

STUDY GUIDE

FOR THE ISAR COMPETENCY EXAM

Time management is the key to your best performance on the exam. Your time should be divided up proportionately to the exam parts so that you can complete all the sections.

Exam Sections:

The exam has three sections and totals 549 points or marks. Six hours are given to complete.

Section I. True/False & Multiple choice (283 questions – 308 possible marks) = 56% of Total

1. Overview of history, astronomy, calculations, computer skill and familiarity with ephemerides, tables, and cycles.
2. Natal chart interpretation and focus.
3. Forecasting skills, including progressions, directions, solar arc, returns, phases, transits, eclipses, and lunations.
4. Synastry and relationship including family patterns, misc. relations and group dynamics.

Tips:

Section I. True and False and Multiple Choice. Each topic area has both kinds of questions.

True and False. Answer these questions as quickly as possible. Don't think too much; there are no trick questions. If you are not sure, you can skip the question until later when you are at the end of this section, or when you are at the end of the exam. Filling them in before going on to the next section is preferable.

Multiple-choice questions may have multiple answers. Failing to choose a correct answer when there is more than one will cause a deduction. If there are four choices, any of and more than one could be correct. The examiner (person grading your exam) is instructed to count each correct answer as one point. In the event that there are two answers and you miss one, you will receive 0 points since one right answer will be cancelled out by an incorrect or missing answer.

Section II. (50 questions, 132 possible marks) = 24% of Total

A. Short answer (40 questions)

B. Essay questions (10 questions)

1. 2 parts on aspect delineation with examples
2. 3 parts on aspect delineation.
3. Natal chart interpretation. 5 comments to make

Tips: for short essay and essay questions

Be sure to answer the question as given. Read carefully. Answer these as directly and concisely as possible. Looking up information from your resources is fine if you only need to do this a few times. It can waste a lot of time you need for the other parts of the exam. Adding extra words or explanations will not earn you extra points on the ones you know. Save your ability to expound further for the written chart interpretation questions.

Section III. (20 questions, 111 possible marks) = 20% of Total

A. Natal Chart questions (3 questions, 31 marks)

B. Synastry (34 marks)

1. Paragraph on specific male chart configurations
2. Paragraph on specific female chart configurations
3. Paragraph about how their configurations interact
4. Suggestions that you would give that may help them as clients

C. Solar Return. One essay question on chart provided (18 marks)

D. Progressions – There are 12 various questions based on the mechanics, observation, and delineation of a progressed chart in a tri-wheel layout (natal>progressed>transit). (28 points)

Tips:

Section II & III Essay questions and Chart Delineation

These two sections give you almost 50% of your points, but may take up more of your total time. Read these questions very carefully to know what you are looking for in the charts. Mark-up the provided charts as you please. Make notes or outlines on a scratch paper if necessary to organize your thoughts. Use complete sentences. Using only short phrases and keywords will not earn very many points. You may even want to do these sections of the exam first. Examiners specifically look for both the written interpretation and the astrological reasoning in marking those statements.

General advice and information:

- Read the question carefully – It's easy to misread the question. Many examinees do not fully read the question and give an incorrect answer.
- Questions are direct - Answer the question as stated. Do not over-think the question. To our knowledge, there are no "trick" questions. Many examinees miss this point.
- You may find similar questions in the exam. Answer each one independently as each is slightly different and is exploring another facet of your knowledge on the topic.
- The examiner (person grading your exam) does not know who you are. Each exam is numbered and your identity is unknown to the examiner.
- While you have the ability to bring and use any book you want, looking things can take up an amazing amount your time. There are almost 360 questions and six hours (360 minutes); do the math.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

Typical True & False Questions (Answer Key at the end)

1. Mercury goes Retrograde 3 times a year for 1 1/2 months.
2. In temperate and northern latitudes such as USA, Canada, Europe and Japan, The Mid-heaven in a chart is the Southern Angle.

