Commission on Dietetic Registration
NDEP Area Meeting Questions and Answers
Updated February 2015

Candidate Name Release

1. **Q. Is the "Release of Candidate Data" section, of the examination application, clearly identified?**

   A. Yes, the on-line application requires that this question be answered in order for the appointment and payment to be processed. The actual question is:

   "I authorize Pearson VUE to release my test results with my name to my Program Director? Click "Yes" if you wish to release your results with your name."

2. **Q. Why can't CDR release the names of students with their scores? It will help to identify students who are failing the exam.**

   A. Donald A. Balasa, JD, MBA, Chair, National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and Executive Director and Legal Counsel of the American Association of Medical Assistants provided the following information to NDEP members in October 2012.

   Compliance with all the Standards and Standards of Interpretations is **mandatory** for certification programs to become, or remain accredited by the NCCA. CDR is accredited by NCCA.

   It is the opinion of the NCCA that NCCA-accredited certification programs are permitted to include on the examination application form a statement that the name of each candidate and her/his test score(s) will be released to the academic program from which she/he has graduated (or will graduate) unless the application indicates on the form that she/he does not want this information released. This statement must be in a conspicuous place on the examination application form and in reasonably noticeable type so that it would not be overlooked by the average candidate.

   a. Scores are disclosed to education program, *unless the candidate opts out*.
   b. Scores are **not** disclosed to education programs, *unless the candidate opts in*.

   Generally, licensure is a mandatory credentialing system established by state law. Generally, certification is a voluntary credentialing system provided by a private sector body.

   There is a major difference between: (a) the authority of a state licensing board to mandate release of licensing examination scores to academic programs (or event more widely); and the right of a private sector certifying body to release test scores to academic programs. The primary purpose of licensure is public protection. Because of the strong interests of the state and its people, the state legislature can require the names of candidates for licensure and their scores to be released to their respective academic programs. However, certification is not a creature of state law, and candidates' rights of confidentiality/privacy pertaining to their test scores are greater than they are in a licensure situation. In other words, in certification there is no countervailing state interest militating

in favor or releasing examination results to programs.

The Federal Privacy Law, enacted in 1974, prohibits the release of examination scores without the permission of the examinee. Unlike many other credentialing programs, CDR releases scores without the examinee name regardless of the number of examinees included on the institutional score report. Many other credentialing programs do not provide institutional score reports if the number of examinees falls below a minimal number; e.g., less than 10, due to the increased likelihood that individual student scores could be identified. CDR encourages Program Directors to continue to emphasize to their graduates the importance of releasing score information.

3. **Q.** **Why does CDR give candidates a choice whether to provide their name or not?**

A. Examination candidates have the legal right to protect their privacy. When they take the registration examination, they are former students of dietetics programs and are not obligated to provide their name to their previous academic or supervised practice programs. Program directors are encouraged to counsel their students about the importance of releasing their name along with the examination scores for program evaluation purposes.

CDR's testing agency Pearson VUE requires that all examination candidates respond to the following question at the time they apply to take examination prior to the testing date. The candidate is not able to alter their response after submitting their reservation.

"Pearson VUE will send my test scores to my program director. I authorize Pearson VUE to send

to my name as well to my program director.   *Yes*   *No*

> *Test results are only used by the program director as part of ongoing*
> *program evaluation to improve program effectiveness."*

Dietetic Technicians, Registered

4. **Q.** **How many dietetic technicians are currently registered with CDR?**

A. As of December 31, 2014, there are 5,300 NDTR's.

5. **Q.** **Is CDR discontinuing the DTR credential?**

A. No, although the Council of Future Practice 2012 Visioning Report included a recommendation to discontinue the DTR Credential, CDR has made the decision to continue to support the credential as long as it's financially feasible to do so. In 2014, CDR expanded the dietetic technician credential title options to include the Nutrition and Dietetic Technician, Registered (NDTR).

The registry continues to grow as there are currently 5,337 NDTRs and DTRs.

