

# Top 10 Trainer Tips

An ebook by SeeWhy Learning



Passing a financial services regulatory exam can feel daunting, especially the first time. The pressure is real, the material is dense, and the cost of a failed attempt is high.

The good news: passing isn't just about how much you study. It's about how you study, and how you write the exam itself. The right strategy can be the difference between a pass and a near miss.

This guide brings together the top 10 tips from SeeWhy Learning's most experienced trainers, drawn from helping thousands of Canadian candidates pass their licensing exams since 2008. You'll learn how to plan your study time, manage exam-day pressure, work through tough questions, and squeeze every available mark out of the time you have.

**Use what works for you.**

**Put it into practice.**

**Then go pass that exam.**



# #1

## Book Your Exam Today

To pass an exam, you need to study, and the biggest threat to your success is procrastination. It's not uncommon for students to get stuck in a vicious study loop. They start off with good intentions, but when life gets busy, they set their studies aside. Unfortunately, when they get back to studying, they have forgotten much of what they learned and are essentially starting over. That's how a 30- or 60-day study plan can turn into a year. A better approach is to buckle down and get it done.



After reviewing thousands of student profiles, we found that passing regulatory exams often comes down to what the student did in the 30 days prior to the exam, not what they did months ago. So our advice is simple: don't waste time. Book your exam for 30 to 60 days from now. Having a set date on your calendar will also give you a goal to work toward. This will create a sense of urgency and motivate you to study.

Next, find yourself an accountability partner. Share your goal and study commitment with someone who'll check in on your progress: a partner, coworker, study buddy, or family member. Knowing someone is paying attention to your progress can be a powerful motivator.



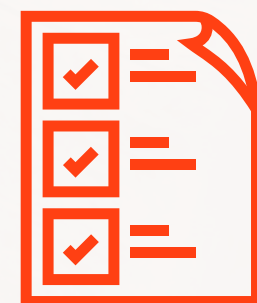


# #2

## Learn It, Then Practice It

Successful students don't rely on just one format. They combine reading, watching, and practicing. It's a very rare student who can read a textbook and immediately pass an exam. For most, practice is just as essential as study. In fact, our most senior trainers believe more than 50% of a student's learning comes from practice.

That being said, you can't just start with practice; you'll get almost everything wrong and learn little from it. This is why SeeWhy's course manuals are designed to give you a solid base knowledge. It's a bridge to your practice sessions where you'll be amazed at how much and how quickly you will learn. Remember, getting a practice question wrong is a good thing if the experience teaches you something you didn't know.





# #3

## Optimize Your Study in the Last Two Weeks

The two weeks leading up to the exam is a critical part of your success. At this point, stop re-reading the textbook or course manual. You're likely to keep reading things you already know and continue missing what you don't. You could find yourself re-reading an entire chapter, with nothing new standing out. Instead, allow practice questions to help you identify what you don't know.

It's true: you can learn a lot from your mistakes. Be sure to read each answer key, as they often come with helpful trainer tips or insight. If you need to solidify your understanding of a topic, spend no more than 5 minutes doing so, and then get right back to practicing. Remember, the goal at this point of your study is to do question after question after question, learning each step of the way.



# #4

## Treat Exam Day Like Game Day

On exam day, don't study. Instead, focus on getting mentally prepared. Remind yourself of all your hard work. Think of it like a hockey team before the big game. The coach doesn't run a tough practice, right? The same goes for you: don't cram.

By now, you know what you know, and more studying could be counterproductive by leaving you tired and stressed. If you insist on studying, focus on content you know really well, as that will help you feel confident when you walk into the exam.





# #5

## Use a 2-minute Brain Dump

You are not allowed to take a “cheat sheet” into an exam, so don’t do that. But it is perfectly acceptable for you to create your own once the exam has begun. A two-minute “brain dump” can reduce test anxiety and clear mental clutter at the beginning of the exam. Use this technique to quickly jot down things you are more likely to forget based on your practice.

As soon as the timer starts, use the proctor-provided paper or the digital scratch pad provided in the proctoring software to jot down tricky concepts or important formulas that you may forget under pressure. Be careful, though. You don’t want to be accused of cheating. It’s critical that your notes are jotted on something you can prove wasn’t brought into the exam with you (like the note paper provided by a proctor).

We recommend practicing this technique before the exam, so you know exactly what you plan on jotting down. You’ll be surprised at how much you can jot down in only two minutes. It can be a game changer!

