

**Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine  
Bau Institute of Medical and Health Sciences Education**

**MCQ Writing Checklist**

Section	No.	Criterion	X	✓	Comments / Action
<b>Planning and alignment</b>	1	The item is written against a clearly identified intended learning outcome.			
	2	The content is based on the objectives of a whole teaching session or topic, not on an isolated slide or trivial detail.			
	3	The item assesses a broad concept or principle rather than detailed facts or minutiae that encourage rote memorisation.			
	4	The item is relevant to authentic patient care, especially common problems or problems of serious clinical importance where appropriate.			
	5	The expected difficulty is appropriate for the target cohort.			
<b>Stem</b>	6	The stem is clear, concise, and grammatically correct.			
	7	It presents one clearly defined problem only.			
	8	It contains all information required to answer the question.			
	9	The stem excludes superfluous information and unnecessary "window dressing."			
	10	If a clinical vignette is used, only relevant details are included (e.g. age, gender, setting, presenting complaint, duration, history, examination findings, investigations).			
	11	The language level and terminology are appropriate for the learners.			
	12	The item avoids trick wording and irrelevant difficulty.			
<b>Lead-in</b>	13	The lead-in is written in direct question format, not as an incomplete statement.			
	14	The lead-in states exactly what the candidate is required to decide or do.			

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	15	The stem and lead-in together can be understood without reading the options first ("hand-cover test").			
	16	Negative lead-ins are avoided; if essential, words such as <b>NOT</b> or <b>EXCEPT</b> are clearly highlighted.			
	17	True/false style lead-ins are avoided unless essential for assessing important knowledge.			
	18	The lead-in avoids vague wording such as "Which of the following is true/correct?"			
	19	The lead-in is free from grammatical clues.			
<b>Options / Choices</b>	20	The item contains exactly <b>four options</b> .			
	21	There is <b>one best answer</b> and three distractors.			
	22	All options are homogeneous in content and belong to the same category.			
	23	All options are parallel in grammatical structure and style.			
	24	The correct answer is approximately the same length as the distractors.			
	25	The options are arranged in alphabetical or numerical order where appropriate.			
	26	All options are clear and plausible.			
	27	The options are mutually exclusive and do not overlap in meaning.			
	28	Avoided "all of the above" "both A and B"			
<b>Distractors</b>	29	Each distractor is plausible to less-prepared students.			
	30	Distractors reflect realistic errors or misconceptions.			
	31	No distractor is partially correct in a way that creates ambiguity.			
<b>Key</b>	32	The keyed answer is clearly the single best answer.			

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	33	The keyed answer is supported by standard teaching, accepted references, or current evidence.			
	34	The keyed answer is not cued by repeated wording from the stem.			
	35	The keyed answer is not cued by unusual length, excessive detail, grammatical fit, or wording pattern.			
<b>Educational quality</b>	36	The item tests application of knowledge or problem-solving rather than simple factual recall, where appropriate.			
	37	The item is not tricky, misleading, or unnecessarily complicated.			
	38	The reading load is appropriate and the item can reasonably be answered efficiently within the expected time.			
<b>Quality assurance</b>	39	The item has been checked for spelling, punctuation, grammar, and formatting accuracy.			
	40	The answer key has been verified before submission.			
	41	The item has been reviewed by another colleague where possible before submission.			
	42	Required item classification has been completed where applicable (e.g. expected difficulty, core/advanced, taxonomy/classification fields).			