



# Post-Graduate Clinical Examination Policy Guide

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## Introduction

This document contains the policies governing the **Post-Graduate Clinical Examination** administered by the University of Alberta, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, Continuing Professional Education Unit (CPE Unit) on behalf of the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta (CPTA)<sup>1</sup>. This policy guide applies to all examinations administered after the date this document was approved by Council.<sup>2</sup>

The Post-Graduate Clinical Examination is the clinical competency examination that is approved by the Council as per section 3(c) of the *Physical Therapists Profession Regulations (PTPR)*. Successful completion of a clinical competency examination approved by Council is required by section 3 (c) of the *Physical Therapists Profession Regulations*.

## Approved Examinations

In 2008 and reconfirmed in 2011, Council approved the Clinical Component of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination administered by the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (CAPR)<sup>3</sup> as the clinical competency examination required by section 3(c) of the *Physical Therapists Profession Regulations*.

In 2021, to address disruptions of the clinical competency examination administered by CAPR due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council approved the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination<sup>4</sup> administered by the CPE Unit as the clinical competency examination required by section 3(c) of the *PTPR*.

The College of Physiotherapists of Alberta contracts the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, Continuing Professional Education Unit (the CPE Unit) of the University of Alberta to administer the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination. The Post-Graduate Clinical Examination is developed for those seeking to be registered with the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta on the General Register.

The CPE Unit will administer an Objective Structured Clinical Examination to candidates who meet the eligibility criteria established by Council. The examination will:

- Be an in-person, clinical skills examination.
- Include content domains based on the CAPR 2018 PCE examination blueprint.

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<sup>1</sup> Physiotherapy Alberta - College + Association is the legal name given to the College under Schedule 20 of the *Health Professions Act*. Physiotherapy Alberta - College + Association is operating as the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta

<sup>2</sup> **MOTION: 2023/03/11: 4:** It was moved by Sean and duly seconded by William to approve the Post Graduate Clinical Examination Policy Guide with amendment to the fee schedule. CARRIED.

<sup>3</sup> The clinical competency examination approved by the Council is the clinical component of the national examination administered by CAPR. [Motion 2008-06, reconfirmed May 28, 2011].

<sup>4</sup> Council has approved 6 Post Graduate Clinical Examinations as per section 3(c) of the PTPR:

**MOTION: 2021/05/10:1 Exam 1**

**MOTION: 2021/09/28:1 Electronic Vote Exam 2**

**MOTION: 2021/11/10:2 Exam 3**

**MOTION: 2022/04/06:1 Electronic Vote Exam 4 and 5**

**MOTION: 2022/11/19:8 Future Exams**

## Eligibility

### Scope

This policy applies to eligibility for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination approved by Council. The policy applies to all individuals who have not successfully completed an approved clinical competency examination to be eligible for registration on the General Register.

### Purpose

To clarify who is eligible to register for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination.

### Policy

Examination candidates (candidates) must successfully pass the Written Component of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination (PCE)<sup>5</sup> administered by the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (CAPR) and meet the eligibility criteria approved by Council to attempt the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination. The Post-Graduate Clinical Examination is only available for those seeking to be registered with the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta on the General Register.

The following candidates will not be eligible for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination:

1. Candidates who have exhausted the maximum attempts as per CAPR policy for the Written Component and Clinical Component of the PCE.
2. Candidates who have three failed attempts or more at any combination of the Alberta Post-Graduate Clinical Examination, Clinical Component of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination administered by CAPR or any other Canadian physiotherapy regulators clinical evaluation for licensure.
3. Former regulated members of the College who have exceeded the permitted time period of two years or have two failed attempts of the Clinical Component of the PCE and were cancelled as per PTPR section 7(3) and 7(4) before January 1, 2017.

To be eligible to take the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination, the candidate must not be ineligible as referenced above and must meet the following criteria:

1. The individual is registered on the Alberta Provisional Register OR
2. The individual is a former regulated member of the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta whose registration was cancelled after January 1, 2017, due to section 7(3) or 7(4) of the Physical Therapists Professions Regulation OR
3. The individual is the subject of an order of the Hearing Tribunal, an Agreement and Undertaking with the Complaints Director, or referral to the Registration Committee which requires the successful completion of the PGCE.

