

# EXAM CANDIDATE HANDBOOK



The PTA Global CPT certification examination is accredited by  
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (“NCCA”)

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## ***Introduction***

This Candidate Handbook provides information about the Personal Training Academy Global (PTAG) and the certification examination it offers personal trainers and fitness professionals. This Handbook includes information detailing PTA Global Certification Board Mission and Objectives along with:

- PTAG's Certified Personal Trainer (CPT) certification program and the certification examination
- Eligibility requirements
- Applying and sitting for the PTAG-CPT Exam
- Exam administration and results
- Rules of conduct and disciplinary action
- Awarding of credentials
- Maintaining credentials through recertification

This Handbook is written to provide essential information to candidates (those considering or preparing to sit for the PTAG-CPT examination) and certified professionals (those who have successfully completed an PTAG certification examination and have received PTAG credentials). All CPT candidates and all certified professionals are required to read this Candidate Handbook. The policies, procedures, rules and obligations set forth in this Handbook and in PTAG's website-published Terms & Conditions, are binding on all candidates and certified professionals.

## ***PTA Global Certification Board (PTAG-CB):***

### ***MISSION AND OBJECTIVES***

#### ***Mission***

The PTAG-CB's mission is to recognize and credential individuals who prove competence and knowledge when creating personal training programs that involve movement and overall health to members of the public in a safe, enjoyable, empathetic, efficient, and professional manner.

#### ***Objectives:***

The objectives of the PTAG-CB are as follows:

- Maintain complete autonomy in the certification process to ensure the examination remains unbiased and fair for all individuals involved.
- Establish, administer, and regulate policies and procedures for resolving professional and ethical concerns as it relates to the certification graduates and the examination process.
- Ensure as the industry and needs of the industry change, the certification exam and processes change at the same pace.
- Develop and administer examinations which assess the knowledge and skills required for the role of a professionally certified personal trainer.
- Ensure the quality of the Certified Personal Trainer (CPT) Exam and processes remain at the highest levels within the industry globally.

Ensure that anyone who is eligible can attempt the certification exam, and that the policies and procedures are clear and precise to enable ease of understanding and adequate completion of requirements.

#### **CERTIFICATION BOARD: CONTACT INFORMATION**

##### **Mailing Address:**

PTA Global Certification Board  
32107 Lindero Canyon Rd. #233  
Westlake Village, CA 91361  
Fax: 805.435.1414  
Email: [certificationboard@ptaglobal.com](mailto:certificationboard@ptaglobal.com)  
Website: [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com)

## **About NCCA Accreditation**

The PTA Global-CPT certification program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), a division of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE). NCCA accreditation provides impartial, third-party validation that a certification program has met recognized national and international credentialing industry standards for development, implementation, and maintenance of its certification program. PTA Global provides NCCA annual reports and is required to submit its CPT certification program for reaccreditation every five years.

## **About the PTA Global Certification Board**

The PTAG-CB is an autonomous and independent board. Their responsibility is for overseeing the PTA Global-CPT program. The Certification Board sets policy over essential certification activities and oversees certification and recertification decisions, including governance, eligibility standards, disciplinary and appeals actions, and the development, administration, and scoring of the assessment examination.

## **PTAG's Nondiscrimination Policy**

PTAG and its designated test vendor, PSI, does not discriminate against any individual because of age, gender, race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability or any other protected class. PTAG and PSI endorse and adhere to the principles of equal opportunity.

## **PTAG CPT Certification**

PTAG's Certified Personal Trainer (CPT) certification program includes, at a minimum, a certification examination developed pursuant to psychometric and NCCA standards and an administration process that includes issuance of credentials, a recertification process and a professional code of ethics.

## **Exam Only**

The CPT Exam Only option allows the candidate to take the NCCA-accredited CPT certification examination only. The purchase of PTA Global certification preparation materials is not required to become eligible to sit for the CPT exam, and does not guarantee a passing score on the exam. Candidates who pass the examination will be awarded the CPT credential. This option is most appropriate for candidates that have received formal education in related fields, such as training, human biomechanics, exercise physiology or athletic coaching and have significant experience with exercise and fitness science.

## **Exam Period/ Extensions**

The exam enrollment period is 180 days from the initial enrollment in the CPT certification preparation program. What this means is, candidates have 180 days from the date of purchase to complete their preparation, obtain their CPR/AED certification and successfully take the CPT certification examination. You may purchase a program extension of sixty (60) days by completing the [Program Extension Request](#) form and emailing to [info@ptaglobal.com](mailto:info@ptaglobal.com). Only three (3) extensions may be purchased. All fees, including the Program Extension Fee, are subject to change and you should reference the PTAG website to confirm the current fee structure. Please note that if you enrolled through a program offered by a PTAG academic partner, the enrollment period may be adjusted to coincide with the term of your school's program.

<b>Extension period</b>	<b>Requires</b>
181-240 days	<i>One extension required</i>
241-300 days	<i>Two extensions required</i>
300-365 days	<i>Three extensions required</i>
Over 365 days	<i>Repurchase of exam required</i>

# **Candidate Eligibility Requirements**

## **Certification Eligibility**

To be eligible to sit for the PTAG-CPT exam and receive certification, each candidate must:

- 1) Have obtained or be within no more than 90 days of successful completion of all requirements needed to obtain a high school diploma or the equivalent, such as the General Education Development test (GED) or other equivalency test recognized by the candidate's state of residency, or diploma and official transcript reflecting equivalent education as evaluated by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers for secondary education.
- 2) Obtain and maintain Adult CPR and AED certifications. Candidates will be required to provide proof of current CPR/AED certification prior to being admitted to sit for the PTAG -CPT examination. Certified professionals must have a current CPR/AED card when applying for recertification. All CPR/AED courses must have a hands-on training component. Examples of approved providers include: American Heart Association — [www.CPR-ECC.org](http://www.CPR-ECC.org), American Red Cross — [www.RedCross.org](http://www.RedCross.org), American Safety & Health Institute — [www.hsi.com](http://www.hsi.com), EMS Safety Services — [www.emssafetyservices.com](http://www.emssafetyservices.com), Emergency University — [www.emergencyuniversity.com](http://www.emergencyuniversity.com), National Safety Council — [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org). Before taking a CPR/AED program from a provider not listed here, please confirm that such provider has been approved by contacting [info@ptaglobal.com](mailto:info@ptaglobal.com). PTAG will not accept a CPR/AED certification card from an online only provider.

## **Eligibility Exception Requests**

Candidates may request an exception to eligibility requirements to sit for the certification exam by completing the Exception Request/Appeal form and submitting supporting documentation. The exception request will be reviewed and decided upon by the Administrative Committee, a committee of the Certification Board. The Committee's decision will be provided to the candidate in writing. Decisions of the Board are final.

See the "Appeals" section of this Candidate Handbook for more information.

PTAG reserves the right to uphold eligibility requirements as established by the Certification Board.

## ***DEVELOPMENT OF PTAG CPT EXAM***

PTAG is committed to providing the highest quality certification examinations through continuous development and psychometric review. The examination development process begins with a job analysis. This is an industry-accepted process for determining the competencies that are required for safe and effective practice in the tested field. Subject matter experts representing both practitioners and educators work with PTAG's psychometricians to define the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for safe and effective practice in the field covered by the exam. The results of this job analysis are then used to form the examination; every question written for the examination must address one of the specified tasks on this job analysis. Regular assessment of the profession and the conduct of the job analyses allow the examination to remain a current assessment of the competencies a practitioner in the field must possess. Prior to the implementation of a new examination test plan, it is reviewed and approved by the Certification Board. Once an exam form is implemented, the psychometric team evaluates the statistical properties throughout the life of the test items used on that exam form, as well as the quality of pretest items used to develop future exam forms. All examination items used to build forms are reviewed and continuously monitored by the psychometric team to ensure the statistical properties meet the appropriate specifications.

### ***Exam Content***

The exam content domains (broad topics) that are covered by the exam and the number of questions allocated to each domain are found in this manual. We also provide sub-topics for each domain. Because the questions are randomly distributed within each domain, not all sub-topics will be tested on each exam form. Candidates may refer to the exam content domains during their self-study and exam preparation.

