

Introduction

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CHAPTER

1

HOW TO USE THIS REVIEW GUIDE

Congratulations on your choice to use the *Comprehensive Review Guide for Health Information: RHIA and RHIT Exam Prep*. It is an invaluable resource for navigating through school and preparing for the national exams. This comprehensive review of health information is designed to assist students in passing the national examination for Registered Health Information Administrators (RHIA) and Registered Health Information Technicians (RHIT) and with navigating through coursework.

We are excited about the added revisions and updates to this edition of the *Comprehensive Review Guide for Health Information: RHIA and RHIT Exam Prep*. These revisions reflect major renovations in the curriculum and the industry of health information. The inclusion of these additions provides the user with a more superior guide for test success. Namely, the new material covers the following topics:

- The electronic health record and reimbursement methodologies
- The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) legislation
- ICD-10-CM/PCS
- New additions to the *Information Technology and Systems* chapter from the *HITECH curriculum* chapter
- New practice tests questions added to each chapter
- A Test Prep product that provides multiple online mock exams with item analysis
- A companion website that provides downloadable audio lectures and online learning opportunities consisting of a series of gradable activities, including matching and sequencing exercises

The *Comprehensive Review Guide* was created to accommodate the various learning styles:

- **Visual (spatial):** Learn best using pictures, images, and spatial understanding.
- **Aural (auditory-musical):** Learn best using sound and music.

- **Verbal (linguistic):** Learn best using words, both in speech and writing.
- **Physical (kinesthetic):** Learn best using your body, hands, and sense of touch.
- **Logical (mathematical):** Learn best using logic, reasoning, and systems.
- **Social (interpersonal):** Learn best within groups or with other people.
- **Solitary (intrapersonal):** Learn best working alone and utilizing self-study.

This review series is not intended to teach or introduce new information, but rather highlights major areas of study that you have learned about or are learning during your coursework.

This unique guide contains all the components needed for a comprehensive strategy for test success. Each of the nine chapters is organized as follows:

- An extensive review of the subject area
- Practical Application of Your Knowledge exercises (short-answer, fill-in-the-blank, and matching questions)
- Test Your Knowledge opportunities (multiple-choice chapter questions)

To assure maximum strength of your knowledge, answers for the Practical Application of Your Knowledge exercises are not provided (with the exception of the classification systems section). If you do not know the answers in a given chapter, reread the review section or reference your textbooks. However, answers and references are provided for the Test Your Knowledge sections.

All test questions have been created utilizing the Domains and Subdomains structure dictated by the American Health Information Management Association. To maximize this learning tool, we recommend the following:

1. Review the content areas in the review section of the book. Begin with your challenging areas first (visual, social, solitary, verbal, logical learning).
2. Listen to the audio review on the focused area of study from the companion website (audio, solitary, social learning).
3. Complete the Practical Application of Your Knowledge exercises related to the content area of study (physical, logical, solitary).
4. Evaluate your comprehension of the content area by taking the “Test Your Knowledge” exam on the relevant content area.
5. Repeat this process until you have completed all of the content areas.
6. After completion of all areas of content in the review book section, audio, and workbook, take a mock examination. Take advantage of the multiple mock exams via the online Test Prep product. It is designed to decrease your test anxiety and build confidence that you have the knowledge capacity to succeed on the national examination.
7. Repeat steps 1 through 4 for areas of weakness as indicated by the mock exam results.
8. Continue to reinforce learning by listening to the audio review series while exercising, cooking, or even falling asleep.

In addition, utilize your textbooks to provide more support for challenging areas. Remember the steps in your study process (Figure 1-1). Information about the exams may change. Be sure you consult with the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) to obtain the latest information. Their website is www.ahima.org.

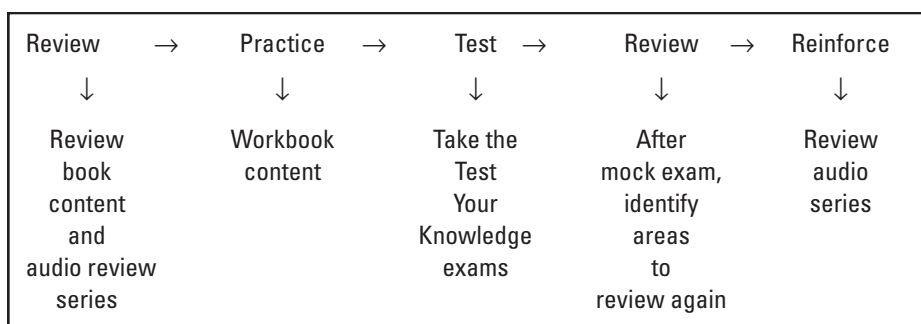


Figure 1-1 Study Process Steps

The RHIA and RHIT national exams of the AHIMA are based on an explicit set of competencies. The RHIA exam is 4 hours in duration and has 180 test questions. The RHIT exam is 3.5 hours and consists of 150 questions. Please see the following competency domains outline and the percentage of each domain area on the RHIA and RHIT exams.

Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) Examination Content Outline	
Number of Questions on Exam: 180 Multiple Choice	Exam Time: 4 hours
Domain I	
<i>Health Data Management (20%)</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage health data elements and/or data sets 2. Develop and maintain organizational policies, procedures, and guidelines for management of health information 3. Ensure accuracy and integrity of health data and health record documentation 4. Manage and/or validate coding accuracy and compliance 5. Manage the use of clinical data required in reimbursement systems and prospective payment systems (PPS) in healthcare delivery 6. Code diagnosis and procedures according to established guidelines 7. Present data for organizational use (e.g., summarize, synthesize, and condense information) 	
Domain II	
<i>Health Statistics and Research Support (11%)</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and/or respond to the information needs of internal and external healthcare customers 2. Filter and/or interpret information for the end customer 3. Analyze and present information for organizational management (e.g., quality, utilization, risk) 4. Use data mining techniques to query and report from databases 	

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**Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)
Examination Content Outline (continued)**

Number of Questions on Exam: 180 Multiple Choice

Exam Time: 4 hours

Domain III

Information Technology and Systems (20%)

1. Implement and manage use of technology application
2. Develop data dictionary and data models for database design
3. Manage and maintain databases (e.g., data migration, updates)
4. Apply data and functional standards to achieve interoperability of healthcare information systems
5. Apply data/record storage principles and techniques associated with the medium (e.g., paper-based, hybrid, electronic)
6. Evaluate and recommend clinical, administrative, and specialty service applications (e.g., financial systems, electronic record, clinical coding)
7. Manage master person index (e.g., patient record integration, customer/client relationship management)

Domain IV

Organization and Management (30%)

1. Develop and support strategic and operational plans for facility-wide health information management (HIM)
2. Monitor industry trends and organizational needs to anticipate changes
3. Perform human resource management activities (e.g., recruiting staff, creating job descriptions, resolve personnel issues)
4. Conduct training and educational activities (e.g., HIM systems, coding, medical and institutional terminology, documentation and regulatory requirements)
5. Establish and monitor productivity standards for the HIM function
6. Optimize reimbursement through management of the revenue cycle (e.g., charge-master maintenance)
7. Develop, motivate, and support work teams and/or individuals (e.g., coaching, mentoring)
8. Prepare and manage budgets
9. Analyze and report on budget variances
10. Determine resource needs by performing analyses (e.g., cost-benefit, business planning)
11. Evaluate and manage contracts (e.g., vendor, contract personnel, maintenance)
12. Organize and facilitate meetings
13. Advocate for department, organization, and/or profession
14. Manage projects
15. Prepare for accreditation and licensing processes (e.g., Joint Commission, Medicare, state regulators)

Domain V

Privacy, Security, and Confidentiality (13%)

1. Design and implement security measures to safeguard Protected Health Information (PHI)
2. Manage access, disclosure, and use of Protected Health Information (PHI) to ensure confidentiality
3. Investigate and resolve healthcare privacy and security issues/problems
4. Develop and maintain healthcare privacy and security training programs

**Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA)
Examination Content Outline (continued)**

Number of Questions on Exam: 180 Multiple Choice

Exam Time: 4 hours

Domain VI

Legal and Regulatory Standards (6%)

1. Administer organizational compliance with healthcare information laws, regulations, and standards (e.g., audit, report and/or inform; legal health record)
2. Prepare for accreditation and licensing processes (e.g., Joint Commission, Medicare, state regulators)

**Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) Content
Outline**

Number of Questions on Exam: 150 Multiple Choice

Exam Time: 3.5 hours

Domain I

Data Analysis and Management (20%)