6.   Q.   **How many BS/DPD program graduates have applied to take the registration examination for dietetic technicians and have taken the examination?**

A. Please review the summary information below:

Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians - First Time Candidates

	Total Eligible	Total Tested & Percentages*	Percent Passing					
			2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Pathway 1 (Traditional Associate Degree)	1919	1236 - 64%	56%	67%	65%	61%	62%	72%
Pathway 2 (DPD + Supervised Practice)	21	17 - 81%	63%	50%	50%	0%	100%	0%
Pathway 3 (DPD Only)	4170	1883 - 45%	66%	65%	66%	64%	67%	74%

* Percentages reflect the total number of first-time examinees compared to the total eligible population from 2009 to 2014 ytd.

**Total includes Dietetic Technician Pathway 3 candidates since implementation June 1, 2009.

Score Reports

7.   Q.   **Why can't CDR release all four examination domain sub-scores? It would help to inform pedagogy. Noted trends will help inform progress or potential weakness of program. Need scores by domains so educators can review/assess for trends and areas to be changed/ improved in curriculums and rotations. Upper administration wants us to identify specific areas in outcomes data that need to be addressed/revised, etc.**

A.   While CDR understands the need for program faculty to assess the effectiveness of their educational program, it is important to note important differences between educational and certification testing. Certification testing methodology focuses its measurement precision on discriminating at the cut score or passing level, with a corresponding lack of measurement precision at the higher and lower levels of performance. In addition, modern computer based testing models allow pass/fail decisions to be made with many fewer questions than previously needed. While this is helpful in controlling development costs and reducing item exposure, it reduces the number of questions taken by certification candidates, and therefore, reduces the number of questions available to produce valid and reliable sub-scores on an examination. Thus, while certification tests are extremely reliable near the pass/fail level of performance, they are necessarily less reliable near the extremes of performance, and therefore particularly unsuited and unreliable for diagnostic or educational testing, or for student ranking purposes. The number of questions required to make a reliable pass/fail decision in a broad area of practice (such as on a certification examination) is far fewer than the number required to produce a number of stable, reliable sub-scores. A small number of test questions in a sub-area (say 5 or 10), is very likely to produce spurious, non-reliable results, which is often worse than no information at all, causing students and educators alike to draw incorrect conclusions.

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8.   **Q.**   **Who should program directors contact when they have problems accessing institutional Program reports, or have concerns regarding the accuracy of report data?**

      A.   All ACEND Dietetics Education Program Directors receive two e-mail communications regarding the availability of the following institutional examination summary reports annually. In February the following reports are sent: July – December 6-month summary report, five-year summary report and the one-year testing summary report, and in August the January to June 6-month summary report, from CDR's testing agency, Pearson VUE. Two emails are sent to the program director; the first email contains the current CDR Program Director report login/user name and the second contains the password.

      The reports are available by visiting https://pearsoncdrreport.streamworksmn.com. The reports can be viewed online or the PDF can be downloaded. It is recommended that program directors save their reports in a local folder so they can easily access them for future reference. For any questions on accessing your reports program directors may contact CDRProgramReport@Pearson.com .

      For questions or concerns regarding the accuracy of the reports, please contact Elaine Butler (ebutler@eatright.org) at CDR.

9.   **Q.**   **We've had 100% pass rate for a number of years, but I want to make sure I'm reading that right. Prospective interns want to know and one of my outcome measures is RD Exam pass rate. For those interns who don't reveal whether they've passed, can I delete them from the results?**

      A.   Program graduates have the option to reveal their names along with their examination scores to their program directors. Examination scores that are anonymous still are a part of that program's reporting data. Therefore, you cannot ignore or delete these scores from your program's results.

10.   **Q.**   **What other score reporting results can be provided to better assist those programs with a pass rate of less than 80% to improve the program? The two sub-scaled categories are very broad.**

      A.   Beginning in 2013, an additional examination score report that measures candidate's success within one calendar year of testing. ACEND distributes this report annually. Please contact ACEND staff at 800/877-1600, ext. 5400 for more information.

