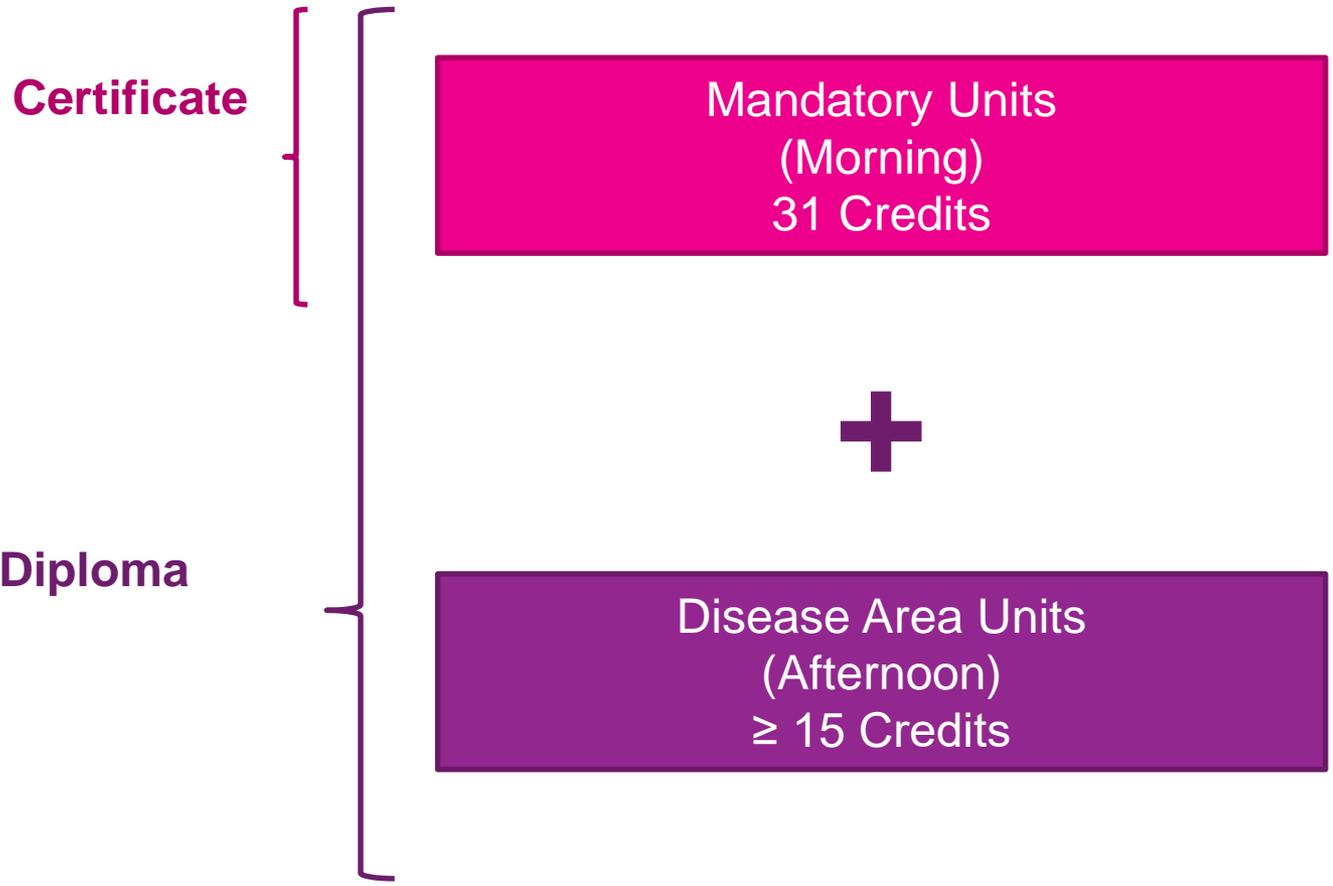# ABPI Exam
