COUNCIL FOR HOMEOPATHIC CERTIFICATION

ITEM WRITER'S HANDBOOK

The Council for Homeopathic Certification (CHC) is a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) and the CHC Certification Program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

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CHC Item Writer's Welcome Letter

Dear Item Writer Volunteers,

Thank you for your interest in the CHC exam development process and your help with the important task of writing items (questions) for the CHC Certification Exam.

We are deeply grateful for your time, talent, and commitment to this process. Your work as an Item Writer plays a critical role in upholding the quality and integrity of the CHC Certification Exam. The success of this certification depends on the thoughtful, informed contributions of volunteers like you—thank you for being a part of this important effort!

Before you begin your service, please read this handbook and send any questions to the CHC Item Writing Chair at chcitemwriters@gmail.com.

Item Writing training sessions will be held throughout the year. All Item Writers are strongly encouraged to attend a live training session. All Item Writers must submit sample/practice written items to be reviewed by the Item Writing chair before writing items for the exam.

We encourage you to write as many items as possible. Item writing can earn you valuable Continuing Education Credits (CEU's) for annual recertification with the CHC. Please check the CHC Recertification Handbook for the number of CEUs earned for Item Writing.

A Word about Security…
Maintaining test security is essential to the test development process and therefore we ask you to sign an Item Writer's Letter of Agreement, Conflict of Interest Form, and Non-Disclosure Agreement, **before writing items**, and Security-Assurance form **after submitting items**.

It is essential that, once submitted and approved, no electronic or other forms of items remain in your possession. Further, the items that you have written may not be used for purposes other than for the CHC Exam. CEUs will be awarded only after you have submitted the Security Assurance form, confirming you have purged all items from your computer.

Before You Begin
Please follow the links for each of the forms below to complete and electronically sign before you begin your work as an Item Writing Volunteer:

- Item Writer Letter of Agreement
- Conflict of Interest/Non-Disclosure Form

Warm regards,

Item Writer's Committee

CHC Item Writer Volunteer Position Description

Overview
Item Writers are volunteers with the Council for Homeopathic Certification (CHC) who write exam items ("questions") for the CHC certification exam.

Item Writers are coordinated by the CHC Item Writing Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Exam Committee. The Item Writing Committee is responsible for recruiting item writers; structuring, delivering and documenting training provided to item writers; and, coordinating the collection of new items that pertain to the item needs of the test.

The CHC Item Writing Process involves several actions that ultimately lead to approved exam items ready for the CHC Item Bank. Each exam item corresponds to a specific domain and statement of the exam, as determined by the Job Analysis (JA) undertaken by the CHC in its exam development process.

Item Writers play an important role in developing clear, knowledge-based items that differentiate between test takers with high levels of knowledge and those with low levels of knowledge.

Item Writers are Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) because they are familiar with the knowledge and skills included in the exam content. The task of the Item Writer is critical to the entire exam development process. Without excellent items, it is impossible to have a high-quality exam.

Volunteer Scope of Work
- Participate in Item Writing training and team writing sessions.
- Write exam items for your assigned domains and statements.
- Submit written items to the Webassessor online test platform.
- Participate in evaluation and feedback sessions to improve the Item Writing process.

Volunteer Qualifications
- Active CCH (Certified Classical Homeopath) credential holder - if writing Homeopathy specific items.
- Expertise in your given field of study - if writing non-Homeopathy health-science related items.
- Proficiency in crafting clear, concise, and grammatically correct exam items.
- Ability to analyze information, identify key concepts, and develop items that assess higher-order thinking skills.
- Ability to meticulously review written items to ensure accuracy, consistency, and adherence to style guides.
- Understanding of potential biases in test questions and the ability to write items that are culturally sensitive and fair to all test-takers.
- Willingness to work effectively with other volunteers to provide feedback and improve item quality.

- Ability to meet deadlines and manage workload efficiently.

Every effort is made to recruit Item Writers who reflect the geographical, ethnic, national, and gender distribution of the certified population. Effort is also made to ensure representation from licensed medical practitioners who are homeopaths as well as lay homeopaths.

Volunteer Requirements

- Complete required volunteer paperwork, and participate in volunteer training.
- Adhere to all confidentiality and conflict of interest requirements as outlined in volunteer paperwork.
- Willing and able to work remotely.
- Ability to access and upload information online.
- Available for regular videoconference meetings throughout your volunteer commitment.
- Work cooperatively as a team with the Item Writing Committee members and other Item Writers.
- Meet with the Item Writing Committee chair as needed for feedback and improvement on submitted Items.

Conflict of Interest

Please note, all Item Writers are required to complete a Conflict of Interest (COI) form prior to beginning their work. Each volunteer's potential conflicts will be reviewed and their ability to write Items evaluated by the Item Writing Committee.

Generally, any person who has had access to any part of the CHC Exam Item Bank or CHC Exam may neither develop material nor deliver coursework related to reviewing or preparing for the CHC exam for a period of three years thereafter.

Continuing Education Units

Volunteering as an Item Writer provides an opportunity for CCHs to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) which qualify for Category I Homeopathy CEUs towards annual recertification. For the most up-to-date CEU awards, please review the CHC Recertification Handbook.

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About the CHC

About the CHC

The Council for Homeopathic Certification (CHC) is the only third-party accredited homeopathic certification organization. We offer a valid and reliable exam for certifying individuals who meet a recognized standard of professional and ethical competence in classical homeopathy, awarding them the CCH (Certified Classical Homeopath) designation.