11.   **Q.**   **Can the student get a score that reflects the questions correct per domain, not just grouped in two general areas.**

      A.   No, for the same reasons as described in the response to the previous Question 4.

12.   **Q.**   **If the student doesn't release their name and then retakes it (the exam) later-say a**

couple of years from now, how do we track who has taken it and if they ever passed.

A.   The most accurate way to track a candidate is if they release their names for score reporting purposes. Program directors may want to survey their program graduates to help them discover who has previously taken the examination, and instruct current students as to the reasons why releasing their names with the scores is important for program tracking. Program Directors may also contact CDR to check the registered status of a former graduate. While CDR can verify registered status, it cannot release specific examination information e.g., examination attempts, or pass/fail status.

13.   Q.   **Does the 5-year report come only once every five years, or is it re-calculated each year? (i.e.; 2003-2007, then 2004-2008, then 2005-2009)**

A.   The five-year report is issued annually, summarizing the previous five years; i.e., 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. Due to CDR's testing vendor transition in 2013 to Pearson VUE from ACT, the five-year summary report data from ACT (2010 – 2013) and the 2014 Pearson VUE report will have to be reviewed and compared. As Pearson VUE's relationship ages, the annual data will be added to the five-year report.

14.   Q.   **Is there any plan for more frequent reporting of exam results to program directors?**

A.   No, CDR does not plan to change or increase the number or frequency of examination score reports. The schedule for program score reporting has been established based on candidate testing volume and the usual academic year using June 30 and December 31 as the cut-off dates.

15.   Q.   **When are the five year reports sent out?**

A.   The five-year summary score reports are mailed 45 days after December 31. Program directors typically receive the reports around February 20 of each year.

16.   Q.   **Please explain the scaled scoring process in more easy to understand terms?**

A.   CDR uses a scaled score to report examination scores; the scale is 1-50 with 25 always being the passing scaled score. The number of questions the examinee must answer to obtain the scaled passing score of 25 varies. This variation is due to the fact that each examination includes a different set of questions. Because every examination is different, one may be more difficult or easier than another. The "raw" scores are adjusted on the scale so that the examinee is not penalized because their examination was more difficult or rewarded because their examination was easier. Testing vendor psychometricians know the difficulty of each examination question based on past administrations. The scaled score process is used to report most national standardized examination results such as the college entrance examinations. An explanation of the scaled score is also included in the Candidate Handbook on page 29-31. Here is the link: http://cdrnet.org/vault/2459/web/files/ADA%20CDR%20RD%20Handbook.pdf

17.   Q.   **Are the registration examination test scores examined by either range of percent**

correct, or correct number of questions answered?

A. Yes, psychomatricians at CDR's testing agency, Pearson VUE, conduct a thorough analysis of the test scores. CDR has made the decision to only release scaled scores because release of the raw scores would generate candidate confusion with some candidates passing and others failing with the same raw score due to the variances in exam difficulty noted in response to Question 13.

18. Q. **Are examination scores for students who completed a dietetics education program several years ago included on the institutional summary reports provided to program directors?**

A. CDR includes aggregate examination score information for program graduates who completed the dietetics education program within the last five years.

Miscellaneous

19. Q. **Please explain why the CDR registration examination is not based on the ACEND competency standards?**

A. The registration examinations are designed to assess entry-level competence to practice, rather than as educational assessment examinations. Both the registration examinations and the ACEND competency standards are based on the results of the dietetics practice audit conducted every five years. This assures congruence between the examination and the educational competencies. While the CDR examination must be careful to test for competence to practice, the educational competencies may include skills and "cutting edge" new information that cannot be assessed on the registration examination, for example counseling skills are difficult to assess on the multiple choice registration examination.

20. Q. **Do dietetics educators have access to the full practice audit reports?**

A. CDR expends considerable resources to conduct the dietetics practice audit every five years. The complete results are shared with the Commission on Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and Academy Research Team. A summary of the results are published in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.* CDR will consider requests for use of the data on a case-by-case basis with a written request including a full explanation of the research project.