3. A Yod pattern is composed of a sextile and two sesquiquadrates.
4. Peregrine means closest to the earth.
5. Pets and their care are shown by the 5th House.
6. A Mars Return Chart should be calculated each year.
7. If you had a Sun at 10 degrees of a sign and Uranus at 22 degrees of a sign, by Secondary Progression they would conjunct at around age 12.
8. Among other interpretations, the major relationship houses are considered to be 3, 7 & 11.
9. Generally speaking Moon to Venus soft aspects in a relationship chart are favorable because they enjoy being together.
10. Composite Sun in the 9th house would indicate one person dominates the other.

Typical Multiple Choice Questions (More than one answer may apply. Answer key below)

1. To quickly see transiting planets over several years or more it helps to have
 - a) an Ephemeris
 - b) a chart calculation app
 - c) a mobile or online Ephemeris
 - d) secondary progressions in a bi-wheel
2. Declination is measured north or south of
 - a) the ecliptic
 - b) the celestial equator
 - c) the vertex and anti-vertex
 - d) the prime meridian
3. Mercury and Venus are trine to each other:
 - a) Once a year
 - b) Every 6 months
 - c) Every 2 years
 - d) None of the above
4. To hand calculate a natal chart we need
 - a) To calculate the Local Mean Time
 - b) A daily ephemeris
 - c) An adjusted calculation date
 - d) The Greenwich time equivalent
5. The function of the Table of Houses is as follows:
 - a) Gives us planetary positions

- b) Gives us the 12 house cusps
- c) Tells us which signs are intercepted
- d) Helps us find the Greenwich Mean Time

Typical Short Answer Questions:

1. What is a Solar Arc Direction and how is it ascertained?
2. What is the Sun's greatest distance from the Celestial Equator?
3. What is the significance of a retrograde planet?
4. What is the harmonic of the quintile aspect and how many degrees is it?
5. What are possible dynamics between a Mars square Saturn aspect in a natal chart? Give three.

Delineation and Interpretation Questions:

Natal Chart:

Select and describe in 3 or 4 paragraphs, at least 3 significant aspects or configurations in the chart that demand attention. Answers need to be supported by planet in sign, house, house ruled, aspect patterns, dispositorships, and links throughout the chart.

Synastry:

Using the two charts for two people in relationship, find a pattern in one chart. How does it manifest in terms of needs or desires in a relationship for that person? How does it interplay with a pattern in the partner's chart?

Solar Return Chart:

This chart is presented in 2 different formats drawn up for the same location. Firstly both Natal and Return charts are given on the same page as individual charts. Then another presentation is given showing the Solar Return on the inner wheel and Natal Chart on the outer wheel. You can use either chart presentation for your answers, or create your own from the single chart presentations. You will be asked questions about the important issues in the upcoming year.

Secondary Progression 3 Wheel Chart With Transits:

You would have to understand how the Secondary Progression works in order to answer the questions. Questions on transit positions are also asked. The following are typical questions:

1. Name 5 progressed aspects within 1 degree orb.
2. What year did the progressed Mid-Heaven move into the next sign?

Answer keys

True & False Answers: 1. (F), 2. (T), 3. (F), 4. (F), 5. (F), 6. (F), 7. (T), 8. (T), 9. (T), 10. (F)

Multiple Choice Answers: 1. (a) (c), 2. (b), 3. (d), 4. (a) (b) (d) 5. (b) (c)

GLOSSARY OF EXAM TERMS

The following is a list of terms deemed important within that body of knowledge that may appear on the exam.

