

# 2026 ACVIM CARDIOLOGY SPECIALTY EXAMINATION

## Candidate Preparation Information

The information below is provided to help prepare for the Cardiology Specialty Examination. Information pertaining to the exam schedule, administration, use of translational dictionaries, and special accommodation requests can be located on the [Specialty Exams](#) page on the ACVIM website

## Exam Structure and Scoring

The Cardiology Specialty Examination is a multi-day compensatory exam worth a total of 300 points. Exam questions may be a combination of multiple-choice and other machine-scorable item types (i.e., fill in the blank, selecting from a list, etc.), along with open-response (short answer) items.

To help create a fair and balanced exam, every effort is made to ensure that each testing day carries approximately the same total number of points. Within each day, exam sections are constructed to be as comparable as possible in terms of question type and point value. Across the administration cycle, the four sections are balanced so that scoring opportunities are distributed as evenly as possible from year to year.

The pass point for the Cardiology Specialty Exam is determined by either a standard setting process where Cardiology Diplomates rate the examination based on the definition of the minimal level of competence or a statistical procedure called equating which is used to adjust for any differences in the level of difficulty across examination forms. The pass point is approved by the ACVIM Certification Council.

Starting in 2025, ACVIM adopted a standardized scaled score range to report scores for all certification exams. Scaled scores provide a uniform frame of reference based on the standard adopted by ACVIM of the threshold at which a candidate demonstrates minimum competency. The scaled scores account for variation among forms, so candidates are held to the same standard regardless of which form they take. Scaled scores are determined by converting the total exam score out of 300 possible points to a scaled score that ranges from **200** to **800**. The raw pass point approved by ACVIM is set to equal a scaled score of 600. A candidate needs a scaled score of at least **600** to pass the examination.

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