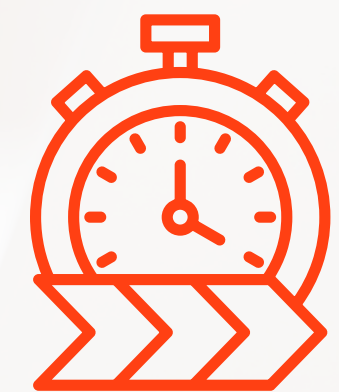


# #6

## Create a Road Map

A road map helps you stay on track. Plan your exam road map out in advance.

For example, if you need to answer 100 questions in 2 hours, that means you have to answer at least 25 questions every 30 minutes. If your exam starts at 9:00 a.m., you should have answered the first 25 questions by 9:30 a.m. Jot down some time markers in your scratch pad to help you remember these important time milestones. When you get to question 25, if it is after 9:30 a.m., you are running behind and need to pick up the pace. If you have answered more than 25 questions, you can relax knowing you are making good progress.

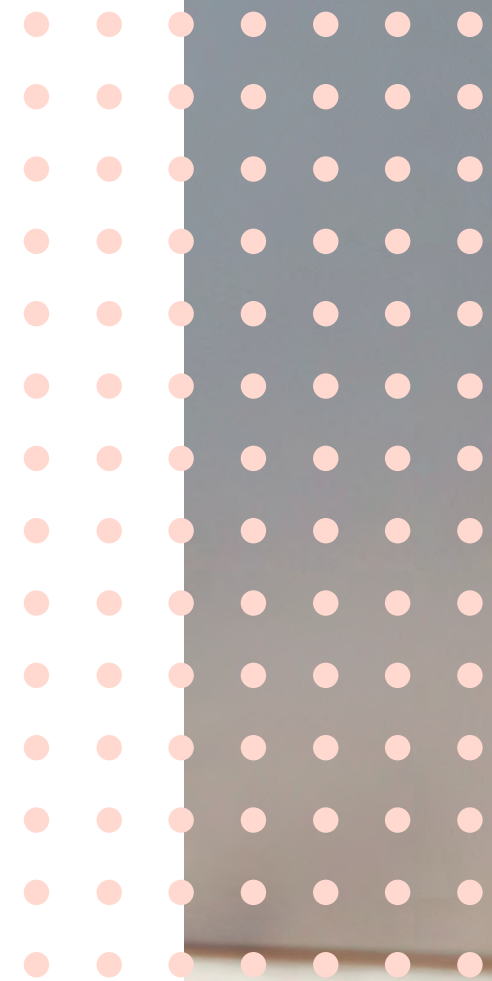
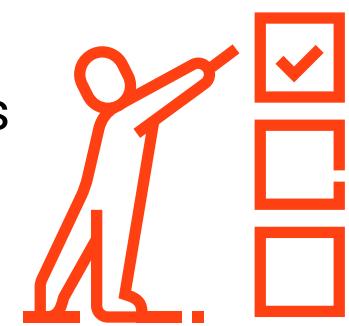


# #7

## Go in Order, Guess if You Have To

We recommend answering questions in order. When you hit a tough one, don't waste time trying to figure it out. Guess, note it on your scratch pad (or use the "flag" feature in your proctoring software, if available), and move on. You can revisit it during your review.

Stick to the exam's question order instead of skipping around, as you might forget to come back to a question or run out of time. Skipping questions also makes it hard to gauge how you're doing with time. You can't track your progress if you're jumping around.



# #8

## Use a Tactical Approach to Answering Questions

There's an art to answering multiple-choice questions. Keep the following in mind.

### *Read the question first*

"Read the question first." Seems simple, but here's why you need to remember this: long or scenario-based questions can include a lot of unnecessary and misleading information, which can sidetrack you. Often, students read the entire scenario, decide what seems relevant, and only then realize they didn't focus on what the question was truly asking. That wastes time!

To avoid this, find the question mark first and read the actual question. This puts you in the right mindset about what you need to solve. Then, go back and read the rest of the scenario to determine what other information you need.

