

Advanced Specialised Training (AST) StAMPS

ADULT INTERNAL MEDICINE | MENTAL HEALTH | PAEDIATRICS | SURGERY
ASSESSMENT PUBLIC REPORT

2021 – 2025

Purpose

This public report provides information for candidates, supervisors, educators, training organisations, communities and external stakeholders and is produced following each Advanced Specialised Training (AST) Structured Assessment using Multiple Patient Scenarios (StAMPS) exam. This report summarises assessment outcomes over the past five years. A rolling format has been adopted to account for low annual candidate numbers and to prevent identification of individual trainees. It provides details on exam conduct, outcomes, statistical data, and commentary. Previous public reports are available on the [ACRRM website](#).

Introduction

The StAMPS assessment is an oral assessment in which the candidate is presented realistic rural medicine scenarios relevant to the AST being assessed. Candidates are asked three questions over 10 minutes for each scenario. The StAMPS assessment aims to test higher order thinking skills in a highly contextualised framework. Candidates are expected to explain how they would approach a given situation, demonstrating clinical reasoning, and not only knowledge of facts.

The 2025 AST StAMPS for Adult Internal Medicine, Mental Health, Paediatrics and Surgery exam was held on 15 November 2025.

Assessment Statistics

The pass rates are shown by AST StAMPS over last 5 years (2021 – 2025) in the table below.

Assessment	Failed	Passed	Total	Percentage
AST StAMPS Adult Internal Medicine	20	36	56	64.3%
AST StAMPS Mental Health	5	18	23	78.3%
AST StAMPS Paediatrics	11	27	38	71.1%
AST StAMPS Surgery	4	9	13	69.2%

Conduct of the Exam

The StAMPS exam is conducted online over three (3) hours. Due to the number of AST StAMPS, the 2025 exam was delivered at different times and on two platforms (Zoom & Risr/).

Candidates were provided a Community Profile that described the demographics, logistics and health service availability of a simulated rural community in which the assessment is set. This ensures consistency of assessment delivery and marking for all candidates regardless of their actual practice location. The current Community Profile is published on the [ACRRM website](#) and available to view by the general public.

The StAMPS consists of eight (8) scenarios, each of ten minutes duration. Candidates have time at the commencement of the exam to log in and accommodate for any technical issues if required. Candidates are expected to have read and be prepared for their first scenario by the start of the commencement of the first rotation. An interval of 10 minutes is placed between scenarios consisting of 5 minutes for candidates to read the exam material for the following scenario and 5 minutes to allow for any technical issues that may arise. Examiners remained on one continuous connection throughout the assessment with an ACRRM online room monitor. Candidates moved between the rooms. The 2025 AST StAMPS was delivered with no in-person invigilator.

Further information may be found in the [Handbook for Fellowship Assessment](#).

Quality Assurance

Each discipline has a Lead Examiner, each supporting the teams of examiners. Examiners are selected based on discipline expertise and their considerable experience with the StAMPS modality. All examiners undergo training and ongoing development.

Each Lead Examiner also undertook independent and concurrent scoring ensuring that each case and each examiner had paired data to assess inter-examiner variability/reliability. These Quality Assurance (QA) scores were not included in the candidates' total scores and therefore did not affect the overall outcome, serving only a QA function. All candidates' scenarios were videorecorded. These recordings are retained until reconsideration, review and appeal processes are completed and then destroyed.

As part of process, an additional QA check was performed by a team of Review Examiners of the narrowest scoring pass performances to ensure that these candidates were indeed meeting the standard to pass.

Grading and Scoring Overview

Candidate performance is graded against a rubric and behaviour anchors on an 8-point linear scale. Each scenario offers the candidate the opportunity to earn up to 7 points on 5 items/domains which are scored independently.

- Management in Part 1 that incorporates relevant medical and rural contextual factors
- Management in Part 2 that incorporates relevant medical and rural contextual factors
- Management in Part 3 that incorporates relevant medical and rural contextual factors
- Problem Definition & Systematic Approach
- Communication & Professionalism

** Flexibility in Changing Context was removed from August 2025 onwards*

Curriculum Blueprint

The table below provides a brief overview of the 2025 topics covered for each AST StAMPS across the domains of the curriculum assessed.