The CHC was formed in 1991 and incorporated in 1992 as a non-profit 501c(6) organization with the vision of a healthcare system that includes certified classical homeopathic practitioners and makes homeopathy accessible to all. Acting as an autonomous governing board, the CHC maintains oversight and responsibility for all certification and recertification policy decisions, including governance, eligibility standards, appeals and disciplinary actions, and the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of the results of assessment instruments.

In July 2017, the CHC was accredited by NCCA, designating it as the only accredited homeopathic certification organization in the field of homeopathy. Reaccreditation takes place every five years, and the CHC was reaccredited in 2022. NCCA standards require that certifying exams meet psychometric content validity, reliability, and scoring standards, and that certification processes adhere to best practices to help ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public.

The CHC is also an organizational member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE). ICE is a private and voluntary membership organization that provides educational, networking, and other resources for organizations like the CHC.

CHC Mission

The CHC Mission is...To advance the homeopathic profession by certifying individuals who meet and maintain a recognized standard of professional and ethical competence in classical homeopathy and to assist the general public in choosing appropriately qualified homeopaths.

CHC Vision

We envision a healthcare system that encompasses certified classical homeopathic practitioners accessible to all.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The CHC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs, disability, marital status, national origin, or ancestry.

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CHC Exam Development Overview

The CHC Exam is a valid and reliable measure of an individual's knowledge and skill in classical homeopathy required for an entry-level certified practitioner of homeopathy. Individuals who have met the CHC Homeopathic Educational Requirements are eligible to take the exam.

The CHC certification exam is *valid*, which means the exam content accurately reflects on-the-job skills and activities required of entry level homeopathic practitioners.

To ensure validity, CHC conducts a rigorous process required by accreditation authorities that entails:

1. **Job Analysis**
   The first phase of exam development focuses on a Job Analysis (JA), an information gathering process that determines exam content. Accreditation standards require this process to be conducted every 5 - 7 years. The CHC, along with a contracted psychometric firm, conducted its first JA in 2015, its second in 2020, and the third was completed in 2025.

   A volunteer Job Analysis Committee comprised of CCH Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) produces a detailed outline of tasks, knowledge and skills required for an entry-level homeopathic practitioner. This outline is used to create the Job Analysis Survey.

   The Job Analysis Survey is sent to homeopathic practitioners to rank the importance and frequency of each statement on the survey as it relates to their work as a homeopath.

2. **Survey Results, Psychometrics, and Test Blueprint**
   After survey responses are collected, the psychometrician analyzes the data. This analysis helps the CHC prepare an accurate description of the knowledge and skills that an entry-level practitioner should possess to competently perform the work of a homeopath.

   This results in a test blueprint with exam objectives matched to the knowledge and skills of an entry-level practitioner, listed in the form of Domains and Statements.

   Domain
   A domain is a broad content area or subject category covered by an exam. Domains represent the major responsibilities or knowledge areas required for competent performance in a profession. Each domain may contain multiple tasks or knowledge statements and is often used to structure the exam blueprint.

   Statement
   A statement describes a specific task, knowledge, or skill that an entry-level practitioner must demonstrate to perform competently in the field. Statements are developed during the Job Analysis process and serve as the foundation for item development and exam

content. They ensure the exam is aligned with real-world practice and reflect the minimum competence required for safe and effective entry-level work.

The CHC Domains and Statements can be found on the CHC website here. The Domains are the bolded headings written in all-caps, such as "**FOUNDATIONS AND THEORY OF CLASSICAL HOMEOPATHY".** The Statements are the sentences in regular type that follow each Domain heading. Each attached Statement is identified by a reference number such as FT-01 (FT-01 = FOUNDATIONS AND THEORY OF CLASSICAL HOMEOPATHY, Statement 01).

3. **Item Writing**
   The next phase of exam development is Item Writing. In this stage, volunteer SMEs are utilized to create the actual exam questions, also known as 'items.' These SMEs use the domains and statements identified in the previous step as a guide to ensure each question is aligned with the content.

   The goal of item writing is to develop clear, valid, and defensible questions that accurately assess a candidate's competence in the areas defined by domains and statements. Items must also follow specific formatting and style guidelines to maintain consistency and fairness across the exam.

4. **Item Review, Editing, and Submission**
   Item Writers first submit items to the Item Writing Chair to review for a first edit. After that edit, finalized items are entered into Webassessor, the online system used to generate and deliver the exam.

   Review entails checking for content validity, clarity, grammar, and to ensure the item is submitted in the required format (A stem and four options, including three distractors and the single identified key (correct response), references, and domain and statement number).

   Once in Web Assessor, the Item Writing Chair approves the items which are then reviewed and edited by the Item Editing Committee. Once edited, items are stored in the CHC Item Bank and are piloted for use on future versions of the CHC exam.

As you can see, volunteer Item Writers play a critical role in creating the CHC exam and we thank you for your contribution to CHC Exam Development!

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Item Writing Resources

The following online materials related to Exam Development support the Item Writing process. Clicking the title of each document will take you to the resource online.

- CHC Domains and Statements
  - A complete outline of the knowledge and skills required to practice competently as an entry-level homeopath. The exam items are based on the Domains and Statements.
- CHC Study References List
  - A list of the reference books, repertories, charts, documents and other resources used to create the exam items and which exam takers can access to prepare for the exam.
- Remedy List
  - A list of the homeopathic remedies for which exam items must be written.
- Health Sciences/Human Pathology Study Guide
  - A guide to study recommendations for health sciences and human pathology concepts which may be included in the exam.
- CHC Exam Preparation Resources
  - The CHC provides a variety of resources to help prepare candidates for the exam. These include a link to an online library of publicly available homeopathy books, including several in the CHC Study References List.

