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ACE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION ACCREDITATION

Founded in 1985, the American Council on Exercise (ACE) is a nonprofit organization committed to America's health and wellbeing. Over the past 30 years, we have become an established resource for health and fitness professionals, and the public, providing comprehensive, unbiased research and validating ourselves as the country's trusted authority on health and fitness.

Today, ACE is the largest nonprofit health and fitness certification, education and training organization in the world with 58,000 certified professionals who hold more than 64,000 ACE certifications. With a long heritage in certification, education, training and public outreach, we are among the most respected organizations in the industry and a resource the public has come to trust for health and fitness education.

This ACE Certification Candidate Handbook covers the requirements and processes necessary to earn and then maintain ACE certifications.

ACE MISSION STATEMENT

ACE's mission is to ensure people have access to well-qualified health and fitness professionals and health coaches, and science-based information and resources on safe and effective physical activity, so they may get active, establish healthy behaviors, and live their most fit lives.

ACE CREDENTIALING DEPARTMENT

The ACE Credentialing Department functions independently in its oversight of American Council on Exercise certification activities. This includes governance over exam development and administration, eligibility requirements to sit for and then earn an ACE certification, issuance of certifications, criteria for maintaining ACE certifications through enhanced continued competence, and developing and implementing disciplinary procedures.

The ACE Credentialing Department upholds ACE’s established policies and procedures in maintaining the integrity of all examinations set in accordance with NCCA accreditation standards. ACE certifications are awarded only to individuals who meet the eligibility requirements for the certification and then demonstrate that they meet or exceed the established level of professional competence by passing the certification examination.

Governance for ACE certification program direction is provided by the ACE Board of Directors and the ACE Executive Team. Under the direction of ACE's Chief Science Officer, the ACE Director of Credentialing oversees all administrative acts of the ACE Credentialing Department, including management of all ACE meetings and processes focused on ACE certifications, exam development, disciplinary committees, and management of ACE's business relationships with Castle Worldwide, Inc., the testing service provider that ACE contracts for the development, delivery, scoring, validation and security of all ACE certification examinations.

The ACE Certification Department functions to achieve the following professional objectives:

1. To create and publish standards, policies and procedures for the development and administration of ACE certification programs;
2. To determine candidate eligibility criteria to sit for each ACE certification examination and for recertification;
3. To establish policies, procedures and requirements for continuing education and recertification for all ACE Certified Professionals;
4. To confer recognition to individuals who successfully earn the ACE credential and who successfully complete the continuing education and recertification requirements established by ACE;
5. To define the scope of practice for each ACE certification;
6. To develop standards for professional conduct, known as the ACE Code of Ethics, and implement procedures for addressing violations according to ACE's Professional Practices and Disciplinary Procedures;
7. To uphold and promote the validity of the ACE credential to stakeholders;
8. To comply with standards of, implement policies and programs for, and submit relevant certification and recertification information to regulatory bodies to support the validity and reliability of ACE credentials;
9. To earn and maintain accreditation for ACE’s certification programs from accrediting and regulatory bodies in the US and Canada (e.g., NCCA, ANSI) and abroad (e.g., Registers of Exercise Professionals); and
10. To acquire, develop, distribute, and maintain information relative to the certification functions of ACE.
ACE CODE OF ETHICS

As an ACE Certified Professional, I am guided by the American Council on Exercise’s principles of professional conduct whether I am working with clients, the public or other health and fitness professionals. I promise to:

- Provide safe and effective instruction.
- Provide equal and fair treatment to all clients.
- Stay up-to-date on the latest health and fitness research and understand its practical application.
- Maintain current CPR and AED certificates and knowledge of first-aid services.
- Comply with all applicable business, employment and intellectual property laws.
- Uphold and enhance public appreciation and trust for the health and fitness industry.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all client information.
- Refer clients to more qualified health or medical professionals when appropriate.
- Establish and maintain clear professional boundaries.

These principles of professional conduct make up the ACE Code of Ethics. During the exam registration process, candidates must affirm their agreement to uphold the ACE Code of Ethics throughout the ACE certification process and in their professional work should they earn an ACE certification.

ACE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The professional practices and disciplinary procedures of the American Council on Exercise® (ACE®) are intended to assist and inform certificants, candidates for certification and the public of the ACE Application and Certification Standards relative to professional conduct and disciplinary procedures. ACE may revoke or otherwise take action with regard to the application or certification of an individual in the case of:

1. Ineligibility for certification.
2. Irregularity in connection with any certification examination.
3. Unauthorized possession, use, access, or distribution of certification examinations, score reports, trademarks, logos, written materials, answer sheets, certificates, certificant or applicant files, or other confidential or proprietary ACE documents or materials (registered or otherwise).
4. Material misrepresentation or fraud in any statement to ACE or to the public, including but not limited to statements made to assist the applicant, certificant, or another to apply for, obtain, or retain certification.
5. Any physical, mental, or emotional condition of either temporary or permanent nature, including, but not limited to, substance abuse, which impairs or has the potential to impair competent and objective professional performance.
6. Negligent and/or intentional misconduct in professional work, including, but not limited to, physical or emotional abuse, disregard for safety, or the unauthorized release of confidential information.
7. The timely conviction, plea of guilty, or plea of nolo contendere in connection with a felony or misdemeanor, which is directly related to public health and/or fitness instruction or education, which impairs competent and objective professional performance. These include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual abuse of a client, actual or threatened use of a weapon of violence, the prohibited sale, distribution, or possession with intent to distribute, of a controlled substance.
8. Failure to meet the requirements for certification or recertification.

ACE has developed a three-tiered disciplinary process of review, hearing and appeals to ensure fair and unbiased examination of alleged violation(s) of the Application and Certification Standards in order to (1) determine the merit of allegations; and (2) impose appropriate sanctions as necessary to protect the public and the integrity of the certification process.

Note: As an ACE certification candidate and/or certified professional, you are deemed to be familiar with and comply with the ACE Code of Ethics and ACE Professional Practices and Disciplinary Procedures. Please contact ACE to request a complete copy of ACE Professional Practices and Disciplinary Procedures.
ACCREDITATION

NCCA Accreditation

In 2003, ACE’s four core certifications received accreditation from the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCCA, created in 1987, is the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE), which was formerly known as the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). The NCCA is an independent non-governmental agency that accredits certification programs in a variety of professions including athletic training, dietetics, occupational therapy, financial services, and fitness, to help ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public. The NCCA reviews the certification organization’s procedures, protocols and operations, and determines if the certification properly discriminates between those who are qualified and those who are not qualified to be awarded the respective credential. The NCCA evaluates the processes and systems used by an organization to identify professional role and scope of practice, develop exam content, and provide proper exam administration and scoring to ensure the following:

- That the examination process is fair and unbiased
- That the examination accurately measures the minimal competence of the candidate for the profession
- That the public is protected from unqualified or ineffective practitioners
- That the organization has the means to support its professionals

The NCCA has 21 Standards that a certification organization must meet and remain in compliance with in order to earn NCCA Accreditation. These NCCA Standards serve as a benchmark for how organizations should conduct certification programs.

For more information about the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, please go to the NCCA website: http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/p/cm/ld/fid=86

What does the NCCA accreditation standard mean to you as a health and fitness professional?

The International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) and Medical Fitness Association (MFA) recommend that club owners and medical fitness facility operators hire fitness professionals with certifications that are accredited by the NCCA or an equivalent accrediting organization. In addition, the Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs for Personal Fitness Training, established by Committee on the Accreditation for the Exercise Sciences (CoAES) of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), include students’ performance on a national credentialing examination accredited by the NCCA as one of the primary outcomes for earning this accreditation. Recently, the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) has established standards for facilities that have as one requirement that the facility hire only professionals who hold certifications accredited by a third-party organization that accredits competency-based examinations (e.g., NCCA, ANSI).

By earning an NCCA-accredited ACE certification, fitness and health professionals demonstrate that they meet the qualifications to take a legitimate place in the healthcare continuum within their defined scope of practice. Earning and maintaining an NCCA-accredited certification can give you a competitive advantage when being considered as a candidate for employment with a company or organization that belongs to IHRSA or MFA, as it demonstrates that you have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide the public with safe and effective exercise programs.

For additional information on the accreditation of ACE certification programs by the NCCA and EHFA, go to the ACE website: http://www.ACEfitness.org/ncca-accreditation/default.aspx

EHFA Accreditation

The European Health & Fitness Association (EHFA) sets standards throughout Europe for the accreditation of health and fitness credentials. Using a standards council comprised of industry experts, employers, academics, and practitioners from across Europe, EHFA sets standards for organizations to become approved as accredited training providers. In 2012, ACE became the first U.S. fitness certification provider to earn approval by the EHFA Standards Council. This designation means that ACE Certified Personal Trainers and Group Fitness Instructors are eligible to join the European Register of Exercise Professionals (EREPS), the principal resource for hiring qualified health and fitness professionals in Europe.
ACE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

The American Council on Exercise has four core fitness certification programs, each with a unique population and/or programming as described below:

ACE Personal Trainer Certification (ACE-CPT)

The ACE Personal Trainer Certification is designed for fitness professionals providing one-on-one or small-group fitness instruction to individuals who are apparently healthy or have medical clearance to exercise.

ACE Group Fitness Instructor Certification (ACE-GFI)

The ACE Group Fitness Instructor Certification is designed for fitness professionals teaching any form of exercise to apparently healthy individuals in a group setting.

ACE Health Coach Certification (ACE Health Coach)

The ACE Health Coach Certification is designed for fitness, health care, corporate wellness, and allied health professionals coaching a wide variety of individuals and groups to adopt structured behavioral change programs that focus on lifestyle and weight management through physical activity, nutrition, and education necessary to improve and maintain health, fitness, weight, and total wellness.

ACE Medical Exercise Specialist (ACE-CMES)

The ACE Medical Exercise Specialist Certification is designed for advanced fitness professionals providing in-depth preventative and post-rehabilitative fitness programming for individuals who are at risk for or are recovering from a variety of cardiovascular, pulmonary, metabolic, and musculoskeletal diseases and disorders, as well as apparently healthy clients in special population groups including older adults, youth, and pre- and post-natal women.

Each ACE certification program is evaluated and updated on a regular basis to ensure that they are up to date with the most current research and standards. Assessments for each certification program are also updated on a regular basis, and are designed to assess if candidates meet the established level of minimum competence to safely practice within the scope of practice of the specified certification.

EARNING AN ACE CERTIFICATION

In order to earn an ACE certification, candidates must first meet the eligibility requirements, and then must register for and pass the certification examination. ACE will not grant a certification to any individual based on education and/or experience, as all ACE certifications must be earned. ACE certifications are valid for 2 years, and must be renewed through submission of 20 hours or more of ACE-approved continuing education, current CPR/AED certificate, and applicable renewal fees. Information regarding ACE certification examinations, including eligibility criteria, registration, format, design, administration, scoring, passing criteria, professional code of conduct, and maintaining an ACE certification can be found in the sections that follow.

