

Study Tips for Members Writing the ABCFP Registration Exams

The objective of this document is to help enrolled members get organized to start studying and then maintain good study habits to properly prepare for their registration exam.

A. The Year Before you Write – Light Preparation

It is a good idea to start getting organized the year before you write so you don't feel overwhelmed during your exam year. Here are some things you can do early on to prepare yourself for serious studying later:

1. Visit the ABCFP website (www.abcfp.ca) to see the resources available to help you study. Click on *Member's Area, Enrolment to Registration, Registration Exam*, scroll down and click on *Preparing to Write the Exam*. Under *Preparing to Write the Exam* click on *more* or under *Exam Questions* click on *Preparing to Write the Exam*. This webpage has many resources to help you study.
 2. Click on the *Registration Exam Resource Library* and start collecting all material for your exam listed on this site. Make sure you check next year as well to receive updated material. Read this material at your leisure. Once you have finished each document, **summarize it in a short document**. These summaries will go into your study binder when you build it next year. It is good to prepare some of these summaries in your first year so you don't have to cram during the year you write the exam.
 3. Find out if there is a study group in your community and consider attending study group meetings. You can audit these meetings to absorb the dialogue or become more involved at your discretion.
 4. If there is no study group in your community, keep an eye on the website to see if one is formed in the future so you can attend meetings. At this stage in your studies, you may not need to form a study group, but you can if you want to do so.
 5. Become familiar with the RFT and RPF registration exam study threads on the ABCFP Discussion Forum to give you an idea of how you can use this forum as a serious study tool next year.
-

6. Consider buying the Forest Legislation and Policy Reference Guide when it comes out in July. This guide will contain at least 90% of the material in next year's guide and is about 600 pages. This gives you a chance to read each chapter at your leisure and determine your knowledge gaps where you will need to look up more information. Starting your reading early is better than cramming this document during the year you write.
7. Gather the past two years issues of the **BC Forest Professional** magazine and make sure you keep all present issues as they come out. Each issue contains useful topics for studying.
8. Sign up for your free subscription to Quickscribe. This service lets you view detailed information about each legislative amendment and provides direct links to the affected section.
9. Check out the past exams and sample answers on the ABCFP website to give you an idea of the type of questions you can expect and quality of answers you need to provide.
10. Set aside two to four hours each week or two for the above study tips in the year before you write. This discipline will allow you to prepare yourself for studying next year when the hard work begins in earnest.

B. During the Year that You Write – Serious Studying

1. Check the ABCFP website to see if there is a study group in your community so you can join. If there isn't, form your own study group in January or February. It is best to have a combined RFT and RPF study group because there are common topics to both.
 2. To form your own study group, go to the ABCFP member directory, at <https://secure.abcfp.ca/imisCustom/Directory/Disclaimer.aspx>, log on and enter Forester in Training or Trainee Forest Technologist under designation and then enter the name of your community (city) or neighbouring communities and click *Search*. This will give you a list of FITs and TFTs you can contact to form your study group.
 3. Register your study group on the ABCFP website at http://www.abcfp.ca/members_area/enrollment_to_registration/registration_exam/studygroups.asp and then announce your study group or ask if anyone wants to join your study group on the ABCFP Discussion Forum.
 4. Your study group should meet at an appointed time and place once a week. During your first meeting, start building a list of potential exam study topics (current or hot topics) and keep adding to this list as the year goes on. **Post this topic list on the ABCFP Discussion Forum** so others can add to it or, add to an existing list.
-

5. Have a look at your list of potential exam study topics and if you need help understanding a particular topic, ask your sponsor, co-workers or specialists for where you can find current information. Build a network of advisors or specialists who can help you fill in your knowledge gaps.
 6. Set up an e-mail group for your study group so you can easily exchange information.
 7. At each study group meeting, assign a topic or document to each study group member who will then prepare a summary for that topic/document and bring it to the next meeting to share with the rest of the group. Discuss each topic summary for the benefit of the group and assign new topics for members to summarize for the next meeting. These topic or document summaries go into your study binder.
 8. Bring in guest speakers who are knowledgeable about study topics to talk to your group. Take notes and put these in your study binder. Guest speakers and study group members can join in by speaker phone.
 9. Send an e-mail to the contact person for each registered study group on the ABCFP website (refer to # 3 above) and offer to share your topic summaries with them and ask if they can share their topic summaries with you. This enlarges your study group to a provincial size and lessens each study group's workload so every study group doesn't have to work on their own and summarize the same topics.
 10. **Your study group's most valuable tool is the ABCFP Discussion Forum.** Post your topics and summaries to receive comments from other users and to ask questions about any topic. If your discussion group has any type of technical or ethical question, this is the best way to get an answer. Post announcements about your study group and any guest speakers. The ABCFP will also post study tips and exam information on this forum.
 11. Refer to the RFT and RPF study group information on the ABCFP Discussion Forum. There is a lot of valuable current and past advice for studying and writing the exam.
 12. Buy the Forest Legislation and Policy Reference Guide (available in hard copy or by electronic download) when it comes out in July. At the end of each chapter is a section entitled "Apply the Knowledge" where there are potential exam questions and answers. Prepare summaries of each chapter for your study binder.
 13. Register for the ABCFP workshops to help prepare for the exam. They are available in person at certain locations or online. Watch for information about these workshops in the **Increment**. There are presently four workshops: *Working Effectively with Aboriginal Peoples*, *Professional Reliance*, *Professional Ethics and Obligations* and *Writing the Best Exam Possible*. You can register at: http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/continuing_education/workshops.asp#ab09. You can also purchase workshop materials for some of these workshops.
-