### *Pay attention to qualifiers*

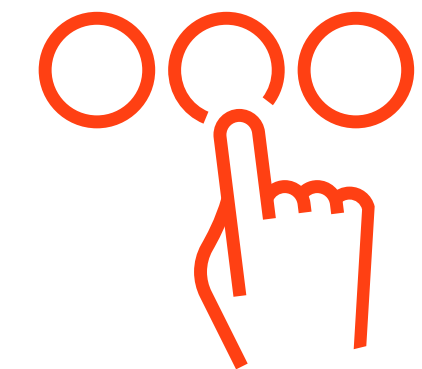
Words like "always," "never," "sometimes," "usually," and "not" can change the meaning of a statement. Pay close attention when you encounter these in a test! Absolutes like "all" or "never" in answers are often incorrect.

### *Choose the best answer*

Some options may answer the question under some circumstances, but they're not the best answer. If you have to do mental gymnastics to make an answer "work," it's probably incorrect.

### *Eliminate the wrong answers*

If the right answer doesn't jump out at you, flip the approach: start eliminating the ones that are clearly wrong. Answers are often long, with only one small detail making three of them incorrect. Narrowing the field is one of the most useful tools you have on exam day.



# #9

## Making Educated Guesses

At SeeWhy Learning, our goal is for you to know the material so well that you don't have to guess. But that isn't always the case for every concept. On exam day, here's how to guess smart and fight for every mark.

### *Follow your gut*

If you have a hunch, follow it. An informed instinct, built from your studying and practice, is almost always better than a random guess.

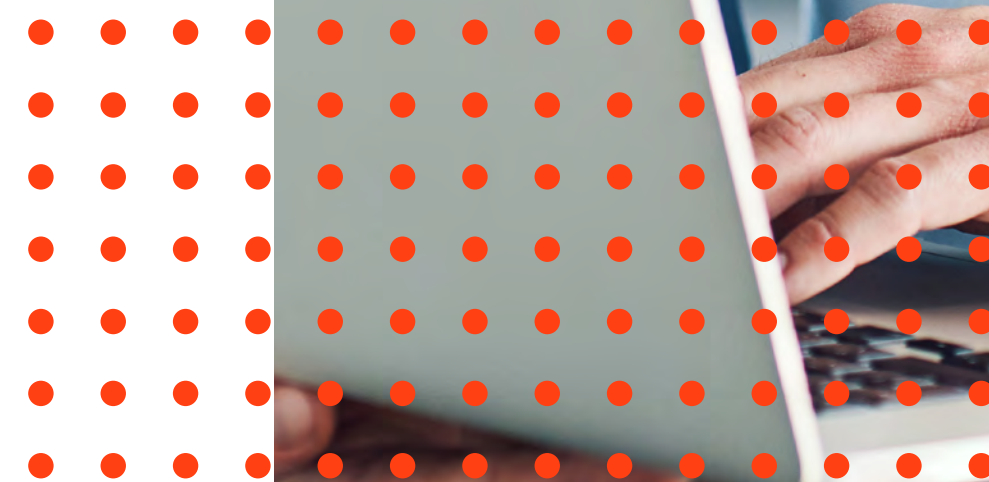


### *Look for opposites*

If two answers are opposite statements, one of them is likely correct and one is not. If this holds true, you already have a 50/50 shot.

### *Answer the question precisely*

Sometimes a particular answer doesn't even relate to the question asked. For example, if the question is asking about advantages, be careful not to select an answer that is a disadvantage, even if it's true. Slowing down and reading carefully can make a big difference.



# #10

## Use Every Minute, But Trust Your First Answer

You've planned your time well, answered every question as best you can, and now you're finished with time to spare. Don't leave yet! Imagine finding out you failed by just one mark. You'll wonder, "Could I have found that mark if I stayed?"

Use that remaining time to re-check your answers. Look for silly mistakes, like missing "except" or "not," or simple math errors. Revisit questions you guessed on; working through the full exam may have jogged your memory.



A word of caution: your first answer is usually your best one. Only change an answer if you spot a clear mistake; otherwise, you risk second-guessing yourself out of a mark. If you find yourself wanting to change more than one or two, trust your preparation and submit.



# You're ready. Go show what you know!

Remember, success on exam day comes from a combination of solid preparation and smart exam strategies. Trust the work you've put in, stay focused, and use these tips to your advantage.

**From all of us at SeeWhy Learning, good luck! You've got this.**

## *Ready to put these tips to work?*

SeeWhy Learning has helped thousands of Canadian candidates pass their financial services licensing exams since 2008. Our courses combine clear, focused study materials with extensive practice questions, so you walk into exam day prepared and confident.

Explore our courses and find the right one for your exam

