

# Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition Candidate Handbook



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition for Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) or Registered Dietitians (RD) is offered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), the credentialing agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition is granted in recognition of the applicant's documented clinical nutrition practice experience and successful completion of a computerized examination designed to assess advanced practice. There is one, three-week examination window in November. It is essential that you keep this Candidate Handbook readily available for reference until you have successfully completed the examination. You are responsible for knowing its contents.

## **TESTING AGENCIES**

The Caviart Group is currently the professional agency retained by CDR to assist in the development, scoring, and analysis of this examination. Pearson VUE is the professional agency retained by CDR to administer the examination.

## **STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

CDR, The Caviart Group and Pearson VUE do not discriminate among candidates on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, disability or marital status.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information about candidates for testing and their examination results is considered confidential. Test question drafts and other materials used to create examination questions (except for test content outlines or reference lists) are secure and confidential. All such materials shall be kept in secure, locked storage, accessible only by authorized

personnel, and not disclosed to or shared with others. All questions written and materials developed for questions are considered a "work for hire," and remain the property of CDR. Question writers are not allowed to conduct "review courses" or other programs designed to prepare candidates to take a CDR advanced practice examination. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no information identifiable with any candidate, unless authorized by the candidate.

CDR asks that each practitioner work to maintain the integrity of the advanced practice examination so that it can provide a quality certification—one that highlights the AP-RDN, AP-RD as a certified expert in advanced clinical nutrition practice. Thus, it is important to not discuss the examination content, questions and/or study resources. Each time examination content is discussed the exam is compromised and there is significant loss, not only in fiscal terms (cost of test development), but also in the many hours spent creating, reviewing, editing and compiling statistics for examination questions. Discussing the examination content is unethical and provides exam candidates an unfair advantage when taking the examination.

## **COPYRIGHTED EXAMINATION QUESTIONS**

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of CDR. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to severe civil and criminal penalties.

## EXAMINATION APPOINTMENTS

All candidates approved by CDR as eligible to take the examination will automatically receive an authorization to test e-mail from Pearson VUE, CDR's testing vendor. The authorization to test email contains a personal CDR Candidate ID and dates of initial authorization. It also includes instructions regarding creating an account with Pearson VUE and the web address where the exam may be scheduled. A copy of this email should be kept in a secure location. This email will explain the process to schedule an exam and create login credentials for Pearson VUE's website. Candidates should receive this e-mail no later than one month before the examination window opens. If unable to locate the e-mail, make sure to check the e-mail junk/spam folder. Candidates who have any questions regarding the authorization to test e-mail, please contact Pearson VUE customer service at 888-874-7651.

## UPDATE OF ACCOUNT

Begin by reviewing the candidate profile. Sign in to the CDR/Pearson VUE web portal using assigned login credentials. On the home page select "My Profile" under the My Account section. Changes to e-mail addresses, mailing addresses, and phone numbers need to be made in writing to CDR.

For candidate identity protection, name changes must be submitted with legal documentation via the mail to the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR), attention Advanced Practice in Clinical Nutrition Certification. Candidates must use the Name/Address Change Form located on CDR's website ([cdrnet.org](http://cdrnet.org)). Documentation must include the original legal document, such as a marriage license, divorce decree, or court order

showing the name change. A notarized copy of the original document will be accepted. Original documents will be returned upon request. Please be sure to indicate that you are an exam candidate. Name changes can be sent to: Commission on Dietetic Registration, Attention: Advanced Practice Certification, 120 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000, Chicago, Illinois 60606. CDR is unable to accept faxed or scanned copies attached to e-mails. Candidates who have any questions regarding name change, should contact CDR.

Only the candidate's legal name as it appears on an *original* (no photo copies), *valid* (unexpired) *government issued ID* that includes their name, photograph, and signature, should be used. Use of nicknames or abbreviations must be avoided. In this Handbook for Candidates, Admission to Examination (page 5), there are directions which state that the candidate's name in Pearson VUE's scheduling system profile must match the name on the government-issued photo identification card to gain access at the test centers.