1. Abstract information found in health records (e.g., coding, research, physician deficiencies)
2. Analyze data (e.g., productivity reports, quality measures, health record documentation, case mix index)
3. Maintain filing and retrieval systems for health records
4. Identify anomalies in data
5. Resolve risks and/or anomalies of data findings
6. Maintain the master patient index (e.g., enterprise systems, merge/unmerge medical record numbers)
7. Eliminate duplicate documentation
8. Organize data into a useable format
9. Review trends in data
10. Gather/compile data from multiple sources
11. Generate reports or spreadsheets (e.g., customize, create)
12. Present data findings (e.g., study results, delinquencies, conclusion/summaries, gap analysis, graphical)
13. Implement workload distribution
14. Design workload distribution
15. Participate in the data management plan (e.g., determine data elements, assemble components, set time frame)
16. Input and/or submit data to registries
17. Summarize findings from data research/analysis
18. Follow data archive and backup policies
19. Develop data management plan
20. Calculate healthcare statistics (e.g., occupancy rates, length of stay, delinquency rates)
21. Determine validation process for data mapping
22. Maintain data dictionaries

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Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) Content Outline (continued)

Number of Questions on Exam: 150 Multiple Choice

Exam Time: 3.5 hours

Domain II

Coding (18%)

1. Apply all official current coding guidelines
2. Assign diagnostic and procedure codes based on health record documentation
3. Ensure physician documentation supports coding
4. Validate code assignment
5. Abstract data from health record
6. Sequence codes
7. Query physician when additional clinical documentation is needed
8. Review and resolve coding edits (e.g., correct coding initiative, outpatient code editor, national coverage determination, local coverage determination)
9. Review the accuracy of abstracted data
10. Assign present on admission (POA) indicators
11. Provide educational updates to coders
12. Validate grouper assignment (e.g., MS-DRG, APC)
13. Identify hospital-acquired condition (HAC)
14. Develop and manage a query process
15. Create standards for coding productivity and quality
16. Develop educational guidelines for provider documentation
17. Perform concurrent audits

Domain III

Compliance (16%)

1. Ensure patient record documentation meets state and federal regulations
2. Ensure compliance with privacy and security guidelines (e.g., HIPAA, state, hospital)
3. Control access to health information
4. Monitor documentation for completeness
5. Develop a coding compliance plan (e.g., current coding guidelines)
6. Manage release of information
7. Perform continual updates to policies and procedures
8. Implement internal and external audit guidelines
9. Evaluate medical necessity (clinical documentation management program [CDMP])
10. Collaborate with staff to prepare the organization for accreditation, licensing, and/or certification surveys
11. Evaluate medical necessity (outpatient services)
12. Evaluate medical necessity (data management)
13. Responding to fraud and abuse
14. Evaluate medical necessity (ISSI utilization review)
15. Develop forms (e.g., chart review, documentation, EMR)
16. Evaluate medical necessity (case management)
17. Analyze access audit trails
18. Ensure valid healthcare provider credentials

Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) Content Outline (continued)	
Number of Questions on Exam: 150 Multiple Choice	Exam Time: 3.5 hours
<p>Domain IV</p> <p>Information Technology (12%)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train users on software 2. Maintain database 3. Set up secure access 4. Evaluate the functionality of applications 5. Create user accounts 6. Troubleshoot HIM software or support systems 7. Create database 8. Perform end-user audits 9. Participate in vendor selection 10. Perform end-user needs analysis 11. Design data archive and backup policies 12. Perform system maintenance of software and systems 13. Create data dictionaries 	
<p>Domain V</p> <p>Quality (12%)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audit health records for content, completeness, accuracy, and timeliness 2. Apply standards, guidelines, and/or regulations to health records 3. Implement corrective actions as determined by audit findings (internal and external) 4. Design efficient workflow processes 5. Comply with national patient safety goals 6. Analyze standards, guidelines, and/or regulations to build criteria for audits 7. Apply process improvement techniques 8. Provide consultation to internal and external users of health information on HIM subject matter 9. Develop reports on audit findings 10. Perform data collection for quality reporting (e.g., core measures, PQRI, medical necessity) 11. Use trended data to participate in performance improvement plans/initiatives 12. Develop a tool for collecting statistically valid data 13. Conduct clinical pertinence reviews 14. Monitor physician credentials to practice in the facility 	
<p>Domain VI</p> <p>Legal (11%)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure confidentiality of the health records (paper and electronic) 2. Adhere to disclosure standards and regulations (e.g., HIPAA privacy, HITECH Act, breach notifications) at both state and federal levels 	

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Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) Content Outline (continued)

Number of Questions on Exam: 150 Multiple Choice

Exam Time: 3.5 hours

3. Demonstrate and promote legal and ethical standards of practice
4. Maintain integrity of legal health record according to organizational bylaws, rules, and regulations
5. Follow state-mandated and/or organizational record retention and destruction policies
6. Serve as the custodian of the health records (paper or electronic)
7. Respond to release of information (ROI) requests from internal and external requestors
8. Work with risk management department to provide requested documentation
9. Identify potential health record–related risk management issues through auditing
10. Respond to and process patient amendment requests to the health record
11. Facilitate basic education regarding the use of consents, healthcare power of attorney, advanced directives, DNRs, etc.
12. Represent the facility in court-related matters as it applies to the health record (e.g., subpoenas, depositions, court orders, warrants)