### ***Cut Score***

A cut score is the minimum score needed to pass an examination. Criterion-referenced cut scores are set to establish minimum levels of competency for the PTAG-CPT examination. These cut scores are established by panels of subject matter experts who evaluate whether a minimally qualified candidate would correctly respond to each item on the examination, rating those items accordingly. The current cut score for the PTAG Certification Exam is 72%.

# EXAM REGISTRATION

## Getting Started

How do exam candidates purchase/register for PTA Global CPT self-study program and exam?

Online registration: [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com).

The purchase the PTAG-CPT package is made using credit or debit card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, or American Express).

Following the paid registration, exam candidates will receive a confirmation email that will include a receipt. If the exam only option is purchased, exam scheduling instructions will also be provided.

Candidate Profiles are created at the time of purchase. Candidates can access their online self-study program by logging into the PTA Global website with their account login. Once this has been set up, the paid registration becomes NON-REFUNDABLE.

Exam candidates are instructed to review the information in the six (6) content domains of the CPT Exam and have an adequate knowledge base to ensure the greatest likelihood of passing the CPT Exam prior to scheduling the exam appointment.

It is essential that you provide and confirm that the following information is always current and accurate:

1. **Name.** Your name must match the name you use on government-issued identification. You should not use nicknames or other substitute names. Your certification and credentials will be issued under the name in your candidate profile. You will not be allowed to sit for your certification examination unless you present a current and valid government-issued photo ID. Accordingly, you must be sure to register for your exam using the exact same name that appears in your candidate profile and on your government-issued identification. If your name changes due to a change in marital status or a legal name change, you must be sure to have the name change reflected in your candidate profile but only after you have arranged for government-issued identification using your new name.

a. To change your name with PTAG, you will need to provide an official duplicate of the legal document reflecting the change of name. This document must contain the official seal of the government entity issuing the document. PTAG cannot accept a photocopy of the official document. Along with the document, you must provide your previous name, current mailing address, telephone number at which you can be reached and current personal email address. PTAG may need to request additional documentation to confirm your identity before processing the name change in its system.

b. Request for name changes are sent to [info@ptaglobal.com](mailto:info@ptaglobal.com)

2. **Contact Information.** You are advised to provide and keep your contact information current always. It is important that PTAG be able to provide you with information concerning your certification and credentials. You are encouraged to provide a personal email address when you create your candidate profile rather than an email address associated with a school or employer so that PTAG is able to contact you even after you have changed schools or employers.

## Accommodations

Accommodations may be available to individuals with documented disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). PTAG provides reasonable testing accommodations to candidates whose documented disabilities or other qualifying medical conditions hinder their ability to take the examination under standard conditions. Examples of requests for special testing accommodations that may be granted include modification of seating or other physical arrangements in the testing facility, or providing for the examination to be taken in an accessible location, providing for a reasonable extension of testing time, providing a sign language interpreter (to assist with audio or spoken components, if any), reader, or other auxiliary aid.



PTAG recommends that you submit an [accommodation request](#) and obtain approval before registering for an exam date. Often, the provision of an accommodation will require PTAG's test administration site to make arrangements that will impact on scheduling. PTAG will provide notice of an approved accommodation to the test administration providers and the specific accommodations will then be taken into consideration in setting an exam date.

Requests for accommodations will be processed as quickly as possible. Candidates should allow for a minimum of thirty (30) days for processing, with the understanding that some cases may take longer. Candidates should include all the required documentation (see instructions below for what is required) with their initial request.

Candidates will be notified in writing of the decision regarding their request for an accommodation. Candidates who receive a testing accommodation are subject to the same policies and procedures described in this Handbook as apply to all other exam takers. PTAG determination about the approval of an accommodation request is final.

### ***Requesting Accommodations***

To be considered for special accommodations, a candidate must complete the [PTAG Request for Accommodations Form](#), located at [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com).

Please be aware that submission of a request for an accommodation does not guarantee testing accommodations. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis considering the information submitted and in accordance with the law.

Requests for accommodations must include either:

A letter, written no more than two years earlier than the date of the request, from an objective physician or healthcare professional qualified to diagnose the disability or medical condition and render an opinion as to the need for an accommodation. An "objective" professional cannot be the candidate requesting the accommodation or a relative of the candidate.

The letter from your qualified professional MUST include the following:

1. The specific disability/diagnosis. Mental/emotional disabilities must be accompanied by a numerical DSM-IV classification code.
2. A brief explanation of how this condition limits the candidate's ability to take the exam under standard conditions.
3. If this is not a permanent disability or diagnosis, include date first diagnosed, approximate duration, and method used to make the diagnosis.
4. State specifically the accommodation(s) required. Requested accommodations should be adequate to address the candidate's specific disability or diagnosis without creating an unfair advantage. Please note that candidates who require extra time to complete the exam will be given 150% (or 1 1/2 times) the standard allotted time. If more time is needed, the letter must specifically state how much time is needed and why that amount of time is required.

Accommodations are provided to qualified candidates with disabilities to the extent that such accommodation does not fundamentally alter the examination or cause an undue burden to PTAG or the test administration site. The cost of excessive accommodation requirements is to be borne by the candidate (i.e., electronic communication equipment, etc.).

Candidates who arrive at the test center for a scheduled examination who have not made a prior request for a special accommodation should be offered the opportunity to take the exam without the accommodation.

Candidates with blood sugar disorders are not required to get prior authorization for small hard candy items at the examination station. Candidates will be asked to remove the items from plastic wrappers, as this could cause a distraction to other candidates.

PSI and PTA Global comply with the standards set forth within ADA. Proctors will make every effort to assist in the accommodation of examination needs of candidates with disabilities.

If a candidate appears to be having difficulty taking an examination, the proctor will inquire if there is anything that can be done to improve the candidate's examination experience. Actions such as adjusting the contrast of the monitor, adjusting the chair height, or adjusting the screen angle will be undertaken immediately.

*PLEASE NOTE: The exam is written and administered in the English language. A lack of facility with the English language is not considered a disability. Exams will not be translated into foreign languages, and interpreters are not permitted inside the exam room for the purpose of translating the examination from English into another language for a candidate.*

### **Registering for an Exam**

When you are ready to take the certification exam, you will need to register for an exam date and location. PTAG recommends that examination candidates register for their exam at least sixty (60) days prior to an anticipated examination date to allow adequate preparation time.

An exam preparation tutorial can be found [HERE](#).

All PTAG-CPT exams are administered by PSI, an independent testing vendor. Information about PSI locations can be found at: <https://candidate.psiexams.com/index.jsp>.

To register for the PTAG-CPT exam within the US and Canada, call 800.211.2754 or visit their website at <https://candidate.psiexams.com/>. PTAG will send you a code upon completion of study material or purchase of exam only option. The candidate must have this code to schedule their exam.

You will receive confirmation of the examination location, date and time directly from the test administration site. Please keep the confirmation – you should bring it with you on the exam date and, if you should need to cancel, the confirmation will contain the contact information.

You should register for an examination date well in advance, but no later than three days before your preferred date, because availability at your preferred location and on your preferred date is subject to demand. For international candidates, please allow 4-6 weeks to schedule.

Please note that you will not be admitted into the examination if:

- 1) You are not registered to take the examination on that date and time at that location.
- 2) Your identity cannot be confirmed with a current and valid government-issued photo ID.
- 3) You do not present a current CPR/AED certification card which had a hands-on practical.

**Examination registrations are nontransferable.**

## ***Exam Check-in***

1. You will need to bring a current and valid government-issued photo identification, your exam date confirmation provided by the test administrator, and a current CPR/AED certification card (with hands-on practical) to the examination. Only the individual named on the exam registration roster will be permitted to take the certification examination. No substitutions are permitted. Accordingly, the name on your government-issued photo identification must match the name on file with PTAG and the name provided at the time of the exam registration.
2. You may only sit for the certification exam at the specific location and on the date and at the time for which you registered. You cannot go to another site offered by the test administrator or attempt to sit for the certification examination at a time other than the date and time for which you registered. You will not be admitted into the examination if you are not registered to take the examination on that date and time at that location, you are advised to bring the confirmation you received from the test administrator to avoid confusion.
3. You will need to present a copy of a current CPR/AED certification card from an approved provider which includes the live, hands-on practical. Approved providers are listed in the Certification Eligibility section of this Handbook.