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Step-by-Step Overview of the Item Writer's Process

Step 1: Sign and Submit the Item Writer's Letter of Agreement, and the CHC Conflict of Interest and Non-Disclosure Agreement forms.
Linked above in page 3, in the Item Writer's Welcome Letter.

Step 2: Participate in Item Writing Training webinar.
First time Item Writers must participate in the training webinar live. Returning Item Writers are required to participate either live or review a recorded webinar.

Step 3: Read the Job Analysis Domains and Statements for Exam Content
Read the CHC Domains and Statements to become familiar with the exam content. The exam tests what is expected of the minimally competent certified homeopath.

Step 4: Domains/Statements Selection
With the help and guidance of the Item writing Chair you will be assigned specific Domains and Statements for which you will write items.

After reviewing the Domains and Statements, please email your top 3 - 5 preferred Domains for which you would like to write items to the Item Writing Chair at chcitemwriters@gmail.com.

The Chair will respond and confirm which Domains and Statements have been assigned to you, using the reference number for each assigned statement (e.g., FT-01 means you have been assigned FOUNDATIONS AND THEORY OF CLASSICAL HOMEOPATHY, Statement 01).

Please note that in some cases the Chair may assign you Statements outside of your preferences to balance the distribution and ensure items are written to cover all Domains and Statements.

Please do not begin writing until you have completed training and your Domain/Statement assignments have been confirmed.

Step 5: Submit Sample Items
In a word processing document, write at least 5 sample items, each for a different statement, following the guidelines included in this handbook. Each sample item must be submitted in the required format (Required format = A stem and four options, including three distractors and the single identified key (correct response), references, and domain and statement number) (see page 14).

Email your samples as an attachment to chcitemwriters@gmail.com for review by the Item Writing Chair.

Step 6: Feedback from the Item Writing Chair
The Item Writing Chair will return your document with feedback and instructions for the next step.

Step 7: Compose Your Items and Send for Review
After your sample items are approved, proceed to write the items relating to the Domains or Statements to which you were assigned in a word processing document and email the document as an attachment to chcitemwriters@gmail.com for review.

Step 8: Feedback from the Item Writing Chair
The Item Writing Chair will return your document with feedback, requests for revisions, and directions on the next step.

Step 9: Entry of the Items into Webassessor
After you have updated your items with the suggested edits, you will receive login information for Webassessor, the web-based item bank. The technical instructions on how to enter your items are contained in this handbook.

Step 10: Notify the Item Writing Chair that you have uploaded your Items
After you have completed the Webassessor entry, please contact chcitemwriters@gmail.com. Wait for Item Writing Chair to confirm your entries.

Step 11: Sign and submit the Security Attestation Form
Once your entries have been confirmed, you must destroy any paper copies, electronic, digital or other types of copies of the submitted item(s), as outlined in the Item Writers Letter of Agreement. Annually, you will be required to sign a security attestation form confirming you have complied with this requirement.

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Item Writing Terminology

The use of a standard terminology promotes clear communication between Item Writers and Item Reviewers/Approvers. The list below includes several commonly-used terms in Item Writing. Figure 1.1, below, shows how each term shows up in a properly written item.

Item - This is often referred to as a test question. In many cases it is not a question, and therefore, the more general term ‘item ’is appropriate. All CHC exam items are created in the form of a stem with four multiple choice options (three distractors and one key).

Stem - The stem is the portion of the item that appears before the answer choices and refers to everything other than the answer choices. The stem presents the problem or question to be answered or responded to and provides the context for the response options.

The stem can be a complete question (e.g., What is the capital of France?) or an incomplete statement (e.g., The capital of France is...).

Options - In multiple-choice exam items, options are the complete set of possible answers presented after the stem. This set includes the correct response(s) (i.e., the key) and the three distractors (plausible but incorrect responses).

Options are sometimes also referred to as alternatives or choices, but in technical item writing, "options" is the preferred umbrella term. All options should be mutually exclusive, homogeneous in structure and length, and plausible within the context of the stem.

Key - The key is the option that is designated as the correct answer to a multiple-choice or multiple-response item. It is the scored response, meaning the test taker must select this option (or options, in the case of multiple-response items) to receive credit.

The key should be clearly correct based on the content domain, supported by approved CHC references, and unambiguous to knowledgeable test takers.

Distractor - In a multiple-choice item, distractors are the plausible but incorrect options presented alongside the correct answer. Their purpose is to differentiate between test takers who clearly understand the material and those who do not.

A well-crafted distractor should seem reasonable to someone who does not fully understand the content, but clearly incorrect to someone who does.

Domains - A domain is a broad content area or subject category covered by an exam and was further defined in the CHC Exam Development Overview section above.

Statements - A statement describes a specific task, knowledge, or skill that an entry-level practitioner

must demonstrate to perform competently in the field.

Reference – An authoritative, evidence-based source—such as a textbook, published guideline, or peer-reviewed article—used to support the accuracy and validity of exam items. References ensure that the key (correct answer) and any content presented in the stem or options are factually accurate and consistent with current, accepted practice.

See the next page for Reference requirements under Requirements for Submitted Items.

For the CHC exam, all items must be supported by the CHC's approved list of references (See Item Writing Resources above). Item writers are required to cite a specific source from this list when developing or revising items, ensuring content validity, fairness, and defensibility of the exam. These references serve as the official foundation for item content and are reviewed periodically to reflect current standards of practice.

