



National Certification Exam (NCE) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION (NCE) CANDIDATES' FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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 NBCRNA NCE Handbook, in the eligibility notice, in the online registration instructions and on the NBCRNA website. You are responsible for being familiar with this information. Please refer to the NBCRNA NCE Handbook for information concerning procedures for when and how to communicate with the NBCRNA office.

Eligibility and Verifications

Q If I am enrolled in a voluntary treatment program, do I need to disclose this to the NBCRNA?

- » Yes; even if the state board of nursing does not require you to disclose your participation to entities such as your employer, the NBCRNA requires you to disclose this information to us during your application process.

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

- » You can expect to receive an email notification from the NBCRNA of your eligibility to take the NCE within 1-5 business days following the date that verification of your nurse anesthesia educational program completion is received by the NBCRNA. It is your responsibility to make certain that you have provided the NBCRNA with your current email address, that you have not blocked access to your account by the NBCRNA and Pearson VUE, and that you can receive attachments from either group.

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

- » If you cannot produce identification that matches the first and last names on the eligibility notification, you must notify the NBCRNA immediately via email at certification@nbcna.com to obtain new eligibility materials.

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

- » The NBCRNA 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 requests for notification at 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 1-5 business days from the date that verification of the nurse anesthesia educational program completion is received by the NBCRNA.
- » No eligibility notification will be sent prior to the verified completion of your nurse anesthesia educational program.

- » If you submit a request to the NBCRNA after your application to take the examination has been received, the request will be handled within 1-5 business days of receipt.

Preparing for the Exam

Q How should I prepare for the NCE?

- » Whether you use study groups, workshops, or review courses, you should carefully review the content outline in the NBCRNA NCE Handbook; it contains everything a candidate needs to know about the NCE administration.

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 that suggests topics and topical areas used to generate and categorize NCE questions. It is not all-inclusive, as some elements apply to more than one area. This means that not only must candidates validate their knowledge of a subject, but they also must 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 uses only 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 the Item Writing section that may be of help: 1) Alternative Question Format FAQs; and 2) Alternative Question Format Samples.

Taking the Exam

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

- » You must take the following to the test center: two separate forms of current, valid ID, both of which must bear a signature and one of which must bear a photo. The photo ID can be a current government-issued ID such as a passport, driver's license, state ID or military ID; an unexpired school ID or employee ID; or a valid RN license. Both pieces of ID must have the same first and last names as they appear on the certification eligibility notification sent via email by 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 contacting the NBCRNA for reauthorization and pay 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. Once you have agreed to the statement, the NCE will begin.

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.

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 after your examination 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 email.
- » Candidates should carefully consider making time-sensitive employment-related commitments that require immediate verification of certification (i.e., passing the NCE). Processing of results may take up to 4 weeks following the date of your examination, and processing will not be altered for individual requests.

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 may also take differing amounts of time.

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

- » You can request your score information from your nurse anesthesia educational program administrator. 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?

- » Within 2 business days 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?

- » Employers are able to verify a potential employee's certification status free of charge on the NBCRNA website at <https://portal.nbcna.com/credential-verification> immediately following the processing of the official NCE results.

Passing the Exam and Preparing for Continued Professional Certification (CPC)

Q When do I have to meet CPC Program requirements?

- » Your certification card contains the date you need to meet CPC requirements.
- » Information about the CPC Program is available on the NBCRNA website, and the date you will demonstrate CPC compliance is indicated on your certification card.

Retaking the Exam

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

- » If you do not pass the NCE, you will receive a notification letter that provides diagnostic data for the four content areas of the examination along with instructions to submit a new NCE application.
- » Test questions cannot be made available for review.

Q If I was not successful on the NCE and have made a commitment for employment, can I have my official results and retake application expedited?

- » Processing time frames will not be altered for individual requests. Official results take 2-4 weeks following the test date. Once you have paid the examination fees and submitted your online Retake Application Form, you should allow 1-5 business days for retake application processing and eligibility notification.

Q When can I retake the exam?

- » You can take the NCE up to four times within one year following the completion date of your nurse anesthesia educational program. If you do not pass within that first year, you will only have up to four more times within one more year to take and pass the NCE.
- » There are no required waiting periods between individual exam attempts in a given year.
- » You cannot schedule your retake exam with your previous eligibility notification. A new online NCE application must be submitted.

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 educational 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 eight 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.

Missed or Canceled Appointment

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

- » Cancellations of appointments must be made directly with Pearson VUE. 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 test administration. If there is an emergency, you must send a written explanation and documentation to the NBCRNA office at certification@nbcna.com for review.