## ***Rescheduling or Cancellation of an Exam***

Rescheduling an Exam. Candidates may reschedule an examination date, without paying an additional fee, pursuant to the following conditions:

- The candidate must visit the PSI website (<https://candidate.psiexams.com>) at least 48 hours prior to the originally scheduled appointment to reschedule or cancel his/her examination without penalty.
  1. If the candidate does not cancel or reschedule his/her exam in advance, the cost of the exam is forfeited and the candidate must purchase a retest.

If the candidate does not reschedule his/her exam (at least 48 hours in advance), the examination fees will be forfeited and the candidate will need to purchase a retest. Similarly, if the candidate fails to sit for a rescheduled exam within the required 180 days, the examination fees will be forfeited and the candidate will need to re-register and purchase the exam only option. **Candidates MUST take the exam within 12 months original purchase date.**

PTAG is not liable for expenses (e.g. travel) that may be incurred by the candidate during the course of the examination process.

## ***Late Arrival, Failure to Appear or INVALID/EXPIRED ID for an Exam***

If you arrive late, do not have your testing code, do not have the required CPR/AED certificate, or have an invalid/expired ID for the certification exam, you will not be permitted to take the examination at that time. You are not entitled to a refund.

If you fail to appear for a scheduled certification exam, it will be treated as a failed attempt and you will need to follow PTAG's retest procedures (see the "Exam Retest" section of this Handbook for more information). You are not entitled to a refund.

Under certain circumstances, PTAG, at its sole discretion, may waive the retest fee for a late arrival or the failure to appear. PTAG will consider the following circumstances: serious illness suffered by you or an immediate family member; death of an immediate family member; disabling traffic accident, court appearance or jury duty; or unexpected military call-up. To receive a waiver, you must email a letter describing the circumstances and provide supporting documentation. Possible documentations include but not limited to: Physician letter, Court letter, Service orders. The documentation must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of the registered exam date.

# **EXAM ADMINISTRATION**

## ***Testing Format***

The PTAG-CPT exam is in four-answer, multiple choice format. The exam includes 120 questions and candidates are provided two (2) hours to complete the exam.

Exam proctors will adhere to the time limit set for the CPT examination. If an accommodation for additional time has been requested and approved, proctors will adhere to the time limit set in the approved accommodation.

## ***Security at Test Administration Sites***

All candidates must have their identification verified with a valid and current government- issued photo-ID before entering the examination room. Proctors are required to verify the candidate's identity as a condition of candidate admittance to the exam. Candidates must present a government-issued ID, such as a driver's license or passport, which should include a current photograph, the candidate's signature, and a permanent address. If the address on the government-issued photo identification is different from that supplied at the time of registration, the candidate must show proof of address, such as a current utility bill.

The second step of the identification verification process is for the proctor to confirm that the candidate is registered to take the exam at that specific location and on that date and at that time. Proctors are supplied with a registration roster and only candidates listed on the roster will be permitted to take the examination.

After the verification process is complete, candidates are required to initial the roster next to their name. After the exam, proctors are required to return the roster to PTAG, which indicates that all identifications were verified according to policy.

## ***Confidentiality***

Confidential information (non-public information including, but not limited to, social security number, financial account numbers, or medical information, etc.) is protected by federal, state and local laws or regulations. To protect the privacy of our candidates and certified professionals, PTAG's database of personal information is accessible only by authorized staff and authorized contractors operating under a nondisclosure agreement. Please see PTAG's Confidentiality and Records Retention, posted on its website, [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com), for more information about data collected by PTAG and the use of such data by PTAG.

Exam scores are considered confidential information and will not be disclosed without the written consent of the person in question, unless PTAG is required to do so by law or court order. Unless required by law to be provided to a regulating agency, score results are provided only to the candidate and only if the candidate did not pass the exam. Test scores are not provided over the phone.

Information that is not considered confidential and may be shared with schools, employers, inquiring clients of certified professionals, regulatory or licensure body, and other concerned third-parties includes general exam results (whether a candidate passed and exam), certification status, certification number, the current status of a previously-certified individual's credential and whether the individual is in a "Not in Good Standing" status with PTAG.

Information in the PTAG database, such as pass rates, number of certified professionals, score trends, etc., may be used in the aggregate (summarized across a group of individuals) for the purpose of research reports, marketing, partner relations and other published data. Additionally, schools, employers or PTAG partners may be provided aggregated data (e.g., summarized across all students of an institution, all employees of an employer, or other grouping, provided that there are enough included individuals to assure that data pertaining to any one individual cannot be deduced) reflecting the Pass/Fail percentage, recertification rates and other data points collected by PTAG.

## **EXAM CONDUCT**

PTAG does not tolerate cheating or any breach of academic or professional ethics. PTAG also does not tolerate activity or conduct that jeopardizes the security or integrity of its certification exams. Accordingly, all candidates are required to:

1. Abide by the Testing Rules of Conduct described below
2. Provide accurate and truthful information when they register
3. Adhere to the PTAG Professional Code of Ethics, which is provided in the “Suspension or Revocation of Credentials (Disciplinary Action) section of this Handbook.

Failure to do so is considered misconduct for which the candidate may be disciplined.

### ***Testing Rules of Conduct***

Each candidate must abide by the following PTAG Testing Rules of Conduct:

- All exams must be completed within a single, continuous session. Candidates may not stop their exam administration and return to review their answers or continue the exam(s) at a later date or time.
- No reference books are allowed during any PTAG examination administration. Such material or any other papers may not be brought into the examination room.
- Telephones, personal computers, electronic tablets, electronic readers, cameras, MP3 players, pagers, radios, watches, electronic translators, calculators, and all other electronic devices are prohibited in the examination room, except to the extent the electronic device is approved pursuant to an accommodation request. Such approved devices are subject to inspection.
- The proctor will not answer any questions pertaining to the examination content.
- Once the candidate has entered the exam room, referencing written materials, using electronic devices, or discussing or reviewing any aspect of the exam with other individuals is strictly prohibited, even during scheduled breaks, if any, until the exam is completed. Where an accommodation has been granted, and such accommodation requires the use of written materials, electronic devices, or the assistance of another person, the accommodation will be provided by the proctor (and not the candidate) or, with respect to certain electronic devices that must be supplied by the candidate, the device will be subject to inspection by the proctor. People providing assistance such as sign language interpreters and test readers, may not assist the candidate with answering the examination and are subject to these Testing Rules of Conduct.
- Eating or drinking in the examination room is not be allowed unless deemed necessary due to a documented medical condition and the candidate sought and received approval for the accommodation prior to the examination date.
- Leaving the examination room at any time other than at a scheduled break, if any, is not allowed. The proctor is permitted to make an exception to this rule only under specific conditions, which include: (i) a determination by the proctor that the break is reasonably necessary; (ii) only one examinee may be absent from the examination room at any time; (iii) the candidate may not engage in conversation, may not reference any written materials, and may not use any electronic devices while outside of the examination room; (iv) the time for taking the exam will not be extended or altered (in other words, break time is counted as test taking time); and (v) any other condition the proctor determines is necessary to protect the integrity of the examination process and the security of the exam.
- Removal of exam content from the examination room is prohibited. Any act to retain exam content for use after the completion of the exam will be deemed a breach of the confidentiality policy and considered theft of PTAG’s intellectual property. This includes any effort to copy, photograph, record, or memorize exam content.
- Candidates are honor-bound to report all suspected cheating or attempts to steal examination content by others that he/she witnesses, hears about, or is asked by another to participate in. Failure to alert the proctor or PTAG to such activity will be deemed a violation of the Testing Rules of Conduct.