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<sup>5</sup> The written knowledge-based examination approved by Council is the written component of the national examination administered by CAPR [Motion 2008-06, reconfirmed May 28, 2011].

## Examination Registration

Only those who meet the eligibility criteria approved by Council will have access to register for the examination.

Eligible former regulated members of CPTA will only receive direct communication from CPTA notifying them when the examination registration is open if they have provided their contact information to CPTA using the form provided on the CPTA website. Providing accurate contact information to CPTA is required for CPTA to grant the candidate access to the registration portal.

All examination candidates who meet the eligibility criteria based on current registration on the Provisional Register must maintain continuous registration on the Provisional Register to maintain examination eligibility. An examination candidate whose registration is cancelled due to section 7(4) of the Physical Therapists Professions Regulation before completing the examination continues to maintain examination eligibility as a former regulated member.

No late registrations will be accepted. Candidates are responsible for making sure the examination registration form is completed correctly and the examination fee is paid in full.

Registration will be on a first come first served basis and capacity of the examination is limited to 72 people per day.

Examination registration will close 9 weeks in advance of the examination date. The CPE Unit requires final numbers of examination candidates 8 weeks in advance of the examination date for planning and scheduling purposes.

## Fees

The fee for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination is established by Council and listed in the fee schedule. Payment must be made in Canadian funds for the full amount with a completed application form for examination registration to be complete. Candidates are only registered for an examination when the application form and payment of the examination fee are submitted, and the registration portal displays “booked”.

## Withdraw from the Examination

A request to withdraw from the examination must be made in writing and emailed to the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta at [jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca](mailto:jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca). CPTA will notify the CPE Unit of any withdrawals.

Administration fees for withdrawing from the examination will apply as follows:

<b>Administration Fees for Withdrawing from the Clinical Examination</b>		
Anytime before registration closes	After registration closes with no medical or extenuating circumstances	With proof of medical or extenuating circumstances
\$125	\$250	Full Refund

**Illness or Extenuating Circumstances**

If a candidate is ill or there are extenuating circumstances, they must assess their ability to attempt the clinical examination and how examination performance may be affected. Candidates are encouraged to withdraw from the examination should they determine that their performance will be negatively affected.

Extenuating circumstances mean situations outside of the control of the candidate (example death of a family member) that could reasonably be expected to negatively impact the candidate’s performance during the examination. Extenuating circumstances do not include situations not unique to other candidates such as generalized examination anxiety, decreased ability to prepare/study for the examination.

Candidates seeking to withdraw from an examination must make the request in writing and submit the request to the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta at [jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca](mailto:jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca). Individuals must provide proof of medical documentation or evidence of extenuating circumstances to the satisfaction of the Registrar to be considered for a full refund.

The Registrar’s decision is final.

**Health and Safety Measures**

As administrator of the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination, the CPE Unit has the discretion to implement any measures deemed necessary to protect the health and safety of examination candidates, examiners, standardized patients, and university staff. Candidates are required to comply with all health and safety measures established by the University of Alberta as a condition of participating in the examination.

Failure by candidates to comply with health and safety measures will result in the cancellation of their examination and immediate removal from the examination center.

**Refund Policy**

The administration fee for withdraw will be withheld consistent with the withdraw policy. Refunds, where applicable, will be issued within 15 business days of CPTA receiving the request.

## Transfers

Transfers between examinations will not be accepted. Candidates will be required to withdraw from the clinical examination they are registered for subject to administration fees for withdraw and register for a different examination date including payment of the examination fee should space be available. The risk is assumed by the candidate as spots for a different examination date are limited and may not be available.