ACE CERTIFIED PROFESSIONALS

ACE certifications are valid for two years and must be renewed through continuing education. The numbers below represent the total number of currently certified ACE Professionals as of March 30, 2015:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE Certification</th>
<th>Currently Certified as of 3/30/2015</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACE Personal Trainer</td>
<td>41,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACE Group Fitness Instructor</td>
<td>13,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACE Health Coach</td>
<td>3,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACE Medical Exercise Specialist (formerly known as ACE Advanced Health &amp; Fitness Specialist)</td>
<td>814</td>
</tr>
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CERTIFICATION EXAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To sit for an ACE certification exam, you must meet all eligibility requirements that have been established for that particular certification exam as detailed in the table below. On the day of the exam, candidates must present their exam admission ticket and a current government-issued ID with photo and signature that matches the name registered on the admission ticket.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility Requirements - ACE Personal Trainer and Group Fitness Instructor Certification Exams</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You must be at least 18 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must hold a current adult CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and AED (automated external defibrillator) certificate including live skills check *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must have completed high school (or the equivalent)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility Requirements - ACE Health Coach Certification Exam</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You must be at least 18 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must hold a current adult CPR and AED certificate including live skills check *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must submit supporting documentation for one of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Current NCCA-accredited certification** in fitness, nutrition, health care, wellness, human resources, or a related field; or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o An associate’s degree or higher from an accredited college or university in fitness, exercise science, nutrition, health care, wellness, human resources or a related field, or two years comparable work experience in any of these specified industries. ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility Requirements - ACE Medical Exercise Specialist Certification Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• You must be at least 18 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must hold a current adult CPR and AED certificate including live skills check *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You must submit supporting documentation for each of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o A four-year (bachelor’s) degree in exercise science or a related field ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 500 hours of work experience designing and implementing exercise programs for apparently healthy individuals and/or high-risk individuals, as documented by a qualified professional ****</td>
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* CPR and AED are both required in the US and Canada. Candidates outside the US and Canada are required to hold only current CPR due to differing laws regarding AED use by non-medical professionals in some countries. Candidates taking an ACE exam via Computer-based Testing must hold a current CPR/AED certificate prior to registration. Candidates can sit for ACE pencil and paper exams without proof of CPR/AED; however, results will be held by ACE until proof of current CPR/AED is provided.

** All NCCA-accredited certification programs can be found via the following link: [http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/p/cm/ld/fid=121](http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/p/cm/ld/fid=121)

*** Candidates must submit supporting documentation of current NCCA-accredited certifications, degrees, and/or work experience used to meet eligibility requirements prior to registering for the ACE Health Coach and ACE Medical Exercise Specialist exams.

**** Candidates for the ACE Medical Exercise Specialist exam must also submit documentation of their 500 hours of work experience prior to, or at the time of, exam registration.

Eligibility documentation forms for ACE certification exams can be obtained at [https://www.acefitness.org/certificationexams/pdfs/CBT_2012.pdf](https://www.acefitness.org/certificationexams/pdfs/CBT_2012.pdf) or by contacting the ACE Exam Registration Department via phone at (800) 825-3636, ext. 783, or via email at ExamRegistration@ACEfitness.org.
APPEALS FOR DENIED ELIGIBILITY

ACE reserves the right to reject any registration application that does not meet the specified eligibility requirements. If a registration application for an ACE certification exam is not accepted, an individual can appeal and request the application be reviewed again. The appeal must include a detailed explanation of the reason(s) why the individual believes they should be eligible, plus all supporting documentation. Submit all eligibility appeals for review via mail, email, or fax to:

ACE Exam Registration
4851 Paramount Drive
San Diego, CA 92123
Email: ExamRegistration@ACEfitness.org
Fax: 858-576-6564

Eligibility appeals will be reviewed and responded to within 10 working days of their receipt. Individuals submitting the appeal will receive notice that their eligibility appeal was either “approved” with instructions for moving forward with exam registration, or “denied” with notification of the reason for the denial. Individuals who have an eligibility appeal “denied” can submit a new eligibility appeal if they have additional supporting documentation that meets the requirements noted in the denial.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

ACE uses competency-based examinations to assess if candidates meet the established level of competence to earn the specific ACE certification. All ACE certification exams are comprised of 150 multiple-choice questions; with 125 scored and 25 experimental questions. The 25 experimental questions are not included in the candidate’s score as they are being evaluated to determine if they perform well enough statistically to be introduced as scored items on a future exam. Only the 125 scored items count towards a candidate’s finals score that determines if the candidate passed or failed the exam. The 125 scored items are distributed according to the test specifications, called the Exam Content Outline, for the specific certification program.

Exam content outlines for ACE certification programs are updated each time that ACE conducts a Role Delineation Study for the certification program, which occurs on a 5-year rotating basis for the ACE Personal Trainer, Group Fitness Instructor, and Health Coach Certification programs and every 5-7 years for the ACE Medical Exercise Specialist Certification program. This is a critical step to ensure that professional certification programs stay relevant and current, with examinations that reflect the composition and focus as established and validated through the role delineation study.

Exam content outlines serve as blueprints for the development of each exam for a given certification program. ACE exam content outlines are typically divided into major areas of responsibility called Domains. Each Domain represents a logical grouping of Task Statements that detail the job-related functions under each domain. Each Task Statement has associated knowledge and skills deemed necessary to perform the task in a practical setting.

Overviews of each ACE exam content outline are found in the outlines that follow. Each outline contains the Domains, Task Statements, and Domain percentages for the specified ACE certification program. The Domain percentages provide candidates with the portion of questions on the specific ACE examination that map to each Domain.

Detailed exam content outlines with complete knowledge and skill statements for each ACE certification program can be found in Appendix B of the manual for that program and all four exam content outlines can be found at: http://www.ACEfitness.org/getcertified/certification-exam-content.aspx.

ACE PERSONAL TRAINER EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

Domain I: Client Interviews and Assessments - 31%

1. Obtain health, medical, and exercise history and lifestyle information (e.g., personal, physical, environmental, nutritional, and occupational factors) using questionnaires, interviews, and available documents to determine risk stratification, identify the need for medical clearance and referrals, and facilitate program design.

2. Assess clients’ current attitudes, preferences, goals, and readiness for behavior change using questionnaires and interviews to identify potential barriers, motivators, and expectations necessary to set appropriate program goals.
3. Identify and evaluate the quality of client movement (e.g., balance, stability, and mobility) through observations and assessments, to develop appropriate exercise programming designed to improve movement efficiency and enhance activities of daily living, overall physical performance, and injury prevention and recovery.

4. Select and conduct physiological assessments (e.g., cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, body composition, heart rate, blood pressure) based on client interviews, questionnaires, and standardized protocols to facilitate safe and effective program design and to monitor changes over time.

Domain II: Program Design and Implementation - 33%

1. Interpret the results of the client interview and assessment data (e.g., client goals, attitudes, motivations), define program goals, and design safe and effective exercise and lifestyle programs.

2. Apply appropriate exercise parameters (e.g., frequency, intensity, duration, type) and principles (e.g., overload, specificity, progression) for cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility using current guidelines to develop safe and effective exercise programs.

3. Incorporate skill-related exercises (e.g., stability, mobility, coordination, balance, power, speed, agility) and appropriate equipment into client programs, in accordance with scientific research, to improve movement efficiency and enhance activities of daily living, overall physical performance, and injury prevention and recovery.

4. Instruct clients on safe and effective exercise techniques (e.g., intensity, breathing, tempo, movement patterns, postural alignment) and equipment use, using a variety of cues (e.g., verbal, visual, kinesthetic) to achieve program goals.

Domain III: Progression and Modifications - 19%

1. Promote program adherence through reinforcement of client motivators, education regarding the benefits of exercise and leading a healthy lifestyle, and modification of program parameters to achieve program goals.

2. Recognize and respond to lapses in program adherence by identifying client barriers and helping to establish and implement support systems and/or solutions.

3. Routinely evaluate client exercise programs by using assessment data, observations, and client feedback to progress and modify programs as needed.

Domain IV: Professional Conduct, Safety, and Risk Management - 17%

1. Apply risk-management strategies in accordance with recognized standards, guidelines, laws, and regulations to protect the client, personal trainer, and other relevant parties in order to reduce the risk of injury and liability.

2. Document client-related data, communications, and progress using a secure record-keeping system in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements to maintain confidentiality and continuity of care, and to minimize liability.

3. Use credible resources to maintain and enhance competency by staying current with scientifically based research, theories, and practices in order to provide safe and effective services.

4. Conduct assessments of the exercise space, equipment, and environment in order identify potential hazards and undertake necessary modifications to provide a safe environment for clients and the personal trainer.

ACE GROUP FITNESS INSTRUCTOR EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

Domain I: Exercise Programming and Class Design - 19%

1. Select appropriate music and/or equipment based on an understanding of the objectives of the type of class for a varied group of participants to create a safe and effective class design.

2. Create a class plan of safe and effective exercise movements using general fitness principles in order to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience for a varied group of participants.

3. Integrate variety into class design by changing class elements (e.g., exercises, sequencing, equipment, music) for the participants in order to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience.
Domain II: Group Instructional Methods - 37%

1. Lead a class using appropriate and effective instructional techniques (i.e., teaching methods) to accommodate cultural and demographic differences of class participants in order to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience.

2. Lead a class using appropriate and effective instructional techniques in order to accommodate participants’ various learning styles and motor development for optimal participant physical performance and to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience.

3. Educate participants on how to monitor their own intensities using a variety of methods to enable them to exercise at the most appropriate level to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience.

4. Observe class participants’ exercise and movement techniques and exertion levels and provide feedback and/or corrections using appropriate strategies in order to prevent injury and improve exercise performance.

5. Instruct and educate participants using clear, concise, and timely cues during the class in order to facilitate safe and effective movement execution and transitions.

6. Motivate and educate a varied group of participants, using academically sound resources as well as appropriate strategies and techniques within the GFI scope of practice, to set realistic goals and take ownership of the exercise experience.

Domain III: Group Leadership and Class Management - 29%

1. Lead classes that are safe and effective by accommodating for the needs of the multiple fitness levels of participants, by offering exercise and movement modifications, progressions, and regressions to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience.

2. Lead classes that are safe and effective by accommodating for the needs of participants from various special population groups by offering exercise and movement modifications and variations to achieve individual health, fitness, and wellness goals, reduce potential injury, promote adherence, and enhance the experience.

3. Conduct pre-class and ongoing assessments of the space, environment, and participants in order to identify potential hazards and undertake necessary modifications to ensure a safe setting for a varied group of participants.