ACRRM Domains:

1. Provide expert medical care in all rural contexts
2. Provide primary care
3. Provide secondary medical care
4. Respond to medical emergencies
5. Apply a population health approach
6. Work with Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and other culturally diverse communities to improve health and wellbeing
7. Practise medicine within an ethical, intellectual, and professional framework
8. Provide safe medical care while working in geographic and professional isolation

2025 AST STAMPS topics covered			
ADULT INTERNAL MEDICINE	MENTAL HEALTH	PAEDIATRICS	SURGERY
STEMI	Deliberate self-harm, borderline personality disorder	PBB Eczema Asthma	Trigger finger
Immigrant with HBV	Psychosis in the elderly patient, Lewy body dementia, delirium, capacity assessment	Limp Septic Joint Needle Stick	Skin Cancer
Palliative Care	Schizophrenia, psychosis	CVA CT Support	Priapism
Knee pain and ARF	PTSD, Veterans affairs	Neo	Burn
Seizure	Post partum depression, suicide	Bed wetting	Testicular Pain
Haemochromatosis	Bipolar affective disorder, mania, lithium & medication management	Self-harm	PR Bleeding
Irritable Bowel Syndrome	Anxiety, school refusal, child sexual abuse	Speech delay	Carpal Tunnel
Rheumatoid Arthritis	Acute psychosis, de-escalation, schizophrenia & anti-psychotics	Suspected Autism	Abdominal Pain

Candidate and Educator Guidance

Feedback from examiners offers valuable insights for candidates who sat this exam and registrars preparing for future attempts. The information below reinforces that success in the AST StAMPS requires not only clinical knowledge but also structured thinking, clear communication, cultural sensitivity, in addition to the ability to act decisively as a senior rural generalist and being current in the AST.

Passing the AST StAMPS requires a candidate to demonstrate their ability to manage presentations as outlined below:

- Competently provide definitive medical care for patients and determine when additional support from experienced colleagues is required (which may be through distance telehealth technology).
- Interpret common investigations and be able to provide a contextualised differential diagnosis.
- Describe the technique of performing procedural skills described in the curriculum documents or Logbook.
- Provide continuity of care for patients.
- The appropriate use of communication and cultural safety, including confidentiality.
- Provide collegial support and clinical advice to colleagues in more remote settings via telehealth technology.

Further information may be found in the [Advanced Specialised Training Handbooks](#). In addition to the abilities required in the CGT curriculum for each AST, doctors achieving AST in either discipline are required to be able to competently provide definitive care including common interventions for individual patients across all presentations.

Survey Feedback

Following the exam, examiners, candidates and staff are encouraged to provide feedback via an online survey. Feedback is reviewed and considered accordingly and may be used to drive continuous improvement and improve candidate, examiner and staff experience for future exams.

Based on feedback received, the following themes were identified:

- Many candidates praised the overall organisation and process of the assessment and professionalism of examiners.
- Candidates appreciated the ability to sit the exam online, reducing travel stress and improving comfort by reducing by doing the exam from home without an invigilator.
- Several candidates reported that study group cases and official preparation activities did not match the actual exam format or question style, whilst some candidates found study groups and preparatory materials helpful once sessions commenced.
- There was a general agreement that the assessment format and topics covered were appropriately aligned with curriculum expectations.

Evaluation

Led by the Assessment Committee, ACRRM undertakes a cycle of quality improvement in its suite of assessments, including the AST StAMPS. ACRRM has an ongoing commitment to improve the transparency and reliability of its assessments and to ensure its assessment systems are comprehensible to Registrars and Educators. Work is continuously ongoing to increase examiner recruitment and training, professional development, increase QA examiners on exam day to reduce post exam QA review requirements and to improve qualitative feedback for candidates.

Some improvements include:

- the removal of the 'flexibility' marking item from the StAMPS marking rubric in August 2025.
- the permanent removal of in-person invigilators from October 2025 for all StAMPS. In some instances, an invigilator may be required for adjustments requested under the special consideration policy.
- the use of a private residence as an approved exam venue.

- increased examiner recruitment and training.

Further improvements to the examination software are in discussion to simplify the process for candidates and examiners.

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