## Verification of Identity

Candidates will be required to present proof of their identity in the form of federal/provincial government issued identification with photograph to gain entrance to the examination site on the day of the examination (e.g., Canadian Passport, Alberta Driver's license). The government issued identification must match the candidates name on their examination registration form. Candidates whose appearance or name do not match that on the government issued identification will not be permitted to take the clinical examination.

## Accommodations

A candidate is required to indicate if accommodations are required upon registration for the examination. Supporting documentation is required and will be provided directly to the CPE Unit by the candidate. Accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The CPE Unit is responsible for determining the appropriate accommodation in consultation with the candidate. In situations where there is a change in health status after registering for the examination, an accommodation may be granted if the CPE Unit has the capacity to do so. However, no new accommodation requests will be considered on examination day.

The CPE Unit reserves the right to designate the date and time of the examination should accommodations be requested. Candidates must be available for both days if accommodations are requested. For example, if a candidate chooses to register for the October examination administration, they must be available on both days.

## Examination Administration

The CPTA has contracted the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, Continuing Professional Education Unit (CPE Unit) of the University of Alberta to administer the clinical examination.

Information collected during registration of the examination is subject to *Personal Information Protection Act* and will be shared with the contractors for the purpose of administering the examination.

The CPE Unit will establish all processes and procedures required for the examination. Candidates registered for the examination will receive all necessary information such as examination date, scheduled time and location required for the examination day from the CPE Unit. All communication will be sent to the email address on the candidate's My Profile form in their CPTA Member Portal on the date registration closes.

## Recording of Performance in Examination Stations

All candidates will be recorded during each station. This will allow for review of performance should it be required.

## Cheating

Cheating will not be tolerated. Should cheating be suspected candidates may be asked to leave the examination site, the clinical examination may not be marked, or other appropriate action may be considered. CPTA will be notified of suspected cheating.

CPTA will conduct appropriate investigations into all suspected cheating.

Results of the investigation will be forwarded to CPTA's Registration Committee to determine if cheating occurred. If the Registration Committee determines cheating occurred, the Registration Committee will then determine if the candidate continues to meet the good character and reputation requirement as required by section 25(b) of the *Physical Therapists Profession Regulation*. In making its decision, the Registration Committee will consider CPTA's Good Character & Reputation Decision-Making Guidelines.

If in the opinion of the Registration Committee the candidate no longer meets the good character and reputation requirement, the Registration Committee shall notify CPTA's Complaints Director of their decision and provide all documentation considered by the Committee to render its decision.

## Examination Results

Candidates will complete 12 stations. An analysis of performance within each station on a predetermined checklist and for the overall examination will be conducted. Pass levels will be determined after the examination using the comprehensive scoring data.

Examination results will be available within 12 weeks of the examination. Candidates will receive an email from CPTA when their examination results are available in their CPTA Member Portal.

## Rescoring

The CPE Unit has a second reviewer review the scoring of all stations. The scoring is reviewed prior to the examination data being released to the psychometrician for analysis. Rescoring of the examination is not an option following the release of examination results to candidates.

## Administrative Reconsideration

This applies to candidates who fail the **Post-Graduate Clinical Examination**.

### Purpose

Administrative reconsideration is for **incidents on examination day** that may affect a candidate's performance negatively due to circumstances beyond their control. This process allows for review of the candidate's examination day experience to determine whether the incident may have materially affected the delivery of the examination or their performance.



## Policy

### Examination Day Incidents

There are two types of examination day incidents:

1. Extenuating circumstances
2. Procedural irregularities.

#### *Extenuating circumstances*

Extenuating circumstances are incidents that arise unexpectedly on examination day that could affect a candidate's performance. Extenuating circumstances (such as acute illness or injury, the death of an immediate family member) must be supported with official supporting documentation. Supporting documents (e.g., a physician's note, a death certificate) must be on official letterhead, be dated and signed by the issuer and be obtained as close to the examination date as possible. When possible, the documentation should indicate how the extenuating circumstances affected the candidate on examination day.

#### *Procedural irregularities*

A procedural irregularity is an event or incident on the examination day that materially prejudices the delivery, but not the content, of an examination.