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Format for Submitted Items

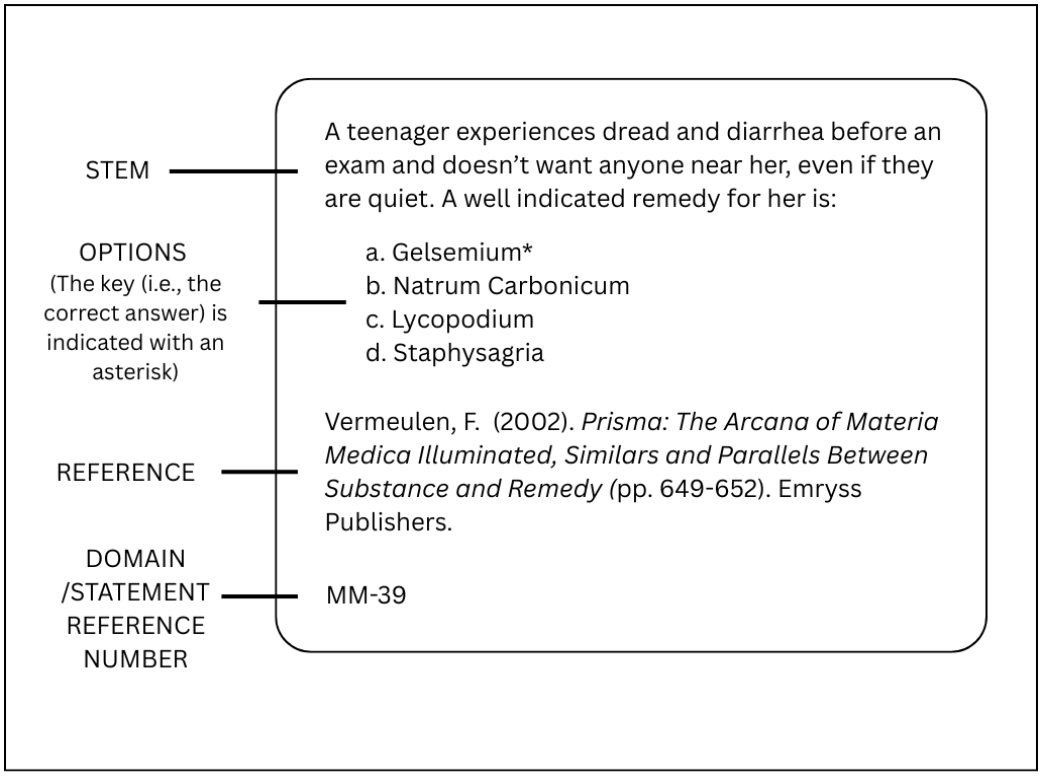
Each Submitted Item must include:

- A stem and four options, including three distractors and the single identified key (correct response). The key is denoted by an asterisk at the end of the option.

- A reference for the material presented in the item. References should include, where applicable, the following:
    - Author(s) (Last name, First initial)
    - Year of publication (in parentheses)
    - Title of the book, source, or webpage (italicized or underlined if italic not possible)
    - Edition (if applicable)
    - Publisher or website name
    - For website please write “Retrieved from:” followed by the full URL
    - Section or chapter title, especially when page numbers may vary across editions or when an online source does not provide page numbers
    - Page number(s), when available; page numbers are required whenever possible so the item can be verified
    - For websites: “Retrieved from:” followed by the full URL and **or search words**
    - For example, “Kent, J.T. (2006). *Lectures on Homoeopathic Philosophy* (p. 87). B. Jain Publishers.”

- The reference number for the Domain and Statement for which the exam item is written, e.g., FT-03.

Submitted Item Diagram
The diagram below outlines the specific components of a correctly submitted exam item.



Item Writing Basics

Common Formats

There are two common formats for multiple choice items. *The first is to simply ask a question* and list several possible answers; *the second is to formulate the item as a sentence completion* or fill-in-the-blank task.

Below is an example of the same item, with the same key(*) and distractors, formatted in two different ways:

Format 1:
What is the capital of Norway?
A. Oslo*
B. Bergen
C. Stavanger
D. Stockholm

Format 2:

The capital of Norway is
A. Oslo.*
B. Bergen.
C. Stavanger.
D. Stockholm.

Good Stem Characteristics

The following list contrasts poor and better stems.

1. A good item stem presents a problem situation clearly.

Poor: An elevated white blood cell count is
A. A sign of infection.*
B. Dangerous.
C. Normal.
D. Any count over 20,000.

Better: An elevated white blood cell count is most often symptomatic of
A. Infection*.
B. Diabetes.
C. Hypertension.
D. Asthma.

In the poor item, the stem does not pose a problem; it fails to provide test takers with a frame of reference for answering the question. In the better item, test takers know that they are looking for something of which an elevated white blood cell count is a symptom. This suggests that the correct option will be in the form of a disease or a pathological state.

2. A good item stem is stated positively rather than negatively.

Poor: Which of the following is NOT a city in California
A. Boise*
B. Sacramento
C. Los Angeles
D. San Francisco

Better: In what state is the city of Boise located?
A. Idaho*
B. Iowa
C. New Jersey
D. California

At times, a negative stem is unavoidable, as in a safety related question where it is important for candidates to know what **NOT** to do in a certain situation. In those cases, the negative term (e.g. **NOT, EXCEPT, LEAST, CONTRAINDICATED,** etc.) should be capitalized, presented in bold face or underlined to call attention to it.

3. A good item stem is presented as simply as possible, including only information that is necessary to understand the problem.