An e-mail address is required in order to schedule an exam. Since e-mail is the main method of communicating with candidates, a permanent e-mail address should be listed in the e-mail field. Do not use an academic institution e-mail address (like a school .edu address) unless it is permanent. It is the candidate's responsibility to make sure their e-mail address is current.

Address, city, state, and ZIP code fields should be updated with CDR, if necessary. At least one telephone number is required. Make sure your permanent telephone number is in the Telephone Number field, and fill out the other telephone number fields as necessary.

## SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

To schedule an appointment, the candidate must:

- sign in to the CDR/Pearson VUE web portal using the username and password you received upon creating your Pearson VUE account
- select the Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition Examination option under Pre-approved Exams in the CDR Exams section to schedule an exam.
- select “Schedule this Exam”
- candidates must agree that they will not disclose any information about the exam to anyone else. In order to proceed with the application, the candidate must select “I Agree” and click “Next” to save this selection.
- use the Test Center Search to locate a test center using either you address or Zip Code. Select and test location and use the “Next” button to proceed
- use the calendar tool to see available test times on a certain date
- select an available test time
- review the appointment schedule examination appointment.
- The system will display the exam policies for cancellation and rescheduling and candidates must agree to the CDR policies to proceed

Please Note: the candidate must agree that he/she will not disclose any information about the exam to anyone else. Agreement to that question is required in order to proceed with the scheduling.

For questions about scheduling an exam, step by step instructions are posted on

[www.pearsonvue.com/CDR](http://www.pearsonvue.com/CDR). For further assistance, contact Pearson VUE at 1-888-874-7651, 7:00 am – 7:00 am Central Time, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

## TEST CENTER LOCATIONS

The Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition Examination is administered at over two hundred and fifty (250) Pearson VUE professional test centers in the United States and selected international locations.

## SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

Candidates applying for test accommodations must not sign in to the candidate account and register at this time. Instead, read and follow the instructions provided at the following website: [www.pearsonvue.com/accommodations](http://www.pearsonvue.com/accommodations). There you will find information about accommodations and the application process. It will also include information on comfort aids which do not require an accommodations application. Follow the instructions in the Guidelines for Candidates. Do not ask your physicians, other professionals, or other agencies providing documentation to mail your documents separately. **You must send all documentation together to the fax number in the Guidelines for Candidates. All accommodation requests and supporting documents must be submitted for evaluation each time you want to test with accommodations.**

CDR makes every reasonable effort to accommodate applicants for the Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition Examination who are disabled, as that term is defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 2008. Under the ADA, a person is disabled if he or she has a physical or mental

impairment that substantially limits him or her in a major life activity.

In an effort to make the Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition in Clinical Nutrition Examination equally accessible to applicants with disabilities, testing accommodations are made available for candidates with diagnosed physical, mental, sensory, or learning disabilities, and who provide appropriate documentation.

All accommodations requests are evaluated by qualified professionals. Requests may also be submitted for independent external reviews by specialists in a particular impairment. It is important to understand that the mere documentation of the presence of a disability does not entitle you to accommodation(s). Rather, the impact of your disability on your ability to take this examination must be quantifiably documented.

**For all requests:** Candidates will be notified by mail whether or not their accommodations have been approved. If accommodations are approved, a letter will provide instructions on how to schedule the exam by telephone. If the candidate has not yet registered for the exam, a credit card is required when contacting the Accommodations Program Coordinator.

All candidates, regardless of accommodations, are still required to test during the examination window. Apply as early as possible in advance so that sufficient time will be allowed to make the proper arrangements as **accommodations must be approved in advance of testing**. It is your responsibility to notify Pearson VUE of the need for accommodations.

Pearson VUE reserves the right to independently evaluate documentation submitted by all candidates who request accommodations.

Pearson VUE may refuse accommodations if adequate notice accompanied by complete documentation as set forth above is not provided. If accommodations are denied, the candidate will be required to test under standard conditions. Please register and schedule for your exam by following the instructions outlined in this Handbook.

