Advanced Specialised Training (AST) StAMPS

ADULT INTERNAL MEDICINE | MENTAL HEALTH I PAEDIATRICS I SURGERY

ASSESSMENT PUBLIC REPORT

2022 – 2026

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) in Adult Internal Medicine, Mental Health, Paediatrics and Surgery Structured Assessment using Multiple Patient Scenarios (StAMPS) exam. It includes information on the conduct, outcome, statistics and commentary for the most recently delivered exam. Past public reports are available on the website.

Introduction

The StAMPS assessment is an oral assessment in which the candidate is presented with 8 scenarios set in a rural context. 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, leadership and in addition to knowledge of facts.

The 2026AST StAMPS exam was held on 10 October 2026.

Assessment Statistics

The pass mark for 2026 AST StAMPS was 164 out of a theoretical maximum of 280. It is important to note that the score may vary slightly between each exam based on robust statistical processes which account for individual variation in question difficulty and examiner scoring patterns. Candidates who scored 10 points below the pass mark (i.e. 154 or higher) were formally reviewed.

The cumulative pass rates are shown by AST STAMPS over the last 5 years (2022 – 2026) on the following page.

AST StAMPS 2022-2026

Assessment	Failed	Passed	Total	Percentage
AST StAMPS Adult Internal Medicine	19	37	56	66.1%
AST StAMPS Mental Health	5	16	21	76.2%
AST StAMPS Paediatrics	14	33	47	70.2%
AST StAMPS Surgery	6	8	14	57.1%

Conduct of the Exam

The StAMPS exam is delivered online over 3 hours, with candidates rotating through a series of scenarios. Depending on candidate numbers, the exam may be conducted over one or two days.

Candidates have access to a Community Profile that describes the community population demographics, logistics and health service availability of a simulated rural community in which the assessment is set. This ensures consistency of assessment context regardless of their actual practice location. The Community Profile can be accessed on the ACRRM website and is available to the public.

The StAMPS consists of eight 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 remain in a single virtual room, while candidates move between rooms. Invigilators are not used for the StAMPS.

Further information may be found in the Handbook for Fellowship Assessment.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance processes are integral to maintaining fairness. 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. The Team Leads were available to assist in nuanced decision-making regarding candidate's scores when required. All examiners undergo training and ongoing development.

Each Lead Examiner also undertook independent and concurrent scoring ensuring that each station and examiner has paired data to provide insight to possible 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 StAMPS exams are videorecorded, and the recordings are kept until any reconsideration, review and appeal processes are completed and are then destroyed.

As part of the process, an additional QA check is performed by a team of Review Examiners of the candidates whose scores fall within a predefined review zone to ensure that these candidates were assessed accurately.

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.

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

Curriculum Blueprint

The table below provides an overview of the 2026 AST StAMPS topics covered that are blueprinted and written against the relevant AST curriculum.

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

2026 AST StAMPS topics covered

2026 AST STAMPS				
Scenario	**Adult Internal Medicine**	**Mental Health**	**Paediatrics**	**Surgery**
1	Asthma	Depression, older persons, ECT	Allergies	Appendicitis diverticulitis
2	Heart Failure	Remote telehealth, depression, suicide risk	Scarlet Fever	SCC
3	PMR - Polymyalgia Rheumatica	Post-natal depression, public health initiative	Adolescent Mental Health	Balanitis
4	Renal	Anxiety, panic, CBT	Ketotic Hypoglycemia	Cholecystitis
5	DKA - Diabetic Ketoacidosis	Trauma, PTSD, self-care, burnout	Burns	Trauma
6	Hyponatraemia	Psychosis, Critical incident review	Neonatal	Barrett's
7	Alcoholic cirrhosis	School refusal, Anxiety, Paediatric patient	6-Week Check	Necrotising Fascitis
8	Crohn' s Disease	Eating disorder, anxiety	Diabetic Ketoacidosis	Olecranon bursitis

Candidate and Educator Guidance

The following commentary is provided to assist candidates in understanding their results, future candidates in preparation for this assessment and educators who are supporting candidates. Brief individualised feedback is routinely provided, but this does not entirely capture the differences between success and non-success. Therefore, it is recommended that individual results and feedback be read in conjunction with the comments below.

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.
- 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 Rural Generalist (RG) 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. ACRRM has a number of preparation activities available to candidates to prepare for this assessment including a StAMPS Assessment online module that is available to all members.

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, invigilator and examiner experience for future exams.

Based on feedback received from the 2026 cohort of candidates, the following themes were identified:

- Candidates generally considered the assessment relevant to their Advanced Specialised Training discipline and reflective of rural and remote practice.
- Examiners were frequently described as professional, respectful and supportive throughout the assessment process.
- Study groups and other preparation activities were viewed positively and assisted candidates in building confidence and familiarity with the assessment format.
- Many candidates valued the inclusion of the Community Profile and recognised its importance in supporting context-specific decision-making.
- Candidates appreciated the opportunity to demonstrate a broad range of knowledge and skills relevant to their AST discipline.

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 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.

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