Candidates are required to report procedural irregularities within 7 business days of the examination. Candidates must report the incident to CPTA even if the examination provider indicates they will report it on the candidate's behalf.

Incident reports submitted by the candidate will be reviewed. All procedural irregularities will be investigated as close to the examination day as possible in coordination with the CPE Unit.

## Reporting

ALL examination day incidents, including extenuating circumstances and procedural irregularities, must be reported directly to CPTA within 7 business days of the examination date by emailing [jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca](mailto:jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca). The candidate must provide detailed information about the incident and how it affected the candidate on examination day. The details must show a cause-and-effect relationship between the issues raised and the candidate's ability to perform during the examination.

CPTA will acknowledge the email and keep this information on file. CPTA will not consider incidents that are reported more than 7 business days after the examination date.

*If an incident occurred at any point **before** the examination the candidate should refer to the "Illness or Extenuating Circumstances in the Withdraw from the Examination" section of this document.*

## Submitting a reconsideration request

Candidates are only eligible for reconsideration if:

- They reported an incident within 7 business days of the examination date AND
- Upon receiving their examination results, they failed the examination.

To submit a reconsideration request the following steps apply:

1. Send CPTA an email to [jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca](mailto:jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca) within 15 calendar days of receiving the examination result.
2. Use **Examination Result Reconsideration** in the subject line.
3. Provide detailed information on why the reconsideration request is being made for the examination result.
4. All supporting documentation must have been received within 7 business days of the examination date.

Requests received more than 15 calendar days after the results of the examination are released will not be reviewed.

### Steps of the reconsideration process

The request will be reviewed to determine whether it is eligible for reconsideration and there are valid grounds based on:

- The final result (failed result).
- When the incident was reported (must have been within 7 business days of the examination).
- When the reconsideration request was submitted (must have been within 15 calendar days of the results being released).
- The submitted details of the incident.
- The supporting documentation submitted (for extenuating circumstances only).

Decisions regarding administrative reconsideration will be at the discretion of the Registrar.

Should the administrative reconsideration be founded, the examination attempt will not be counted as a failed attempt as it would relate to s.7(3) of the PTPR. The examination attempt will be considered an invalid attempt.

### **Examination results will not be changed from a fail to a pass regardless of the extenuating circumstance or procedural irregularity.**

In the event the reconsideration is founded for a procedural irregularity a refund of the administrative fee or annul charge for the examination fee may be considered.

The fee for administrative reconsideration is \$250.

## Appeals

If a candidate is not satisfied with the outcome of their administrative reconsideration, they may choose to appeal.

The appeal will be considered by the Registration Committee. The appeal to the Registration Committee will be based on the record of administrative reconsideration and the decision of the Registrar. No new information will be considered by the Registration Committee. In the

appeal, the Registration Committee will review the same information that was considered by the Registrar. The Registration Committee serves as a “check and balance” by providing oversight with respect to how the Registrar exercised their decision-making authority. The request for appeal must be submitted along with the required fee.

Criteria for appeal:

- The candidate must request an administrative reconsideration and receive the Registrar’s decision before the candidate can request an appeal.
- The appeal must be submitted in writing to [jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca](mailto:jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca).
- The request for appeal must be received no later than 15 calendar days after the date on administrative reconsideration decision.

The Registration Committee will convene within 90 days of the examination date to consider an appeal request.

The Registration Committee’s powers on appeal:

1. Make any decision that, in its opinion, should have been made by the Registrar.
2. Quash, confirm or vary the decision of the Registrar.

A decision of the Registration Committee is final. There is no other appeal mechanism through CPTA.

The fee for appeal is \$250.

## Examination Fee Schedule

<b>Examination Registration Fee</b>	\$750
<b>Reconsideration Fee</b>	\$250
<b>Appeal Fee</b>	\$250
<b>Withdrawal Administration Fee</b>	
<i>Anytime before registration closes with no medical or extenuating circumstances</i>	\$125
<i>After registration closes with no medical or extenuating circumstances</i>	\$250
<i>With proof of medical or extenuating circumstances</i>	Full Refund