4. Foster a comfortable exercise environment by utilizing effective communication skills with groups and individuals to establish and enhance rapport, develop relationships, and build community in order to improve class adherence.

5. Create a positive participant experience by utilizing customer service and skills required to be professional with groups and individuals in order to enhance class adherence.

Domain IV: Professional Responsibilities - 15%

1. Prepare for, practice, and respond to, facility emergencies, acute medical conditions, and injuries, by following established protocols and documentation requirements in order to maximize participants’ safety and manage risk.

2. Assess, document, and maintain requirements for certification and liability insurance in order to help minimize risk for the class participants, organizations, and the ACE Certified Group Fitness Instructor.

ACE HEALTH COACH EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

Domain I: Building Rapport and Facilitating Behavior Change - 26%

1. Use appropriate communication strategies to create and sustain rapport to establish and maintain credibility and trust with clients in order to recognize their current status (e.g., goals, barriers, progress, achievements, needs, expectations, stage of change).

2. Build client independence through teaching nutrition, exercise, and lifestyle modification skills and by emphasizing the importance of a social support network to enhance self-efficacy, motivation, program adherence, and behavior change.

3. Educate and work with clients on key behavioral-change strategies in order to impart the knowledge and skills necessary for program adoption and success.

Domain II: Program Design and Implementation - 27%

1. Identify potential areas for behavioral change and/or the need for referral by collecting and assessing clients’ current fitness, health, dietary, and lifestyle information using appropriate screening tools and techniques.
2. Select and conduct appropriate assessments based on clients’ unique health, fitness, nutritional, and lifestyle data and goals to facilitate program design and implementation.

3. Design and implement programs based on clients’ interview, screening and assessment data, and goals to progress clients toward healthy lifestyle, weight management, and behavior change.

**Domain III: Program Progression and Adjustments - 32%**

1. Work with clients to facilitate progression toward established goals and self-efficacy using observed and self-reported data and appropriate communication strategies (e.g., feedback).

2. Evaluate program effectiveness by reassessing current fitness, health, dietary, and/or lifestyle data and comparing with previous results in order to recognize successes, and determine and implement appropriate program adjustments and progressions.

3. Monitor client attitudes (e.g., perceptions, experiences, enjoyment) through continuous dialogue in order to make appropriate program adjustments.

4. Continuously revisit goals with clients and recognize achievements, challenges, and barriers in order to maintain and progress program participation, motivation, and success.

**Domain IV: Professional Conduct and Competency - 15%**

1. Adhere to legal and ethical codes, scope of practice, and standards of care in order to protect the client, maintain professional standards, and manage risk.

2. Maintain and enhance competency by staying current on scientifically based research, theories, and best practices using credible resources such as continuing education, professional organizations, industry journals, and periodicals to provide safe and effective services and education.

3. Document client-related data, communications, and progress using a recordkeeping system that is secure, confidential, accurate, current, and retrievable in order to manage risk.

4. Prepare for, practice, and respond to facility emergencies, acute medical conditions, and injuries by following established protocols and documentation requirements in order to maximize clients’ safety and manage risk.

**ACE MEDICAL EXERCISE SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE**

**Domain I: Interviews and Assessment - 27%**

1. Gather health, fitness, and lifestyle information from client interviews and journals, electronic medical records, questionnaires, and communication with other healthcare providers to ensure accurate screening and assessment of the client.

2. Evaluate health, fitness, and lifestyle information using industry guidelines and recommendations to assess an individual’s readiness for physical activity, facilitate program design, optimize adherence, identify at-risk clients, and make appropriate referrals.

3. Perform baseline and periodic follow-up screens and assessments using recommended guidelines and protocols in order to optimize program design, ensure safety, and enhance effectiveness.

**Domain II: Program Design, Implementation, and Modification - 35%**

1. Set realistic and appropriate goals based on client expectations and limitations, assessment data, and recommendations from healthcare professionals.

2. Design preventive programs for at-risk clients in order to help them improve health, fitness, and function while mitigating the risk of diseases, disorders, ailments, and injuries.

3. Design programs for clients in all stages of medical intervention in order to complement treatment and improve health, fitness, and function.

4. Modify a client’s program and goals based on reassessment data; exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle logs; client- and healthcare provider-reported information in order to ensure program safety and success.

5. Collaborate with other members of the healthcare team in order to deliver complementary programs that promote improved health, fitness, and function.
Domain III: Communication and Behavior Change - 21%

1. Develop rapport with clients using purposeful questioning and attentive listening to facilitate communication, compliance, and a positive working relationship.

2. Educate the client on specific health behaviors and self-monitoring tools in order to enhance program adherence, safety, and success.

3. Instruct clients on safe and effective exercise techniques using appropriate communication, coaching, and cueing strategies in order to optimize program outcomes and build self-efficacy.

4. Apply coaching strategies in order to facilitate lasting healthy behavioral change.

Domain IV: Professional Conduct and Risk Management - 17%

1. Maintain detailed records using policies and procedures that adhere to professional guidelines in order to track progress, make appropriate adjustments, and communicate (as necessary) with other healthcare professionals.

2. Comply with applicable laws, regulations, ACE Code of Ethics, and industry guidelines in order to protect the interests of all stakeholders and minimize risk.

3. Recognize and respond to acute medical conditions and injuries by following an emergency action plan in order to provide appropriate care and comply with risk-management practices.

4. Pursue information from professional resources in order to provide services consistent with accepted standards of care.

ACE CERTIFICATION EXAMS

All four ACE certification programs have competency-based assessments comprised of multiple-choice exams with 125 scored items and 25 experimental items that make up the entire credentialing exam. Candidates are given three hours to complete an ACE multiple-choice exam for any of the four ACE certification programs.

ACE employs Castle Worldwide, Inc., a full-service, third-party testing company, to ensure that ACE certifications adhere to national testing standards. ACE examinations are developed by committees of working health and fitness professionals who have been identified as Subject Matter Experts (SME) for that particular ACE certification program. Each multiple-choice question that is developed must be referenced to an appropriate text or resource, such as ACE or other exercise science-related manuals, and current industry standards, guidelines, and position papers (e.g., ACSM, AHA, ACOG, USDA). Each multiple-choice question is written by at least one SME, and then reviewed and validated by a minimum of three more SME to ensure that each question is objective, clear, fair, current, maps to the exam content outline, and has only one clearly correct answer (response) and three incorrect responses.

ACE certification exams include three types of multiple-choice questions: recall, application, and analysis. Application and analysis questions make up the majority (70 to 85%) of the questions on ACE multiple-choice exams. These questions provide assessments of problem solving and decision making skills through realistic scenarios that require candidates to apply their knowledge in circumstances they can expect to experience in the field. The rest of the questions on an ACE multiple-choice exam are recall questions, which are cognitive in nature and test the candidate’s ability to recall knowledge. The information that follows is designed to give ACE certification exam candidates a better understanding of multiple-choice question design and the difference between recall, application, and analysis questions.
Anatomy of a Multiple-choice Question

A multiple-choice question consists of a stem and response options. The stem is a statement or a question and often includes key words to help candidates understand what is being asked or assessed. The stem may be presented as a direct question, an incomplete statement, or a best answer format. For instance:

Direct:
What muscle flexes the elbow joint?

Incomplete statement:
The muscle that flexes the elbow joint is:

Best answer format:
Which exercise MOST effectively strengthens the flexors of the elbow joint?

Response options consist of one correct or clearly best answer and distractors (all of which are incorrect). Distractors usually contain common errors and are often drawn from the same conceptual category as the correct response. Distractors are also similar in length, complexity, grammatical construction, etc. to the correct response. For example:

Which of the following muscles is a prime mover for lateral flexion of the spine?
  A. Latissimus dorsi
  B. Rhomboid major
  C. Quadratus lumborum
  D. Transverse abdominis
(The correct answer is C)

Recall Questions

Recall questions assess facts, terminology, and comprehension of important principles. A relatively small number of recall questions are presented on the ACE exams since they assess candidates’ abilities to remember information rather than apply it to solve problems. For example:

Which muscle flexes the elbow joint?
  A. Bicep brachii
  B. Triceps brachii
  C. Biceps femoris
  D. Triceps surae
(The correct answer is A)

Application Questions

An application question poses a problem or situation that would most likely be encountered while working in the profession. Application questions assess candidates’ abilities to recognize the proper use of factual information and principles in solving problems fitness professionals might experience on the job. For example:

A new client has been sedentary for five years and is eager to begin resistance training. Results from the client’s Thomas test with each leg reveal that the back of the lowered thigh does not touch the table, but the knees do flex beyond 80 degrees. Based on this information, what stretch would be MOST important to include in the client’s initial program?
  A. Iliotibial band stretch
  B. Quadriceps stretch
  C. Half-kneeling triplanar stretch
  D. Hamstring stretch
(The correct answer is C)

Analysis Questions

Analysis questions assess candidates’ abilities to examine information and understand the relationship between its components. In other words, how do the parts work together to make a whole? In this manner, a candidate who can correctly analyze the facts can identify a problem and its appropriate solution. For example:
The food label on a 12-ounce bag of candy provides the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving size:</th>
<th>6 pieces (40 g)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servings per container:</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount per serving:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories:</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calories from fat:</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Daily Value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fat:</td>
<td>3 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated fat:</td>
<td>0.5 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars:</td>
<td>30 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein:</td>
<td>less than 1 g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the total amount of kilocalories (kcal) and percentage of calories that come from fat in the entire bag?

A. 27 kcal, 4 percent  
B. 160 kcal, 7 percent  
C. 216 kcal, 17 percent  
D. 252 kcal, 30 percent  

(The correct answer is C)

**TEST-TAKING STRATEGIES FOR ACE CERTIFICATION EXAMS**

All exam questions are based on an Exam Content Outline for the specific certification program and can be found on the ACE website (http://www.ACEfitness.org/getcertified/certification-exam-content.aspx) and as Appendix B of each respective ACE manual. The exam content outline lists the specific Task Statements that make up the exam blueprint for a given ACE certification program’s examinations, and the percentage of questions that are mapped to each Domain of grouped Task Statements. Similar to the principle of specificity that helps guide effective fitness programs; ACE certification candidates familiar with the exam content outline can use it to guide their studies, helping to alleviate test anxiety as they prepare for their examinations and a career in the field.

The following strategies may prove helpful for candidates taking ACE certification exams as well as other standardized tests:

- Pace yourself and make efficient use of your time. You should be halfway through the exam (or slightly more) when half of your time is up.
- Read each question carefully and avoid skimming or speed-reading. Be sure you understand what the question is asking. Pay special attention to phrases such as: BEST, MOST, etc.
- Try to anticipate what the answer is but still read all response options carefully before finalizing an answer. Remember that there is only one correct answer and two response options may appear to be similar without careful reading.
- Do not overanalyze or read into the question. Each question is written as clearly as possible and should be interpreted as it appears. There is no hidden meaning or attempt to be tricky.
- Eliminate the least plausible response options. Eliminating one or two response options will increase your chances of selecting the correct answer.
- Take care in marking your selected response correctly on paper answer sheets and/or the computer if testing at a computer-based testing facility.
- Answer every question. Remember, there is no penalty for guessing.
- Although first impressions are best, change your answer if you feel strongly about it.
- Response options on ACE exams are randomized. If you know absolutely nothing about a question, it is best to simply guess and move on.