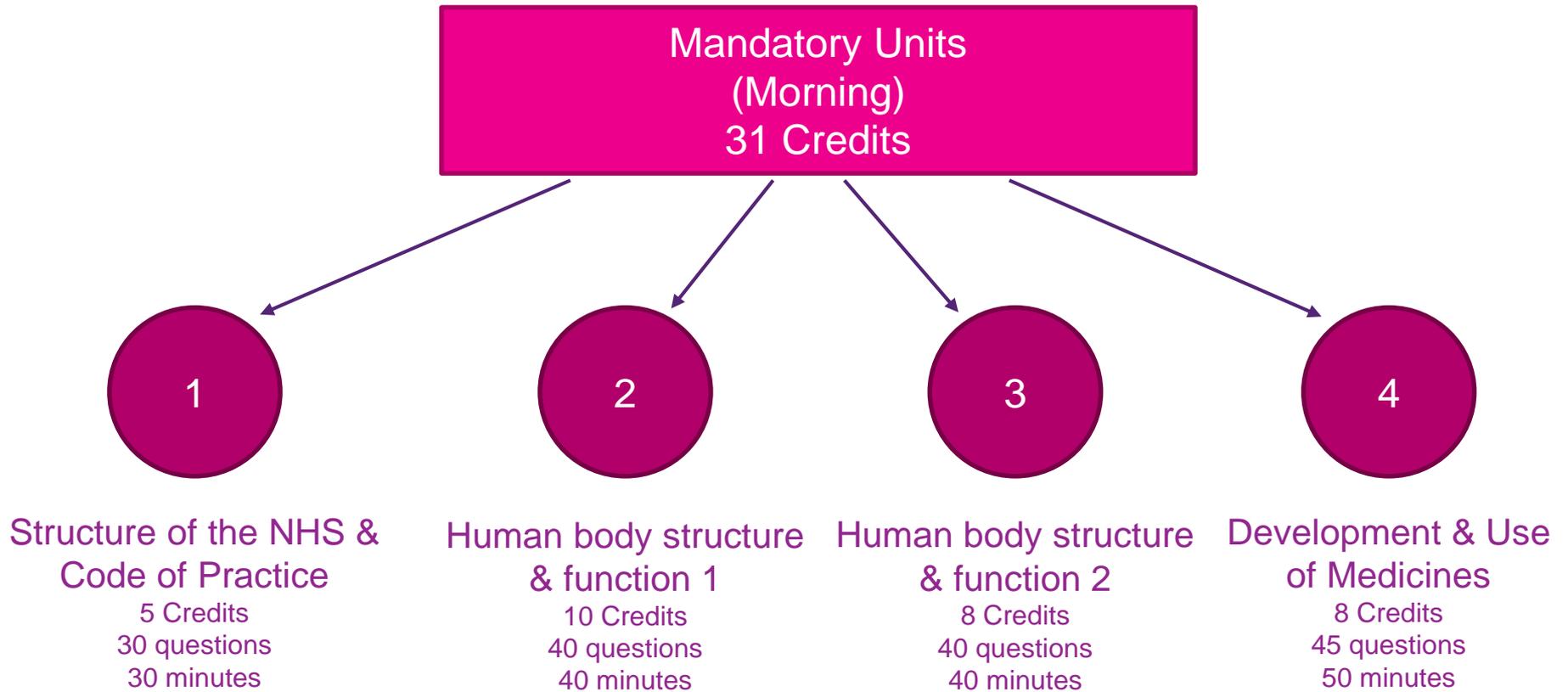## *What does it involve?*

