

## Study Tips from People Who Have Earned the MWC

“If you’re an experienced writer, you probably don’t need to study much as you’ve likely learned what you need to know on the job. Review the 5 domains covered by the exam and the example questions to help identify any potential knowledge gaps, and study accordingly. For example, I used the book *How to Report Statistics in Medicine* by Tom Lang and Michelle Secic to brush up on statistical concepts. I also reviewed the ICH guidelines and components of the Common Technical Document because I am not a regulatory writer and knew I needed to familiarize myself with regulatory content and terminology. If you’re new to the profession, use the MWC examination domains and Candidate Study Guide as a framework to guide your professional development activities as you gain the required experience to meet the exam eligibility criteria.”  
—Dana Randall, MS, PharmD, RD, RPh, MWC

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“Attend AMWA workshops and review the notes from the workshops.”  
—Deborah Sommerville, MWC, ELS

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“The MWC is not a “regulatory” exam. Don’t be afraid to take it if you are not a regulatory writer. Review basic biostatistics!”  
—Kathy Spiegel, PhD, MWC

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“While my daily work as a writer of patient education materials prepared me well for parts of the MWC exam (eg, writing mechanics, medical terminology, plain language), I had to branch out to learn more about other areas, such as regulatory writing, publication management, and CME. I found AMWA’s Candidate Study Guide hugely helpful in providing an outline of the topics to be covered in the exam, and the example questions were a great way to get a sense of how the exam would be structured. The list of resources provided was also very helpful in that it gave me an idea of where to begin in areas with which I was least familiar (eg, regulatory submissions).”  
—Kelly Crowley, MWC

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“I gave myself several months to prepare for the MWC exam, so I could keep my study schedule without compromising my job and personal responsibilities. I started with the topics I knew well as it took less time to review them, and I felt a huge sense of reward crossing them off my list. I included practice exercises, with longer sessions as I approached the exam. Each practice session would include all previously reviewed topics so that I could continue to retain the information.”

—Nola Clarke, PhD, MWC, RAC

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“There were excellent resources on the AMWA website to give me an idea of what I was in for and to help me prepare for the MWC exam. The Candidate Study Guide provided advice, the exam content outline, and an excellent set of sample questions along with an answer key that clearly explained the choices. I set up a 12 week self-study syllabus based on the content outline.”

—Liza Ovington, MWC

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“Obtain all the recommended books/sources suggested by the commission; study with a buddy, create a study plan and meet regularly; and develop practice multiple choice questions—this was the hardest part for me. It’s not just enough to know the content. A person who takes the exam has to respond to multiple choice questions.

—Nancy Katz, PhD, MWC

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“I was familiar with CME, having worked in the industry for 25+ years, so I studied the regulatory information more thoroughly. The example questions were very helpful. Also, it appears that there are now more references and resources available via hyperlink, which would be very helpful to those unable to purchase these sources.”

—Nancy Lucas, MWC

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“About 6 months before the MWC exam, I printed out and reviewed the Candidate Study Guide. I used highlighters to create three categories in the guide based on my level of knowledge: topics I knew well (knowledge and experience); topics I had some idea about (knowledge and no experience or limited practical exposure); and topics I knew nothing about (no knowledge or experience). I reviewed the recommended resources provided in the Candidate Study Guide and purchased some of the resources for the topics that I knew nothing about. I also identified online resources to “brush up” on some topics.”

—*Nola Clarke, PhD, MWC, RAC*

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“First, leave yourself plenty of study time...more than you think you will need. Even if you are an expert medical writer, you may find the test covers unfamiliar content that is outside your area of specialization. Second, take the practice test offered in the Candidate Study Guide. Mark the questions where you had to guess or got the question wrong, then find the related study references in the answer key. Third, do a quick scan of the other references on the list. If there are content areas that you think may be challenging, explore them. If you have taken AMWA courses covering these content areas, use the exams to review the topic. “

—*Kim Rowe, MWC*

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