



## **Board Certification as a Specialist in Sports Dietetics Eligibility Application Instructions**

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**Introduction:**

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) invites you to apply for Board Certification as a Specialist in Sports Dietetics. Board Certified Specialists are Registered Dietitians (RDs) who have met established criteria and have successfully completed a specialty certification examination. Qualified RDs use the designation Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics, "RD, CSSD."

**Principles of Equal Opportunity:**

CDR, the credentialing agency for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetic, is an equal opportunity organization.

**Specialty Examination:**

The examination for Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics is developed and administered by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. CSSD subject matter experts (SMEs) contribute to the development and review of each specialty examination prior to its use. These examinations are administered by computers at designated testing locations. The examination consists of 160 multiple choice questions (140 questions scored questions and 20 pretest questions). Pretesting is done to see how well items perform before they are used in the scored portion of the examination. The pretest questions cannot be distinguished from those that will be scored, so it is important that all questions are answered. Candidates will have to choose the one best answer from either three or four options provided. The content outline and reference list are available in this application instruction booklet and on CDR's website (<http://cdrnet.org/certifications/board-certification-as-a-specialist-in-sports-dietetics>).

**Sports Dietitian Definition:**

Sports dietitians are registered dietitians for a minimum of two years who apply evidence-based nutrition knowledge in exercise and sports. They assess, educate, and counsel athletes and active individuals. They design, implement, and manage safe and effective nutrition strategies that enhance lifelong health, fitness, and optimal performance.

**Initial Certification Eligibility Requirements:**

Minimum requirements for specialty certification are established and approved by the Commission on Dietetic Registration. In order to be eligible to become a Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics, candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Current Registered Dietitian (RD) status by CDR.
- Maintenance of RD status by CDR, for a minimum of two years from original examination date (by the time of the specialty examination date).
- Documentation of 1,500 of specialty practice experience as an RD with CDR, within the past five years (by the date the application is due). Until the application deadline for the July 2014 examination, advanced educational degrees will be allowed to substitute for a maximum of 1,200 hours of the required experience. A minimum of 300 specialty practice hours is a required for initial certification.

**Recertification Eligibility Requirements:**

The reasoning for requiring recertification testing is that the Specialty Board 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 a specialist in that area. The nature of the knowledge and skills to practice at a specialty level is subject to change due to technological and scientific advances.

Recertification testing helps to provide continuing assurance that the certified specialist has indeed maintained their knowledge in the specialty area.

At the end of the five-year certification period, current specialists who wish to recertify must be a registered dietitian by the Commission on Dietetic Registration and:

- Successfully complete an eligibility application documenting a minimum of 1,000 specialty practice hours (for recertifying applicants) within the last five years (by the date the application is due). A minimum of 300 specialty practice hours is a required for recertification.
- Submit an specialty examination fee
- Successfully complete a specialty examination

**Specialty Examination Dates and Locations:**

There are two windows of testing per year—one in February and one in July. Each testing window lasts three weeks. You will be able to schedule your examination Monday through Friday within regular computer center hours. The computerized examinations are administered at approximately 100 test center locations around the country. A general list of test center locations is available on CDR's website at the following link:

<http://cdrnet.org/certifications/board-certification-as-a-specialist-in-sports-dietetics>.

More specific information regarding test centers, testing times, and instructions on scheduling an examination appointment will be mailed with the eligibility letter once your application is processed and approved.

**Specialty Application Deadline:**

All applications must be mailed postmarked on or before the deadline date for candidates to be considered to take the Specialty examination. Incomplete or improperly submitted applications will be returned to the candidate and may cause the candidate to miss the postmark deadline.

A candidate is may be required to submit a new application for a subsequent examination administration. The application forms/documents must be sent in one packet to:

Attn: Specialty Certification  
Commission on Dietetic Registration  
Suite 2000  
120 South Riverside Plaza  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995

**Instructions for Completing the Examination Application:**

Read and follow carefully all instructions when completing the application forms. All candidate information must be complete. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. The application forms must be mailed together. Please print clearly in blue or black ink.

**Part A- Candidate Information:**

- Print your registration number. This will be used for identification purposes only.
- Print your last name, first name, address, city, state/province, and zip code. Indicate the country if different from the United States.
- Print your credentials. Divide your credentials with commas.
- Provide a daytime phone number.
- Print your e-mail address so that you can be contacted at if there are questions regarding your application.
- Please check the box indicating your highest academic degree completed.
- Please indicate which examination month/year that you are applying.

**Part B- Specialty Examination Fee Payment:**

Indicate how you would like to pay the \$250 examination fee. Payment must be included with the application. Checks and money orders should be made payable to Commission on Dietetic Registration. Make sure your registration number is written on the check. If you would like to pay by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express), complete the payment information on the application.

Please note there is different examination fees associated with different postmark deadline dates. For examination fee schedule, please visit CDR's website: <http://cdrnet.org/certifications/board-certification-as-a-specialist-in-sports-dietetics-nutrition-examination-dates-and-fee-schedule> or e-mail [specialists@eatright.org](mailto:specialists@eatright.org) .