**STUDY MATERIALS AND RESOURCES**

ACE produces manuals and associated study materials for each ACE certification program. These manuals are produced first and foremost as resources to help candidates prepare for professions in health and fitness. While these materials also help candidates prepare for the corresponding ACE certification exam, it is critical that candidates view these study materials as helpful resources rather than the sole authority for a particular profession or examination. Candidates do themselves and the industry a disservice if they believe that studying an ACE manual alone is a comprehensive resource for their health and fitness knowledge and their career.
ACE has Study Assistance Consultants available to help candidates with questions as they prepare for their ACE certification examination. These ACE Study Assistance Consultants have no involvement in the development and delivery of ACE certification examinations; however, they are ACE Certified Professionals who have experience working in the field and can help candidates navigate the exam content outline for the specific certification program, and help them to prepare for careers in health and fitness. You can contact an ACE Study Assistance Consultant via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 796 or email StudyAssistance@ACEfitness.org.

For more information about preparing for an ACE certification exam, please review the certification-specific information on the ACE website (http://www.ACEfitness.org/fitness-certifications/default.aspx), or contact an ACE Education Consultant at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 782 for assistance.

EXAM ADMINISTRATION

ACE certification exams are managed by Castle Worldwide, Inc. (Castle), the testing service company that ACE contracts for the development, administration, scoring, and security of ACE certification exams. Castle offers ACE certification exams in two proctored delivery formats: computer-based testing (CBT) and live paper-and-pencil (PnP) examinations for all four certification programs.

ACE examinations in the U.S. and Canada have transitioned from all PnP delivery to predominantly CBT delivery in less than seven years. Castle offers ACE exams at over 550 CBT facilities throughout the U.S. and Canada, and multiple locations internationally. For security purposes, CBT exams are offered only at proctored testing facilities.

ACE offers exams delivered via PnP administration at a very limited number of sites in the U.S. and Canada, and at all test administrations internationally. These PnP exams are offered only in conjunction with educational facilities that offer courses to help students prepare for careers in health and fitness, and sign up to host an ACE exam administration. In all cases, the examinations are administered by Castle proctors in classroom settings.

To register for an ACE examination at either a proctored CBT facility or a PnP administration, go to the Exam Registration portion of the ACE website: http://www.ACEfitness.org/certificationexams/default.aspx

EXAM SCORING AND PASSING CRITERIA

ACE examinations are scored according to procedures accepted by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education. The candidate’s score is derived from the number of questions answered correctly, and is then converted to a scaled score ranging 200 and 800 points, with the passing point set at scaled score of 500 points. Candidates who earn a scaled score of 500 or more points will be awarded the ACE certification for which they tested.

All test forms for an examination are built to a standardized test blueprint. Using a test specification ensures that test forms are comparable in content coverage, that test content is weighted in accordance with the requirements for competent performance, and that all forms of the examinations adhere to standards for content validity. However, the actual items for an exam change over time. This done to ensure the content is up-to-date, relevant, and to enhance test security. Since items differ in how easy or hard it is, different test versions may not be equally difficult. As a result, ACE conducts reviews of the test forms to ensure that the passing score required is adjusted so that it is equivalent across the different test forms. ACE uses scaled scores to enable us to compare candidate performance on different test forms, or with people who may have taken different test forms.

ACE candidates who sit for examinations at Computer-based Testing (CBT) facilities receive their exam scaled score and pass/fail status upon submission of the examination for scoring. This is referred to as immediate score reporting, which requires ACE certification examinations to be launched with an established passing point. The ACE Personal Trainer and Group Fitness Instructor Certification examinations use a process known as Item Response Theory (IRT) to establish an equivalent passing score across different test forms. This robust method is an industry standard for larger certification programs, especially when programs provide immediate score reporting. The psychometricians at Castle Worldwide, Inc. perform the IRT equating for all ACE-CPT and ACE-GFI certification exams. The only exception to this rule is the very first ACE-CPT or ACE-GFI examination built to according to a new exam content outline, which is rated by subject matter experts for the certification program at a standard setting.

The ACE Health Coach and ACE Medical Exercise Specialist Certification programs do not have the candidate numbers at this time to utilize IRT equating. As a result, ACE holds standard setting meetings for each ACE Health Coach and ACE Medical Exercise Specialist test form that is used. At these meetings, panels of subject matter experts
experts for the specific certification program follow the direction of the psychometric team at Castle Worldwide, Inc., in reviewing and rating the difficulty of each question on the examination. The results of the panel’s ratings are statistically analyzed with the results provided to ACE as the panel’s recommendation for the passing point for the specific test form. Each recommendation is then presented by the psychometric team at Castle to the ACE Director of Credentialing, along with confidence interval and standard error statistics, for review. Working with the psychometric team at Castle, the ACE Director of Credentialing makes statistically-based determination that is then approved by the ACE Chief Science Officer, and that score is used as the passing standard for that particular test form. At such time that either program reaches large enough annual candidate volumes, that program would be transitioned to IRT equating as the method for setting the passing standard for each form.

EXAM RESULTS

ACE computer-based exams are administered via Castle’s secure internet-based testing system at proctored computer-based testing (CBT) facilities in the US, Canada, and internationally. Exams are scored upon completion, with candidates receiving their exam scaled score and pass/fail status immediately upon submission of their completed examination.

ACE paper-and-pencil (PnP) exams are shipped by the exam proctor to Castle for scoring. Upon completion of scoring and scaling, Castle mails results directly to candidates that include the candidate’s scaled score and pass/fail status achieved, within four to six weeks of the exam date. Candidates with outstanding registration holds, such as documentation of current CPR/AED not on file, or those issued holds by virtue of being selected for ACE’s random CPR/AED audit will not receive their results until CPR details are submitted and the hold is cleared.

The scaled score and pass/fail status on the results candidates receive from Castle constitute a candidate’s official score and pass/fail status. Only the scaled score determines pass/fail status. Any details that go beyond this scaled score (e.g., domain performance in percentages), is provided only as a guide for failed candidates to identify the domains where they have the greatest room to improve, should they choose to take the examination another time.

Candidates who achieve a final scaled score of 500 or more points on their certification exam will be awarded the ACE certification for the exam that they successfully passed. Candidates who pass their ACE exam will receive their certification within four to six weeks after the scores are released. Candidates who achieve a final scaled score below 500 points will receive a ‘failed’ status on the examination. These candidates have the ability to sit for a certification exam for the specific program at a reduced rate (see Exam Fees).

Castle also sends the score reports to ACE on a daily basis, via secure data transfer, for all candidates who complete an ACE examination on a given day. These exam results are stored in the specific candidate’s password protected and secure ACE web account.

VERIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION STATUS

ACE allows the public and employers to easily verify if an individual currently holds an ACE certification. This information is readily available via the “Is my professional certified with ACE?” search engine on the ACE website (https://www.ACEfitness.org/acefit/locate-trainer/). Only currently certified ACE Professionals will be found using this search tool. Individuals who have let an ACE certification expire, and are still in their 6-month grace period following their expiration date, will not show up in this search engine until they complete all steps required to renew their certification.

It is important to note that certifications are issued by legal name (first and last). Searches using nicknames, middle names, or abbreviated version of full names, will not retrieve the professional whom is the subject of the search. As such, ACE provides a link to “view all of our professionals” and a phone number that the public and employers can call to verify if a professional holds an ACE certification.

ACE also provides a “Find an ACE Certified Professional” search tool on this same page, allowing the public to find qualified health and fitness professionals in their area. Profiles will vary from basic certification validation to fully developed professional profiles. The basic certification validation is provided to allow for verification of ACE Certified Professionals. The expanded professional profiles are an option that ACE provides to its certified professionals who want to provide the public with additional information about the services they provide.
EXAM SCORING APPEALS

Any candidate who feels that their examination effort was negatively impacted by improper instruction, unprofessional proctoring standards, or unreasonable environmental or other distracters, must report their grievance to the exam proctor immediately. The proctor will document the complaint and submit it to Castle Worldwide, Inc. where the complaint will be forwarded to the ACE Exam Registration Department for further investigation. Following any examination administration where a candidate feels that his/her examination effort was negatively impacted, ACE mandates that candidate also contact ACE Exam Registration via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 783 or email ExamRegistration@ACEfitness.org to report the incident and how it negatively impacted performance within 30 days of the examination. ACE will make an equitable decision based upon the information gathered from all relevant sources, including the candidate, proctors, and Castle.

EXAM RESCORING

Should a candidate not pass the examination, yet believe that a scoring error was involved during the computer scoring, he or she may appeal and request to have their entire examination manually rescored. While the results of a manually scored examination rarely, if ever, differ from the result obtained through the automated process, the candidate does have the right to pursue this option. In order to request a manual rescore, candidates must contact ACE Exam Registration via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 783 or email ExamRegistration@ACEfitness.org to receive a manual rescore form. Candidates must then submit the completed form, along with the $50.00 rescore fee to Castle Worldwide, Inc. All requests for a manual rescore must be made within 30 days of the original examination date. Castle will inform the candidate of their rescored results within two to four weeks of receiving the rescore request.

EXAM SCORE CANCELLATION

Candidates may cancel their scores by writing to Castle no later than seven days after the examination to request that their paper and pencil exam not be scored. No refunds are given to candidates who request their scores be canceled. Requests should be sent to:

Castle Worldwide, Inc.
Attention: Scoring Department
900 Perimeter Park Drive, Suite G
Morrisville, NC. 27560 USA
Phone: 919-572-6880
Email: info@CastleWorldwide.com
PASS RATES FOR ACE EXAMS

Registered Candidates and Pass Rates for each ACE Certification Program (Annual)

Personal Trainer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Pass Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>12,012</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>10,452</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>8,656</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Fitness Instructor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Pass Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,641</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2,036</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health Coach (*formerly titled: Lifestyle & Weight Management Coach*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Pass Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1103</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Medical Exercise Specialist (*formerly titled: Advanced Health and Fitness Specialist*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Pass Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE CERTIFICATION EXAM PROCESS

EXAM REGISTRATION: COMPUTER-BASED TESTING (CBT)

Candidates registering for computer-based testing (CBT) may utilize one of the following options:

- **Online** - Due to additional eligibility requirements, this format is permissible only for the ACE Personal Trainer and Group Fitness Instructor Certification exams, and for currently ACE Certified Professionals registering for the Health Coach Certification exam.
- **Phone registration** - Permissible for all ACE certification exams based on eligibility criteria.
- **Faxed or mailed application** - Permissible for all ACE certification exams based on eligibility criteria. Due to the timeliness of registration for and confirmation of computer-based testing due to seat availability at the internet-based testing facilities.

