

CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR AIS CODING SPECIALISTS

Handbook for Candidates

EXAMINATION DATES	
Spring 2017	
Application Deadline	Testing Window
February 15, 2017	Begins: Saturday, March 11, 2017 Ends: Saturday, March 25, 2017
Autumn 2017	
Application Deadline	Testing Window
August 15, 2017	Begins: Saturday, September 16, 2017 Ends: Saturday, September 30, 2017



AIS Certification Board



PROFESSIONAL TESTING CORPORATION® 1350 BROADWAY • 17th FLOOR • NEW YORK, NY 10018

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This handbook contains necessary information about the AIS Coding Specialist Certification (AISC.B) Examination. Please retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This handbook is subject to change.

CERTIFICATION

The Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM) is the parent body of the Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS)* and is the sponsor of the AIS Certification Board (AISC.B).

The AISC.B endorses the concept of *voluntary*, periodic certification by examination for all AIS Coding Specialists. Certification is one part of a process called credentialing. It focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of current competence in a specialized area of practice. Board certification is highly valued and provides formal recognition of AIS coding knowledge and application.

PURPOSES OF CERTIFICATION

TO PROMOTE COMPETENCE IN USE OF THE ABBREVIATED INJURY SCALE BY:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet the eligibility requirements of the AIS Certification Board and pass the Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists.
2. Encouraging continued personal and professional growth in the practice of injury severity scoring using the AIS.
3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification in injury severity scoring using the AIS.
4. Providing a standard of knowledge requisite for certification, thereby assisting the employer, public, and members of the injury scoring community in the assessment of the AIS Coding Specialist.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

It is suggested that candidates have a minimum of one year of experience using the Abbreviated Injury Scale. Candidates must meet the following requirements:

1. A minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent.
2. Completion and filing of an Application for the Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists.
3. Payment of required fee.

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ADMINISTRATION

The Certification Program is sponsored by the AIS Certification Board. The Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists is administered for the AISC.B by the Professional Testing Corporation (PTC), 1350 Broadway - 17th Floor, New York, New York 10018, (212) 356-0660, www.ptcny.com. Questions concerning the examination should be referred to PTC.

ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who pass the Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists are eligible to use the registered designation CAISS after their names and will receive certificates from the AISC.B. A registry of Certified AIS Coding Specialists will be maintained by the AISC.B and may be reported in its or AAAM publications.



Certification is recognized for a period of five years at which time the candidate must retake and pass the current Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists or meet such alternative requirements as are in effect at that time in order to retain certification.

REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an Application.
2. Misrepresentation of certification status.

The Appeals Committee of the AISC.B provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of Board Certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Read and follow the directions on the application and in this handbook. All applications must be completed online. The application can be found on Professional Testing Corporation's website <https://secure.ptcny.com/apply/>.
2. The online application and appropriate fees for the examination must be received on or before the appropriate deadline listed in this handbook.

Additional information regarding the Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists may be obtained from the **Professional Testing Corporation**, www.ptcny.com or visit the AAAM website at www.aaam.org. Read and follow the directions on the Application and in this Handbook for Candidates.

COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

Candidates must complete the examination application in full, using your name exactly as it appears on your current government issued photo ID such as a driver’s license or a passport. The completed application, with all documentation (if required), can be submitted and paid for online at www.ptcny.com/clients/AISC.B.

FEES

Note: Fees are NOT refundable. Fees will not be transferred from one testing period to another.

Application Fees for the Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists..... \$350.00

Visa, MasterCard, and American Express are accepted. Please submit the Credit Card Payment with your online application.

DO NOT SEND CASH.

INTERNATIONAL AIS CERTIFICATION TESTING

It may be possible to establish a special testing center to take a paper and pencil examination outside of the United States for an additional fee of \$125.00 per testing center. The Special Testing Center Request Form, available from www.ptcny.com, must be sent with your application and fees, specifying your preferred city and country and must be received by PTC at least eight weeks before the testing period begins. If there are no testing centers in your province in Canada, you can follow this same procedure or travel to the closest computerized testing center in the US or Canada to take the examination. You will be contacted by email to confirm your test center.

Multiple applicants may test at the same time for one testing center fee of \$125. All of the applications for a group international test center must be submitted in one package, with all the fees and original documentation included, plus the Special Testing Center Request Form. For groups submitting five or more applications, a group testing fee of \$250 will apply. All fees must be submitted at the time of application.