First application postmark deadline= \$250

Second application postmark deadline= \$275

Third application postmark deadline= \$300

Refunds will be provided under the following guidelines:

- If you are ineligible to take the examination.
- A candidate who does not schedule his/her examination appointment during the current test administration window may have their application and examination fee transferred to the next administration free of charge by contacting CDR at 1-800/877-1600 ext. 4705 or 4816 or [specialists@eatright.org](mailto:specialists@eatright.org). Candidate's eligibility and examination fee will only extend one test administration window.
- A candidate who does not schedule his/her examination appointment after confirmation of eligibility, may request a full refund, if he/she does not wish to test during the current or subsequent test administration window. Requests for refunds

must be made in writing and mailed, faxed or e-mailed to CDR. If you wish to take the examination again, you will need to resubmit an application and examination fee.

- A candidate who wishes to reschedule their examination, but fails to contact the testing vendor, AMP (Applied Measurement Professionals), at least four business days to the scheduled testing session will be required to pay an \$85 fee to reschedule the examination. This fee applies even if the candidate waits to the next test administration to reschedule their examination appointment. Please note examination eligibility will expire after the next test administration window. We will contact you if your application needs to be updated.
- Other requests for refunds must be made to CDR Specialty Appeals Panel and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Documentation of Specialty Practice Hours:**

Specialty Practice Hour Requirement:

- Initial Certification: 1,500 hours
- Recertification: 1,000 hours

For certification/recertification, a minimum of 300 hours must be documented on the Part C-1 form(s). Specialty practice hours must be completed as an RD and within the past five years (by the date the application is due). Only completed practice hours can be documented. Future dates/hours that have not been worked yet will not be accepted. It is not necessary to document more than the required specialty practice hours. Until the application deadline for the July 2014 examination, advanced educational degree will be allowed to substitute for a maximum of 1,200 hours of the required experience. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain the appropriate Part C documentation and forms and to submit them to CDR with the completed application packet.

### **C-1- Verification of Specialty Practice Hours**

To document employment hours use form C-1. One Part C-1 form must be completed for each position, even if the position is within the same facility. You may need to photocopy the form. Please note that dates of employment must be within the past five years from the postmark deadline date of the application. These dates may or may not coincide with the beginning dates of employment. An authorized individual will sign off on the form (employer, supervisor, human resources, coach, volunteer coordinator etc, if consultant, the person or MD who refers clients to them). Another option for consultants to document hours would be to include tax/income documentation and/or pay records, receipts, letter from accountant, as well as brochure/information about their business.

The experience needs to be sports related/sports specific and not on the level with the job duties of a Registered Dietitian. There needs to be a component of your job duties that would meet the depth and breadth of the definition of sports dietetics. Your job experience/duties would have to demonstrate that you use sports specific knowledge with your nutrition assessment/counseling, etc and involves sports-specific nutrition interventions. It may be helpful to read over the content outline for the exam to see the depth of sports knowledge required for the exam to see if your job duties correspond to the requirements (<http://cdrnet.org/certifications/board-certification-as-a-specialist-in-sports-dietetics>)

Required experience can include direct and indirect activities. Direct activities would be specifically working with clients, students, athletes etc. in a variety of settings. Indirect activities would be as documented by management, education or research practice linked specifically to sports dietetics.

Specialty hours can be documented through sports employment, or certain professional experiences. Experience can be through employment or volunteer in the sports area. Individuals work in a variety of settings, outpatient clinics, fitness centers, schools/colleges, clinics etc. Examples of specialty practice experience include the following:

- Assess athletes and active individuals
- Educate students, coaches, parents, athletic trainers, MD and other healthcare professionals
- Counsel /consult with athletes and active individuals
- Participate as a member of multidisciplinary sports medicine team
- Work with high school, collegiate or professional sports team
- Teach sports nutrition, exercise physiology classes
- Develop menus (training tables, pre/post meals) for teams
- Work with eating disorder clients

**C-2- Verification of Professional Experience**

To document professional experience, use form C-2. For each professional experience, print the number of specialty hours documented (according to the table below) and enclose the requested information. Dates of professional experiences must be within the past five years.