Poor: Mr. Watson is a 73-year-old widower who has suffered from headaches for several years. His wife died four years ago, as the result of a stroke. They had two children, both now grown and living in other parts of the country. Mr. Watson believes that his headaches may be due to high blood pressure, but tests to date have not confirmed his suspicions. In an effort to establish the cause of Mr. Watson's headaches, what is the first procedure that should be initiated?

Better: What should be the first procedure to be initiated to diagnose the probable cause of chronic headaches in an otherwise healthy 73-year-old man?

4. A good item stem includes all words that would have to be repeated in each option.

Poor: Ice forms on water when
A. the temperature falls below 32 degrees F at sea level*
B. the temperature falls below 24 degrees F at sea level.
C. the temperature falls below 12 degrees F at sea level.
D. the temperature falls below 0 degrees F at sea level.

Better: At sea level, ice forms on water when the temperature falls below
A. 32 degrees F.*
B. 24 degrees F.
C. 12 degrees F.
D. 0 degrees F.

5. A good item stem specifies the authority or standard upon which the correct option is based, if the item calls for a judgment.

Poor: The diet of Americans provides vitamins and minerals in amounts that are
A. adequate for normal nutrition*.
B. inadequate for normal nutrition.
C. in excess of normal requirements.
D. variable in relation to individual requirements.

Better: According to the American Medical Association, the diet of the average American provides vitamins and minerals in amounts that are
A. adequate for normal nutrition.*
B. inadequate for normal nutrition.

C. in excess of normal requirements.
D. variable in relation to individual requirements.

6. A good item stem poses a problem to which the correct answer is not likely to change over time.

Poor: Who was the President of the United States last year?
A. Barack Obama*
B. Jimmy Carter
C. Gerald Ford
D. Ronald Reagan

Better: Who was the President of the United States in 1995?
A.Bill Clinton*
B. Jimmy Carter
C.Gerald Ford
D.Ronald Reagan

7. A good item stem focuses on important learning objectives and avoids testing trivia.

Poor: The initials NRA stand for
A.National Recovery Act*.
B.National Rifle Association.
C.Northeast Regional Accreditation.
D.Nebraska Recreational Administration.

Better: What legislation, passed by Congress during the Great Depression, was later found to be unconstitutional?
A.National Recovery Act*
B.Work Projects Administration
C.Civilian Conservation Corps
D.Public Works Administration

The poor item illustrates more than one defect. The item is testing at a trivial level, and any of the four options would be correct. The better item requires candidates to apply more knowledge in selecting the best option.

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Requirements for Acceptable Items

For items to be acceptable to include in the CHC exam they must take the following aspects into consideration:

- **The question stem is clear and unambiguous.** It is written in a straightforward and concise manner that leaves no room for misinterpretation. It presents a single, well-defined problem or scenario without unnecessary complexity or vague language.

- **Uses clear, accessible language.** Avoid jargon, slang, colloquialisms, or overly complex language. Items should be written so they are easily understood by all test takers, regardless of background or familiarity with informal expressions.

- **Ensures cultural sensitivity and fairness.** Items should be free from cultural bias, stereotypes, or assumptions that could disadvantage any group. Use inclusive language and examples that reflect diverse populations and experiences.

- **The key is *unquestionably* correct,** and incorrect options (distractors) are *unquestionably* wrong.

- **All four options are grammatically related to the stem.** If the stem is phrased as a question, each option should provide a logical and grammatically correct answer. If the stem is an incomplete statement, each option should complete the statement in a way that is grammatically correct and contextually appropriate.

- **All four options are homogeneous in terms of structure, content, and length.** This means they should be similar in length, grammatical form, and level of detail, and should all relate to the stem in a comparable way. Avoid making the correct answer noticeably longer, more specific, or more complex than the distractors.

- **All four options are no longer than one line of text.** Since test takers have less than 1 minute per item, try to keep the options a reasonable length.

- **If the key. includes one or more words or phrases that appear in the stem (the question or prompt), then the distractors (the incorrect answer choices) should also include similar language**. This helps avoid giving unintentional clues to the test-taker about which answer is correct. When only the key echoes language from the stem, it can stand out as the obvious choice—not because it's known to be correct, but because it 'sounds right' or matches more closely.

- **Absolute terms have been avoided.** In poorly constructed test items, options containing “all”, “none”, “always” and “never” are likely to be found in distractors, while less definite terms such as “generally” and “often” are likely to be used in keys. Test takers will quickly recognize the

absolute terms in the distractors and reject those distractors.

- **Options are mutually exclusive.** If two options have the same meaning, and only one answer is to be selected, test takers will realize that both options must be incorrect and recognize them as distractors.

- **Avoid combining multiple ideas or using compound statements in options.**
  Each option should reflect a single, clear concept or outcome. When options include more than one idea (e.g., “A and B are both correct” or “This remedy is effective *and* safe”), they become harder to evaluate and may confuse test takers—especially if one part is true and the other is not.

  Compound options can unintentionally shift the focus away from assessing knowledge and toward interpreting tricky language. Keeping options focused and singular helps ensure clarity and fairness.

- **The key does not contain any incorrect information.** If the key did contain incorrect information, it might force the test taker to choose between ignoring the incorrect information and selecting some other option.

- **“None of the above” cannot be used as an option.**

- **“All of the above” cannot be used as an option.**

- **Avoid the use of the pronouns “it”, “he”, “she”, and “you”.** In the case of “it”, “he”, and “she”, the candidate may be uncertain about the referent. Questions that ask, “What would you do?” can have no single right answer, since individual candidates could justify their individual responses.

