



COLLEGE OF
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS
OF ALBERTA

Post-Graduate Clinical Examination Policy Guide

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Introduction

This document contains the policies governing the **Post-Graduate Clinical Examination**¹ 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). This policy guide applies to all examinations administered after the date this document was approved by Council.

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

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)³ as the clinical competency examination required by section 3 (c) of the *Physical Therapists Profession Regulations* (PTPR).

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 Examination⁴ 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.

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 PCE examination blueprint.

Eligibility

Scope

This applies to eligibility for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination approved by Council. The policy applies to all Canadian-educated and internationally educated physiotherapists attempting the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination.

Purpose

To provide clarity regarding who is eligible to register for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination.

Policy

Candidates must successfully pass the written component of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination (PCE) 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 intended for those seeking to be registered with the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta.

Exclusion Criteria

Candidates who are not eligible for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination include:

- Candidates who have exhausted the maximum attempts as per CAPR policy for the Written Component and Clinical Component of the PCE.⁶

- Candidates who have three failed attempts 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
- Candidates who have exhausted eligibility for the registration process in another Canadian province or territory.
- 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.

Eligibility for upcoming examinations in October 2022 and February 2023 Exam as approved by Council⁷

1. Registered on the Alberta Provisional Register before April 1, 2022
OR
2. Registered on the Alberta Provisional Register before April 1, 2022, and have one previous unsuccessful attempt at either the Clinical Component of the PCE administered by CAPR prior to the pandemic or the Alternate Exam administered by the U of A.
OR
3. Former regulated member of Physiotherapy Alberta whose registration was cancelled due to section 7(3) or 7(4) of the Physical Therapists Professions Regulation in the last 5 years (cancelled after January 1, 2017)

Registration

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

Former regulated members of the College whose registration was cancelled after January 1, 2017, and who have not exhausted their eligibility in the Clinical Component of the PCE administered by the CAPR will only receive direct communication from the College notifying them when the examination registration is open **if they have provided their contact information to the College using the form provided on the College website. Providing accurate contact information to the College is required for the College to grant the candidate access to the registration portal.**

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

No late registrations will be accepted. Candidates are responsible for making sure the registration form and payment are completed correctly.

Fees

The fee for the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination will be \$750. Payment must be made in Canadian funds for the full amount with a completed application form in order for exam 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

The CPE Unit requires final numbers of exam candidates eight weeks in advance of the exam date for planning and scheduling purposes.

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. The College will notify the CPE Unit of any withdrawals.

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

Administration Fees for Withdrawing from the Clinical Examination			
Anytime before registration closes	After registration closes to 8 weeks prior to the exam date	8 weeks or less prior to the exam date.	8 weeks or less prior to the exam date with proof of medical or extenuating circumstances.
\$125	\$250	No refund will be issued	Partial refund to be considered by Registrar. The administration fee of \$250 will not be refunded.

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 exam 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 exam. Extenuating circumstances do not include situations not unique to other candidates such as generalized exam anxiety, decreased ability to prepare/study for the exam.

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. Individuals must provide proof of medical documentation or evidence of extenuating circumstances to the satisfaction of the Registrar to be considered for any refund. An administration fee will be applied to all refunds should a refund be granted.

The Registrar's decision is final.

Refund Policy

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

A full refund of the examination fee will be issued in the event the candidate cannot attend the exam because of COVID-19 isolation/quarantine requirements as per provincial CMOH orders with medical evidence and documentation.

Transfers

Transfers between examinations will not be accepted. Candidates will be required to withdraw from the clinical examination they are registered for and be 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 that 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). Your government issued identification must match the name on your registration form for the examination. Candidates whose appearance or name do not match that on the government issued identification will not be permitted to take the clinical examination.

Accommodations

Requests for accommodations must be made in advance of the examination. 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 at the University of Alberta by the candidate. Accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Last minute requests made on the examination day will not be accommodated.

CPE is responsible for determining the appropriate accommodation in consultation with the candidate.

The CPE unit reserves the right to designate the date and time of the examination should accommodations be requested.

Examination Administration

The College is entering into a contract with the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, Continuing Professional Education Unit of the University of Alberta (the CPE Unit) 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 exam.

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 exam date, scheduled time and location required for the examination day from the CPE unit.

COVID-19 Indemnity

Participation in the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination is not without risk. By registering for the examination, the candidate agrees to the following:

- The examination will involve contact with standardized patients, examiners, and examination administrators. **This is not a virtual examination.**
- Candidates will not attend their examination on the day assigned if they become ill with signs and symptoms of COVID-19 or are a confirmed case of COVID-19 and are legally required to isolate in accordance with provincial public health orders. Candidates will not attend if they have been instructed to quarantine by Canada Border Services or public health officials. If this situation occurs, candidates will notify the College immediately to cancel their examination. A full refund of the examination fee will be issued in this circumstance with medical evidence and documentation.
- 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. No refund will be issued.
- If a candidate should become exposed to or ill with COVID-19 as a consequence of their participation in the examination despite the implementation of public health measures by the CPE Unit, neither the University of Alberta nor the College shall be responsible for any subsequent losses or illness, up to and including loss of life.