While the same general eligibility criteria apply as when registering for a PnP examination, the pre-requisite of holding a current CPR certificate with CPR information on file with ACE is mandatory. As examination results are immediately provided with CBT, candidates cannot register for an ACE certification examination without first submitting verification of a current CPR certificate.

Candidates can register for CBT examinations as early as 10 days prior to the date of the exam, and may have the option to register as far out as 6 months in advance of the exam date provide such dates are available on the ACE website. Once a candidate registers for a CBT examination, the requested examination location and timeslot requires approval through the third-party contracted testing centers. The confirmation process for CBT exam registrations is an automated process, with email confirmation of registration dates being either approved or unavailable generally received by candidates within minutes of submitting their registration. On occasion, when there are technical issues, this process can take up to 2-3 business days following registration. Once a candidate’s preferred examination choice is approved, the candidate is subject to ACE’s reschedule and cancellation policy. If the preferred examination choice is unavailable, the candidate will receive an email with direction as to how to request a new exam choice through the ACE Exam Registration portal at no additional charge.

CBT SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Candidates with a special testing need will be accommodated as best as possible. Candidates requesting testing accommodations MAY NOT register online. All ADA candidates must submit proper documentation to support ADA requests. This documentation must be submitted, along with a completed registration form, at least 15 days prior to the requested exam date. The confirmation process for CBT exam registrations with special accommodations require approval through the third-party contracted testing centers. The confirmation process for these types of registrations results in a confirmation email to be received roughly 24-72 hours after the registration is initially processed. On occasion, special accommodations cannot be made on the requested exam date or location. In this instance, a member of the ACE Exam Registration Department will contact the candidate for alternate testing locations, dates and/or times.

EXAM REGISTRATION: PAPER AND PENCIL (PnP) TESTING

Candidates registering for live paper-and-pencil (PnP) examinations may utilize one of the following registration options:

- **Online** - Due to additional eligibility requirements, this format is permissible only for the ACE Personal Trainer and Group Fitness Instructor Certification exams, and for currently ACE Certified Professionals registering for the Health Coach Certification exam.
- **Phone registration** - Permissible for all ACE certification exams based on eligibility criteria.
- **Mailed or faxed application** - Permissible for all ACE certification exams based on eligibility criteria.

Before registering for an ACE examination candidates must meet the eligibility criteria for the ACE certification exam they wish to take. Candidates can register for a PnP exam without having current CPR and AED information on file; however, they will not receive their exam results until they provide these details.

The online registration deadline, as well the mail and fax registration deadline, for PnP examinations is 30 days prior to the exam date.
PAPER AND PENCIL SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Candidates with special testing needs will be accommodated as best as possible. All requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation and received by the ACE Exam Registration Department no later than 60 days prior to the exam date.

- **Military Personnel and Dependents - Domestic and International:** Candidates may be able to take the examination at a DANTES military test center provided a DANTES proctor agrees to administer the ACE Exam. Candidates must include with their registration application, a letter from the DANTES Test Control Officer (TCO) on military letterhead which specifies candidate name, examination date, examination type, DANTES four-digit test center code, shipping address for examination materials, and TCO contact information.

- **Limited English Proficiency:** The ACE Personal Trainer certification examination is currently offered in English, Indonesian, Thai, Simplified Chinese and Turkish. If none of these languages qualify as the first language, the candidate may request additional time to take the exam. If requesting additional time on an exam, then this is classified as a special accommodation and the candidate may not register online. The candidate must submit a completed registration form with proper documentation such as a copy of a birth certificate or passport to verify the request for additional time.

- **Disabled Candidates:** Special accommodations will be made to the best abilities of ACE, CASTLE Worldwide, Inc. and the testing for candidates with visual, sensory, physical or other disabilities that prevent them from taking the examination under standard conditions. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), documentation of the disability must be submitted by a professional qualified to diagnose the disability. Requests and completed registration information from disabled candidates must include a description of the accommodation requested. ACE reserves the right to determine if the requested accommodation is reasonable.

- **Additional Requests:** Accommodations can be made if a candidate has other special requests that are not listed above. Documentation of this special need, made by a professional qualified to make a diagnosis, must be submitted with the request. ACE reserves the right to determine if the requested accommodation is reasonable.

INTERNATIONAL EXAMS

ACE offers its four certification exams via PnP delivery internationally hosted by ACE Educational Partners. ACE also offers CBT exams internationally at select locations. To find an ACE exam offered outside the US, please go to the ACE website at: [http://www.ACEfitness.org/certificationexams/default.aspx](http://www.ACEfitness.org/certificationexams/default.aspx). You will need to select the 'Paper and Pencil' or ‘Computer-based Testing’ tab and then choose ‘International’ in the dropdown bar to ‘Select Country.’

STAND-BY CANDIDATES

If a candidate is unable to register for a paper-and-pencil Personal Trainer or Group Fitness Instructor Certification exam by the registration deadline, he/she may choose to attend the exam as a walk-in candidate and pay the additional $25.00 administrative fee. However, this does not guarantee a seat as walk-in candidates are registered in order of arrival and as space and resources permit. Walk-in registration begins at 8 a.m. on the date of the exam for all candidates. Any individual attempting to sit the examination as a stand-by candidate must bring:

- A completed stand-by registration form which can be obtained directly from ACE Exam Registration by calling (800) 825-3636, ext. 783 or emailing ExamRegistration@ACEfitness.org, or downloaded from the ACE website [http://www.ACEfitness.org/getcertified/pdfs/standby_reg_form.pdf](http://www.ACEfitness.org/getcertified/pdfs/standby_reg_form.pdf)
- Legal identification, including a photo ID with signature
- A certified (cashier’s) check or money order made payable to the “American Council on Exercise” for the appropriate examination fee (credit cards or personal checks will NOT be accepted at the exam site)
- Two soft-lead (#2) pencils and an eraser
- Extra layers of clothing for comfort in the exam center

Due to the additional eligibility requirements for the Medical Exercise Specialist and Health Coach Certifications, these candidates are not able to be accommodated on a walk-in basis. Candidates for the Medical Exercise
Specialist and Health Coach Certification exams do have the option, if space and resources permit, to provide documentation for all eligibility criteria to the ACE Exam Registration Department and then pre-pay the standard exam registration fee plus the $25.00 walk-in fee. In these situations, the candidate would be issued a pre-paid walk-in candidate exam registration letter on ACE letterhead to submit to the proctors on the exam day. Proctors would also receive advanced notice from ACE and CASTLE that the pre-paid walk-in candidate will be attending.

Walk-in registrations are also not permitted at international test administrations outside the US and Canada. International candidates for all ACE certification exams do have the option, if space and resources permit, to provide documentation for all eligibility criteria to the ACE Exam Registration Department and then pre-pay the standard exam registration fee plus the $25.00 walk-in fee, according to the procedures described above.

EXAM FEES

For paper-and-pencil examinations, ACE will only register candidates that submit a completed registration application and payment in full by the respective registration deadline. Checks or money orders should be in U.S. funds, drawn on a U.S. bank, and payable to ACE. ACE does not accept cash, purchase orders or invoices and will return all incomplete registration applications and/or registration applications with cash, purchase orders, invoices, declined credit cards or returned checks. Active military, veterans and eligible spouses and dependents can receive reimbursement for their ACE exam fees from the government by submitting appropriate paperwork as directed at http://www.gibill.va.gov/; this includes both first time and retakes fees.

For the most up to date exam pricing please refer to the Exam Registration webpage: http://www.ACEfitness.org/certificationexams/default.aspx

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RETAIL EXAM PRICING - US and CANADA</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CBT and PnP Formats</strong></td>
<td><strong>ACE PT, HC, CMES Exams</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>First Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reschedule</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Formerly ACE certified Professional</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>CBT Format</strong></th>
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<th><strong>ACE Medical Exercise Specialist Exams</strong></th>
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<tr>
<th><strong>PnP Format</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACE PT, HC, CMES Exams</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACE GFI Exams</strong></th>
<th><strong>ACE Medical Exercise Specialist Exams</strong></th>
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<td>Formerly ACE certified Professional</td>
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RESCHEDULING: COMPUTER-BASED TESTING

If a candidate is unable to sit for an examination on the date they are registered, then they have until 11:59 p.m. PST on the day preceding their examination to reschedule their exam date. This reschedule can be done through the candidate’s ACE account. The fee to reschedule a CBT exam is $149.00 in the U.S. and Canada, and $299 in any other country.
Candidates may only reschedule their examination date once and may only reschedule for another CBT format exam.

Exceptions to the reschedule fee will be considered on a case-by-case basis for documented cases of serious illness, bereavement, natural disasters, and other emergencies. In these instances, candidates must contact ACE Exam Registration prior to or the day of the exam date. Candidates must then provide proper documentation verifying their reason for missing their ACE examination. Candidates must also work with the Exam Registration Department to receive assistance in rescheduling their exam date. No refunds will be given for rescheduled exams.

RESCHEDULING: PAPER-AND-PENCIL EXAM

If a candidate is unable to sit for a domestic examination on the date they are registered, then they have until 11:59 p.m. PST on the day preceding their examination to reschedule their exam date. The fee to reschedule a PnP exam is $149.00 in the U.S. and Canada, and $169 in any other country.

Candidates may only reschedule their examination date once and may only reschedule for another paper-and-pencil format exam. Candidates who cannot find a date in their area to reschedule their PnP exam should contact the Exam Registration Department about rescheduling to a CBT location. Candidates who fail to take the examination on the rescheduled date will forfeit their entire exam fee. No refunds are issued for examinations that have been rescheduled.

International exam candidates who need to reschedule a PnP exam will be rescheduled for the next available exam in their area. International candidates who fail to attend their registered examination forfeit the registration fee in its entirety.

REFUNDS

Exam Voucher Policy

Candidates who purchase certification bundles that include an exam voucher are subject to the following policies:

- ACE's Refund Policy allows for returns within 30 days from the date of purchase. All returns are subject to a 20% restock fee. Customers who have redeemed their exam voucher are not eligible for a refund.
- Exam vouchers are non-refundable and non-transferable.
- Exam vouchers must be redeemed within 6 months from the original date of purchase.
- CPR/AED certification is required to register for the exam and must remain current through the exam date. Course must include a live skills check; online-only CPR/AED courses not accepted.
- Extensions are not given on exam vouchers.
- Retake vouchers (included in select study bundles) must be redeemed within 60 days of the original failed exam date.