## ***Disciplinary Actions for Exam Misconduct***

Any misrepresentation of a candidate's eligibility, violation of the to adhere to the PTAG Professional Code of Ethics is considered Misconduct for which PTAG may take disciplinary action. Any candidate engaging in any activity that may compromise the security, validity, or integrity of the PTAG-CPT exam will be subject to disciplinary action, which can include the invalidation of exam scores, revocation of credentials, and imposition of a ban from retaking the examination or any other examination offered by PTAG.

In addition to the disciplinary action described herein, PTAG reserves the right to discipline a candidate or certified professional who engages in illegal, threatening or unprofessional behavior or activity, even if not specifically described in this Handbook. PTAG also reserves the right to report disciplinary actions to concerned third parties, which may include the employers, schools, inquiring customers of the certified professional, regulatory, licensing or oversight bodies, or law enforcement.

Candidates and certified professionals are entitled to Due Process and have a right to appeal disciplinary action, as described more fully in the "Due Process" and "Appeals" sections of this Candidate Handbook.

## ***Suspicion of Misconduct Arising at or During the Examination***

If the proctor is unable to verify the identity of the person appearing to sit for an exam, the proctor must deny access to the examination. Under most circumstances, the candidate will be able to reschedule the examination without additional charge to a date on which he/she can present proper verification of identity. PTAG reserves the right to determine that the candidate is ineligible to take the exam at a future date in cases of misrepresentation, fraud, or other circumstances indicating attempted cheating or exam content theft.

Proctors are permitted, on PTAG's behalf, to enforce the Testing Rules of Conduct. If a candidate violates any of the Rules, the proctor can terminate the exam and remove the candidate from the examination room. The proctor will file a report with PTAG, and PTAG will determine if any further discipline is warranted. Absent a determination that the proctor's concerns were unfounded, no refund will be provided.

## ***Violations of Certain Testing Rules of Conduct***

Violations amounting to theft of exam content: Any allegations concerning the security of the exam and PTAG's intellectual property will be investigated. PTAG has the right to invalidate test scores, suspend or revoke certification credentials, and deem a candidate ineligible to retake the exam or sit for other PTAG exams.

Violations amounting to cheating: Any allegations of cheating will be investigated. PTAG has the right to invalidate test scores, suspend or revoke certification credentials, and deem a candidate ineligible to retake the exam or sit for other PTAG exams.

PTAG reserves the right to report violations of these Rules to concerned third parties, which may include the candidate's school or employer, any regulatory or licensing body, or law enforcement.

# EXAM RESULTS

## Scoring

Certification exams are scored immediately upon completion by web-based testing software. Candidates are given a preliminary result while at the test center indicating whether or not they have passed. Although the scores are not made official until verified by PTAG and any proctor or exam incident reports have been reviewed (within approximately two weeks after the exam date), candidates may use this preliminary report to provide evidence to employers of a passing score. Accordingly, please note that although scores may be released immediately, all data subsequently will be analyzed for anomalies. If anomalies are found that impact the scoring, the exam will be rescored and the candidate will be advised if the rescore impacts whether he/she passed or failed the exam. In some cases, an anomaly will be determined to be the result of an administrative error or, possibly, misconduct. PTAG reserves the right to require candidates to retake exams when an administrative error occurs that impacts exam scores or if it determines that misconduct by others may have impacted the scores of all examinees. Individuals involved in misconduct are subject to disciplinary action described

PTAG examinations are scored using a scaled score method. Scaled scores can range from 0 to 100 and represent a conversion of the candidate's raw score to allow for comparison between different forms of the same examination. The use of a scaled score provides consistency in reporting passing standards by accounting for the difficulty level of the examination form. The same level of performance is required to meet the scaled passing score of 72 regardless of which form of the exam a candidate takes. A candidate must achieve a scaled score of 72 or higher to pass the examinations covered in this Handbook.

Each exam includes 20 "pretest questions." These are questions that are being tested for future examinations as part of the continuous exam development process at PTAG as required by PTAG's accreditor. Pretest questions are excluded from the scoring process and are scattered throughout the exam. Pretest items are not identifiable; therefore, all candidates should answer all questions to the best of his or her ability.

Disclosure of Scores to Candidates. Candidates who pass the exam may not be given their actual score. Candidates who fail the exam are provided with their score. Exam scores are never provided over the phone.

Disclosure of Scores to Third-Parties. Although PTAG may share successful exam results (a pass without a score) with third parties, PTAG does not disclose exam scores or failed attempts to others unless required by law to provide results to regulating agencies, or if permission has been granted by the candidate.

Candidates who, after verification, pass the exam will receive a formal certificate indicating that they are a certified professional. The certificate is sent electronically within four weeks following the date the exam. Hard copies of the certificate may be purchased by contacting [info@ptaglobal.com](mailto:info@ptaglobal.com). Instructions for the purchase of the hard copy will be included in the email with your electronic certificate.

## ***Exam Appeals***

Candidates may request an appeal of their final exam score. Requests must be received in writing on the official PTAG appeals form, which can be found at: [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com) within thirty (30) days of the examination date. Decisions will be communicated in writing only. All decisions are final. For more information about the appeals process, please see the appeals section of this Handbook.

## ***Exam Retest***

Candidates who show up late, do not have proper documentation, miss a scheduled exam appointment or do not pass the certification exam on the first attempt and wish to retake the exam will be allowed to retest after a one-week waiting period. If the candidate is unsuccessful after the second attempt, he/she will be required to wait thirty (30) days between subsequent exam attempts. Exam retakes must be taken within 60-days of exam purchase. The CPT exam may not be taken more than three (3) times. Eligibility to retake an exam, under extraordinary circumstances, can be reviewed by the Disciplinary and Appeals Committee. Please see the Appeals section of this Candidate Handbook for more information. An exam preparation tutorial can be found [HERE](#).

Retest requests are made using the PTAG CPT [Exam Retest Request Form](#) found at on our [Forms Page](#) and submitted to [info@ptaglobal.com](mailto:info@ptaglobal.com).

All exam candidates should be aware that there is more than one (1) version of the CPT Exam, and exam candidates should therefore be prepared to learn and understand the job knowledge and skill sets required of a personal trainer to pass the CPT Exam.



## ***Certification Credentials***

### ***Awarding of Credential***

Only candidates who achieve a passing score on the exam will be allowed to use the certification program credential. PTAG will issue an official certificate to individuals who earn their certification. Certifications are valid for two (2) years and expire on the date provided on the certificate.

### ***Reception of Certification***

You should expect to receive your certification, if you have met all examination requirements, within thirty (30) days of your examination date. You will receive notification of your official results and your certificate by email. If for some reason you have not received your official score or certification within thirty (30) days, please contact info@ptaglobal.com by email to inquire about your results.

### ***Credential Use***

Candidates who achieve a passing score on the exam and have a current valid credential are allowed to include the certification credential “PTAG-CPT” behind their name and the title “PTAG- Certified Personal Trainer”. The use of the certification credential should always be in a context and using media consistent with demonstrating professional credentialing, including but not limited to: office signage, resumes, websites, business cards, presentations, introductions, and electronic signatures. PTAG credentials may not be used to endorse any product, service, or company; or as a company, product, or brand name.

### ***Recertification***

PTAG certified professionals are required to keep their certification current through fulfilling at least 20 CEC’s (approximately 20 hours of CB approved credit study every two (2) years. This is referred to as “recertification.” The purpose of recertification is to assure that certified professionals holding PTAG credentials stay current with best practices in the personal trainer and fitness fields and demonstrate a continued investment in their profession.

### ***Updating Your Contact Information***

As noted in the Getting Started section of this Handbook, it is important that PTAG always have current name and contact information about you. It is important that you advise PTAG of changes to your name, address and other contact information as soon as possible but at the very least before undertaking the recertification process. If your name has changed and you wish to have your new certificate to match your current name, PTAG will need to update your records. Additionally, the name on the CPR/AED card submitted with your recertification application will need to match the most current name in PTAG’s records.

### ***Recertification Requirements***

A certification is valid for two (2) years following the issuance date of the certification. To recertify, you must complete continuing education, complete the recertification application and pay the recertification fee, as follows:

**Continuing Education:** Certified professionals must complete 20 continuing education credits (CEC), the equivalent of 20 contact hours of training, every two years.