14. Attend the ABCFP Policy Review Seminars in September to fill in knowledge gaps. Starting in 2010, these will also be available by live broadcast through the web. Watch the **Increment** for details.
 15. Summarize topics in the **BC Forest Professional** magazine issues from the past three years. Some past issues contain exam study tips.
http://www.abcfp.ca/publications_forms/magazine.asp
 16. Keep an eye on the ABCFP professional development calendar for workshops and events which will help you prepare for the exam:
http://www.abcfp.ca/practice_development/professional_development_calendar/events_calendar.asp
 17. Ask your sponsor to give you advice on potential exam topics and discuss topics and questions with him or her.
 18. Look at strategies for answering questions on the registration exams at:
http://www.abcfp.ca/members_area/enrollment_to_registration/registration_exam/documents/exam_guidetoOs2005.pdf
 19. Use Quickscribe to study applicable legislation.
 20. Make sure you have all the documents from the Registration Exam Resource Library for your exam year and you have summarized them. Keep in mind that this resource library is not a complete list and you will have to study other information as well.
 21. Refer to the study hypotheticals (ethics case scenarios) on the ABCFP website at:
http://www.abcfp.ca/members_area/enrollment_to_registration/registration_exam/documents/Study%20Hypotheticals-2008.pdf
 22. During the last couple of months before the exam, look at the past exams on the ABCFP website at:
http://www.abcfp.ca/members_area/enrollment_to_registration/registration_exam/preparing_to_write.asp and without looking at the answers, sit down and write answers to exam questions for the past couple of years. This will give you exam writing practise and help with your time management. Discuss answers amongst your study group peers. Most valedictorians say the practice and discussion are what best prepared them for the exam.
 23. Consult people who wrote the exam last year and obtain study tips from them while their experience is still fresh in their minds.
 24. Your study group can update questions from previous exams and then prepare practice answers. The study group can also prepare other practice questions so members can answer them. Try putting a time limit on answering these practice questions.
 25. Read and summarize all the stewardship and practice reports, policy papers, practice guidelines and regulatory publications on the ABCFP website:
http://www.abcfp.ca/publications_forms/publications/committee_reports.asp
-

C. Organizing and Building Your Study Binder

1. You can look at previous study binders for reference but it is important to build your own binder and organize it to suit your needs. You should not use or modify someone else's binder from the past because the process of reading and summarizing documents and building your binder is a good study tool.
2. Put tabs in your binder for each subject area. Customize these tabs to suit your personal needs.
3. Don't put whole pieces of legislation in your binder. This takes up too much room and you won't have time read legislation during the exam. You won't be asked to quote sections of legislation. When you read a piece of legislation (act, regulation or Bylaw), use your discretion to determine which sections are applicable to the exam and then summarize the main points and put this summary in your binder. e.g.: the *Foresters Act*, *Forest Act*, *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation* etc.
4. When you read a document or paper, prepare a short summary and put it in a tabbed section of your binder. From then on, study this summary rather than the original document.
5. The following advice about preparing summaries for your binder is from Angeline Nyce LLB, RPF:
 - Prepare a brief outline of the article or publication with headings for easy reference,
 - Answer the following questions (literally): who, what, where, when, why, how,
 - Describe any real or potential professional ethics and obligations issues,
 - Identify and describe the applicable forestry legislation and/or policy,
 - Based on your understanding of the issues/topics, state your position on the issues raised in the article and any advantages or disadvantages to the practice of forestry; include in your analysis arguments both for and against the issues, and
 - Cite the author(s) and date the summary. You will need to cite references when you are writing the exam.

Good luck to all exam writers and if you have any questions or would like to have me help out in person or over the phone at one of your study sessions, please call me at 250.851.3185 or send me an e-mail at brobinson@abcfp.ca.

Brian Robinson, RPF
ABCFP Director of Professional Development and Member Relations