Exceptions to the refund deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis for documented cases of serious illness, bereavement, natural disasters, and other emergencies. In these instances, candidates must electronically date-stamp or postmark their request no later than 30 days after the examination date and provide any and all supporting documentation. With proper documentation, candidates will be offered the option to apply their examination fee towards a future registration to be scheduled within the next six months, or they can request a full refund of examination fees. No refunds will be given for rescheduled exams.

EXAM RETAKES

Candidates who do not pass a certification examination are eligible to sit for the exam another time for the retake fee of $199.00 for a period of one year after the date of the initial examination. For retake examinations, candidates have the option to select either paper-and-pencil or CBT exam format, and will be charged the appropriate fee for the format selected. After this one-year period, the candidate must submit the first-time candidate exam fee.

EXAM DELIVERY AND SECURITY
Both examination formats are delivered by Castle, the testing service ACE contracts to provide the development, security, delivery, and scoring of all ACE certification exams. Castle utilizes an extensive network of examination testing site administrators (TSA), proctors, and live and computer-based testing centers.

Castle assumes responsibility for all exam administration arrangements and provisions for special-exam accommodations as needed. They will ensure that all examination centers conform to local building, sanitation, ADA, health and safety codes, and are maintained in good, clean condition. Castle will train testing site administrators to provide a site that has accessible parking spaces within reasonable distance to the examination rooms, examination rooms that are quiet, free from any known environmental distractions and interruptions, and comfortable in temperature.

Every attempt, within reason, is made to ensure a quiet and comfortable testing environment for all candidates. However, last minute needs and emergencies by building operators cannot be anticipated. We suggest that you bring appropriate clothing with you (i.e., sweat shirt without pockets or a hood) to help you adapt to a cooler or warmer climate in the examination room. Bring earplugs if you are very sensitive to noise distractions.

**COMPUTER-BASED TESTING ADMINISTRATION AND SECURITY**

Candidates registered for a CBT exam will receive an email notification from ACE instructing them to download and print out their admission ticket once their selected examination date, site and time have been approved. The confirmation process for CBT exam registrations is an automated process, with email confirmation of registration dates being either approved or unavailable generally received by candidates within minutes of submitting their registration. On occasion, when there are technical issues, this process can take up to 2-3 business days following registration. On the day of the examination, candidates must report to the testing center no later than 15 minutes prior to the registered start time indicated on the admission ticket and provide the necessary documentation to verify identification. CBT candidates are expected to adhere to the same examination policies as outlined for paper-and-pencil testing (see below).

Computer-based examinations are administered in separate rooms with a closeable door to minimize potential distractions to the candidates. The proctor will monitor activity from within the examination room, via direct observation through an unobstructed window view, or via video surveillance. Many CBT facilities have rooms with more than one testing station per examination room, with adequate space, or partitions between testing stations.

Computer-based testing centers provide exam administration services for multiple credentialing exams. These exams can be of different lengths, have different start times, and have different rules than ACE certification exams. All attempts will be made by the testing center to provide a calm, quiet, testing experience. Candidates who are sensitive to noise and occasional distractions may want to bring earplugs or similar to mitigate ambient noise.

**PAPER AND PENCIL EXAM ADMINISTRATION AND SECURITY**

Candidates are mailed admission tickets approximately two weeks prior to the examination date and must bring the following to the examination location:

- Admission ticket
- Current legal identification with photo ID and signature

The examination room(s) must be large enough to comfortably accommodate the anticipated number of pre-registered candidates in standard classroom or theater style seating. To ensure adequate separation among candidates taking the exam in a classroom-style setting, 6 to 8 foot (2 - 2.7 m) tables must be arranged with two candidate seats per table at a minimum distance of 48” (1.2 m) between adjacent seats, measured center-to-center from each seat; or allow at least one empty seat between candidates and with candidates seated directly behind one other in a theater-style setting.

Every attempt within reason is made to ensure a quiet and comfortable testing environment for all candidates. However, some environmental distracters cannot be anticipated. Candidates are encouraged to bring appropriate clothing (see admission ticket for clothing restrictions) to help adapt to cooler or warmer examination rooms and to bring ear plugs if one is sensitive to noise distractions.

Only the individual named on both the admission ticket and registration roster and whose name on the photo identification matches the registration roster will be permitted to take the examination. This naturally excludes those candidates attempting to take the examination as a stand-by as their name is not on the roster, except in cases where the candidate has printed and completed the appropriate stand-by paperwork from the ACE website.
and has all mandatory items including payment in the form of a certified (cashier’s) check or money order made payable to the American Council on Exercise for the correct amount. Candidates are strongly advised to contact ACE if an admission ticket is lost or misplaced, or in the event that it is not received within one week prior to the examination date. Failure to notify ACE may prohibit entry into the examination center.

For paper-and-pencil examinations, the following timelines will be adhered to unless otherwise noted on the admission tickets:

- 7:30 a.m. Test Site Administrator and Proctors report to site
- 8:00 a.m. Multiple Choice Exam registration (all certifications)
- 8:40 a.m. Multiple Choice Exam instructions are given
- 9:00 a.m. Multiple Choice Exam begins (all certifications)
- 12:00 p.m. Multiple Choice Exam ends

Candidates have three hours to complete the 150-multiple-choice question exam unless provided with special time accommodations.

All candidates must report to the examination site no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day of the examination. Exam instructions will begin no later than 8:40 a.m. for all. Candidates must arrive on time, as no one will be allowed admission after the examination instructions have begun. Candidates are required to adhere to the following examination policies:

- No visitors are allowed in the examination rooms.
- Candidates must perform all of their own work, without assistance. Sharing information or disturbing others is cause for dismissal with no refund.
- Impersonating another candidate, giving or receiving help on the exam, or removing exam materials or notes from the examination site is cause for dismissal with no refund.
- No dictionaries, calculators, paper or other supplies are allowed during the exam.
- No purses, bags, or any powered communication devices such as cell phones and PDA’s etc. are allowed in the examination room.
- No food or drinks are allowed in the examination room unless approved in advance by ACE for medical reasons.

Candidates may be disqualified from taking or continuing forward in the examination process, or from receiving exam results, if ACE, CASTLE and/or the examination proctor determine, either through direct observation or through statistical analysis that the candidate engaged in collaborative, disruptive, cheating, or other unacceptable behavior before, during or following the administration of the ACE exam.

CALCULATOR POLICY

Exam candidates for all four ACE certification programs will have access to a basic 4-function calculator with the following functions: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. CASTLE will provide calculators for candidates who are taking the paper and pencil exam. Computer Based Testing candidates will have access to an online calculator that is part of Castle’s CBT testing platform. CANDIDATES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING THEIR OWN CALCULATORS. THIS ACT WOULD CONSITUTE CHEATING AND BE SUBJECT TO “ACE’S PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES” (http://www.ACEfitness.org/fitness-certifications/certified-code.aspx).

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The purpose of the ACE examinations is to protect the public and other stake-holders against ineffective practices and procedures. The examinations are intended to ensure minimal entry-level competency of fitness professionals. Sharing of examination information with and between candidates, compromises the validity of the examination. Consequently, in order to maintain the integrity and security of all ACE examinations, examination questions, answer sheets, answers, or other source materials are never released to candidates under any circumstance.

Candidates are expected to prepare and pass examinations on their own merit. Candidates who intentionally pursue examination information beyond what is legally and ethically shared by ACE and ACE employees, including pursuit of previous examination candidates, are considered to be engaging in unethical and illegal acts and will be disqualified from eligibility. All candidates who take the ACE examinations voluntarily agree to maintain examination confidentiality and are contractually obligated to uphold this agreement. Printed examinations are the copyrighted property of the American Council on Exercise and should any confidentiality agreement be violated, the culpable person or persons will be prosecuted by the American Council on Exercise.
ACE does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of religion, gender, ethnic background, age, national origin, or physical disability.

No information submitted to ACE and CASTLE will be released to a third party without authorization and a written consent from the candidate. This includes examination results and pass/fail status.

The only situation where ACE provides individual pass/fail status to an organization is in conjunction with the MyCAA program. In this program, military spouses who meet eligibility criteria with MyCAA can receive reimbursement from the Department of Defense for expenses associated with ACE examinations and associated study materials. Candidates eligible for and interested in receiving MyCAA funding give written consent for their pass/fail status to be sent to MyCAA, allowing their expenses to be paid through the MyCAA funding.

ACE does verify if an individual currently holds an ACE certification. This information is readily available to the public and employers via the “Is my professional certified with ACE?” search engine on the ACE website (http://www.ACEfitness.org/acefit/locate-trainer/).

CHEATING AND OTHER TESTING VIOLATIONS

The purpose of the ACE examination is to protect the public by ensuring that candidates for certification have achieved entry-level competence to work in a designated role within health and fitness (e.g., Personal Trainer). Candidates are expected to pass the ACE exam based on their own merit and without assistance (e.g. without referencing study materials, websites, etc.). Previous exam candidates who share exam information with future exam candidates undermine the very purpose of the exam; putting the public at risk should an unqualified candidate achieve a passing score through means other than their own merit.

All ACE examinations are legally defensible, proctored examinations ensuring candidates the most valid test experience. You may be disqualified from taking or continuing in the examination process, or from receiving exam results, if ACE, Castle Worldwide, Inc. (the organization administering the exams on behalf of the ACE), Castle proctors, or personnel at the contracted testing center have determined at any time during the exam registration, administration, or scoring process, through examiner observation or statistical analysis that a candidate was engaged in collaborative, disruptive, or other unacceptable behavior before, during, or following the administration of the ACE exam. This includes irregular behavior associated with any aspect of the examination and violations of the ACE Code of Ethics.