- 1) PTAG offers a one time, ninety (90) day grace period with an extension fee. This extension allows the certified professional 90 days beyond the expiration date to complete the 20 CECs.
- 2) CECs earned after the 90- day grace period will not count toward recertification. If a certified professional has not completed all the required CECs before the end of the 90-day grace period, he/she will be required to retake the certification examination to maintain his/her credentials.

- 3) The “Recertification Period” is the two-year period before your current certification expires plus, if you pay the Extension Fee, an additional 90 days.
- 4) CECs can be obtained from PTAG-approved continuing education providers. Continuing education opportunities can be found on the PTAG website under the “My Education” tab, at [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com). The cost, length and CECs awarded for continuing education courses vary, so you should review carefully the information available about each course before enrolling.
  - The PTAG Provider Program allows outside organizations to submit their course content to be considered for review and approval of CECs. Once approved, these courses will be designated as PTAG approved offerings and will meet the approved requirements
  - If there is a continuing education course that has not yet been approved by the CB, you must submit a CEC Approval Request Form and associated fees. As with all PTAG-approved CECs, PTAG will evaluate the course to ensure that it (a) promotes continued competence, develops knowledge and skills, and enhances professional skills and judgment beyond that required for entry-level practice and (b) that the number of awarded CECs is appropriate. PTAG reserves the right to withhold approval of a submitted course or to limit the number of CECs awarded. Until the course is approved by PTAG, it cannot be used towards recertification so you should be sure to submit the course well in advance of the end of the Recertification Period.
  - PTAG offers courses and credentials, which can count for as much as 19 CECs. Please see the PTAG website to learn more about these opportunities.
  - All recertification applications must demonstrate the applicant has a valid and current CPR/AED certification. Please note that the name on the CPR/AED card submitted with your recertification application will need to match the most current name in PTAG’s records. (You will **NOT** receive CECs for obtaining a current CPR/AED certification because this is a requirement for the certification.)
  - Excess CECs earned in one Recertification Period cannot be applied to the next Recertification Period.

**Recertification Application:** With each recertification, you will need to follow the recertification application process and complete the [Recertification Application Packet](#). You will be required to provide documentation verifying the completion of 20 CECs, 4 of which need to be live, in-person training. You are responsible for obtaining a certificate of completion or other official document from each continuing education course you attended, this includes the front and back of your mandatory CPR/AED certification. There will be a random audit performed on all recertification applications submitted. If your application is chosen for audit and you do not meet the requirement, you will have 30 days to submit all supporting documentation to the PTAG Recertification Department.

**Recertification Fees:** Unless the certified professional has purchased the “Lifetime Certification” package: (see below), a fee must be paid with each recertification application (the “Recertification Fee”). If you timely recertify before the expiration date on your certificate, you will be charged the Recertification Fee (see website for current fee amount). If you use the 90- day extension period to complete your CEC requirements, you will be required to pay the normal Recertification Fee, plus an additional “Extension Fee”. All fees, including the Recertification Fee and the Extension Fee, are subject to change and you should reference the PTAG website to confirm the current fee structure. Only one (1), ninety (90) day extension may be granted. CEC costs are separate and apart from the recertification fees and are paid at the time of purchase of each continuing education course.

## ***Lifetime Certification***

“Lifetime Certification” is an opportunity to pay all recertification fees at one time and never have to pay the normal recertification fee again. Because fees, including the recertification fee, are subject to change, this allows you to avoid price increases over the course of your career.

- The Lifetime Certification fee is an in-full, one-time payment. Previously paid recertification fees cannot be applied against the Lifetime Certification fee.
- Lifetime Certification only concerns the recertification fee. You still must complete all other recertification requirements every two years:
  - Purchase and complete 20 CECs;
  - Submit the Recertification Application and proof of CEC completion; and
  - Provide a valid and current CPR/AED certification.
- If, in the future, you use the 90-day grace period to complete your CEC requirements, you will not have to pay the recertification fee, but you still will be required to pay the Extension Fee (see Recertification Fees section above)
- PTAG reserves the right to discontinue offering Lifetime Certification or change the terms offered to new purchasers of Lifetime Certification at any time and without prior notice. All fees, including the Lifetime Certification fee, are subject to change and you should reference the PTAG website to confirm the current fee structure.

## ***Restoring Certification***

Should a certification expire, you may restore your certification after the three (3)-month extension period, but within one (1) year of the expiration date. To restore your certification, you must submit:

- evidence of 20 continuing education credits (the credits must have been earned prior to the original expiration date or within the ninety (90)-day extension period)
- a copy of the front and back of your CPR/AED certification card that shows the certification was continuously current from the original certification period;
- payment of applicable fees, including the Recertification Fee, Recertification Extension Fee and the Recertification Restoration Fee. If you have purchased the Lifetime Certification package, you will still be required to pay the Recertification Extension and or Recertification Restoration Fees depending upon certification date.

You may not restore your certification after the one-year anniversary date of the expiration date or if the above-listed requirements cannot be satisfied. Under such circumstances, you must register and successfully retake the examination to become certified. You are not permitted to use the PTAG-CPT credential following your name or on office signage, your resumes, any websites, your business cards, presentations you give, introductions, or electronic signatures if you have let your certification lapse.

## **SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF CREDENTIALS**

### **(DISCIPLINARY ACTION)**

PTAG reserves the right to reprimand a certified professional or suspend or revoke his/her credentials for violating the PTAG Professional Code of Ethics (described in this Handbook), engaging in unprofessional conduct as described below:

#### ***PTAG's Professional Code of Ethics***

PTAG has established a code of ethics and guidelines to protect the public and the profession. Candidates are expected and certified professionals are required to agree to and follow the PTAG Professional Code of Ethics, stated below.

**Professionalism.** Each certified professional must provide optimal professional service and demonstrate excellent client care in their practice. Each certified professional must:

1. Abide fully by PTAG Professional Code of Ethics; Conduct oneself in a manner that merits the respect of the public, other industry colleagues, PTA Global and its employees and management staff;
2. Treat each client and industry professionals inside and outside the fitness industry with respect and dignity all the time;
3. Maintain the confidentiality and privacy of clients or other colleagues by not sharing conversations had with them;
4. Use appropriate professional communication in all verbal, non-verbal, and written transactions. This includes contact with clients while training. Be sure to inform and get verbal approval from all clients in every situation before touching them in any place on their body;
5. Provide and maintain an environment that ensures client safety at all; times, every session, with focus on the client during the training session;
6. Be on time for every session with a client, including non-paid assessments and consultations while maintaining proper hygiene;
7. Refrain from cellular phone usage during any client session;
8. Train only low risk clients or those who are cleared of medical concerns by a registered medical professional;
9. Always stay focused on the client you are training and never lean on equipment or watch television during a session with a client;
10. Refer the client to the appropriate medical practitioner when, at a minimum, the certified professional:
  - a. Becomes aware of any change in the client's health status or medication;
  - b. Becomes aware of an undiagnosed illness, injury, or risk factor; or
  - c. Becomes aware of any unusual client pain and/or discomfort during the course of the training session that warrants professional care, in which case the certified professional will immediately discontinue the session.
11. Refer the client to other healthcare professional when nutritional and supplemental advice is requested unless the certified professional has been specifically trained to do so or holds a credential to do so and is acting in that capacity at that time;
12. Maintain proper professional hygiene (clothing and physical appearance) all the time when present in the workplace;
13. Treat every member, client, and colleague as well or better than you would want to be treated;
14. Remain in good standing and maintain current certification status by acquiring all necessary continuing education requirements.

**Confidentiality.** Each certified professional must respect the confidentiality of all client information. In his/her professional role, the certified professional must:

1. Protect the client's confidentiality in conversations, advertisement and any other arena unless otherwise agreed upon by the client in writing or, when necessary due to a medical occurrence or when legally required;
2. Protect the interest of clients who are minors by law or unable to give voluntary consent by securing the legal permission of the appropriate third party or guardian; and
3. Store and dispose of client records in a secure manner.