Additional questions regarding disabilities and/or required documentation, are to be directed to Pearson VUE at 888/874-7651 and ask for an accommodations Program Coordinator between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm Central Time, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

## **SCHEDULING, CHANGING OR CANCELLING AN APPOINTMENT**

Scheduling, changing, or cancelling an appointment is completed on the Pearson VUE Web Portal.

Sign into the candidate personal account using the username and password that was created after receiving the authorization to test email from Pearson VUE. Any changes to an appointment made through an online account must be completed **at least 48 business hours before your current test appointment**.

Candidates who are rescheduling by **telephone, you must call at least 48 business hours in advance of their current test appointment**. Anytime an appointment is scheduled, changed, or cancelled, the candidate will receive confirmation of the transaction by e-mail. **It is the candidate's responsibility to verify your receipt of the**

**scheduling or cancellation  
e-mail and your testing appointment date,  
time, and location.**

If candidates do not take the examination within the testing window they will be required to submit a new application for the next examination window. Previous applications cannot be used.

If assistance in scheduling a test appointment is needed, please call Pearson VUE's Candidate Service Center at 888/874-7651, from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Friday, Central Time, excluding holidays. Scheduling outside of these hours must be done on the Pearson VUE Web Portal.

**LATE ARRIVALS**

Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes late for their testing appointment will not be seated. Candidates can reschedule if there is still availability within the testing window. If candidates are unable to reschedule within the testing window then candidates will have to apply for the next examination window.

**ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION**

**Candidates are required to present one form of *original* (no photo copies), *valid* (unexpired) *government issued ID* that includes their name, photograph, and signature.** If the candidate does not have the qualifying ID, a passport from their country of citizenship is required. The identification must reflect the candidate's current legal name and match the information on their Pearson VUE profile. Workplace, college or university identification will not be accepted.

Effective March 9, 2015, all examination candidates who report to a Pearson VUE Test

Center will be required to remove their eye glasses and present them to the Testing Administrator for visual inspection. Eye glasses are considered a comfort aid item, which means they are allowed in the testing room following visual inspection to ensure examination security.

For identity authentication, candidates will have their palm scanned using "Palm-Vein Recognition" biometric technology. Palm-Vein Recognition offers an accurate, safe form of positive identification and helps to maintain the examination's integrity.

If extreme weather conditions prohibit travel to the test center, the candidate must contact Pearson VUE by telephone (888/874-7615) within three days after the scheduled examination date in order to be reauthorized to take the examination at no cost to the candidate. Examination appointments that the test center cancels due to weather or other emergency conditions may be rescheduled at no cost to the candidate.

**RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION**

1. None of the following types of personal items may be taken into the testing room: cellular phones, hand-held computers/personal digital assistants (PDAs) or other electronic devices, pagers, calculators, watches, wallets, purses, hats (and other head coverings), bags, coats, books and notes. Studying is not allowed in the test center.
2. Candidates must store the personal items in a secure area indicated by the administrator. Cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic devices must be turned off prior to placing them in the



designated secure area. The testing center is not responsible for lost, stolen or misplaced personal items.

3. The Proctor may dismiss a candidate from the examination for any of the following reasons:

- the candidate's name on their the government-issued photo identification does not match the name in Pearson VUE's system;
- the candidate's admission to the examination is unauthorized;
- the candidate creates a disturbance, is abusive or otherwise uncooperative;
- if a candidate gives or receives help, or is suspected of doing so;
- the candidate attempts to remove test materials or notes from the test center;
- the candidate attempts to take the examination for someone else;
- the candidate has access to a cell phone or other electronic device during the testing session.

4. No visitors will be allowed at the test center.

5. An erasable note board will be provided at the test center and may only be used after the exam has started. Candidates cannot remove the note board or any other items from the testing room at any time during the exam and must

return all items to the administrator immediately after the exam.