ABPI Exam Team

Why is it important?

- **Reputation of the Industry and professional standards**
- **Knowledge and understanding of the ABPI Code of Practice for the Pharmaceutical Industry**
- **Human Biology & Disease Area knowledge → meaningful conversations with care professionals**

- **For you:**
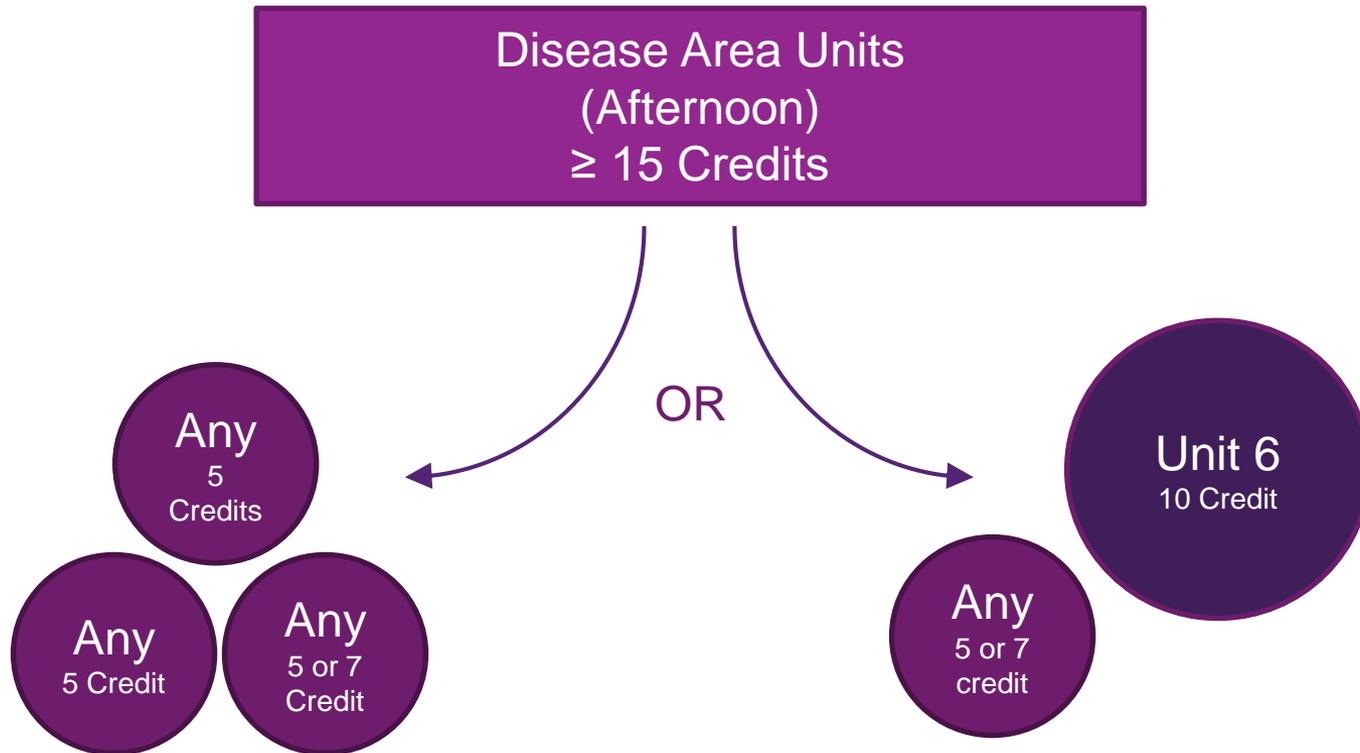 - "Fitness to Practice"
  - Required for your role

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Exam Structure

Certificate

Mandatory Units
(Morning)
31 Credits

+

Diploma

Disease Area Units
(Afternoon)
≥ 15 Credits

Exam Structure

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Mandatory Units          │
│          (Morning)              │
│          31 Credits             │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```

(1)

Structure of the NHS & Code of Practice
5 Credits
30 questions
30 minutes

(2)

Human body structure & function 1
10 Credits
40 questions
40 minutes

(3)

Human body structure & function 2
8 Credits
40 questions
40 minutes

(4)

Development & Use of Medicines
8 Credits
45 questions
50 minutes

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Choice of disease area units

Disease Area Units
(Afternoon)
≥ 15 Credits

OR

Any
5
Credits

Any
5 Credit

Any
5 or 7
Credit

Any
5 or 7
credit

Unit 6
10 Credit

Timeline

- **Candidates must sit <u>all units</u> within 1 year of starting a role within the scope of the Code**
  - NOT from the date promoting medicines in the field is started
  - **Mandatory** <u>and</u> **Disease area** units

- **Must pass within 2 years**

- **Remember, exam sittings <u>do</u> book up (often 3 months before), so book ahead!**
  - The Exam Team cannot guarantee spaces before the 1 or 2 year time limit.
  - Where there is a cancellation, the seat is released through the Alert list on a <u>first-come, first-served</u> basis and is usually booked by a waiting candidate extremely quickly (often within minutes)

- **Any extension applications for <u>exceptional circumstances</u> must be directed to the PMCPA**

PMCPA | Prescription Medicines Code of Practice Authority

Switchboard: 020 7747 8880
Fax: 020 7747 8881

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Study Time

- **Certificate & Diploma are accredited at Level 3 (A level equivalent)**

- **Each credit represents approximately 10 hours of study time**

- **Total approx. <u>300 hours</u> of studying for the Certificate (450 for the Diploma)**