Recording of Performance in Exam 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 exam site, the clinical examination may not be marked, or other appropriate action may be considered. The College will be notified of suspected cheating.

The College will conduct appropriate investigations into all suspected cheating.

Results of the investigation will be forwarded to the 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 Physiotherapy Alberta'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 the Complaints Director of their decision and provide all documentation considered by the Committee to render its decision.

Exam Results

The CPE unit will send exam results by email to candidates within 12 weeks of the examination. The CPE unit will also send results directly to the College.

A candidate who passes the examination is deemed eligible to be admitted to the General Register in Alberta. When the College receives the examination results from the CPE Unit, we will follow our usual registration processes to add successful candidates to the General Register.

If a candidate fails the clinical examination, and this is the first failed attempt at an approved clinical competency examination they are eligible to remain on the Provisional Register until the end of their two-year eligibility or failure of the clinical examination a second time.

With two failed attempts of any combination of the Post Graduate clinical examination, clinical component of the PCE administered by CAPR or any other Canadian physiotherapy regulators clinical evaluation for licensure the candidate will not be eligible to remain on the Provisional Register as per section 7(3).

Failed attempts at the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination, the Clinical Component of the PCE administered by CAPR or any other Canadian physiotherapy regulators clinical evaluation for licensure will be counted as an examination attempt for the purpose of administering Section 7(3) of the *Physical Therapists Profession Regulation*, which states "If an applicant fails the examination referred to in section 3(c) a second time, the applicant's registration is cancelled."

Rescoring

All failed stations of the clinical competency examination are reviewed by a second reviewer. The CPE unit reviews all failed stations prior to the exam results being released; therefore, rescoring of the examination will not be an option following the release of exam results.

Administrative Reconsideration

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

Purpose

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

Policy

Exam Day Incidents

There are two types of exam day incidents:

1. Extenuating circumstances
2. Procedural irregularities.

Extenuating circumstances

Extenuating circumstances are incidents that arise unexpectedly on exam 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 exam date as possible. When possible, the documentation should indicate how the extenuating circumstances affected the candidate on exam day.

Procedural irregularities

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

Candidates are required to report procedural irregularities within 7 days of the examination. Candidates must report the incident to the College even if the exam provider indicates they will report it on your behalf.

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

Reporting

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

The college will acknowledge the email and keep this information on file. The college will not consider incidents that are reported more than seven business days after the exam date.

*If an incident occurred at any point **before** the exam 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 seven days of the exam date AND
- Upon receiving their exam results, they failed the exam

To submit a reconsideration, request the following steps apply:

1. Send the College an email to jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca within 15 calendar days of receiving the exam result.
2. Use **Exam Result Reconsideration** in the subject line.
3. Provide detailed information on why the reconsideration request is being made for the exam result.
4. All supporting documentation must have been received within seven days of the examination date.

Requests received more than 15 days after the results of the exam are received 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 seven days of the exam)
- When the reconsideration request was submitted (must have been within fifteen days of the results being received)
- The 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 exam 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 exam fee may be considered.

The fee for administrative reconsideration is \$250.

Appeals

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your administrative reconsideration, you 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.

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:

- You must request an administrative reconsideration and receive the response before you can request an appeal.
- The appeal must be submitted in writing to jvogelgesang@cpta.ab.ca.
- The request for appeal must be received no later than 15 days after the date on your administrative reconsideration.

The registration committee will convene within 90 days of the exam date to consider any appeal requests.

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 Physiotherapy Alberta.

The fee for appeal is \$250.

Fee Summary

Exam Registration Fee	\$750
Reconsideration Fee	\$250
Appeal Fee	\$250
Withdrawal Administration Fee	
Before registration closes	\$125
After registration closes to 8 weeks prior to exam	\$250
8 weeks or less	No refund will be issued for withdraw

A full refund of the examination fee will be issued in the event the candidate cannot attend the exam because of COVID-19 isolation/quarantine requirements as per provincial CMOH orders with medical evidence and documentation.

References

1. MOTION: 2022/06/04: 10 For the purpose of the clinical competency examination administered for College of Physiotherapists of Alberta by the CPE unit, examination will be used. Post-Graduate Clinical Examination.
2. MOTION: 2022/0/04: 9: Approval of the Post-Graduate Clinical Examination Policy Guide
3. 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].
4. Council has approved 5 temporary alternate 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
5. 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].
5. Candidates starting CAPR examinations prior to 2013 had a maximum of 5 attempts for the written and clinical examinations. After 5 failed attempts at either component a candidate has exhausted their eligibility. These candidates must have completed all attempts to both components by December 31, 2018. All other candidates have a maximum of 3 attempts to pass the Written Component and Clinical Component of the PCE. After 3 failed attempts of either component, a candidate has exhausted their eligibility. (CAPR policy 4)
5. **MOTION: 2022/04/06:** 1 Electronic Vote (Exam 4 and 5)



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