Domain VII

Revenue Cycle (11%)

1. Communicate with providers to discuss documentation deficiencies (e.g., queries)
2. Participate in clinical documentation improvement programs to ensure proper documentation of health records
3. Collaborate with other departments on monitoring accounts receivable (e.g., unbilled, uncoded)
4. Provide ongoing education to healthcare providers (e.g., regulatory changes, new guidelines, payment standards, best practices)
5. Identify fraud and abuse
6. Assist with appeal letters in response to claim denials
7. Monitor claim denials/overpayments to identify potential revenue impact
8. Prioritize the work according to accounts receivable, patient type, etc.
9. Distribute the work according to accounts receivable, patient type, etc.
10. Maintain the charge-master
11. Ensure physicians are credentialed with different payers for reimbursement

Cognitive Levels of the RHIA and RHIT National Examinations		
<p>The RHIA and RHIT computer-based national examinations consist of four-option, multiple-choice questions written at three different cognitive levels: recall, application, and analysis. These levels represent an organized way to identify the performance that practitioners will utilize on the job. The three cognitive levels are defined as follows:</p>		
Cognitive Level	Purpose	Performance Required
Recall (RE)	Primarily measuring memory.	Identify terms, specific facts, methods, procedures, basic concepts, basic theories, principles, and processes.
Application (AP)	To measure simple interpretation of limited data.	Apply concepts and principles to new situations; recognize relationships among data; apply laws and theories to practical situations; calculate solutions to mathematical problems; interpret charts and translate graphic data; classify items; interpret information.
Analysis (AN)	To measure the application of knowledge to solving a specific problem and the assembly of various elements into a meaningful whole.	Select an appropriate solution for responsive action; revise policy, procedure, or plan; evaluate a solution, case scenario, report, or plan; compare solutions, plans, ideas, or aspects of a problem; evaluate information or a situation; perform multiple calculations to arrive at one answer.
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Please check the AHIMA website regularly for the most up-to-date competencies:
<http://ahimafoundation.org/education/curricula.aspx>.

A WORD ABOUT SOFT SKILLS

As educators, we take a holistic approach to student success. This guide has been designed to assist in the achievement of passing the National Exams for Registered Health Information Administrators and Technicians. The test accomplishment is an outcome that validates your knowledge base and skill sets. It prepares you to enter the world of health information as a credentialed professional. Securing proof that you possess the entry-level required hard skills (technical skills that relate to a specific profession or industry) to become employable is step 1. The degree and the credential will get your foot in the door, but the remaining doors that lead to upward mobility, promotion, and sustainability will be opened to you through soft skills. Soft skills, it is suggested, will be the new hard skills of the future. Every industry is seeing a deterioration in what was wrongly assumed would be innate skills in a new hired professional. Employers are often shocked to learn that educated and credentialed professionals lack communication skills, do not know how to extend courtesy and respect to others in the workplace, inappropriately text and use cell phones, create e-mails with tactless tones, and lack sound emotional intelligence, resulting in an inability to manage conflict and maintain balance of work and home life.

So what are soft skills? Soft skills can be defined as personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance, and career prospects. Unlike hard skills, which focus on a person's skill set and ability to perform a certain type of task or activity, soft skills are interpersonal and applicable on a broader scale. Soft skills can also be defined as people skills, social skills, and interpersonal skills that, when well developed, enrich the quality of our interactions with others. They are displayed in our personality, attitudes, and behavior. Although they are intangible and challenging to measure, they have a tremendous influence on our personal and professional development and on the culture of any organization.

For this reason, soft skills are increasingly being pursued by employers in addition to standard qualifications. The following is an abbreviated list of soft skills desired by employers:

- Ability to communicate verbally and in writing
- Ability to work with others
- Impulse control
- Common sense
- Possess manners
- Problem solving
- Initiative
- Self-discipline
- Respectful
- Loyalty
- Commitment
- Enthusiasm
- Motivation
- Adaptability
- Honesty and integrity
- Pride in personal appearance
- Ability to deal with pressure
- Ability to deal with conflict
- Reliability

- Emotionally intelligent
- A balanced attitude toward work and home life.