Please note that the Examination is administered in English.

EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION

The Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists is administered during an established two-week testing period on a daily basis, Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by PSI. PSI has several hundred testing sites in the United States, as well as Canada. Scheduling is done on a first-come, first-serve basis. To find a testing center near you, visit: www.ptcny.com/cbt/sites.htm or call PSI at (800) 733-967.

Note: Hours and days of availability vary at different centers. You will not be able to schedule your examination appointment until you have received a Scheduling Authorization from PTC.

ONLINE SOFTWARE TUTORIAL

A testing tutorial document can be viewed online. Please visit www.ptcny.com/cbt/demo.htm. This document can give you an idea about the features of online testing.

SCHEDULING YOUR EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

Once your application has been received and processed and your eligibility verified, you will be sent a notice from PTC confirming receipt of payment and acceptance of application. Within six weeks prior to the first day of the testing period, you will be sent a Scheduling Authorization via email from notices@ptcnyc.com. Please ensure you enter your correct email address on the application and add the 'ptcnyc.com' domain to your email safe list. If you do not receive a Scheduling Authorization at least three weeks before the beginning of the testing period, contact the Professional Testing Corporation at (212) 356-0660.

The Scheduling Authorization will indicate how to schedule your examination appointment as well as the dates during which testing is available. Appointment times are first-come, first-serve, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization in order to maximize your chance of testing at your preferred location and on your preferred date.

Your current government-issued photo identification, such as a driver's license or passport, must be presented in order to gain admission to the testing center. PTC also recommends you bring a paper copy of your Scheduling Authorization and your PSI appointment confirmation with you to the testing center.

After you make your test appointment, PSI will send you a confirmation email with the date, time and location of your exam. Please check this confirmation carefully for the correct date, time and location. Contact PSI at (800) 733-9267 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

- **It is your responsibility as the candidate to call PSI to schedule the examination appointment.**
- **It is highly recommended that you become familiar with the testing site.**
- **Arrival at the testing site at the appointed time is the responsibility of the candidate. Please plan for weather, traffic, parking, and any security requirements that are specific to the testing location. Late arrival may prevent you from testing.**

SPECIAL NEEDS

AISC.B and PTC support the intent of and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTC will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered under the ADA. Special testing arrangements may be made upon receipt of the Application, examination fee, and a completed and signed Request for Special Needs Accommodations Form, available from www.ptcnyc.com or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660. This Form must be uploaded with the online application at least EIGHT weeks before the testing period begins. Please use this Form if you need to bring a service dog, medicine, food or beverages needed for a medical condition with you to the testing center.

Information supplied on the Request for Special Accommodations Form will only be used to determine the need for special accommodations and will be kept confidential.

CHANGING YOUR EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

If you need to cancel your examination appointment or reschedule to a different date within the two-week testing period, you must contact PSI at (800) 733-9267 no later than noon, Eastern Standard Time, of the second business day PRIOR to your scheduled appointment. If you fail to arrive for your appointment or cancel without giving the required notice, you will forfeit your testing fee.

Please note: PSI does not have the authority to authorize refunds or transfers to another testing period.

RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

1. All Electronic devices that can be used to record, transmit, receive, or play back audio, photographic, text, or video content, including but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, tablets, Bluetooth devices; wearable technology such as smart watches; MP3 players such as iPods; pagers, cameras and voice recorders are not permitted to be used and cannot be taken in the examination room.
2. No papers, books, or reference materials may be taken into or removed from the testing room.
3. No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. The candidate should read carefully the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.
4. Candidates are prohibited from leaving the testing room while their examination is in session, with the sole exception of going to the restroom.

Violation of any of the rules listed above may lead to forfeiture of fees, dismissal from the testing room, and cancellation of your test scores

REPORT OF RESULTS

Candidates will be notified in writing by PTC within four weeks of the close of the testing period whether they have passed or failed the examination. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be reported. Successful candidates will also receive certificates from the AISC.B.

REEXAMINATION

The Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists may be taken as often as desired upon filing of a new Application and fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. The AISC.B will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate.
2. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to AISC.B or the Professional Testing Corporation.