CANDIDATE COMMENTS

Upon completion of an ACE exam, candidates are given the chance to submit comments about the examination and testing environment. At the conclusion of an ACE computer-based exam, candidates are asked to complete a brief online survey about the testing environment. These comments are also reviewed by the Testing Manager at CASTLE, and then copied and forwarded to the ACE Director of Credentialing. Where necessary, the ACE Director of Credentialing will follow up with CASTLE to determine if further action is warranted. At paper-and-pencil exam administrations, candidates write feedback on Candidate Comment Forms. These Candidate Comment Forms are sent to CASTLE Worldwide, Inc. along with the completed and blank exams, where they are first reviewed by the Testing Manager at CASTLE and then copied and forwarded to the ACE Director of Credentialing for review.
ACE CERTIFICATION EXAM DEVELOPMENT

TESTING SERVICE PROVIDER

ACE utilizes the services of Castle Worldwide, Inc., (Castle) to develop, administer, score and report all ACE certification exams. Castle offers comprehensive content services built on a history of developing quality high-stakes certification examinations for organizations that license or certify the expertise of professionals in various fields including medical technology, engineering, athletic training, occupational therapy, and fitness. Their specific exam development services include:

- Job/task analysis and role delineation studies
- Development of test specifications
- Content validation studies
- Establishing cut score standards
- Computerized item banking and examination production
- Item writing (virtual and in-person) and test assembly
- Editorial and psychometric reviews
- Development of candidate handouts
- Examination printing
- Delivery of exams in both paper and pencil and computer-based testing formats
- Proctor and exam site identification and training

Castle Worldwide, Inc. is located at the following physical address:

Castle Worldwide, Inc.
900 Perimeter Park Drive, Suite G
Morrisville, NC. 27560 USA
Phone: 919-572-6880
Web: www.CastleWorldwide.com
Email: info@CastleWorldwide.com

Castle administers proctored paper-and-pencil and computer-based certification and licensure examinations to candidates almost anywhere in the world. Exam administration services provided include:

- Establishing domestic and international test sites
- Hiring and training proctors
- Adhering to Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for special-needs candidates
- Customizing answer sheets
- Tracking and inventory control of examination materials
- Ensuring secure storage and shipment of examination materials
- Exam registration services
- Verifying candidate identification
- Developing test administrator and proctor manuals
- Scoring, equating, and scaling of examinations
- Secure reporting of exam results to candidates
- Secure storage of examination results and candidate information

Castle provides individual and aggregated score reports. Individual reports provide final scaled score, pass/fail status, and domain performance (percentage correct). Aggregated score analysis evaluates item performance, to help certification programs in identifying questions that continue to effectively measure knowledge and skills and those that merit retirement or rewriting. Scoring and reporting services include:

- Scoring, scaling, and equating as appropriate for the certification program
- Post-examination item analysis and summary statistics review
- Generating and mailing customized score reports
- Hand-scoring upon request
- Preparing diagnostic reports
EXAM DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Castle Worldwide, Inc. specializes in offering comprehensive content services including high-stakes certification examination development, upholds these rigorous standards for exam development, administration, scoring and equating. ACE works collaboratively with Castle to uphold these rigorous standards for all ACE certification programs. This ensures that certified professionals meet minimum standards of knowledge and skills necessary to provide safe and effective fitness instruction for the protection of the public.

All ACE exam questions and exam forms are developed by national and representative panels of industry experts called subject matter experts, who are recognized by ACE for their expertise in one or more areas relating to at least one ACE certification program. The composition of exam development committees varies for each certification program due to the different focus and scope of practice for each program. These committees are composed to fulfill the qualification requirements for each certification weighted according to the exam content outlines.

All ACE examinations are developed using the six-point exam development process guided by standards accepted by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education. These steps are facilitated by the psychometric team at Castle Worldwide, Inc. and include:

1. **Job Analysis/Role Delineation:** A group of industry experts analyzes the specific job requirements in order to develop an outline of the tasks, knowledge and skills required to perform the job effectively (e.g. group fitness instruction, personal training, etc.).

2. **Validation Study:** A research survey is conducted to determine the validity of the job analysis. The survey is sent for validation to a large, random, national sample of fitness professionals who currently hold the certification for which the job analysis was conducted.

3. **Item Writing:** A national and representative panel of industry experts develops exam questions that are tied to exam specifications and referenced to acceptable texts or documents. Once completed, each exam item, or question, must be validated by three Subject Matter Experts who were not involved in writing the question.

4. **Exam Assembly:** The questions are reviewed, selected and approved by an exam committee. The constructed exam is then forwarded to Castle for final editing.

5. **Cut Score Determination:** The passing score is determined as a standard for public protection. Each question is rated by a group of industry experts using criterion-referenced procedures. The experts estimate the percentage of minimally competent professionals that will answer each question correctly. The passing score is then calculated and based on the overall degree of difficulty.

6. **Continual Exam Evaluation:** Following an exam administration, there is a continual evaluation and analysis of each question to help ensure validity. If a question is determined to be flawed, it is reworked or replaced. Exam questions and exam forms will also be retired once they have had significant exposure in terms of exam candidates.

A new exam-development process begins every 5 years, beginning with a new job analysis/role delineation. ACE exams are developed using the six-point exam development process and are guided by standards accepted by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education. All ACE certification programs adhere to the 21 Standards of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

ACE CERTIFICATION COMMITTEES

ACE has a pool of committed and qualified volunteer subject matter experts (SME) for each certification program. Each subject matter expert for a given program must hold that certification or qualifications that are equivalent to or exceed the certification, and they must work in the role of the certified professional, or supervise or educate professionals who serve in the specific certificant role. Some SME are qualified to sit on committees for more than one ACE certification program due to their combination of credentials, education, and work experience. Due to professional roles and personal commitments, most subject matter experts are not available for every possible meeting for which they are qualified. As such, the ACE Director of Credentialing assembles ‘ad hoc’ committees of qualified SME for each certification committee meeting. The ACE Director of Credentialing takes care to ensure
that each committee includes representation from the major areas of function for the credential, and that it is representative of the geographic and gender distribution of the certified population, with a focus on ethnic diversity as well.

OBJECTIVITY IN EXAM DEVELOPMENT

ACE recognizes that equal opportunity is fundamental to equality in all forms of human endeavor. Therefore, all administrative practices and procedures will be nondiscriminatory on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, lifestyle, national origin, gender, physical disability, or sexual orientation. This includes all certification and exam development activities.

ACE subject matter experts go through training at the beginning of each certification committee meeting and before virtual item writing to ensure that the objectives of the meeting are understood and that the panel understands the target population of the certification examination. One key element that is part of the instructions for ACE certification committee meetings, covered collaboratively by the ACE Director of Credentialing and the Castle Psychometric Team, is to instruct SME that all ACE exam questions should be unbiased and objective. This includes avoiding any gender, age, ethnicity, geography, or other biases in exam items developed, edited, and included on ACE exam forms. ACE does allow for exam questions to include gender or age information in a question when that information is critical for candidates to be able to differentiate between correct and incorrect responses. Examples of these exceptions include risk factor guidelines that differ for men and women, and exercise programming guidelines that differ for very specific age-groups, such as youth.

SECURITY

Disclosure of examination content or information to persons outside of the exam develop committees is prohibited and constitutes a breach of security, compromising and invalidating the examination and certification in question. All exam development members are required to sign Non-Disclosure agreements prior to participation, agreeing to abide to security procedures established by the psychometric staff to prevent compromise of any examination. All documents created during exam development meetings are shredded upon conclusion of the meeting by the ACE Director of Credentialing and Castle Psychometric Project Manager.
MAINTAINING YOUR ACE CERTIFICATION

ACE certifications are valid for two years, expiring on the last day of the month in which the certification was earned two years prior. In order to maintain current certification, ACE Certified Professionals are required to complete 20 hours (2.0 CEC) of continuing education biannually. As stated in the ACE Code of Ethics, ACE Certified Professionals agree to remain up-to-date on the latest health and fitness research and understand its practical application.

First and foremost, the purpose of continuing education is for the protection of the public. By completing continuing education that advances knowledge, skills, and abilities, ACE Certified Professionals stay current with the latest research, professional standards, and guidelines in the fitness industry, health care, and allied health. This helps the fitness professional to be better prepared to provide safe and effective fitness instruction. The second purpose is to help the professional advance his or her career.

Given the dynamic nature of the fitness industry and the vast amount of exercise science research published annually, it is imperative for fitness professionals to complete continuing education on a regular basis. With new research and standards being released every couple of years; ACE has set a two-year term for each certification period to help ensure that ACE Certified Professionals are completing continuing education at least every other year to remain current. During this two-year period, ACE Certified Professionals are required to complete at least 20 hours of ACE-approved continuing education. Both the two-year term for ACE certifications and the average of 10 hours per year of continuing education are in line with other NCCA Accredited certification programs in fitness and other areas of allied health.

ACE has set 20 hours (2.0 CEC) of continuing education as a minimum requirement to remain current with exercise science research and to become eligible to renew an ACE certification. ACE encourages its certified professionals to complete additional continuing education as necessary to help advance their careers and services provided to the public.

RECERTIFICATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACE certified professionals must comply with the following every two years to renew their ACE certifications:

- Complete at least 20 hours (2.0 CEC; 1 hour=0.1 CEC) of ACE-approved continuing education credits (CEC)
- Renew your cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) certificate(s). You must be current at time of renewal.
- Remain in good standing with the American Council on Exercise.
- Submit your renewal online or via fax or mail along with the appropriate renewal payment prior to the expiration date for the certification. Renewal rates are scheduled to recognize individuals who hold multiple credentials, and to provide discounts to those renewing online.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Cycle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Certification</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-time renewal</td>
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<td>Additional Certifications: *</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-time renewal for 2 certifications</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-time renewal for 3 certifications</td>
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<td>Late Renewals:</td>
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<td>Up to 3 months late</td>
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<tr>
<td>Up to 6 months late</td>
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</table>

Prices subject to change

* Rate based on total number of current certifications at time of recertification.

ACE Certified Professionals are allowed to renew their certification at any point during their certification cycle; however, CEC can only be accrued for the current certification cycle and cannot be applied to future cycles. Renewals can be completed online via your ACE Certified Professional web account, or through faxed or mailed submissions, and must contain all the necessary information to be processed. For mailed or faxed renewals, download a renewal form from the ACE website at [https://www.acefitness.org/myace/docs/Renewal.pdf](https://www.acefitness.org/myace/docs/Renewal.pdf).
ACE mails renewal informational reminders six and twelve months prior to the expiration date of the professional certification, and also sends email notifications at 90 and 30 days prior to the expiration date, informing individuals on how they can attain ACE-approved CEC and renew their certification. ACE Certified Professionals can access their web account at any time to check the status and expiration dates of their certifications, update and verify CEC information on file, update and verify CPR/AED information on file, and to renew certifications.

Professionals who hold more than one ACE certification can apply the same CEC to more than one certification for renewal, provided that the subject matter is appropriate for continuing education for all ACE certifications to which the CEC are applied. Each certification has a renewal fee (see table above) and CPR/AED must be current at the time of renewing an ACE certification.

If you have any questions about maintaining your ACE certification, please contact ACE Educational Services via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 782, or via email at EducationalServicesMail@ACEfitness.org.

RENEWING AN EXPIRED CERTIFICATION

ACE extends a professional courtesy of an extension to individuals unable to submit renewal information by their expiration date. During this ‘grace’ period, the certification is technically expired and the individual is not a current ACE Certified Professional for the given certification.

In these situations, there are penalties fees associated with processing the application. Individuals submitting renewal applications up to three months late will be assessed a renewal fee of $169.00 per late certification, while those submitting renewal information three to six months late will be assessed a $199.00 renewal fee per late certification. Individuals in situations where they must submit their renewals within the six month grace period following their expiration date must submit the renewal via mail or fax, with all appropriate paper work including the renewal fee plus the penalty fee. Individuals who are unable to submit their application within this grace period will lose their certification and have no option but to reregister to take the exam to re-earn the certification.

