Psychometrics is a statistical science of mental measurement. Psychometricians work to ensure that exams are fair for examinees and that scores are a valid reflection of the examinee's ability.

**ABIM accomplishes this by holding itself to this rigorous multi-step assessment development process:**

1. **Blueprinting**
   
   Practicing physicians are surveyed to determine what is relevant to practice. Then, the exam committee determines what content should appear on the exam.

2. **Item Development**
   
   An iterative process where test questions are developed by content experts from the internal medicine community. Each test question undergoes multiple rounds of qualitative review before appearing on an exam.

3. **Item Analysis**
   
   Statistically evaluate each question to ensure that the questions used to score examinees measure the appropriate skills and are statistically well-functioning.

4. **Form Assembly**
   
   Build exam forms of comparable content and difficulty.

5. **Equating**
   
   This process ensures that examinees of the same ability will receive the same score by accounting for any remaining differences in exam form difficulty.

6. **Standard Setting**
   
   Committees of volunteer board certified physicians make judgments about questions to determine how many questions an examinee must answer correctly to pass an exam, based on what they believe a physician must know to be certified by ABIM. Once the standard is set it stays constant for several years.

7. **Scoring**
   
   The questions on each physician's exam are scored as correct or incorrect. The physician's score is compared to the predetermined passing score to determine the pass/fail decision. Detailed score reports are created for each physician with a score, pass/fail status, and feedback about strengths and weaknesses.