Program Audit

21. Q. **If a program is in audit, will CDR tell a student who calls regarding their application status that their application is pending?**

A. Yes, it is CDR's procedure to indicate to students whether or not an application has been received and its status.

22.   Q.   **Why is it necessary to hold up processing the entire class submitted when one application was not filled out properly? During the summer when applications are often processed, the program director may not be available to obtain the correct information?**

       A.   CDR makes the assumption that the Program Director has previously reviewed and edited their students' application materials prior to submission. Recognizing that many program directors are away from their offices during the summer months, CDR developed a special contact form for use in resolving application issues. CDR will expedite the processing of the class, without the incomplete or incorrect student application, upon program director's written authorization.

23.   Q.   **Why are test sites closed?**

       A.   Beginning January 1, 2014 CDR's examination will only be given at Pearson VUE corporate centers.

Content Outline Questions

24.   Q.   **Was the content outline based on only the survey respondents? Wouldn't this squew ACTUAL practice if based only on those who completed the survey?**

       A.   The content outline is based on the results of the entry-level Dietetics Practice Audit survey conducted every five years. The last audit was done in 2010. Survey participants are selected from a highly stratified, random sample of RDs and DTRs. The high percentage of survey respondents satisfies research requirements which allow the response data to be extended to the entire population of entry-level RDs and DTRs.

25.   Q.   **When are you going to do another survey (Practice Audit) to change the domain percentages?**

       A.   The next entry-level dietetics practice audit is being conducted in 2015. Updated test specifications will be effective January 1, 2017.

26.   Q.   **The practice audit results from 2010 indicated much lower frequency and involvement in management related functions compared to nutrition care. The management and food service management component is 21% and 17% respectively of the exam. Why?**

       A.   The practice audit results showed a lower number of entry-level practitioners who were practicing dietetics in management and food service areas. The Content Outline reflected this change in actual practice.

27.   Q   **Did I understand correctly that each candidate exam has the same number of questions in each domain -- so for each test of 100 scored questions there will be 12**

in Food and Nutrition Science, 50 in Nutrition Care Process, etc.

A.   Yes, the 100 questions are divided according to the percent distribution documented in the Content Outlines for the registration examination for dietitians and 80 questions for the registration examination for dietetic technicians.

28.   Q   **Do you also have a current test content breakdown for the dietetic technician examination, as you do for the dietitian exam?**

A.   The Content Outline/Test Specifications for the scored items of the Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians can be found on the CDR website at: http://cdrnet.org/certifications/registration-examination-for-dietetic-technicians-test-specifications-effective-January-1-2012

Examination Questions

29.   Q.   **Do questions start out at a certain level of ability and then increase in difficulty?**

A.   No, the examination questions do not increase in difficulty as the examination progresses. Each question has its own level of difficulty. However, when all the questions on an examination are pooled together, the level of difficulty from one examination to another varies slightly and is adjusted through the scaled scoring process described in Question 13.

30.   Q.   **A recent student did not pass and mentioned that many of the questions asked, "What would you do first?" I thought this type of question had been discontinued. Please comment. Thanks.**

A.   The registration examination determines if a candidate is competent and ready to practice. Situational, application questions are used to determine readiness.

31.   Q.   **Are there always just four answers per question?**

A.   Yes.

32.   Q.   **Are questions weighted?**

A.   Yes.

33.   Q.   **Can a student pass the exam if they answered all the questions correctly in all areas but one?**

A.   Possibly. If they did not successfully answer all the questions in Domain II correctly, they would fail since this domain is 50% of the dietitian examination.

34.   Q.   **Are all the questions numbered?**

A.   Yes.

35. Q. **When scenarios are written, and several questions relate to the scenario are presented, can the student re-read the scenario or do they have to remember the case?**

    A. Scenario-type questions are single questions only. The use of one scenario for multiple questions was discontinued with the implementation of computer-based testing.

36. Q. **Are examinees expected to have any equations/math formulas memorized for the test?**

    A. No. Other than knowing basic formulas, the examination candidate should not have to remember mathematical formulas. Typically, the examination item/question should have sufficient information in it so that the candidate can compute the correct answer.

