



2012
NCE CANDIDATES'
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

NBCR NA
National Board of Certification & Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists

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119th National Certification Examination (NCE) for Nurse Anesthetists

Introduction

This document contains examples of candidates' frequently asked questions about the National Certification Examination (NCE) and the certification process along with brief responses. Detailed information is provided in the *2012 NBCR NA Candidate Handbook for the NCE*, the eligibility notice and online registration instructions, and on the NBCR NA website. You are responsible for being familiar with this information. Please refer to the *2012 NBCR NA Candidate Handbook for the NCE* for information concerning procedures for when and how to communicate with the NBCR NA office.

Section I: Eligibility Verifications and Notifications

Q When can I expect to receive notification from the NBCR NA that I am eligible to take the NCE?

- » You can expect to receive an email notification from the NBCR NA of your eligibility to take the NCE within 2-4 weeks following the completion date of your nurse anesthesia educational program and the date that verification of your program completion has been received by the NBCR NA. It is your responsibility to make certain that you have provided the NBCR NA with your current e-mail address, that you have not blocked access to your account by the NBCR NA or Pearson VUE, and that you can receive attachments from either NBCR NA or Pearson VUE.

Q What if my name on this eligibility notification does not match my identification?

- » If you cannot produce identification that matches the eligibility notification, you must notify the NBCR NA immediately via e-mail at **certification@nbcna.com** and a request will be created for you online to pay the \$50 fee for processing a duplicate notification. Upon receipt of payment, your file will be updated and a new eligibility notification will be sent.

Q When can I expect that state boards of nursing will receive verification that I am eligible to take the test?

- » The NBCR NA does not automatically notify a state board of nursing of a candidate's eligibility to take the NCE.
- » You are responsible for providing the necessary forms or requests for notification at the time you apply to take the examination in order for a state board of nursing to be notified of your eligibility to take the NCE.
- » All verification of eligibility notifications will be processed within 4 weeks from the time verification of program completion has been received by the NBCR NA.
- » No eligibility notification will be sent prior to the verified completion of your nurse anesthesia program.
- » If you submit a request to the NBCR NA after your application to take the examination has been received, the request will be handled within 4 weeks of receipt.

Section II: Preparing for the Exam

Q How should I prepare for the NCE?

- » You should carefully review the content outline in the *2012 NBCRNA Candidate Handbook for the NCE*, the Alternative Question Format FAQs, and the Alternative Question Format Samples on the Certification page of the NBCRNA website. They contain everything a candidate needs to know about the NCE administration.
- » Whether you use study groups, workshops or review courses, the following information is important to remember. You sign an agreement when you apply to take the NCE and before you can begin the NCE on the computer that stipulates: 1) you understand that the content of the NCE, and each individual NCE item, is the property of the NBCRNA, is copyrighted and is strictly confidential; 2) you understand that the unauthorized retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion or receipt of any examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral or other form of communication, including but not limited to e-mailing, copying or printing of electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during or after the NCE, is strictly prohibited; 3) you will inform the NBCRNA if you are aware of anyone who discloses any NCE question(s) or asks you to disclose any NCE question(s); and 4) you understand the legal, professional and monetary consequences of breaking this agreement.

Q If I do not see a specific drug, agent or dosing on the test content outline, does it mean it will not be included on the NCE?

- » The test content outline is only a guide which suggests topics and topical areas to generate and categorize NCE questions. It is not all-inclusive with some elements applying to more than one area. This means that not only must a candidate validate their knowledge of a subject, but also be able to integrate this knowledge across the spectrum of anesthesia practice.
- » In regard to specific questions about drugs, candidates should be aware that anesthetics and anesthetic adjuncts are constantly evolving. It may be appropriate for the content to include older agents as a mechanism to compare and contrast with new agents. Drug dosing is of course an essential part of pharmacologic knowledge and application.

Q Are brand names of drugs used on the NCE?

- » No. The Certification Examination Subcommittee only uses generic names of anesthetics and anesthetic adjuncts on the NCE.

Q How can I practice the new question types that appear on the exam?

- » The Certification page of the NBCRNA website contains the **Exam Tutorial** as well as two documents in PDF format that may be of help: 1) **Alternative Question Format FAQs** and 2) **Alternative Question Format Samples**.

Section III: Taking the Exam

Q What do I have to take to the test center?

- » You must bring the following to the test center: two separate forms of current, valid ID. Both forms of ID must have a signature and one must have a photo. NOTE: Both forms of ID must have the same first name and last name as listed on the Certification eligibility notification you were sent from the NBCRNA.
- » If you appear without the specified identification, or are late, you will not be permitted to take the examination. You may not reschedule your test without reauthorization from the NBCRNA and payment of the \$75 fee.

Q What other identification measures will be conducted at the test center?

- » For security purposes, the NBCRNA has authorized these further identification measures to be conducted when you check in at the Pearson VUE testing center: You will be asked to place both of your palms on the palm vein scanner and your photo will be taken.