**Legal and Ethical.** Each certified professional must comply with all legal requirements within the applicable jurisdiction. In his/her professional role, the certified professional must:

1. Obey all local, state, federal, and provincial laws, regulations and professional rules;
2. Accept complete responsibility for his/her actions;
3. Maintain accurate and truthful records; and
4. Respect and uphold all existing copyright, trademark and intellectual property right laws.

PTAG may revoke or otherwise take immediate action with the certification of an individual who is or has been convicted of, plead guilty to, or plead no contest to a felony or misdemeanor or has been found through legal process to have been negligent or responsible for injury or harm in performing in his/her professional capacity or have misrepresented his/her qualifications to provide services, including opinions or advice, to the public.

**Business Practice.** Each certified professional must practice with honesty, integrity, and lawfulness. In his/her professional role, the certified professional must:

1. Maintain adequate liability insurance;
2. Maintain adequate and truthful progress notes for each client;
3. Accurately and truthfully inform the public of services rendered and his/her qualification to render such services;
4. Honestly and truthfully represent all professional qualifications and affiliations;
5. Advertise in a manner that is honest, dignified and representation of services that can be delivered without the use of provocative and/or sexual language and/or pictures;
6. Maintain accurate financial, contract, appointment, and tax records including original receipts for a minimum of four years; and
7. Comply with all local, state, federal, and providence laws and employer rules regarding harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment.

### ***Unprofessional Conduct***

Certified professionals who hold PTAG credentials serve the public and are entrusted with the care, safety and privacy of their clients. PTAG requires all certified professionals to behave professionally at all times and reserves the right to suspend or revoke credentials for any of the following reasons:

- Acts of dishonesty, misrepresentation, or fraud.
- Behavior that disregards the dignity, safety, or privacy of the client or anyone under the certified professional's fitness or training oversight.
- Unlawful activity, particularly such activity that jeopardizes the life, safety or health of others or calls into question the certified professional's ability to practice as a competent fitness professional.
- Conduct that is discriminatory or harassing, including acts of sexual harassment.

- Denial or revocation of licensure, registration, or approval by a state board or agency or membership organization with oversight responsibilities for the profession on grounds of gross misconduct, gross negligence of duties, misrepresentation or fraud.
- Unauthorized use of PTAG’s proprietary content or materials or any
- infringement activities with regards to any of PTAG’s intellectual property rights, including its copyrighted materials, its trademarks, its trade names, including those of any of its products, whether in long name, short name or acronym form, its logos, its trade dress or its science.
- Material misrepresentation or fraud in any statement to PTAG, including, but not limited to, statements made to assist oneself or another candidate or certified professional to apply for, obtain, or retain certification or in applying for, entering into obligation or failing to meet the obligations of a payment plan with PTAG.
- Violation of the Testing Rules of Conduct, even if not discovered until after the issuance of PTAG certification credentials.

PTAG reserves the right to discipline a certified professional who engages in illegal, threatening or unprofessional behavior or activity not specifically described above. PTAG also reserves the right to report disciplinary actions to concerned third parties, including employers, inquiring customers of the certified professional, school, any regulatory or licensing body or law enforcement.

### ***Due Process***

Due process is afforded to any individual involved in misconduct, violation of the PTAG Professional Code of Ethics, or other prohibited activity described in the Unprofessional Conduct section above.

1. Determining the existence of a possible violation;
2. Investigating the suspected violation;
3. Communicating the findings and sanctions imposed, if any, to the affected parties.

If a proctor, candidate, consumer, or other party has a complaint, they can fill out the Conduct Violation Report form, found at [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com). The charged person will be notified of the complaint by traceable mail, such as registered mail or Federal Express. Where PTAG deems it to be appropriate, to protect the person who made the complaint from retaliatory action, PTAG reserves the right to withhold such person’s name.

A written response concerning the complaint will be considered if submitted within ten (10) days following the delivery of the complaint to the accused individual. The complaint and response, if any, will be reviewed by the Administrative Committee.

Upon completion of its investigation of the reported conducted, including the written response and any materials provided by the accused individual, PTAG will make determination and, if appropriate impose disciplinary action. If the Administrative Committee has considered substantially similar case(s) in the past, their decision in those prior cases will be considered precedent for future cases and PTAG staff will apply the prior decision where appropriate. Under those circumstances, PTAG staff will send a decision letter that is consistent with the Committee’s earlier decisions. If the Committee has not considered substantially similar cases and there is no determinative precedent, the request and supporting evidence will be reviewed by the Committee.

Upon review of the complaint and the evidence, the Administrative Committee will determine if a further investigation is warranted. Based on its review of the gathered information, including the written response and any materials provided by the accused individual, and after deliberations, the Committee will take a vote. Upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Committee, this Committee shall determine whether any disciplinary action already taken by PTAG needs to be revised or enhanced and, in cases where disciplinary action has been taken, whether grounds for additional disciplinary action exists and, if so, what additional disciplinary action should be taken. The Committee shall notify the charged candidate or certified professional of their decision within thirty (30) business days by traceable mail.

## **APPEALS**

As described above in the Due Process Section, the first recourse for a disciplined candidate or certified professional who disagrees with the findings leading to disciplinary action or the imposed action itself, can file a request for appeal with the Administrative Committee. The Committee will consider any new information provided by the affected individual and will either reverse or uphold the earlier determination. Although the Committee may uphold the original finding, the Committee may determine to reduce or affirm the earlier imposed disciplinary action. The individual is then allowed to seek review of the Committee's appeal decision by the Certification Board. A separate request for review by the Board must be submitted. The Board will review the appeal at the next scheduled board meeting. The Board typically meets two times a year. Decisions of the Board are final. All decisions of the Committee or the Board are communicated in writing only.

### ***Exception Requests***

As noted in the "Eligibility" and "Recertification" sections of this Candidate Handbook, candidates must meet certain requirements to be eligible to sit for a certification exam or to obtain recertification. Candidates seeking exceptions to these requirements may do so as described below.

#### ***Eligibility Exception Requests***

Candidates may request an exception to eligibility requirements to sit for the certification exam by completing the appropriate exceptions request form. PTAG reserves the right to uphold eligibility requirements as established by the appropriate Certification Board. Decisions concerning exception requests will be communicated in writing only. Candidates may appeal the exception request decision to the appropriate Board. The Board will review the appeal at their next scheduled board meeting. Decisions of the Board are final.

#### ***Recertification Exception Requests***

Certified professionals may request an exception to the requirements for recertification by completing the appropriate PTAG exceptions request form. PTAG reserves the right to uphold recertification requirements as established by the applicable Certification Board. Decisions concerning exception requests will be communicated in writing only. Certified professionals may appeal the exception request decision to the Board. The Board will review the appeal at their next scheduled appropriate Board meeting. Decisions of the Board are final.

#### ***Precedent-based Exception***

Candidates/certified members may appeal a precedent-based determination, as described in the Due Process section above, to the Certification Board within thirty (30) days of receiving the decision letter. The Board will hear the appeal at the next scheduled meeting. Decisions of the Board are final.



## ***CPT EXAM: HOW DID THE CB DEVELOP THE CPT EXAM AND CONTENT DOMAINS?***

The process of developing the CPT Exam and the domains that make up the exam started in 2007.

A group called the International Fitness Leaders (IFL) was formed by health club chains and single health clubs, athletic clubs, and gym facility directors from around the world. The purpose of the group was to come together collectively to share ideas, concepts, concerns, and problems as an industry.

One of the tasks of this group was to give the International Health, Racquet, and Sports Association (IHRSA), one of the fitness industry's leading representative bodies, an overview of how and why the industry needed to be accredited to ensure protection of public interest with personal training and sure the greatest likelihood of certifying competent, skilled, and knowledgeable personal trainers. The group had been approached by IHRSA President Jeff Dyer to research the process so it could be presented to the IHRSA committee to see how they could start the accreditation process.

The recommendation was to bring the certifying bodies together within the industry and jointly obtain the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA) accreditation.

PTA Global then conducted an informal, verbal global survey of many managers and owners of major health clubs (i.e. 24 Hour Fitness, Lifestyle Family Fitness, Town Sports International, and Spectrum Athletic Clubs) asking the following questions:

1. Do the personal trainers currently applying for employment at your facilities have the skill set and knowledge to be successful in the athletic club or gym facility environment?
2. What skills and abilities does a personal trainer need to be successful at your athletic club or gym facility?
3. What skills or knowledge are still needed for the benefit of your customers, members, and clients?