Study Guide

37. Q. **Is there a study guide approved by CDR? How do study guides get sample questions?**

    A. The Commission on Dietetic Registration publishes two study guides: *Study Guide for the Registration Examination for Dietitians* and *Study Guide for the Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians*. Both study guides include a comprehensive study outline, references and practice examination. The practice examination is provided in hard copy and online formats. The online practice exam has been designed to simulate the actual computerized examination. Study Guide sample questions have been selected by the Examination Panel and retired from the actual examination question/item bank.

38. Q. **May I have contact information please?**

    A. To purchase the Study Guides for the Registration Examinations for either Dietitians (catalog number 062512) or Dietetic Technicians (catalog number 063012), the candidate can call the Academy Member Services at 800/877/1600, ext. 5000. The cost of a study guide is $65 plus shipping and handling.

39. Q. **Why doesn't CDR offer the study guide examination on computer?**

    A. Beginning with the 2011 editions of the Study Guides for the Registration Examination for Dietitians and Dietetic Technicians, the practice examination is online. This computerized examination is designed to simulate the actual examination.

40. Q. **Should candidates preparing to write the registration examination use the most recent edition of a reference to study, when an older edition is listed in the study guide reference section?**

    A. Candidates should use the most recent edition of the reference book, if possible, when preparing to take the examination. Annually, all questions are reviewed by CDR's Examination Panel for currency and accuracy prior to administration, and new

references are consulted.

41.   Q.   Which study resource includes questions which most closely match the actual examination question style?

   A.   The practice examination questions included in either the CDR *Study Guide for the Registration Examination for Dietitians or Dietetic Technicians* are questions that were once part of the actual examination item pool. These questions will most closely resemble the style of questions on the actual examination.

Scoring

42.   Qa.   Please clarify again the additional 20 scored questions. Did you say that the student will only receive additional 20 questions IF there is not a clear determination of pass or fail after the first 100 questions are answered?
   b.   After the candidate has completed the 100 questions and the pretest questions (25), describe the situation in which they may receive more questions.

   A.   Up to 20 additional questions can be presented to an examination candidate to clarify their pass or fail status. The computer can terminate the examination at any time between question 125 and 145 (dietitian) or question 110 and 130 (technician) if the examination score can be clearly determined.

43.   Q.   The way I interpret the testing format is that after the first 100 then the remaining questions are focused on areas that have not been successfully completed.

   A.   No, the computerized examination will continue to provide scored questions to the candidate using the percentage distribution documented in the Content Outline. Pretest unscored questions may not conform to the content outline.

44.   Q.   I really do not understand how the question allows for determining if the person falls into the qualified category.
   A.   No one question determines a candidate's ability. Rather, each question provides some information. Responding to your question using classical statistics may help you understand better. There is a statistic called "item discrimination" which is really a correlation between answering the question (right or wrong) and the examinee outcome (passing or failing). {If you would like to read up on it, this is a phi correlation or a special case of the Pearson r.} By responding to many items of known performance we can quite accurately determine whether a candidate is ready to practice or not.

45.   Q.   Please clarify the following - scaled scoring means that a single question may have more informational value than another and will contribute more to the final score. Is this correct?

   A.   Yes, that is correct.

46.   Q.   Is CDR concerned about the falling pass rate on the exam?

A. The primary purpose of a registration examination is to discriminate between those examinees who are minimally competent to practice at entry-level and those who are not. Passing rates on both entry-level registration examinations are expected to fluctuate over time based on examinee competence. Historically, the pass rates on both examinations fall slightly when the test specifications are revised every five years to reflect the practice audit results. You will note on the attached Examination Performance History summaries that the pass rate goes back up. We see this same trend with this cycle of the exam. In 2013-14 the passing rate for first-time candidates for the registration examination for dietitians was 85%, and for dietetic technicians 70%.