As you proceed to a future with endless possibilities, to secure your ultimate goals, you need to perfect your entire self by conducting an inventory of your soft skills. Make a commitment to yourself to cultivate the areas where you are lacking. This investment will lead to greater success returns.

Best wishes on your professional journey!

STUDY TIPS

You are either navigating your way through your HIM program or preparing to take your national RHIA or RHIT exam. Either way, the *Comprehensive Review Guide for Health Information: RHIA and RHIT Exam Prep* is an excellent tool in your arsenal for success. Because everyone is different and our learning styles vary, different methods work for different people. The following are only suggestions for improving your current study techniques to help launch your achievement in the field of HIM.

- 1. Make a study schedule.** Use a calendar to plan the days and times to study specific courses or subject areas. Space out your studying; review class materials at least several times a week, focusing on one topic at a time.
- 2. Set a standard place to study** such as your office, library, kitchen table, or wherever is comfortable and conducive for focused and concentrated learning. Make sure you have adequate lighting and that you are not distracted by noises.
- 3. Place all of your study material in front of you:** lecture notes, course textbooks, study guides, and any other relevant material.
- 4. Use the audio portion of this guide to maximize your learning.** Listen to it as you exercise, cook, or even nap. Use it to walk you through some of the computations.
- 5. Take notes** and write down a summary of the important ideas as you read through your study material. Make notes in your books. There is nothing wrong with writing in your books; they are your books.
- 6. Take short breaks frequently.** Your memory retains the information that you study at the beginning and the end better than what you study in the middle.
- 7. Make sure that you understand the material well.** Do not just read through the material and try to memorize everything. Use the review guide to test your knowledge. Make an exam for yourself and answer the questions. The more times you test yourself, the more you increase your chance of scoring higher on your exam.
- 8. Use the review guide** to review the main information of the knowledge clusters quickly. You also may use the review guide to rewrite the main ideas, information, and formulas to reinforce your comprehension of the material. This may make it easier to retain the key concepts that will be on the test.
- 9. If you choose to study in a group, only study with others who are serious** about the test. Study groups are not social gatherings for happy hour. At the end of the predetermined study period you may want to

end with snacks and fellowship. However, the latter is not the main purpose of coming together; stay focused.

10. Listen to the audio portion of the review guide at a low volume as you study. You also may listen to relaxing music at a low volume to relieve some of the boredom of studying.

11. Try listening to the audio portion of this review guide as you nap. Do not study later than the time you usually go to sleep; you may fall asleep or be tempted to go to sleep. Instead, try studying in the afternoon or early evening. If you are a morning person, try studying in the morning.

TEST-TAKING TIPS

Studying is only a part of getting good results on your exam. You also have to master test taking so that you will score the most points.

1. Familiarize yourself with the AHIMA knowledge clusters. Know what is expected for you to know and master. Read the candidate application book and know what is allowed in the testing center and take the resources you will need with you.
2. Many colleges and state and local associations offer review sessions for mastering the national exams. Go to the reviews and incorporate the testing hints that are relevant to you. Take careful notes and ask questions about items you may be confused about.
3. Do not try to cram the night before the exam. You have studied hard and have retained as much information as you possibly can. Get at least eight hours of sleep the night before the exam.
4. Eat before the exam. You will need the energy that having food in your stomach will provide, and it will help you stay focused on the task at hand. Avoid heavy foods that can make you groggy.
5. Use your alarm clock to assure that you do not oversleep for the exam. Try to show up at least 15 minutes before the test will start. Use this time to acquaint yourself with bathroom and water fountain locations. This also is a good time to pray or meditate and calm yourself.
6. Time is of the essence. Whether you are taking a test in class or the national RHIA or RHIT exams, you have a limited amount of time. Schedule your time accordingly. If you notice yourself spending too much time on one question, come back to it later if you have time. Pace yourself.
7. The RHIA and RHIT are multiple-choice tests. Multiple-choice test-taking tips include the following:
 - a. Read the question before you look at the answer.
 - b. Try to come up with the answer in your head before looking at the possible answers. This will cut down the distractions of the choices given.
 - c. Eliminate answers you know are not correct.
 - d. Read all the choices before choosing your answer.
 - e. There is no guessing penalty, so always take an educated guess if you do not know the answer.
 - f. Do not keep changing your answer. Usually your first choice is the right one unless you misread the question.

8. Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed; if you start to feel nervous, take 10 deep breaths and relax.
9. When you are finished and if you have time left, look over your test and make sure that you have answered all the questions. Only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question, because your first answer is usually the correct one.

It is our hope that this guide helps you to achieve your goal of becoming a credentialed professional in the field of health information. Good studying to you and may your success be great!