The Gregorian Calendar	Local Mean Time
Greenwich Mean Time	Logarithms in Calculation
Hellenistic Astrology	Planet out-of-bounds
Apogee & Perigee	Adjusted Calculation Date
Vertex	Signs of Short and Long Ascension
Declination	Planetary Patterns
Sidereal Time	Ascending & Descending Signs
Fruitful Signs	Zenith
Planetary Cycles	Planetary Ingresses
Parallel of Declination	Contra-Parallel of Declination
Meaning of Retrogrades	Periods of Planetary Retrogrades
Major & Minor Aspects	Calculated Sidereal Time
Occultation	Moon Void of Course
Dispositors	Peregrine
Negative & Positive Signs	Morning and Evening Stars
Greenwich Mean Time	Major Planetary Conjunctions
Antiscion	Phases of the Moon
Moon Speed Variation	Critical Degrees
House cusp Systems	Revolution of each planet
Ecliptic	Celestial Sphere
Applying & Separating Aspects	Cazimi
Dwadashamsa	Decanates
Solstices	Houses of Triplicities
Interceptions	Formula for Fortuna
Primal Triad	Return Charts
Solar Arc Progression	Primary Directions
Eclipse Seasons	Solar Return Charts
Secondary Progressed Moon	Composite Chart
Synastry	Kinds of relationship charts
Planets in Relationship Charts	Moon Increasing or Decreasing in Light
Azimuth	Eclipse Seasons
Solar Chart	Moon's Nodes
Planetary Stations	Heliocentric Zodiac
Planetary Standings	Diurnal & Nocturnal positions
Benefic & Malefic	Applying & Separating Aspects
Arabian Parts	Azimuth
Various Coordinate Systems	An Electional Chart
Ephemeris	Table of Houses
Masculine & Feminine Signs	Galactic Center
Geocentric	Inferior & Superior Planets
Imum Coeli	Medium Coeli
Lunation	Mutual Reception

Luminaries	Synodic Month
Syzygy	Nadir
Partile	Precession of the Equinoxes
Prime Vertical	Ptolemaic Aspects
Quadrant	Saros Cycles

BOOK LIST of Recommended Reading and Study for an ISAR Competency Exam

Education Curriculum and Study Guide for Certification Testing by NCGR

Modern Text of Astrology by Margaret Hone

Astrology a Cosmic Science by Isabel Hickey

A History of Western Astrology Volume I by Nicholas Campion

The Inner Sky by Steven Forrest

All Around the Zodiac: Exploring Astrology's Twelve Signs by Bil Tierney

Astrology by Ronald C. Davison

Astrology For Dummies by Rae Orion

Astrology for Yourself: How to Understand And Interpret Your Own Birth Chart by Demetra George

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Astrology by Madeline Gerwick-Brodeur

Under One Sky by Rafael Nasser

History of Horoscopic Astrology by James H. Holden

Astrology of Personality by Dane Rudhyar

The Soul Purpose by David Railey

Synthesis & Counseling in Astrology: The Professional Manual by Noel Tyl

Solar Arcs: Astrology's Most Successful Predictive System by Noel Tyl

Noel Tyl's Guide to Astrological Consultations by Noel Tyl

Aspects in Astrology by Sue Tompkins

Interpretation Handbook: Guidelines for Understanding the Essentials of the Birth Chart by Stephen Arroyo

Astrology Karma & Transformation by Stephen Arroyo

The Contemporary Astrologer's Handbook by Sue Tompkins

An Introduction to AstroPsychology by Glenn Perry

Saturn by Liz Greene

Horoscope Symbols by Robert Hand

Dynamics of Aspect Analysis by Bil Tierney

The New Way to Learn Astrology by Basil Fearnington and Noel Tyl

The Houses Signs and Planets: Volume 2, The Principles and Practice of Astrology by Noel Tyl

Alan Oken's Complete Astrology: The Classic Guide to Modern Astrology by Alan Oken

The Cosmic Loom by Dennis Elwell

Harmonics in Astrology by John Addey

Traditional Astrology for Today: An Introduction by Benjamin N Dykes

Hellenistic Astrology: The Study of Fate and Fortune by Chris Brennan

The Book of Rulerships: Key Words from Classical Astrology by J. Lee Lehman

Classical Astrology for Modern Living: From Ptolemy to Psychology & Back Again by J. Lee Lehman

Combination of Stellar Influences by Rhinehold Ebertin

Rules for Planetary Pictures, The Astrology of Tomorrow by Alfred Witte & Herman Lefeldt

Uranian Astrology Guide Plus Ephemeris by Sylvia Sherman & Jori Frank-Manske

Vedic Astrology: A Guide to the Fundamentals of Jyotish by Ronnie Gayle Dreyer

An Introduction to Western Sidereal Astrology by Kris Brandt Riske

The Sun at the Center: A Primer on Heliocentric Astrology by Phillip Sedgwick

Christian Astrology, books 1 & 2 by William Lilly [*Horary Fundamentals*]

Horary Astrology: An Introduction to the Astrology of Time by Derek Appleby