Sub-Scores

47. **Q.** **If a test taker fails the test, is there any way a test taker can find out what their weakness was?**

A. There are two sub-scores that are available for the examination candidate to review; Food and Nutrition Sciences (Domains I & II) and Foodservice Systems/Management (Domains III and IV). The candidate can also review the Examination Study Outline to reflect on their examination experience and identify the topic areas in which they may be weak.

48. **Q.** **Questions from which domains are in each subscale--nutrition versus foodservice?**

A. Sub-score #1, Food and Nutrition Sciences (Domains I & II)
Sub-score #2, Foodservice Systems/Management (Domains III & IV)

Candidate Info

49. **Q.** **Some dietetics education program directors have indicated that their institutions are no longer permitting social security numbers to be used in college/university records, including transcripts. How will CDR track students without requiring Social Security Numbers (SSN)?**

A. The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) transitioned from collecting the last four digits of an individual's social security number as a secondary identifier and replaced it with "Date of Birth" and "Mother's Maiden Name." CDR implemented these changes January 1, 2015, to coincide with the year-end registration eligibility applications that will be submitted from program directors for their December graduates.

The revised Verification Form is available on the Program Director portal so that it can be used by program directors when submitting registration eligibility applications to CDR. The updated verification form will have a 01/01/2015 effective date. A fact sheet about the verification statement is located on ACEND's Web site at http://www.eatright.org/ACEND/content.aspx?id=66.

50. Q. **On-demand testing has benefits, but we are frustrated with students who have the attitude, "I'll just take it the first time without studying to see what it is like. Next time I'll study and take it for real." Programs are assessed, of course, on the basis of first time takers. Has CDR considered this trend?**

    A. CDR has not been made aware that examination candidates have this attitude toward taking the registration examination. Educators may want to stress to their students the importance of being well prepared to successfully pass the examination on the first attempt.

51. Q. **What suggestion do you have for candidates who have taken the exam several times and failed?**

    A. Circumstances vary for each individual. Some candidates need to study the material more, and others may need to learn more about the strategies for taking a multiple choice examination. It is best to interview each examination candidate to determine his/her issues and discuss possible aids and solutions.

52. Q. **Does CDR (Pearson VUE) require that both the candidate's name and address match on their government issued photo ID, and authorization to test and appointment letters to be admitted to the testing center?**

    A. No, CDR (Pearson VUE) does not currently require that both the name and address match on the US government issued photo ID and authorization to test email to be admitted to the testing center. Only the name has to match. Previously, CDR required the address to match. The decision was made in 2007 to require only the name to match.

53. Q. **Does CDR collect ethnic, race, age or gender demographic information regarding examination candidates or its registrants?**

    A. No. This decision was made by the Commission at its beginning, based on the recommendation of its legal counsel, and the Commission has maintained this policy. The Academy, however, does collect this information regarding its members and it has been extrapolated to the registered dietitians and dietetic technicians.

Exam Eligibility

55. Q. **Can an individual take the exam before completing their experience such as an internship?**

    A. No. All candidates for the registration examination for dietitians must have completed the minimum of a bachelor's degree, didactic program in dietetics (DPD) requirements, and a ACEND accredited supervised practice (i.e., internship) prior to becoming eligible to take the registration exam for dietitians.

55. Q. **How many times can an examinee retake the exam and in what time period?**

     A. There is a 45 day waiting period in between each examination experience. Candidates can retake the examination as many times as they wish.

56. Q. **How many times can a candidate take the exam?**

     A. There is no limit on how many times a registration eligible candidate can take the examination.

57. Q. **What is the turnaround time between processing the registration eligibility application and a candidate being able to take the registration examination?**

     A. The "Flow Chart, Registration Eligibility Application Process" is on CDR's website: http://cdrnet.org/vault/2459/web/files/Flowchart.pdf. The process can take 4-14 days depending on the speed of applicant response and CDR's application volume.