- **Use “client” in items, not “patient”.**

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Additional CHC Item Writing Guidance

The following guidance is designed specifically to support item writers working on the CHC Exam. While general principles apply, CHC items must align closely with the mission, standards, and scope of the CHC certification process. This means creating exam questions that reflect the knowledge, skills, and professional judgment expected of an entry-level classical homeopathic practitioner.

By following the guidance below, you will help ensure that each item meaningfully contributes to a valid, reliable, and fair assessment of candidates seeking the CCH designation.

Be clear about what knowledge or skill the item is intended to assess. A well-constructed item targets one concept or competency at a time and avoids ambiguity about what is being measured. Keeping this focus will help you craft a stem and options that directly align with the intended domain and statement. If you're unsure what you're testing for, the item is likely to be unclear to the test taker as well.

Focus on knowledge appropriate for the entry-level practitioner. Items should assess foundational knowledge and reasoning that a competent practitioner is expected to have at the start of independent practice. Avoid overly advanced, specialized, or obscure content that goes beyond what is reasonable for entry-level performance. The goal is to evaluate readiness to practice safely and effectively—not expertise in niche areas.

Ensure content reflects broadly accepted knowledge within the field. Be careful when creating questions which have the best response as limited to only one author. While multiple references are not generally required for an item, it's best to not create an item which can only narrowly be attributed to a single source (except in the case where the Domain and Statement reference a single source). In these cases it is best to include the author's name in the item stem. (E.g., FT-13 - Explain how Vithoulkas' hierarchy of symptoms and the intensity of symptoms relates to the possibility of homeopathic cure)).

Draw from real-world professional experience to create meaningful items. Your own clinical or professional experience can be a rich source of inspiration for item writing. Real-world situations often provide practical, relevant contexts that reflect the kinds of decisions entry-level practitioners must make. These scenarios can help ensure that items test applied knowledge and judgment—not just rote memorization**.**

The correct answer, known as the item key, must be supported by information that is explicitly found and cited in one of the sources listed in the CHC Study References List. However, avoid using exact wording from the source material, as directly copied content often results in weak or ineffective test items.

Materia medica items must only include keynote symptoms. . Keynote symptoms represent the most distinctive and defining features of a remedy, making them a practical focus for assessing remedy

knowledge. Questions built around keynotes help determine whether candidates can identify remedies based on their most characteristic signs, which strengthens their ability to apply materia medica in a meaningful and clinically useful way.

Each materia medica item must cross-reference the remedy keynotes in two approved materia medica references and both sources should be included in the reference when submitting the items. Use three to four keynotes to craft each materia medica item. Keynotes are the characteristic symptoms emphasized in the source, such as symptoms shown in bold, italics, underlining, or capital letters, depending on the text or software being used. Please use keynotes only, rather than general or non-characteristic symptoms.

Materia medica items should focus on distinguishing key differences between remedies with similar keynote symptoms. Rather than only testing direct recall of individual key symptoms, good materia medica items challenge test takers to recognize the subtle differences between remedies that share similar keynote features. Short clinical scenarios can be especially effective in testing practical understanding.

Ensure each remedy listed in a materia medica domain statement has at least one developed item. Many materia medica domain statements include multiple remedies. To ensure balanced coverage and fairness in the CHC Exam, item writers must create at least one test item for each remedy identified within the selected domain statement. This guarantees that all specified remedies are represented and assessed in the exam.

Well-crafted distractors are just as important as a clear stem and correct answer. The exam directions remind test takers to select the *best* answer, meaning some distractors may appear plausible but should still be clearly less correct than the key (correct) response. When distractors seem too reasonable — for example, reflecting approaches commonly used in practice but not aligned with classical homeopathy — the item may perform poorly in post-exam statistical analysis, signaling that the item is weak or confusing. Therefore, careful attention to writing all three distractors is just as critical as crafting a clear stem and selecting the correct answer.

The exam and certification promotes public safety and quality assurance. With this in mind, the item writer can often recall tasks, roles, concepts and abilities that comprise essential knowledge for the entry-level practitioner.

In situations involving safety issues, items can be written to determine whether test takers can identify the appropriate course of action. Other sources of inspiration might include situations in which a less than-competent person could cause harm or where an improper sequence or lack of knowledge could lead to an undesirable outcome.

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Guidelines for Submitting Homeopathic Case

As homeopaths, case taking and case analysis are at the core of what we do. Testing these skills is a crucial part of the CHC exam. Here are the guidelines for submitting these cases:

- Cases can only be submitted by certified homeopaths (CCH)
- You must protect the privacy of the client by using a pseudonym and removing all identifying information.
- If you have an idea for a case check with the Item Writing chair before submitting.
  - A case must include an intake, a repertorization and 2 follow-ups.
  - The rubrics used for identifying the curing remedy must accompany the case.
- Use a word processing application to write your case submission and items.
- Case summaries average approximately 600 - 1200 words and should include information from the intake and at least two follow-up appointments.
- The case can be either acute or constitutional.
- The remedy choice must be clear but not obvious. No nosodes.
- The case must be an actual case that you have taken including follow ups that confirm the remedy choice.
- The case should include the initial case intake – not follow-ups alone.
- The remedy that was recommended must be on the list of remedies for exam study identified in the Reference Materials.
- Items must be written with the understanding that examinees will not have access to software or any other materials to analyze the case.
- The client's symptoms should span a range of physical, mental, emotional, and energetic.
- The case should not present symptoms that would lead to an obvious answer. However, the case and items should not be unreasonably difficult or obscure for an entry-level homeopath.
- Case questions that require knowledge about the client's past history – or any information not in the summary – should be avoided.
- ***Cases must not have been used as a teaching case, published at any time in the past, or planned for public discourse in the future.***
  - Email your document that contains your case submission to **chcitemwriters@gmail.com**

Procedure for case item development:

- Develop from the case document a screenshot of 4 repertorizations including 3 repertorization choices as distractors and the one key (correct) repertorization. Be certain that any identifiable information is removed from the repertorization.
- Each repertorization should contain between 5-8 rubrics. All repertorizations must have the same number of rubrics.
- Develop items for each statement in CA, PS, FM, that begins with, "Given a case…".
- Label each item with a corresponding Domain & Statement code.