Exceptions to the extension policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis for documented cases of serious illness, bereavement, natural disasters, and other emergencies. In these instances, candidates must contact the ACE Credentialing Department directly, via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 783, or via email at ExamRegistration@ACEfitness.org, to request reinstatement of their certification. Individuals in this situation must provide documentation to support their request for reinstatement, along with proof of 2.0 CEC, current CPR/AED, and a reinstatement fee of $219.00 per certification. Reinstatement will only be considered for individuals who are within six to twelve months beyond their expiration date.

If you have questions about renewing an expired certification in situations that meet the parameters above, please contact ACE Educational Services via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 782, or via email at EducationalServicesMail@ACEfitness.org.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS (CEC)

The ACE Professional Education Department reviews and approves over 3,000 continuing education courses from over 300 providers each year. This provides ACE Certified Professionals with ample opportunities to earn their CEC for certification renewal. All ACE-approved CEC can be found via the continuing education course search engine on the ACE website (http://www.ACEfitness.org/continuingeducation/default.aspx), where ACE-approved CEC can be searched by career track specializations, topic, CEC provider, course format (at home, conference, in class), CEC value, course start date, and location. This is a professional benefit to all ACE Certified Professionals and can be searched by all fitness and allied health professionals worldwide. Always look for the ACE Approved logo and a notation of how many CECs each course is worth. If you are unsure if a course is ACE approved, contact ACE Educational Services via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 782, or via email at EducationalServicesMail@ACEfitness.org for confirmation.

ACE recognizes that professional development and continuing education can come from sources other than traditional ACE-approved continuing education courses. Such Sources include:

- College course completion with a grade of ‘C’ or higher, with 0.8 CEC awarded per Quarter unit and 1.0 CEC awarded per Semester unit
- Passing an additional ACE certification exam results in 2.0 CEC for the studying involved in preparing for an ACE certification
Professional presentations can earn up to 0.5 CEC per renewal cycle for the research involved in developing the presentation.

Authorship of a correspondence course can earn up to 0.5 CEC per renewal cycle for the research involved in developing the course.

Serving on an ACE committee results in 0.5 CEC per calendar year.

Obtaining another NCCA-accredited fitness related certification results in 0.5 CEC.

Publishing fitness related articles, book chapters, books, or peer-reviewed journal articles can result in a maximum of 0.5 CEC per renewal cycle.

Clinical observation of surgical procedures that can enhance the understanding of human systems that relate to the certification can be worth a maximum of 0.2 CEC per renewal cycle.

Internships in a fitness or related setting can result in up to 0.2 CEC per renewal cycle (for college credit internships, see college course information above).

Community outreach in a fitness related event or similar can result in 0.1 CEC per renewal cycle.

For more information on how to maintain your ACE certification, log in to your My ACE Account and go to: http://www.ACEfitness.org/cp/certified-maintain.aspx.

CONTINUING EDUCATION PETITIONS

ACE recognizes that there are quality educational courses, workshops, and conferences that are not submitted in advance to the ACE Academy for review and awarding of ACE continuing education credits, and has developed the ACE Continuing Education Petition process. In the event that an ACE Certified Professional completes educational coursework that has not been reviewed and approved for ACE CEC, he or she may submit a petition for each individual course completed for consideration as continuing education for certification renewal. A $25.00 petition fee is assessed for each course being petitioned. Each submitted petition must contain a copy of the course materials with course syllabus or outline, learning objectives, the course instructor’s resume or curriculum vitae including academic background and/or certifications, and verification of course completion.

Petitions are reviewed by ACE Professional Services according to criteria established by the ACE Academy with input from the ACE Director of Credentialing. A petitioned course will be awarded continuing education credits only if it meets similar criteria to what is required for courses to be approved in advance by the ACE Academy. This includes the instructor holding either an ACE certification or a four-year college degree in exercise science or a related field to the subject areas taught (e.g., nutrition degree for nutrition related topics), and the course content must be appropriate to advance the knowledge, skills, and abilities the professional holding the specific ACE certification for which the course is being petitioned. For each hour of educational content, 0.1 CEC will be awarded. No CEC are awarded for activity classes, topics that fall outside of the scope of practice or are deemed inappropriate for the credential, or time dedicated to testing at the completion of a certificate program. Reviews will be completed within 15 days of receipt, after which the individual will be notified as to the final decision from ACE Professional Services. Courses that are not approved will not be refunded the $25.00 petition review and processing fee. To submit a petition for a course to be reviewed for continuing education credits, download a petition form from the ACE website at: https://www.acefitness.org/fitness-certifications/pdfs/Petition.pdf.

MAINTAINING YOUR CPR AND AED CERTIFICATES

As a fitness professional, you never know when you may be called upon to step in during a life-threatening event. With this in mind, ACE requires its Professionals to maintain a current adult CPR/AED certificate.

ACE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The ACE Educational Services Department is available to help ACE Certified Professionals maintain their ACE certifications and advance their careers. Everyone working in ACE Educational Services holds at least one ACE certification and has experience in the field. This professional team can help you with questions you may have about many topics including:

- Certification renewal process
- Use of the ACE Pro Site
- Career benefits
- Status of certification
- CEC status
- Liability insurance
- Secondary certification
- Available CEC courses
- Eligible CEC activities (alternative to attending a class)
- Practical Training

You can contact ACE Educational Services via phone at (800) 825-3636 or (858) 576-6500, ext. 782, or via email at EducationalServicesMail@ACEfitness.org.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

ACE is committed to help ACE Certified Professionals develop their careers through quality continuing education, advanced fitness certifications, and business opportunities. As such, ACE has created many opportunities to the 58,000 ACE Certified Professionals in the world. Some of those resources include:

ACE Resource Center
Your personal reference desk and library. Get answers on industry trends from highly qualified fitness professionals with access to 90 journals, 1,500 books and several databases of information. The ACE Resource Center is also open to the public.

Discounted Insurance
Exclusive access to discounted liability, studio and health insurance.

Professional Discount Program
Professional discounts and special offers on fitness apparel, educational programs, products and more.

ACE Apparel & Business Cards
Look the part of an ACE Certified Professional with business cards, apparel and other gear emblazoned with the ACE logo.

Find an ACE Pro
Located on the consumer side of the ACE website, this searchable online database puts you in front of thousands of consumers each month, and provides peace of mind to a potential employer or client by allowing them an easy tool for verifying your ACE certification.

Focus Groups & Surveys
From ACE decision-makers to the media, we rely on ACE Professionals for valuable feedback.
PRIVACY, SECURITY AND RECORDS RETENTION

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

No individual, under employment, contractual agreement, or volunteering to ACE shall dispense candidate or professional information without the expressed, written consent from the individual. Individuals requesting their information be released to third parties must submit a signed letter of consent to permit information release. All individuals, under employment, contractual agreement, or volunteering to ACE are required to sign non-disclosure agreements before commencing service.

Each candidate is assigned a customer identification number for ACE administrative purposes and will select their own username email address and password to access their own account. In the event a candidate forgets a username email address or password, they may contact ACE customer service via email or phone, who will then release the login information via an email to the candidate’s email address on file.

Confidential information will be made available to the appropriate parties if subpoenaed by a court of law or if the candidate or professional violates the ACE Code of Ethics whereby the appropriate authorities must be notified.

Certain information is not considered confidential as it is accessible within the public domain. This information includes:

- Certification status
- State of residence
- Position of standing with the American Council on Exercise
- Personal information that the professional willingly permits to be posted on the ACE “Find a Professional” search engine on the ACE website

The American Council on Exercise posts the ACE Private Policy information on its website at http://www.ACEfitness.org/privacy.aspx. To protect the privacy of all candidates, consumers, and current and former ACE Certified Professionals ACE posts a direct link to this ACE Private Policy at the bottom of every page of the ACE website (www.ACEfitness.org), to explain ACE’s online information practices and the choices individuals can make about the way their information is collected and used.

ACE requests only the information needed in order to provide the highest level of service to individuals using the ACE website or contacting ACE via email or phone. The types of personal information collected include:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Company information
- Email address
- Credit/Debit Card Information (for purchases only - credit card information is encrypted)
- Our Site logs IP addresses and browser types for the purposes of system administration and user functionality. These logs will be analyzed to improve the value of the materials available on our website. While user sessions are tracked, users remain anonymous. We do not link IP addresses to any personally identifiable information. We use no-identifying and aggregate information to better design our website.

We use the information you provide about yourself or someone else when placing an order or making a request only to the extent necessary to complete that order or request.

We will not sell your email address or any other personal information. From time to time, we may send information about our services to the email or mailing address provided by you. We may lease your mailing address to organizations that share our mission and meet our criteria and standards of excellence. As an email recipient, your email address is confidential. When an email message is sent to you, the sender does not see your name or email address. The sender of a message however is always identified and the sender's return email address is disclosed. This policy promotes responsible use of email and directs you to the right source if you feel that you are receiving inappropriate messages.

ACE will share and disclose any information posted by certified personal trainers to the ACE database with IDEA Health & Fitness Association and/or other third parties.
To be removed from receiving any mailings, you may contact our customer service department at support@ACEfitness.org or (800) 825-3636. Unless we think that such action is necessary to comply with the law or legal process or to protect the interests of ACE or others, we will not release personal information about you without your consent.

Individuals can access or correct the personally identifiable information that ACE maintains on them by contacting ACE Customer Service at support@ACEfitness.org or by visiting the ACE store and clicking on My Account. To better protect privacy and security, the individual’s email address must match the email address used to establish the account. ACE uses this procedure to better safeguard private information. Any individuals who have questions about their account may contact ACE Customer Service by phone at (800) 825-3636.

To prevent unauthorized access, maintain data accuracy, and ensure the correct use of information, ACE has put in place appropriate physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard and secure the information ACE collects. ACE website users are responsible for keeping their password secret and are encouraged to never give their password to anyone, even someone claiming to be an ACE employee. The ACE website may link to other websites that may collect user information or solicit personal information. ACE does not control these sites, therefore, ACE is not responsible or liable for the privacy practices or content of such sites.

Any candidate, consumer, or current or former ACE Certified Professional who has questions about his or her information on file and ACE policies for the protection of their private information should contact the ACE Customer Service Department at support@ACEfitness.org or (800) 825-3636.

LENGTH OF RECORDS RETENTION

The American Council on Exercise shall indefinitely retain records of all candidates and current and former ACE Certified Professionals as long as they remain affiliated with ACE as an organization or until they request (in writing) that the information be removed. While public record of their information will then be removed, ACE will retain the member’s records for a period of five years securely. Records of ACE continuing education providers shall be retained for five years. Professionals holding the ACE credential are encouraged to retain certification and continuing education information for a period of four years.

SECURITY

ACE information is maintained in secure databases and archived electronically to a secure local network. Individual information is accessible only via that person’s ACE web account protected by the username email address and password selected by the individual. Any hardcopy records are stored in locked filing cabinets in secure areas within the ACE administrative building.