Exam Structure

58. Q. **Why are candidates not able to go back and review or skip questions and answer later?**

     A. Candidates must answer each question as presented before going to the next question on the computer-based examination. This policy is in effect to protect the security of the exam by not allowing candidates to review or memorize questions for unauthorized sharing purposes. This policy also insures that the candidates are knowledgeable about the information and can respond accurately the first time it is presented. Documented testing statistics show that an examination candidate's first choice of an answer is usually the correct choice. If a candidate has the opportunity to review and change their answer, there is a 75% chance of the candidate selecting the wrong answer. This information is reliable across licensure and certification examinations.

59. Q. **Can a candidate skip a question and come back to it?**

     A. No, the candidate must respond to each question before they can proceed to the next question. Candidates are not allowed to review questions once they are answered and accepted.

60. Q. **How does CDR address the fact that standardized testing is a culturally biased process in light of diversity goals/needs for the profession? Should there be multifaceted evaluation forms of competency?**

     A. CDR recognizes that bias in testing is a complex issue that has received increased scientific and public attention. From the inception of its testing program in 1970, CDR has been committed to the inclusion of bias prevention steps in its examination

development process. The basis of this process is the use of practice audit data that is practice/job related and representative of cultural diversity in dietetics practice to develop the examination content specifications. In the subsequent examination development step, the process of item writing and review, CDR has consistently included writers and reviewers who represent diverse population subgroups engaged in dietetics practice. This assists in ensuring that under-represented group perspectives are represented in the items. This review activity is repeated throughout the examination development process. Annually, all newly written items are reviewed by a Bias Review Panel volunteer group comprised of underrepresented population groups. These volunteers conduct a careful review of all new questions to identify and remove any questions that may be biased.

61. Q. How does the test development process ensure that examination questions are current? Are question writers required to provide references for each question?

A. New questions are written every year by trained item writers representing diverse geographic, ethnic and dietetics practice perspectives. The CDR Examination Panel and content expert reviewers representing diverse ethnic, geographic and practice perspectives review all new questions for currency, accuracy and absence of bias before they are pretested. Entire item pools are reviewed on an annual basis when outdated items are archived and new items are introduced. Every item must be referenced by the item writer prior to submission.

62. Q. Can the *Study Guide for the Registration Examination for Dietitians* practice examination be copied by educators to distribute to students?

A. No. The *Study Guide* is copyrighted. CDR established a nominal charge of $65.00 per copy for the *Guide* with the intent that every candidate would have access to all the information included in the *Guide,* not just the practice examination.

63. Q. Does every candidate get a comparable test as far as the percentage of questions coming from each domain being equal to the study guide test specs?

A. Yes. Every examinee receives an examination that adheres to the content specifications described in the *Candidate Handbooks.* However, it is important to note that each examinee also receives un-scored pretest questions (twenty for dietitian examinees and thirty for dietetic technician examinees), and each exam candidate receives different pretest questions. These questions are newly written and may or may not adhere to the content outline. Depending on the needs of CDR examination question pool, the pretest questions may focus on one or two content areas. This may lead examinees to perceive that their examination is heavily weighted in a particular content area.

64. Q. If a student gets an examination question wrong, do they still receive the same percentage of questions according to the test specifications?

A. Yes, candidates still receive the same examination content. Incorrect question responses do not alter the examination content.

65. **Q.** **Are examinees allowed to change question responses, skip questions, or review question responses?**

    A. No. Each question will require a response in order to continue the examination process. Once an examinee answers a question and continues to the next question, the examinee is not permitted to review or change previous examination questions/responses. This policy was established by CDR to enhance examination security and the credibility of the RD and DTR credentials.

66. **Q.** **Several students have failed the exam on the first try due to "computer problems", and then passed on the 2nd try. What can be done about this?**

    A. CDR is concerned by this query. We maintain a log of all CBT technical problems reported to us by examinees. In no instance has an examinee failed due to a technical difficulty. All computer problems are to be reported to the onsite test proctor for immediate resolution. If the problem cannot be resolved within thirty minutes, the examinee is rescheduled for an alternate test appointment. In no instance is the candidate given a failed score report solely because of a technical problem.

