



THE AMERICAN BOARD OF SURGERY

VASCULAR SURGERY EXAM BLUEPRINT FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION AND IN-TRAINING EXAMINATION (VSITE)

In 2025, the Vascular Surgery Board (VSB) of the American Board of Surgery (ABS) reviewed and revised the exam blueprint used for the Vascular Surgery Qualifying Exam (QE) and In-Training Exam (VSITE) so that the exams better reflect the training and practice of Vascular Surgery trainees. The revision process involved updating and reorganizing the content tested on the exam, specifying the details of treatment tested on the exam (e.g., epidemiology, imaging, diagnosis/work-up, perioperative care, outcomes), and determining weights that dictate how these content categories and details of treatment are represented on the exam. As part of the review, multiple stakeholders were consulted (e.g., VSB Directors, program directors, and current diplomates), and feedback from these groups was used to inform the content and weights for the blueprint. As a final step, a public comment period was held to solicit feedback from a broader audience of stakeholders; feedback was considered in finalizing the blueprint.

Content Distribution

Tables 1 and 2 include the major content categories and details of treatment in the blueprint. Weights are also provided for each. Concretely, the weights indicate the approximate percentage of questions to be included on the Vascular Surgery QE; actual percentages may vary slightly from year to year.

Content Categories

Table 1 includes the major content categories for the exam, which are separated into two sections. Section 1 – Main includes content related to treatment of various conditions. Section 2 – Supplemental includes content that is general to the practice of Vascular Surgery and is not specific to a particular condition.

Dimensions of Patient Care

Table 2 includes dimensions of patient care that will be tested on the exam, which *only* apply to Section 1 – Main. Section 1 exam questions will address *both* a section 1 topic from the content categories *and* a dimension of patient care (e.g., workup and diagnosis for a specific condition). The weights included here represent the percentage of Section 1 questions that will be devoted to each dimension of patient care.



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TABLE 1 – CONTENT CATEGORIES

Content Category	Weight
1. Section 1 - Main	83%
1. <i>Carotid</i>	8%
2. <i>Vertebral</i>	2%
3. <i>Aortic Arch</i>	4%
4. <i>Upper Extremity</i>	4%
5. <i>Thoracic Aorta</i>	6%
6. <i>Aorto-iliac</i>	11%
7. <i>Mesenteric</i>	5%
8. <i>Renal</i>	4%
9. <i>Lower Extremity</i>	12%
10. <i>Venous</i>	11%
11. <i>Trauma</i>	7%
12. <i>Hemodialysis Access</i>	6%
13. <i>Vascular Medicine</i>	3%
2. Section 2 - Supplemental	17%
1. <i>Imaging</i>	3%
2. <i>Procedures/Techniques</i>	3%
3. <i>Research</i>	1%
4. <i>Patient care</i>	4%
5. <i>Medical Therapy/Disease Prevention</i>	3%
6. <i>Practice Management</i>	3%



TABLE 2 – DIMENSIONS OF PATIENT CARE

Details of Treatment	Weight
1. Epidemiology	4%
2. Pathophysiology	7%
3. Work up and Diagnosis	10%
4. Imaging	10%
5. Indications for Treatment	10%
6. Surgical	10%
7. Endovascular	9%
8. Hybrid	7%
9. Vascular Medicine (Medical)	5%
10. Post-procedure Care	7%
11. Complications	9%
12. Surveillance	6%
13. Long Term Outcomes	6%

*Note: Applies only to Table 1, Section 1 – Main content; weights are relative to Section 1 only