Example of a Case with Several Items

44 yo married woman; music teacher; amateur artist. Observation: Intense, animated, talks with hands. She reports the following symptoms all of which have worsened since her husband lost his business about five months ago. She is very uncomfortable, restless and anxious about her health. She indicates the doctors haven't helped her and she doesn't trust them.

She is experiencing tremendous fatigue after several rounds of bronchitis during the previous winter/spring. The fatigue is getting worse. "I can barely drag myself through the day." < Waking/Morning.

She has had no menses for the last four months. Typically, she is very irritable before menses. (Generally, PMS symptoms > once flow begins.) She says her interest in sex is "zero". She has hot flashes every 15 minutes. Dripping perspiration with flushing.

It is difficult for her to empty her bladder completely, the flow is slow to start and it hurts (9 out of 10). It feels like when she has had cystitis in the past.

"I'm trapped in this marriage! My husband doesn't do anything for us! I want him to be part of the family! When he comes home, he's always in a bad mood and criticizes me. I wish he would go to work and never come home. I don't think I get the truth from him.Something's up with him!"

"I've been having panic attacks that wake me in the middle of the night. I'm afraid I will not be able to support the kids and myself. I sleep better with the window open and wearing a loose fitting nightgown.

Heart Surgery 11 years ago: Mitral valve prolapse. Valve repair.

After my heart surgery, I had to take care of the house and kids myself, while my husband went skiing. Friends helped, but it was very embarrassing. I told my friends he was on a business trip. He abandoned us. My heart was broken in more ways than one." I'm having pain in my chest again. Squeezing. Aching. (6 out of 10) "I think it's a broken heart."

Childhood: I had some asthma as a child, it would be worse when my allergies flared in the winter and spring. My nose and eyes run. I was always an "outsider." I was a tomboy. Our town had a school for boys who were interested in industrial arts and engineering. I begged my parents to let me go. When I graduated, I wanted to go to music school, but my parents wouldn't let me. I went to school for applied mathematics instead. My parents never understood me. My father drank. They abandoned me. I didn't fit in. I didn't want to follow their rules or live up to their expectations.

I was in love with a boy in high school. The relationship had to end, because he developed mental illness. I really loved him. I still do. I'm so sad. I miss him.

Fears: Financial security. Heights. Falling. Death. Fm Hx: Alcoholism-father. Depression-mother.

A general symptom in this case is:

A) Fatigue < morning*

B) Cystitis
C) Irritability
D) Embarrassment

Which of the following is the most *individualizing symptom* in this case?

A) Painful urination with cystitis
B) Fatigue worse in the morning
C) Feelings of abandonment*
D) Hot flashes every 15 minutes

A modality affecting her bronchitis is:

A) Time of day
B) Fatigue
C)The seasons*
D) Opening a window

The correct order of events in this case is:

A) Panic attacks, husband lost business, cessation of menses, fatigue
B) Teenage love affair, asthma, cessation of menses, husband lost business
C) Asthma, bronchitis, husband lost business, panic attack*
D) Mitral valve prolapse, marriage, asthma, bronchitis

Asthma and bronchitis are what type of symptoms?

A) General
B) Mental/Emotional
C) Concomitant
D) Physical*

As important aspect of this case is:

A) Financial worries*
B) Mitral valve prolapse
C) Embarrassment
D) Need to sleep with an open window

Select the best set of rubrics to include in a repertorization of this case from the following:

A) Mind, Forsaken feeling (191 rxs); Mind, Ardent (36 rxs); Mind, Fear, High Places, of (120 rxs); Female Genitalia/Sex, Tumors, Uterus, myoma (95 rxs); Female Genitalia/Sex, Menses, Absent (212 rxs)
B) Mind, Forsaken feeling (191 rxs); Mind, Ardent (36 rxs); Mind, Fear, High Places, of (120 rxs); Female Genitalia/Sex, Tumors, Uterus, myoma (95 rxs); Female Genitalia/Sex, Menses, Absent (212 rxs)
C) Mind, Forsaken feeling (191 rxs); Mind, Ardent (36 rxs); Mind, Fear, High Places, of (120 rxs); Female Genitalia/Sex, Tumors, Uterus, myoma (95 rxs); Female Genitalia/Sex, Menses, Absent (212 rxs)

D) Mind, Fear of Poverty (66 rxs); Mind, Suspicious (148 rxs); Mind, Ailments from love, disappointed (57 rxs); Bladder, Urination, retarded (121 rxs); Chest, Pain, aching (73 rxs)*

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Guidelines for Creating Repertorization Items

In addition to cases, test-takers are asked to analyze repertorization charts. In these items, a repertorization chart is displayed and followed by a series of questions related to reading the repertorization chart.

