



---

*While your intuition is a good guide in a multiple-choice exam, the questions require thoughtful consideration to deduce an answer. To improve your exam performance you should: (1) thoroughly understand what you are being tested on; (2) understand the various parts of a multiple-choice question; and (3) become familiar with the multiple-choice format.*

You need to know what type of multiple-choice questions will be included in your exams, or at least

WRITING CENTRE  
Level 3 East, Hub Central  
North Terrace campus, The University of Adelaide

ph +61 8 8313 3021  
writingcentre@adelaide.edu.au  
www.adelaide.edu.au/writingcentre/

Despite the type of multiple-choice questions, there are three important parts that you need to recognise: the root, the stem and the options.

The root is the core, or the main part of the question which relates to the facts you are being asked about. It may be any length and can apply to one or more questions. The facts contained in the root should enable you to answer the question.

The root is the problem base for the questions, so do not add to it.

All of the facts in the root may be significant, or some can be irrelevant.

The stem may take several forms, but it is what you will recognise as the actual question. They may take some of the forms above (1-6).

The stem may modify or supplement the information contained in the root. Often, this occurs where the same root is used as the basis for a series of questions.

It may specify the cause of action or theory to use when answering the question.

This is the list of selections you can choose your answer from.

They may be clear and concise, or they may be longer and include additional facts.

You may have more success in multiple-choice exams if you follow some of these strategies:

Time is always limited in an exam, and students can rush and get the answer wrong because they missed a key word or misread the question. Manage your time in the exam so you set aside a specific duration for each question and adhere to this plan.

Be alert for basic statements which seem unusual. The change in language (e.g. prefixes and suffixes) could result in a change in answer. In addition, a single word may completely change the meaning of a question. Consider the following example:

Drinking alcohol results in increased

- a. alertness
- b. attenpe/Pa,m0 g[



Regular practice sessions are an excellent way to test whether you truly understood the past

friends and other students. Creating tests for each other can be an excellent way to improve your knowledge and your exam techniques. Anything you can do to imitate exam conditions will be advantageous: for instance, you might like to time yourself or test yourself in the Library or another formal space.

If you are anxious about your exams, you can seek assistance. If stress becomes overwhelming there are a number of strategies you can explore. The University of Adelaide Counselling Service runs workshops on stress management and relaxation, or you can make a personal consultation time with one of the counsellors by ringing 8313 5663.

[http://services.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/479500/Understanding\\_and\\_doing\\_well\\_in\\_multiple\\_choice\\_exams\\_Update\\_051112.pdf](http://services.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/479500/Understanding_and_doing_well_in_multiple_choice_exams_Update_051112.pdf)

<http://www.law.suffolk.edu/offices/stuservices/asp/pdf/MasteringMultiChoiceQues.pdf>