you reach question 70, that means there were 50 questions that you didn't read closely enough.
- » Don't get distracted by your emotions. You might dislike some of the questions or be dismayed at how many questions you are having to mark for review. But don't let your feelings snowball into anger or anxiety; just remind yourself that you are well prepared, and then turn your attention back to the task at hand.

Answer the Questions Carefully

- » Control the exam; don't let it control you. You might find yourself staring blankly at the first several questions, thinking that you can't answer them. This happens because your stress level is high and you aren't in the flow of the exam yet. If you don't know the answer to a question, use the "Mark for Review" function and come back to it later. If you do this, your first pass through the exam should be pretty quick, just picking off all the easy questions.
- » Be prepared for ambiguous questions. Read each question carefully, then try to choose the best answer. There may be more than one "correct" answer to each question, but there is only one "BEST" answer. Look for the BEST answer.
- » Identify what is actually being asked in the question. It can be helpful to first figure out what is being asked and decide what the answer should be, and only look at the answer options after that.
- » Read all four answer choices. (Failing to do this is one of the main reasons why people get questions wrong. Don't make that mistake!) After reading the question, look at all four choices carefully and select the BEST answer. If you find yourself forgetting to read all the options, start reading the choices backwards (choice D first, then C, etc.).
- » Many questions will include one or more seemingly plausible choices that are meant to distract you from the correct answer. It might seem as though there are only shades of difference between these choices; read them carefully to identify the BEST answer.
- » Quickly eliminate any answers that are highly implausible. Many questions have only two plausible options and two obviously incorrect options.
- » In the answer choices, be alert for qualifiers such as "first," "last," "next," "best," "never," "always," "except," "not," "most likely," "less likely," "primary," "initial," "most," etc. If you don't notice these words, you are likely to answer the question incorrectly.

- » Also be alert for generalizations such as “always,” “never,” “must,” “completely,” and so forth. Answers that include broad, sweeping generalizations like this tend to be incorrect.
- » On the other hand, answer choices that have carefully qualified statements are more likely to be correct; to identify these choices, look for words such as “often,” “sometimes,” “perhaps,” “may,” and “generally.”
- » When a question asks you to fill in a blank space, the correct answer might not be grammatically correct when inserted in the sentence.
- » Watch out for choices that are true statements but don’t answer the question.
- » Don’t follow the guideline that the longest answer is the right one. That isn’t true for this exam.
- » Be alert to the fact that the answer to one question is sometimes given away in another question.

Finishing Up

- » Use all the exam time. Don’t leave early unless you have reviewed your answer to each question twice.
- » The exam won’t be scored until you indicate you are ready or your time is up. If you complete the exam before the time runs out, you’ll have multiple opportunities to indicate that you’re done.
- » If you pass, the computer or the exam proctor will provide you with a certificate, and you will be officially certified. If you don’t pass, PMI will send you information about retaking the exam. (You’ll have to pay an additional fee to retake the exam.)

Good luck on the exam, and let us know when you pass by e-mailing us at agileprep@rmcls.com!