67. **Q.** **Does the exam begin immediately, or are there practice questions to get the test-taker used to the format?**

    A. An examination tutorial is available at the beginning of each examination. The testing appointment is scheduled for a three-hour period to allow examinees thirty minutes to complete the tutorial before going on to the two and one-half hour examination.

  Special Accommodations

68. **Q.** **Are there any accommodations for exam candidates with special test taking needs?**

    A. The CDR Registration Examination Handbook for Candidates (Dietitian and Dietetic Technician) provides detailed instructions for candidates to follow if they are requesting special accommodations; i.e., extended time, food and/or beverage breaks, etc. A copy of each handbook is available on CDR's website, www.cdrnet.org under Dietetics Program Students and Graduates.

69. **Q.** **What if a student has a learning disability and needs extended time, will the two and one-half hour testing time be extended?**

    A. Yes. The testing time can be extended for examinees that have a documented learning disability. The *Handbook for Candidates,* which is included on the program director page of the CDR website, includes specific instructions regarding the special testing accommodation process. The *Handbook* is also electronically sent to all examination applicants.

  ACEND

70.   Q.   **If scaled scores are not useful to compare groups, how can graduates' scores be used to compare programs?**

      A.   The benchmark for program success is set by ACEND; 80% first time passage rate on the registration exam for dietitians and 70% first-time passage rate on the registration exam for dietetic technicians. ACEND now uses one-year pass rate as another source of data for program evaluation.

71.   Q.   **Why does ACEND hold programs to an 80% pass rate for first time test takers if the purpose of the RD exam is to determine if a candidate is competent to practice and not to reflect on the content of the undergraduate program?**

      A.   The purpose of an ACEND accredited program is to prepare registered dietitians and dietetic technicians, registered. Therefore, ACEND established pass rate benchmarks to determine if programs successfully prepare individuals to become registered dietitians or dietetic technicians, registered. ACEND listened to feedback from program directors and added a second pass rate benchmark, one-year pass rate, to provide programs with an additional measurement of pass rate success. ACEND has developed a Pass Rate Improvement Plan Template to guide the analysis of program components to determine the possible factor(s) influencing the pass rate.

Foreign Language & Test Sites

72.   Q.   **Is CDR planning to offer the registration examination in other languages, or will additional time be allowed for examinees for which English is a second language?**

      A.   CDR has given careful consideration to requests to offer its examinations in a second language. CDR has made the decision not to administer the registration examinations in a second language for several reasons including:
      - The RD credential is a national credential in the United States where English is the official language. English and Spanish are the official languages in Puerto Rico.
      - It is reasonable for employers and the public to assume that CDR credentialed practitioners are fluent in the English language.
      - It is cost prohibitive to develop a separate Spanish registration examination in Puerto Rico. The Spanish dialect spoken in Puerto Rico is different than that spoken by other Spanish populations which would limit use of this Spanish examination to Puerto Rico.
      - English language, textbooks, software and comprehensive examinations are used in ACEND accredited programs in Puerto Rico.

      English as a second language is not currently defined as a reason for special testing accommodations, such as extended time, under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

73.   Q.   **Will the test ever be administered in other languages?**

      A.   CDR has given careful consideration to requests to offer its examinations in a second

language. CDR has made the decision not to administer the registration examination in a second language. Please see the response for question 72.

74. Q.   Can exam candidates take the exam in a foreign country?

A.   Beginning in 2014, the registration examinations can be administered by Pearson VUE internationally. Eligible candidates are to contact Pearson VUE for more information.

Item Writers

75. Q.   How would an individual volunteer as an examination item writer for the registration exams?

A.   Individuals wanting to volunteer to be an item writer for the entry-level registration examinations need to complete the Item Writer Volunteer Form; http://www.cdrnet.org/vault/2459/web/files/itemwritingvolunteerform.pdf. This form needs to be returned to CDR, where they are all reviewed and considered. Volunteers are invited to the annual workshop based on specific criteria; current professional position, experience, and dietetics practice area. Only 12-15 volunteers are invited annually to write for the dietitian examination and 6 for the dietetic technician exam.