Q How do I begin the test on the computer?

- » You must read, acknowledge, and agree to the Statement of Confidentiality and Nondisclosure Agreement that appears on the screen; the NCE will then begin. If you do not agree, the NCE will end and you must contact the NBCRNA office about reauthorization to test and pay the \$75 fee.
- » There is no tutorial, there are no practice questions, and the non-graded pretest items appear randomly throughout the NCE.

Q What does the number of items I answered tell me about my results?

- » The length of your examination, or the number of items answered, is not an indication of a pass or fail result.
- » A candidate with a relatively short NCE may pass or fail, just as a candidate with a long NCE may pass or fail.
- » The length of your examination is determined **solely** by your performance on the questions you are given.
- » Each candidate, no matter what the length of the NCE, has ample opportunity to demonstrate true competence and is given an examination that conforms to the test blueprint.

Section IV: Results of the Exam

Q When do I receive my results?

- » You will receive preliminary results of your examination when you check out at the test center. These are **preliminary only** and are not final until validated by the NBCRNA.
- » You will be notified of official test results by the NBCRNA within 2-4 weeks of the NCE by first-class mail.
- » Contacting the NBCRNA office within the 4-week timeframe slows down the processing of all results because resources are used to answer questions and verify information rather than process results.
- » Under no circumstances are examination results released by telephone, fax or e-mail.

Q Can someone who tested after me receive his or her results before I do?

- » Yes. Not everyone who tests on the same day at the same center will receive their official NCE results at the same time because results are sent via USPS and may take differing amounts of time.
- » Verification procedures for individual records also may take differing amounts of time.

Q If I pass the exam can I get a copy of my score?

- » You can request a copy of your score information from your program director. This information is provided to program directors semi-annually every February and August for those who tested in the previous 6 months. Please do not request this from the NBCRNA office since it is not made available to individuals.

- » The NBCRNA does not make pass score data available to candidates because that information is often misused by employers and other parties to distinguish between applicants. The only appropriate use of the NCE results is for the NBCRNA to make decisions about certification.

Q What do state boards of nursing receive regarding my test results and when do they receive it?

- » Following processing of the candidate results, verification of certification notifications for State Boards of Nursing are sent electronically to the state of residence and the state boards of nursing as indicated on your exam application form.

Q When can employers verify my certification?

- » Following processing of the official results of your NCE, the NBCRNA posts the notification of your certification on the Credentials Verification page of the NBCRNA website. An employer must have the last 4 digits of your social security number and your AANA ID number in order to access this information.

Section V: Passing the Exam and Preparing for Recertification

Q When do I have to recertify?

- » Your pass notification letter contains the date you are eligible to recertify.
- » Information about applying for recertification is available on the NBCRNA website. You will also be contacted by the NBCRNA in 2014 when you are first eligible to recertify.

Section VI: Retaking the Exam

Q What information will I receive if I do not pass the exam?

- » If you do not pass the NCE, you are sent a notification letter that provides diagnostic data for the five content areas of the examination.
- » Test questions **cannot** be made available for review.
- » You can, however, request verification of your NCE results. The *2012 NBCRNA Candidate Handbook* describes the procedure for doing this.

Q When can I retake the exam?

- » You can retake the NCE up to four times within one year following the completion date of your nurse anesthesia program. If you do not pass within that first year, however, you will have up to four times and one more year to take and pass the NCE.
- » You must complete a Retake Application Form, submit a current RN license valid for at least 90 days, submit a new Authentication of Applicant Identity Form (if you have not taken the exam within the past year), and pay the full fee each time you reapply.
- » You should allow 2-4 weeks for the processing of your retake application to be completed and your new eligibility notification to be sent.
- » You **cannot** schedule your retake exam with your previous eligibility notification.

Q What happens if I am not successful on the NCE within the two years following the completion of my program, or I want to take a break between attempts to pass the NCE?

- » If you take the NCE during the two years following the completion date of your nurse anesthesia program (up to four times in each year) and are not successful, you will not be eligible to apply to take the NCE again until you return to and complete a full and unabridged accredited nurse anesthesia educational program.
- » If you decide to take a break between attempts to take and pass the NCE, you may do so; however, you cannot apply again after the second calendar year following completion of your program even though you have not utilized the maximum of 8 attempts. After two years following completion of your program, if you have not passed the NCE, you must return to and complete a full and unabridged accredited nurse anesthesia educational program.

Section VII: Missed Appointment or Canceling the NCE

Q What if I miss the appointment for the test, or have to cancel my appointment?

- » If you fail to appear for the scheduled test, arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time or change or cancel your appointment within 48 hours of the test date and time, you will not receive a refund and the fees will not be transferred to another administration. If there is an emergency, you must send a written explanation and documentation to the NBCRNA office at certification@nbcna.com for review.

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