For example:

- – Two months of full time work (40 hour weeks)
- – One full day a week for 9 months
- – 2 hours a day, 6 days a week for 6 months

- **May be less if prior knowledge of human biology**

- **Always remember this is a <u>serious commitment</u>**

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Learning Materials

- **The learning manuals (Edition 8 currently) contain all the information needed to study for the exam – updates are published on the Exams website**

  - Exam questions are written based on the learning manuals

- **The e-learning contains resources to aid understanding:**

  - Interactive diagrams and animations

  - Quizzes to test learner understanding

    - including Code of Practice Scenarios

  - **Practice papers**

    - written in the same style as the exam

    - NOT the exact same questions found in the exam

- **e-learning enhances the learning manual content, it does not replace it**

Circulatory system

Lungs

Body

System
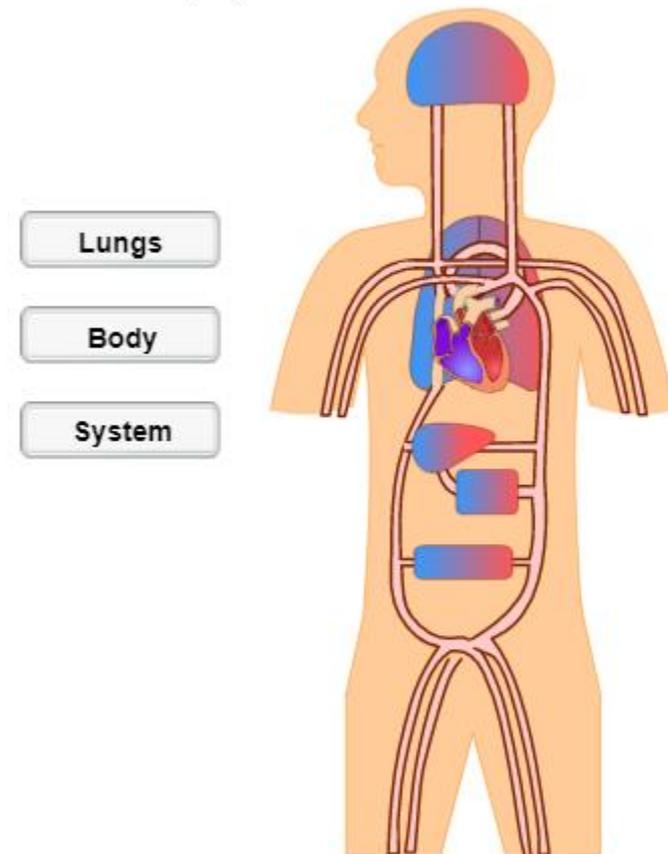
Study Planning

- Make the process easier and avoid too much stress, panic and failed exam sittings by beginning to prepare as early as possible. Don't listen to those who say they are not going to revise. Remember hard work now will provide dividends in the future.

- There are a lot of differences between learning the content and revising it for an examination.
  - *For example:*
    - ***Learning*** *is a long -term process and cannot be done by trying to cram information into a few weeks. It involves completely understanding topics and memorising information.*
    - ***Revision*** *is learning to unlock your memory. There need to be memory prompters to help 'call up' what is known by the candidate.*

- Planning work means that more likelihood of revising all work properly. Another bonus is that good planning always reduces stress. Try to:
  - *make a list of what you have to do*
  - *find out the dates of the exams and make an exam timetable*
  - *plan / design / draw up a timetable for revision*

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Study Planning – Practical Tips

- Candidates need to know what study techniques work for them. *For example:*
  - *Knowledge organisers*
  - *Study/revision diagrams*
  - *Explaining concepts to a friend*

- Arrange to have regular breaks of 5-10 minutes between revision sessions

- Remember to focus on mental well-being
  - *go for a walk or do some exercise*
  - *write down worries - then throw the paper away*

- Plan the Exam day to reduce stress
  - *How to get to the venue, allowing plenty of time to get settled.*
  - *Having all equipment that will be needed. Remember a phone cannot be used as a calculator.*

What to bring on the day

- **Photo ID** for registration – Driving License or Passport

  – candidates will <u>not be permitted</u> to take the exam without it!