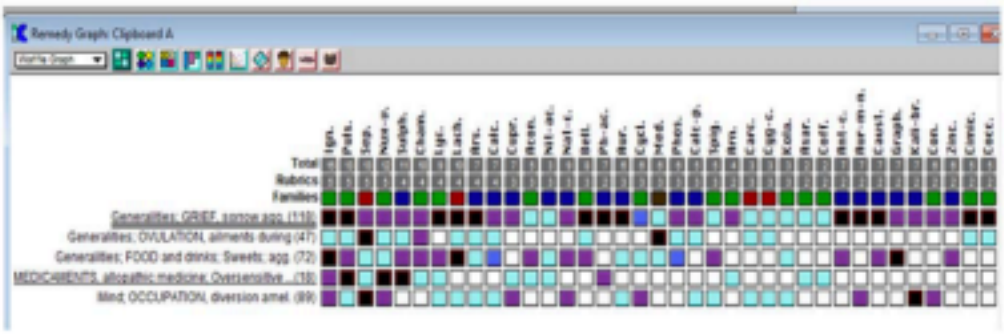
These questions assess the test-taker's ability to interpret the chart independently of a detailed case narrative. For example, they may be asked to identify which remedy ranks highest based on rubric totals, which rubric carries the greatest weighting or importance, or to determine which remedy would be eliminated if a particular rubric were removed.

Other questions may ask the test-taker to recognize patterns within the chart or to assess the impact of adding or removing a rubric on the final remedy selection.

These items test the candidate's competency in understanding the mechanics and implications of repertorization, as well as their ability to critically evaluate and interpret repertory data to guide remedy choice.

Example of Repertorization Items (from the CHC Exam Handbook)

Select the best set of rubrics to include in a repertorization of this case from the following:



24.1	The numbers 118, 47, 72, 18 and 89 represent _____.	A.) The total weight (degree) of the remedies shown in the chart	B) The number of remedies identified for each rubric	C) The page on which the remedy is found in the repertory	D) The importance of the rubric in the repertorization
24.2	The number 4 in the Sulphur column represents _____.	A)The grade of the remedy within the rubric	B) The total number of rubrics that contain Sulphur	C) The total weight (degree) of Sulphur in the repertorized rubrics	D) The probability that Sulphur is the correct remedy
24.3	The rubric, "Generalities, Grief, sorrow, agg." is underlined to indicate _____.	A) Small rubrics have been combined	B) The high intensity of the symptom	C) It is a strange, rare and peculiar symptom	D) It is the only rubric in a particular family
24.4	Two remedies of equal probability in this repertorization are ___	A) Arsenicum and Phosphoric acid	B) Lycopodium and Lachesis	C) Chamomilla and Lachesis	D) Natrum carbonicum and Lycopodium
24.5	Not included in this repertorization are _____ .	A) Physical modalities	B) General modalities	C) Mental symptoms	D) Characteristic symptoms

Procedure for repertorization item submission:

- Use a word processing application to write your repertorization items.
- Insert the image from the repertorization into your document. Be sure to remove any client names or identifiers from the image.
- Be sure the full rubrics can be seen in the screenshot
- Specify in your submission which software application was used to create the repertorization.
- Email your document that contains your repertorization to chcitemwriters@gmail.com

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Entering Your Items into Webassessor

1. Open a web browser and go to https://webassessor.com/chc
2. Enter Login Name and Password and click Log In.
3. On the Webassessor Home page, hover over Assessments and click on Item Banks.
4. On the Item Banks page, click on Unedited Items folder.
5. In the Unedited Items folder, click on the folder that has your name.
6. You will see your Item Writing page and a set of Domain folders.
7. Click on the Domain folder corresponding to the Domain for which you have written items. Click on the New button.
8. In the Item Objective box, enter the code that you see in the left column of the Domains and Statements list for the corresponding Domain/Statement.
9. For example, if your item is based upon Materia Medica statement number 3, enter MM-03.
10. **IMPORTANT Be sure to enter the code exactly as you see it in the list – i.e., two characters followed by 2 digits with a dash in between (XX-00)**
11. In the Item Text box, enter the item stem.
12. Next, enter Item Options in the four spaces provided, and choose ONE radio button to identify the key.
13. Click on the Properties tab on the left side. In the Reference field, enter the Author, Title and Page number or Aphorism number of the reference that you used to write the item. (e.g. Kent: Lectures on Homeopathic Philosophy, p. 10) ***In the Author field, enter your name into the Author box.***
14. Be sure to click on the Save button, upper right.
15. When finished editing the item, click on the Done button and you will automatically return to the Domain folder page.
16. If you have other items to enter, click on your name to return to the list of Domain folders:
17. Select a Domain folder and repeat the process described above.
18. When you have entered all items into Webassessor, notify chcitemwriters@gmail.com that you have completed submitting your items.
19. Upon confirmation of the item entry, you must destroy any paper copies, electronic, digital or other types of copies of the submitted item(s), as outlined in the Item Writers Letter of Agreement. Annually, you will be required to sign a security attestation form confirming you have complied with this requirement.
20. The award of CEU's is dependent upon your completion of this final step and submission of a completed Security Attestation form.

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Thank You

Thank you for your dedication to the CHC Item Writing process. Your contributions are vital to maintaining the quality, integrity, and fairness of the CHC Certification Exam. By thoughtfully crafting exam items, you are helping ensure that the next generation of certified classical homeopaths meets the highest standards of competency and ethical practice.

If you have any questions, need clarification, or would like additional support at any point in the item writing process, please don't hesitate to contact the Item Writing Chair at chcitemwriters@gmail.com.

We are here to support you every step of the way!!

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