Example of Practice Experience	Documentation Required	Hours for Practice Experience
Primary author of an article in a peer-reviewed scientific publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> <li>• Copy of the article or letter(s) verifying acceptance for publication in a peer reviewed journal or .pdf file/link e-mailed to <a href="mailto:specialists@eatright.org">specialists@eatright.org</a>.</li> </ul>	20 hours, maximum per article
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-author of an article in a peer-reviewed scientific publication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> <li>• Copy of the article or letter(s) verifying acceptance for publication in a peer reviewed journal or .pdf file/link e-mailed to <a href="mailto:specialists@eatright.org">specialists@eatright.org</a>.</li> </ul>	10 hours, maximum per article
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Author of a sport dietetics textbook/manual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> <li>• Copy of the title page, copy right page, and introduction or .pdf file/link e-mailed to <a href="mailto:specialists@eatright.org">specialists@eatright.org</a>.</li> </ul>	100 hours maximum, per text book
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Author of a chapter in a sport dietetics textbook/manual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> <li>• Copy of the chapter or .pdf file/link e-mailed to <a href="mailto:specialists@eatright.org">specialists@eatright.org</a>.</li> </ul>	25 hours , maximum per chapter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenter at a peer reviewed national, state and/or regional scientific conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> <li>• Copy of objectives and handouts for the presentation, copy of the brochure/program agenda</li> </ul>	15 hours, maximum per presentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research-sole or principal investigator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> </ul>	20 hours, maximum per

Research-sole or principal investigator (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published research article, final summary technical report or letter(s) verifying acceptance for publication in a peer reviewed journal or .pdf file/link e-mailed to <a href="mailto:specialists@eatright.org">specialists@eatright.org</a>.</li> </ul>	research activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research-co-investigator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verification of professional experience form included with application</li> <li>Published research article, final summary technical report or letter(s) verifying acceptance for publication in a peer reviewed journal or .pdf file/link e-mailed to <a href="mailto:specialists@eatright.org">specialists@eatright.org</a>.</li> </ul>	10 hours, maximum per research activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing education (75 hours maximum)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPE activities must follow the guidelines of the Professional Development Portfolio.</li> <li>CPE activities must be completed within the past five years from the date the specialty application is due.</li> <li>CPE activities must be specifically sports dietetics related.</li> <li>Copies of documentation, such as academic transcripts, certificates of completion, program agendas (with date of the activity and number of CPEUs) must be included with your specialty application.</li> </ul>	

**C-3- Substitution of Education**

To document substitution of education for specialty practice hours use form C-3. Until the application deadline for the July 2014 examination, advanced educational degrees will be allowed to substitute for a maximum of 1,200 hours of the required experience. Education from a US-regionally accredited college or university (or foreign equivalent) will be allowed to substitute for some of the required experience according to the following table. For each education substitution print the requested college/university, degree and date information on the form. An official transcript is *required* to document education requirements. If you used your masters and/or doctorate degree to substitute for the required specialty practice hours when you initially applied for the certification, you *cannot* use the same degree again. Only completed degrees can be used for the education substitution, not individual classes or continuing education classes. Degrees do not need to be completed within the past five years.

<b>C-3- Substitution of Education continued</b>		
<b>Possible Substitutions for hours</b>	<b>Degree Type</b>	<b>Can substitute for this Number of Hours Experience</b>
Doctorate Degree Masters Degree	Sports Nutrition Sports Dietetics	1200 hours
Doctorate Degree Masters Degree	Exercise Physiology Exercise Science Kinesiology MS with emphasis in Sports Nutrition	1000 hours
Doctorate Degree Masters Degree	Dietetics Nutrition	750 hours
Doctorate Degree Masters Degree	Science (Chemistry, Biology) Public Health Wellness Education Health Sciences Related area	500 hours
International Olympic Committee (IOC) Diploma in Sports Nutrition	Completion of all requirements for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Diploma in Sports Nutrition	500 hours
Fellowship	Supervised hours in a Sports Dietetics or Sports Nutrition Internship or Fellowship (must be post-RD)	500 hours

**Part D- Candidate Acknowledgement/Signature:**

- Print your first and last name in the space provided
- Read the verification statement carefully
- Sign and date the application

**Part E- Final Checklist:**

Once you have completed the application, check off the boxes on the final checklist. This will help to ensure that the application is complete.



**Appeals Process:**

Candidates may appeal a decision regarding certification eligibility or assessments results by following the process below:

1. Appeal of certification eligibility or assessment results with the Specialty Certification Appeals Panel.
2. Written notification shall be submitted to the program manager within fourteen calendar days after receipt of notification of the adverse decision. The written appeal should include:
  - a. The stated appeal
  - b. The reason for the appeal (including relevant supporting materials)
  - c. Appellant's registration identification number
  - d. Appellant's daytime phone number
3. The program manager will notify the individual of the decision of the Specialty Certification Appeals Panel within fourteen days of the decision.
4. Should the Specialty Panel grant an appeal on an issue that impacts the eligibility status or the examination scores of other candidates, a review will automatically be conducted. The program manager will notify the individuals of the review or the final decision within fourteen days of the decision.
5. Appeal with the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

Further written appeal and the reason for such an appeal of the decision of the Specialty Certification Panel shall be referred to the Commission on Dietetic Registration. For procedures, refer to the brochure *Appeals Procedure for Members of the American Dietetic Association, Credentialed Dietetic Practitioners, and Candidates*, Section V, C, The brochure can be obtained by calling CDR at 1-800/877-1600 ext. 5500.

**Questions?** Please contact CDR by telephone at 1-800/877-1600, ext. 5500 or e-mail at [specialists@eatright.org](mailto:specialists@eatright.org).