6. Examinees are not permitted to bring their own calculator. A simple "Pop-Up" calculator is provided online, at each computer workstation. A handheld test center simple calculator may be provided, if requested. The calculator should be examined and tested prior to the beginning of the examination.
7. Candidates must remain seated at their assigned workstation until escorted out by a Test Administrator. Eating, drinking, smoking, chewing gum and making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates are prohibited during the exam.
8. Candidates are continuously monitored by the administrator during testing. The session may be videotaped or otherwise recorded for security or other purposes.
9. Candidates should notify the administrator immediately if there is a problem that affects the candidate's ability to take the exam.
10. The exam timer will not be stopped for any **unscheduled breaks**. The administrator will set the workstation to the break mode and the candidate must take his/her ID when leaving the room. The administrator will verify ID before the candidate can return to his/her seat. The exam will then be restarted.



11. While taking an **unscheduled break**, candidates are NOT allowed access to personal items other than medication required at a specific time and with the approval of the test administrator. Items not permitted include but are not limited to: cellular phones, exam notes and study guides, unless specifically permitted by the exam sponsor.
12. Candidates cannot remove copies of exam questions and/or answers from the testing center, and cannot share or discuss the questions or answers with other candidates or any other individuals.
13. At the end of the exam, the administrator will ensure that the candidate's exam has been properly closed. **After** the erasable note board and other materials have been returned to the administrator, the administrator will provide the candidate with a printed document confirming that the test has been completed. A score report will not be given at the end of the examination. Score reports will be sent from CDR approximately 8 weeks following the close of the testing window.

## REFUNDS

A candidate who does not schedule his/her examination appointment after confirmation of eligibility may request a full refund of the examination fee if they do not wish to test during the current examination administration window. The application fee is non-refundable. Requests for refunds must be made in writing and mailed, faxed or e-mailed to CDR. If the

candidate wishes to take the examination again a new application, application fee and examination fee will need to be submitted.

## EXAMINATION FORMAT/TIMING

Candidates will have a total of 5 hours (300 minutes) to complete all of the components in this examination.

- Examination items are organized into two parts - Part I and Part II.
- Each part is timed separately and there is a break between the two parts.
- Each examination part contains three sections, and each section is timed separately.
- When you complete a section and move to the next section, you will NOT be able to go back to the previous section.

The table below indicates all of the examination components, the number and type of examination items in each section and the time (in minutes) for each component.

Examination Components			Time (Minutes)
Welcome Screen			1
Test Timing Screen			1
Non-Disclosure Agreement			3
Tutorial			20
	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Type of Items</b>	
<b>Part I</b>			
Section 1	22	Single-answer	35
Section 2	17	Multiple-answer	45
Section 3	6	Case Management	55
<b>Break</b>			30
<b>Part II</b>			
Section 1	13	Single-answer	20

Section 2	11	Multiple-answer	30
Section 3	6	Case Management	55
Survey			5
<b>Total Time</b>			<b>300</b>

### Single Answer Items

The items in this section contain a question followed by four answer choices. For each question select the one best answer.

### Multiple Answer Items

The items in this section provide a question followed by four or more answer choices. Immediately following the question is an instruction indicating the number of answer choices that candidates must select to respond to the question. For example, the instruction may indicate “SELECT TWO”; or “SELECT THREE”; etc.

### Case Management Items

These items assess candidates’ ability to manage situations that may be encountered by advanced practice (AP) clinical dietitians. Each case has three or more steps.

### Scrolling

Some exam items may not fit on the screen. For these items, a scroll bar will appear along to the portion of the screen that can be scrolled. To view the rest of the item, either use the mouse to click and drag the scroll bar, or click on the arrows on either end of the scroll bar.

### Time Remaining Alert

A pop-up box will alert candidates when there are 10 minutes remaining to complete a section. When candidates have 5 minutes

remaining in a section, the time remaining will automatically appear even if a candidate has minimized it previously.

### TUTORIAL

A tutorial is available on CDR’s website at the following link: <https://www.cdrnet.org/board-certification-in-advanced-practice> under the “Exam Study Resources”. The tutorial will assist the candidate in becoming familiar with the examination format, provide information for navigating through the examination screens and offer some sample items. These sample items are examples of the test format only and will NOT be scored. Also available to candidates are Test Specifications/Content Outline and a Reference List.

