

2026 ACVIM NUTRITION SPECIALTY EXAMINATION

Candidate Preparation Information

The information below is provided to help prepare for the Specialty Examination in Nutrition. 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 Nutrition Specialty Examination is a conjunctive exam consisting of two sections scored separately. Exam questions may be a combination of multiple-choice questions and other item types (i.e., fill in the blank, selecting from a list, etc.), along with open-response (short answer) items.

- General: 100 equally weighted items.
- Clinical Cases: 3 case studies totaling 22 questions and 300 points.

To become Board-certified, candidates must pass both sections of the Nutrition Specialty Examination. First-time candidates must take both sections, while those who do not pass both sections are only required to retake the section they did not pass.

The pass point for the Nutrition Specialty Exam is determined by either a standard setting process where 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 100 and 300 possible points, respectively, 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 each section of the examination.

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