CONTENT OF EXAMINATION

1. The Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists is a computer-based examination composed of a maximum of 250 multiple-choice, objective questions with a total testing time of four (4) hours.
2. The content for the examination is based on AIS 2005, Update 2008, and is described in the Content Outline below.
3. The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in use of AIS and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the AISC.B.
4. The AISC.B, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.
5. The Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

I. ANATOMY	20%
II. MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY AS RELATED TO INJURY DIAGNOSES	10%
III. CODING FUNDAMENTALS	25%
IV. IDENTIFICATION AND CODING OF INJURY DESCRIPTIONS	45%

SCORING PROCEDURE

Prior to administration of the examination, representatives from the AIS Certification Board and the Professional Testing Corporation meet to review all test items for accuracy. At this meeting, the passing score for the examination is set using recognized psychometric methods. The passing score represents the number of test items determined necessary for the candidate to answer correctly to be considered as having minimal basic knowledge of AIS coding.

In order to protect the security and integrity of the certification examination, neither AISC.B nor the Professional Testing Corporation will release examination items, candidate responses, or answer keys to any candidate or agency.

CONTENT OUTLINE

- I. ANATOMY**
 - A. Head
 1. Intracranial vessels
 2. Cranial nerves
 3. Meninges
 4. Brain stem
 5. Cerebellum
 6. Cerebrum
 7. Skull
 8. Other Intracranial Structures

 - B. Face

1. Vessels
 2. Nerves
 3. Eye
 4. Ear
 5. Nose
 6. Mouth
 7. Bones
- C. Neck
1. Vessels
 2. Nerves
 3. Upper airway structures
 4. Salivary and thyroid glands
 5. Larynx
 6. Esophagus
- D. Chest
1. Vessels
 2. Nerves
 3. Lower airway structures
 4. Esophagus
 5. Heart
 6. Lung
 7. Bones
 8. Muscles
- E. Abdomen
1. Vessels
 2. Nerves
 3. Gastrointestinal tract
 4. Genitourinary tract
 5. Liver
 6. Spleen
 7. Pancreas
- F. Spine - Cervical/Thoracic/Lumbar
1. Spinal cord
 2. Nerves
 3. Ligaments
 4. Discs
 5. Vertebrae
- G. Upper Extremities
1. Vessels
 2. Nerves
 3. Muscles
 4. Tendons
 5. Ligaments
 6. Joints
 7. Bones
- H. Lower Extremities

1. Vessels
2. Nerves
3. Muscles
4. Tendons
5. Ligaments
6. Joints
7. Bones

I. External

1. Skin
2. Subcutaneous tissues

II. MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY AS RELATED TO INJURY DIAGNOSES

A. Injury Descriptors

1. Vessel or hollow organ
 - a. Perforation
 - b. Intimal tear
 - c. Circumferential involvement
 - d. Laceration
 - e. Transection
 - f. Aneurysm
2. Solid organ
 - a. Contusion/hematoma
 - b. Laceration
 - c. Stellate
 - d. Rupture
 - e. Organ Injury Scale (OIS)
 - f. Avulsion
3. Skeletal
 - a. Articular
 - b. Proximal
 - c. Diaphyseal
 - d. Distal
 - e. Complex/comminuted
 - f. Segmental
4. Neurologic
 - a. Level of consciousness
 - b. Neurological deficit
 - c. Palsy

B. Injury Types

1. Head
 - a. Closed head injury
 - b. Shearing injury/diffuse axonal injury (DAI)
 - c. Hemorrhage
 - d. Contusion/hematoma
 - e. Crush

2. Face

- a. LeFort fractures
- b. Enucleation
- c. Panfacial fractures
- d. Hemorrhage
- 3. Chest
 - a. Pneumothorax
 - b. Hemothorax
 - c. Flail chest
 - d. Crush
 - e. Sucking chest wound
 - f. Tamponade
- 4. Extremities
 - a. Amputation
 - b. Crush
 - c. Sprain/strain
 - d. Subluxation
 - e. Dislocation
 - f. Fractures
 - 1. Open/compound/closed/avulsion
 - 2. Stable/unstable
- 5. External
 - a. Abrasion
 - b. Contusion
 - c. Laceration
 - d. Avulsion
 - e. Degloving
 - f. Penetrating
 - g. Partial/full thickness
- 6. Spine
 - a. Dislocation
 - b. Fracture
 - c. Herniation
- C. Conditions
 - 1. Head
 - a. Brain edema
 - b. Brain swelling
 - c. Coma
 - d. Concussion
 - e. Herniation
 - f. Loss of consciousness
 - g. Decorticate/Decerebrate Posturing
 - 2. Extremity
 - a. Compartment syndrome
 - b. Palsy/paralysis
 - 3. Vessel
 - a. Thrombosis
 - b. Occlusion
 - c. Devascularization
 - 4. Spine