The most common and overwhelming response was the following:

The trainers are not coming into the industry with the full set of skills or knowledge necessary to be successful as a trainer in the club environment. The skill set and knowledge trainers are missing:

- Applying program design
- Human Behavior
- Communication and business skills
- Liability
- Understanding and meeting special populations needs

This list of domains was designed to be consistent with the feedback from meetings and discussions with all athletic club/gym facility owners and managers when addressing the issue of what skills and knowledge were important for a trainer to possess to be successful.

The next step for PTA Global and subject matter experts was to validate this informal process by conducting a short survey based on the content domains to show what a successful and professional certified personal trainer does to see if it aligns with the domains that the clubs had revealed were missing in the trainers who are unsuccessful and leave the industry.

For this survey, CB appointed subject matter experts and CB members focused on the fitness and personal training managers (those who supervise the trainers at their respective athletic clubs/gym facilities) and had them conduct an observational survey of their top performing personal trainers as to whether they were implementing or using any of the knowledge or skills consistent with the domains.

Following the initial informal verbal survey with the health clubs and the formal observational survey with the fitness and personal training managers, subject matter experts and the CB then looked at the more commonly needed content areas of human sciences (kinesiology), nutrition, and workplace practices that are necessary for the job of any certified personal trainer.

This allowed the CB to create the initial list of exam content domains. These domains were:

- Program Design
- Human Behavior
- Human Sciences
- Workplace Practices
- Nutrition
- Special Populations
- Liability

The next step in the process was to start the Job Task Analysis (JTA) in order to have a greater number of professional viewpoints. This ensured adequate representation of evaluation of personal training skills and abilities through the CPT Exam.

This process began by gathering subject matter experts with at least one (1) full year of professional certified personal training experience.

The subject matter experts and the CB then went into discussion to form an agreement on the current domains created. This was performed with a formal committee meeting with the group, minutes, all comments, decisions, and feedback recorded. The group was able to get a clear, documented majority vote that the domains chosen were the correct ones based on what a personal trainer needs to know and understand in order to be successful.

The next step in the process was to create two (2) focus groups of 8-10 people who would look at a survey from the CB to see if these two groups support the use of the domains with the purpose again of creating a successful certified personal trainer.

The same survey was then released to a much larger population of industry people from very different areas within the industry. From this feedback, six (6) domains were confirmed as the correct domains for a certified personal trainer to have the skills and knowledge to be successful in the industry.

Therefore, from the complete process - the original IFL group to the final JTA and the surveys - the PTA Global Exam Content domains for the CPT Exam are:

- Program Design
- Human Behavior
- Exercise Sciences
- Workplace Practices
- Nutrition
- Special Populations

From the focus groups and the larger survey, the CB and subject experts used the information to confirm the importance of each knowledge domain, with importance based on a total of 100% involving all areas of knowledge and skill a certified personal trainer should possess, which was then confirmed by the JTA to be:

- Program Design (19%)
- Human Sciences (22%)
- Human Behavior (18%)
- Workplace Practices (15%)
- Nutrition (15%)
- Special Populations (15%)

Exam items are made up of questions from each of these main domains being weighted to support the percentages that were determined by the JTA.

The next step was to ensure the exam items or questions follow the recommended guidelines to ensure the questions are fair and equal assessment of personal training skills and knowledge for anyone taking the exam. This includes the way questions are asked, the style and type of questions, the manner in which the questions are written, and the number of questions within the exam.

Results were then tabulated from exam candidates who had completed the exam by a psychometrician who analyzed the data to ensure that the questions were neither too easy nor too difficult and that the exam is consistent with the expectations for a professional qualified and competent certified personal trainer.

The exam was then modified if any of the questions needed to be changed, deleted, or added. This then serves as the final check point for the exam and the domains that will be used in the exam.

The final step is having a testing center deliver the exam at convenient locations around the country. The exam needs to be accessible to all. This includes extra time for anyone needing it due to any form of disability, and ensuring that the exam can be taken by all in a fair and equal environment. The exam is only administered in English and interpreters are not permitted in the exam room.

## CPT EXAM: GRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF THE DOMAIN AND EXAM PROCESS

• IFL created recommendation for IHRSA to create industry-wide accreditation with certifying bodies.

• IHRSA started meetings to bring certification bodies together and decided NCCA was their choice of accreditation bodies.

• Information verbal survey was done, asking clubs what skills and knowledge were necessary to create successful trainers.

• Baseline of domains came from this informal survey.

• Formal, observational survey done with fitness managers asking them to observe what skills and knowledge were shown and practiced by their top trainers.

• Committee on content agree on the domains chosen from the formal survey as to which will make trainers successful.

• More common domains of Human Sciences, Nutrition added into the domains and compared with other NCCA accredited bodies' domains.

• Creation of the JTA through meetings with Exam Content Committee and consultants.

• Two focus groups created from inside the different areas of the industry and some outside of the industry. Focus groups gave feedback on the domains chosen.

• From this focus group, domains restructured. Then large scale groups looked at the survey of the domains and their relevance to making a successful trainer.

• Domains confirmed as the ones to achieve the best outcome.

• Exam questions created under those domains and created following guidelines ensuring the exam is fair and equal for all attempting it.

• After a large number of exam candidates completing exam, the exam results are researched by the psychometrician and questions adjusted for any inconsistencies in results.

• Testing center set up and exam made available for all disabilities and mental or physical concerns to ensure all can take the exam.

• The exam is available to take.

## CPT EXAM: WHAT CONTENT DOES AN EXAM CANDIDATE NEED TO KNOW BEFORE REGISTRATION?

### *What content does an exam candidate need to know before registering for the CPT Exam?*

Exam candidates eligible to take the CPT Exam, you may choose to take the exam only or may choose the study preparation option available at: [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com).

An exam preparation tutorial can be found [HERE](#).

Although exam candidates are not required to purchase study materials from PTAG, PTAG education programming is specifically formulated to help be successful as a personal trainer and aid in passing the CPT Exam. Whether an exam candidate purchases PTA Global educational programming or chooses the exam only option, they must be certain that they have adequate knowledge in the following areas prior to taking the CPT Exam:

#### Program Design (19 exam items/questions)

- Discern the various principles and acute variables of exercise programming and periodization (Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type)
- Develop safe and effective client programming strategies using the principles and acute variables of exercise for different goals and ability levels
- Deliver a client needs analysis assessment following initial and ongoing client consultations
- Demonstrate exercise modification strategies to meet the client's abilities and goals
- Demonstrate and apply various forms of exercise and equipment utilization for different clients
- Knowledge of exercise technique and application
- Knowledge of elemental physiological processes and outcomes
- Knowledge of program design, sequencing, progression and regression, and maintenance
- Conduct a client intake review
- Obtain Health History Form from new clients
- Establish goals with clients collaboratively
- Create a timeline and schedule with frequencies and durations of training sessions
- Match movement to client style and personality

#### Human Behavior (18 exam items/questions)

- Discuss and discern the neurophysiological process of behavioral change in humans
- Differentiate various types of questions and their importance in establishing client rapport and trust
- Deliver appropriate client prospecting techniques and ways to overcome objections
- Detail strategies to work with difficult clients
- Deliver practical strategies for stimulating healthy client behavior change
- Knowledge of basic human behavior and communication
- Knowledge of effective interview techniques
- Knowledge of client motivation and behavioral roadblocks that may prevent client progress
- Knowledge of active listening techniques
- Knowledge of basic techniques to increase adherence

#### Exercise Sciences (22 exam items/questions)

- Differentiate the various systems in the body and how they function as a unit/organism
- Detail the physiological processes that produce human movement
- Detail the physiological responses to movement of different intensities
- Discern and apply the various forces that the body deals with during movement
- Knowledge of the basic anatomy principles as they relate to exercise