  – Registration is 30 mins prior to exam start time (eg. 9:30 am for a 10:00 am start, 1:30 pm for 2:00 pm start).

  – Candidates <u>must</u> be outside the exam room on time for registration

- **Candidates <u>must have</u> a calculator** – candidates could be examined on data interpretation in all units

- **Do <u>NOT</u> bring a phone or smart watch**

  – Candidates will be disqualified if they have any internet enabled device on during the exam (even if there is no intention to use it and it is switched off)

- **The ABPI Exam team provide:**

  – Pencil & eraser

  – Water

- **Lunch is not provided, there will be an opportunity to purchase food on the day.**

- **Final instructions are sent out 1 week prior by email**

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What to expect on the day– AM

Certificate/Diploma in the Promotion of Prescription Medicines
Exam Answer Sheet

MANDATORY UNITS

Last name and initial

Write date & candidate no. in numbers AND mark between brackets

Marking Instructions
- This document is designed to be machine readable
- Please use an HB pencil
- Mark like this ▬
- If you make a mistake erase it completely
- Do NOT mark with ticks, crosses or circles

Candidate name
CHURCHILL M

Candidate signature

UNIT ONE

Answer only Unit 1 here!

- *Multiple choice questions*
- *4 options*
- *Single correct answer*
- *Mark between brackets*
- *No negative marking*

UNIT TWO

Answer only Unit 2 here!

Units 3 & 4 on other side

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What to expect on the day– PM

Diploma in the Promotion of Prescription Medicines

Last name and initial

OPTIONAL UNITS

Candidate name
CHURCHILL M

Candidate signature

Marking Instructions
- This document is designed to be machine readable
- Please use an HB pencil
- Mark like this ▬
- If you make a mistake erase it completely
- Do NOT mark with ticks, crosses or circles

Selected unit numbers must be indicated in the box below and the units answered in STRICT NUMERICAL ORDER under the headings First Choice, Second Choice and Third Choice where applicable.

Write date & candidate no. in numbers AND mark between brackets

Examination date — Day 1 2, Month 0 6, Year 1 5

Candidate number 1 2 3 4

Select your units (mark between brackets)

Complete units in numerical order
e.g.
Unit 5 "first choice"
Unit 10 "second choice"
Unit 15 "third choice"

FIRST CHOICE

Unit title Arthritis

Short title of unit
e.g. "Arthritis"

1	21	41
2	22	42
3	23	43
4	24	44
5	25	45

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Exam Myths

1. **The exam is impossible!**

   – Marks of over 90% were scored in almost every unit in 2017, even some 100% 's

   – 31 Distinctions were awarded in 2017

2. **Units 7 & 16 are much easier than the others (and 14 & 15 are much harder)**

   – Not true! There is no "easy route" through the ABPI exam.

   – Each exam is carefully standardised to make sure the questions have the same difficulty across the board.

3. **Its easy if you have a science background**

   – Is it the 60% pass mark that makes people think this?

   – Each exam unit is associated with a number of credits (from 5 to 10) and each credit indicates approximately 10 hours of learning for someone with no prior knowledge of the topic.

Average Marks (2017)

Bar chart showing Average Mark (%) on the y-axis (0 to 100) for the following categories:

- Code of Practice and NHS
- Human body systems 1
- Human body systems 2
- Development and use of medicines
- Arthritis
- Cardiovascular
- Dermatological
- Diabetes
- Central Nervous System
- Bone
- Female Health
- Gastrointestinal
- Male Genitourinary System
- Oncology
- Psychiatric
- Respiratory
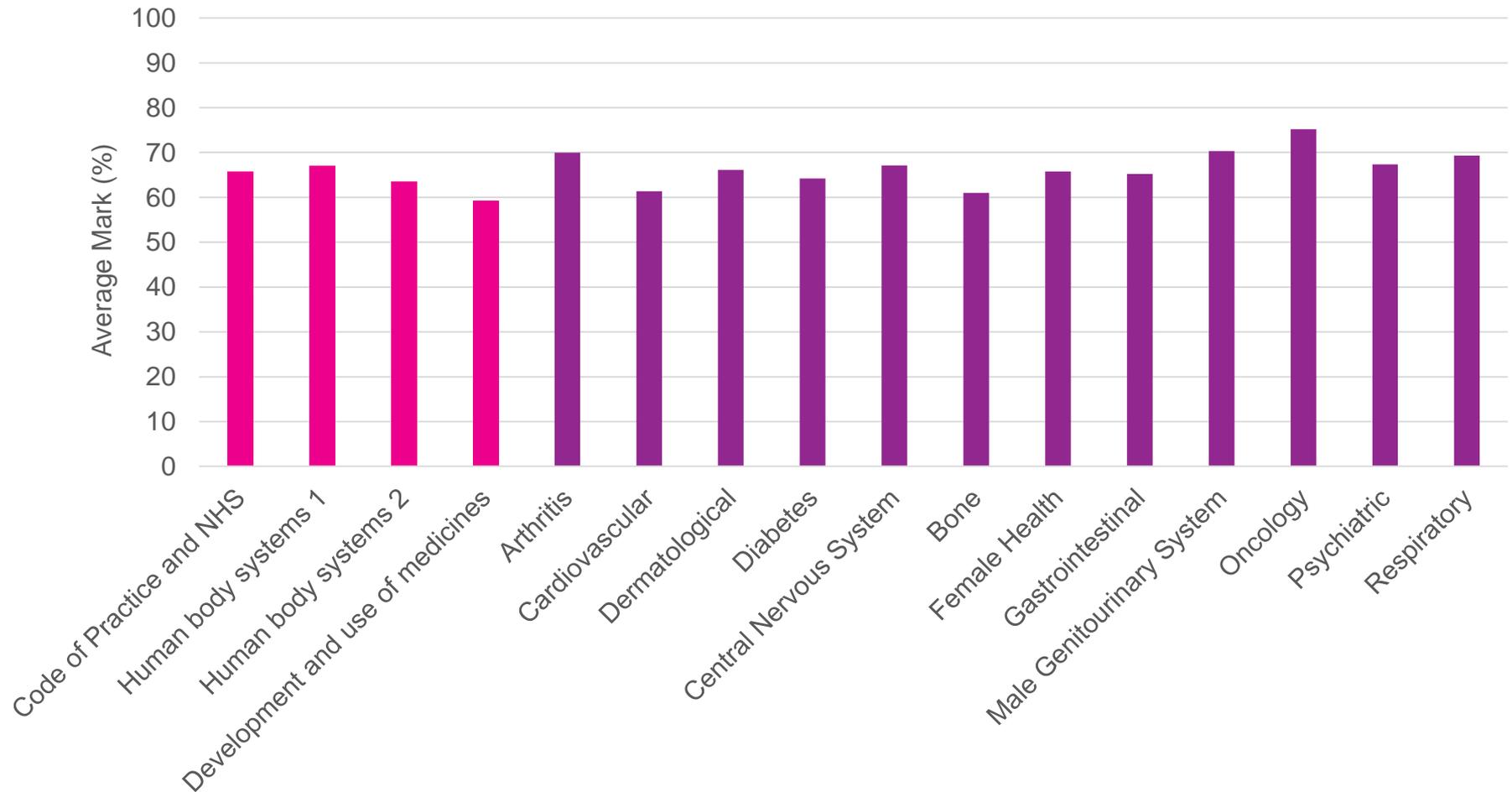
Behind the scenes – what goes into the ABPI exam?

- **Question Writing:**
  - Questions are written by professional question writers and assed for accuracy by the Chief Examiner, a qualified medical practitioner, and the Lead Invigilator.

- **Question Analysis:**
  - The ABPI regularly commission question analysis to determine how questions are performing well at different levels of difficulty. Each exam paper has questions at a range of difficulty levels with a uniform overall difficulty score.

- **Question Queries** from candidates submitted in writing are reviewed by the Chief Examiner.

- **Marking:**
  - All exam papers are marked by an optical mark reader which can pick up any ambiguous marks on the answer sheet. If the machine cannot recognise the answer indicated, it will flag this to the Examinations Officer, and the sheet will be checked by hand. The risk of error in marking is therefore, extremely low.

- **The process for exam result appeals and whistleblowing policies can be found in the ABPI Exam Regulations:**

  https://exams.abpi.org.uk/Pages/Exam-regulations.aspx

- Candidates should read Exam Regulations on registering as a candidate.

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