- a. Complete cord syndrome
 - b. Incomplete cord syndrome
5. External
- a. Burns
 - b. Frostbite
 - c. Hypothermia

III. CODING FUNDAMENTALS

- A. Rules and Guidelines for AIS Coding
 1. Generic
 2. Organ/structure specific
- B. Injury Scores
 1. Predot (Unique Numerical Identifier)
 2. Postdot (AIS Severity)
 3. Accuracy/specificity of codes
- C. Severity Numbers
 1. Minor
 2. Moderate
 3. Serious
 4. Severe
 5. Critical
 6. Maximal
- D. AIS Uses
 1. Maximum AIS (MAIS)
 2. Injury Severity Score (ISS)

IV. IDENTIFICATION AND CODING OF INJURY DESCRIPTIONS

- A. Review of Medical Record
 1. Identification of pertinent documentation
 2. Identification of injuries
 3. Substantiation of diagnoses and injury descriptors
- B. Assignment of AIS Code
 1. Matching of medical record injury descriptors with dictionary descriptors
 2. Application of pertinent rules and guidelines
 3. Assignment to ISS body region
- C. AIS Dictionary
 1. Structure
 2. Content

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

1. A patient is involved in a motor vehicle crash. After evaluation and testing, the patient went to surgery for repair of a transection of the small bowel. The most appropriate code would be

1. 541420.2 – laceration NFS.
2. 541422.2 – no perforation; partial thickness; < 50% of circumference.
3. 541424.3 – perforation; full thickness \geq 50% of circumference.
4. 541426.4 – massive, complex, avulsion, rupture, tissue loss, transection.

2. If a patient has a fracture of T-12 and L-1, how many ISS body regions are involved?

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4

3. An orbital floor fracture is a fracture in which of the following ISS body regions?

1. Face
2. Chest
3. Extremities or pelvic girdle
4. Head or neck

4. To what ISS body region should a lower esophageal injury be assigned?

1. Face
2. Chest
3. Abdominal or pelvic contents
4. Head or neck

5. The maximum AIS (MAIS) ranges from

1. 1 to 5.
2. 1 to 6.
3. 1 to 9.
4. 1 to 75.

<p>CORRECT ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS</p>
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<p>1. 4; 2. 2; 3. 1; 4. 2; 5. 2</p>

REFERENCES

The AAAM's AIS Certification Board has prepared a suggested reference list to assist in preparing for the Certification Examination for AIS Coding Specialists. These references include information of significance to AIS coding practice. Inclusion of certain references on this list does not constitute an endorsement by the AISC.B of specific professional literature which, if used, would guarantee candidates successful passing of the certification examination.

Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine. Abbreviated Injury Scale 2005, Update 2008. AAAM. Barrington, IL, 2005.

Baker, S.P., O'Neil, B., Haddon, W. Jr., Long, W.B. The injury severity score: A method for describing patients with multiple injuries and evaluating emergency care. *J. Trauma*. 1974, 14:187-196.

Champion, H. R., Copes, W. S., Sacco, W. J., Lawnick, M.M., Keast, S. L., Bain, L.W., Flanagan, M.E., Frey, C. F. The major trauma outcome study: Establishing normal norms for trauma care. *J. Trauma*. 1990, 30(11): 1356-1365.

Keller, W.K., Dillihunt, R.C., Fenner, H.A., Jolley, F.L., Keeney, A.H., Weygandt, P.L., Hames, L.N. Rating the severity of tissue damage I. The abbreviated injury scale. *JAMA*, 1971, 215(2): 277-280.

Moore, E.E., Cogbill, T.H., Jurkovich, G. J., Shackford, S.R., Malangoni, M.A., Champion, H.R. Organ Injury Scaling: Spleen and Liver (1994 revision). *J. Trauma*. 1995, 38(3):323-324.

Petrucelli, E., States, J.D., Hames, L.N. The abbreviated injury scale: Evolution, usage and future adaptability. *Accid Anal & Prev*. 1981, 13: 29-35.

Resources for Optimal Care of the Injured Patient: 1999. Committee on Trauma, American College of Surgeons, Chicago, IL, 1998.

Recommended Courses

Injury Scaling: Uses and Techniques. Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine.

Human anatomy

Medical terminology

(Additional references are listed in the Abbreviated Injury Scale 2005, Update 2008.)