- Knowledge of the basic principles of physical sciences as they relate to exercise
- Knowledge of acceptable ranges of heart rate, levels of exertion, levels of hydration
- Knowledge of muscle origins and insertions and overall musculoskeletal function
- Knowledge regarding acceptable energy intake requirements versus output of exertion
- Knowledge of a client's potential to over-train or over-exercise
- Detail how posture effects movement
- Target specific energy systems toward client goals and needs
- Apply appropriate acute training variables
- Consider client adaptation to exercise (SAID)
- Monitor for client daily adaptations or failure to adapt to stress
- Build in appropriate recovery and rest periods
- Incorporate multi-planar movements when appropriate
- Select proper order of exercise appropriate for the client
- Conduct proper exercise progression and/or regression of exercise

#### Workplace Practices (15 exam items/questions)

- Detail strategies to gain and sustain a clientele
- Detail strategies for objectively assessing a client's capabilities to participate in exercise
- Detail strategies for working with other professional industries
- Knowledge of basic accounting, scheduling, record-keeping, and bookkeeping
- Knowledge of employer/workplace policies regarding facility safety
- Knowledge of acceptable workplace behaviors
- Knowledge of recruitment and retention of clients
- Knowledge of personal liability insurance availability and amounts
- Identify a health issues and advise clients to seek reference
- Elicit client feedback on exercise performance
- Check with client at appropriate times throughout the workout
- Communicate and demonstrate safe and proper exercise form
- Set up safe workout environment prior to session
- Present a professional appearance and conduct
- Focus on and pay attention to client throughout session
- Time-manage own schedule and client sessions

#### Nutrition (15 exam items/questions)

- Differentiate between various macro- and micro-nutrients
- Detail the importance/influence of food to the human body before, during, and after exercise
- Detail the effect of food and eating behaviors on body composition and health
- Differentiate between various eating strategies for different types of people
- Knowledge of how to discuss and create awareness of the overall quality of a client's diet
- Knowledge regarding the nutritional content/components/composition of common foods and drinks
- Knowledge of the limitations of trainers to recommend/plan dietary programs for clients
- Advise clients on basic nutrition principles relating to energy systems utilized
- Communicate basic principles of hydration, blood-sugar, and macro-nutrition to clients
- Recognize and adhere to boundaries of scope of practice with regard to nutrition
- Recognize signs and symptoms of low blood-sugar and dehydration

#### Special Populations (11 exam items/questions)

- Deliver safe and effective exercise strategies specific to older adults needs

- Differentiate the various types of behavioral strategies necessary for safe and effective exercise in the youth population
- Detail the physiological responses of the human body to pregnancy
- Deliver safe and effective exercise for pregnant mothers
- Knowledge of special factors which may affect the exercise program and/or ability of youth
- Knowledge of special factors which may affect the exercise program and/or ability of seniors and older populations
- Knowledge of special factors which may affect the exercise program and/or ability of people who are overweight or obese
- Knowledge of special factors which may affect the exercise program and/or ability of people with chronic pain or injuries
- Recognize signs and symptoms of low blood pressure, insulin shock, and diabetic coma
- Recognize special conditions based on medical and health history (e.g. pregnancy)
- Obtain physician release forms as necessary
- Recognize and adhere to boundaries of scope of practice with regard to medical and health concerns
- Adjust measurements and interpretations for clients with special limitations
- Identify past injuries and risk of injury
- Identify exercise contraindication based on injuries and limitations
- Recognize limitations and make adjustments for youth and aging populations

If an exam candidate feels they can adequately meet the information content in the six (6) domains listed above, then they should be confident in their ability to take the CPT Exam without the purchase of education. However, if they wish to either brush up on their skills and knowledge in these areas, or would like to increase their current understanding, PTAG highly recommends the study option found at [www.ptaglobal.com](http://www.ptaglobal.com) to aid in their pursuit of excellence as a professional certified personal trainer.

## **CPT EXAM: RESOURCES FOR FOCUSED STUDY AND EXAM PREPARATION**

An exam preparation tutorial can be found [HERE](#).

### Program Design

- PTA Global. Exercise Programming & Equipment A & B. Online course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Program Design Part 1 & 2. Online Course, 2009.
- Bompa, Tudor, and Gregory Haff. *Periodization: Theory and Methodology of Training*, 5th Ed. Champaign: Human Kinetics, 2009.
- Fleck, Steven J. *Designing Resistance Training Programs*. Champaign: Human Kinetics, 2004.
- American College of Sports Medicine. *ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription*. 8th edition. Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams, and Wilkins, 2010. Chapters 7-8.

### Human Behavior

- PTA Global. Clients and Operations: Client Orientation. Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Workshop Practices: Behavior Change. Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Workplace Practices: Motivational Interviewing. Online Course, 2009.
- Rollnick, Stephen, Miller, William, and Butler, Christopher. *Motivational Interviewing in Health Care: Helping Patients Change Behavior*. 1st edition. New York: Guilford Publishing Inc., 2008. Chapters 1-7.
- Sugarman, Roy. *Motivation for Coaches and Personal Trainers: Engaging and Refining People in Positive Behavioral Change*. 2nd edition. Australia: Heart Space Publications, 2013.

### Exercise Sciences

- PTA Global. Human Body & Basic Exercise Science A & B. Online Course, 2009.
- Myers, Thomas. *Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists*. Philadelphia: Elsevier, 2009.
- Neumann, Donald. *A Kinesiology of the Musculoskeletal System*. 2nd edition. St Louis: Moseby Elsevier, 2010.
- Kenney, W. Larry, Jack Wilmore and David L. Costill. *Physiology of Sport and Exercise*, 5th edition. Champaign: Human Kinetics: 2011.

### Nutrition

- PTA Global. Nutrition. Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Nutrition and Body Fat Management. Online Course, 2009.
- Berardi, John and Andrews, Ryan. *The Essentials of Sport and Exercise Nutrition*. Canada: Precision Nutrition, Inc., 2010.
- Chek, Paul. *How to Eat, Move, and Be Healthy!* San Diego, C.H.E.K. Institute, 2006.

### Professional Workplace Practices

- PTA Global. Clients and Operations: Fitness Markers. Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Workplace Practices: The Personal Training Business. Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Workplace Practices: Marketing & Advertisement. Online Course, 2009.
- American College of Sports Medicine. *ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription*. 8th edition. Baltimore: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2010. Chapters 1-6.

### Social Populations

- PTA Global. Exercise for Special Groups: Older Adults. Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Exercise for Special Groups: Women (Pregnancy). Online Course, 2009.
- PTA Global. Exercise for Special Groups: Children. Online Course, 2009.
- American College of Sports Medicine. *ACSM's Resource Manual for Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription*. 7th edition. Baltimore: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2013.



**CPT EXAM: REFERENCES FOR CREATION OF EXAM ITEMS AND QUESTIONS**

- Exercise Physiology: Human Bioenergetics and Its Applications  
by George Brooks, Thomas Fahey, Kenneth Baldwin. McGraw-Hill Education, 2005.
- Exercise Physiology: Nutrition, Energy, and Human Performance  
by William D. McArdle, Frank I. Katch, Victor L. Katch. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2010.
- Anatomy Trains: Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists  
by Thomas W. Myers (LMT). Elsevier, 2009.
- Designing Resistance Training Programs  
by Steven J. Fleck. Human Kinetics, 2004.
- Periodization of Strength: The New Wave in Strength Training  
by TO Bompá. Veritas Publishing Inc., 1993.
- Motivational Interviewing in Health Care: Helping Patients Change Behavior  
by Stephen Rollnick, William R. Miller, Christopher C. Butler. Guilford Publishing Inc., 2007.
- ACE Personal Trainer Manual: The Ultimate Resource for Fitness Professionals, 4th edition  
by American Council on Exercise (ACE), 2010.
- ACSM's Health-Related Physical Fitness Assessment Manual  
by American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2010.
- ACSM's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription  
by American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2010.
- ACSM's Health/Fitness Facility Standards and Guidelines  
by American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Human Kinetics, 2007
- NASM Essentials of Personal Fitness Training, 3rd edition  
by National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM). Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2008
- NSCA's Essentials of Personal Training  
by National Strength and Conditioning Association. Human Kinetics, 2004.