### FOLLOWING THE EXAMINATION

After completing the examination, candidates are asked to complete a short evaluation of their examination experience. Candidates are then instructed to report to the examination proctor to receive their examination completion report; this is not a score report. Score reports will be mailed to candidates approximately 8 weeks following the *last date* of the examination window. Scores are reported in written form only. Scores are not reported over the telephone, by electronic mail, or by facsimile.

In order to protect the security and integrity of the Advanced Practice Certification in Clinical Nutrition Examination, CDR does not release to candidates the examination questions or the correct and/or incorrect answers.

### PASS/FAIL SCORE DETERMINATION

The methodology used to set the minimum passing score is known as the Angoff method. This method is based on data gathered during

the Passing Point Study involving a panel of experts in the field. In this process, each expert evaluates each item on the examination to assess the clarity and difficulty of the item. The ratings of these experts is then combined to determine how many correct responses are necessary to demonstrate the knowledge and skill required to pass each exam part. A candidate's ability to pass the examination depends solely on the knowledge and skill that candidate displays, not on the performance of other candidates.

In order to become certified, candidates must achieve at least the minimum acceptable score on each part of the examination. The examination parts are not compensatory. That is, a higher than required level of performance on one part will not make up for a lower than accepted level of performance on the other part. Candidates who fail the examination and decide to retest will be required to take both parts of the test again regardless of their performance on any one part.

### **QUALITY CONTROL/SCORING**

Before the final scores are released to the candidate, each examination undergoes a series of quality control checks. A thorough item analysis is completed and a statistical review of the performance of the examination is conducted. CDR, The Caviart Group, Pearson VUE and subject matter experts (SME's) review this examination data along with candidate comments. Adjustments are made as needed to ensure that the scoring of all test questions is appropriate.

### **SCORES CANCELLED BY THE CLIENT OR TESTING VENDORS**

CDR, The Caviart Group and Pearson VUE are responsible for the validity and integrity of the

scores they report. On occasion, occurrences, such as computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate, may cause a score to be suspect. CDR reserves the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, violation of its regulations is discovered.

### **PASSING THE EXAMINATION**

All candidates who pass the examination will receive a wall certificate, identification card and orientation materials approximately six to eight weeks after they receive their score report.

### **RE-ESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY**

A candidate who fails the examination will be required to submit a new application, application fee and examination fee for the next examination window. Previous applications cannot be used.

### **DUPLICATE SCORE REPORT**

Candidates may request additional copies of their results. Requests must be submitted to CDR, in writing. The request must include the candidate's name, registration number, mailing address, telephone number, date of examination and examination taken. Duplicate score reports will be mailed within approximately two weeks after receipt of the request. Note that duplicate score reports will be a photo copy.

### **APPEALS PROCESS**

CDR's Advanced Practice Certification Panel evaluates requests to review adverse decisions. The applicant must submit a written petition within 14 calendar days after receipt of the adverse decision. Letters must include your request, any necessary documentation to support your request, daytime phone number and your registration number. Appeals can be mailed to:

Advanced Practice Certification  
Commission on Dietetic Registration  
120 S Riverside Plaza, Ste 2000  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995

Or emailed to: [advanced@eatright.org](mailto:advanced@eatright.org)

### **CERTIFICATION MAINTANANCE**

At the end of the five-year certification period, certified advanced practitioners who wish to recertify must be a current Registered Dietitian with CDR and:

1. Successfully complete an eligibility application – including the required minimum number of specialty practice hours (800 clinical nutrition practice hours within the past two years)

2. Submit an application fee and examination fee
3. Pass the advanced practice examination

The reasoning for requiring recertification testing is that this certification is a practice credential, a credential that represents to the public that the certificant possesses the knowledge, skills and experience to function effectively as an advanced practitioner in that area. The nature of the knowledge and skills to practice at the advanced practice level is subject to change due to technological and scientific advances. Recertification testing helps to provide continuing assurance that the certified advanced practitioner has indeed maintained their knowledge in the clinical nutrition area.