



Physiotherapy Competency Examination

Written Component
(Qualifying Exam)

Clinical Component
(Physiotherapy National Exam)

Candidate Handbook 2010

Version 2 – May 27, 2010

Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators

Exam Dates in 2010	
Written Component (Qualifying Exam)	Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam)
Sunday, January 10, 2010	Saturday, June 5, 2010
Saturday, March 6, 2010	Sunday, November 21, 2010
Sunday, May 2, 2010	
Saturday, July 10, 2010	
Sunday, September 12, 2010	
Saturday, November 6, 2010	

This handbook lists the policies and procedures for the Physiotherapy¹ Competency Examination (PCE). Although this handbook is accurate at the time of publication, the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (The Alliance) may change these policies and procedures without prior notice. We will try to advise candidates of important changes to fees, exams, policies and procedures. However, candidates are responsible for reviewing the most current versions of the application forms and this handbook before registering for the PCE.

We will post new or revised policies on our website, www.alliancept.org. Visit this site to download the most current versions of application forms and this handbook.

Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators

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Please do not use perfume, cologne, aftershave or other scented products on the day of the exam.

Please keep this handbook until you receive your exam results.

¹ Physiotherapy, physiotherapist, physical therapy, physical therapist, physiothérapeute, physiothérapie, PT and pht are official marks used with permission. In this document, *physical therapy* means the same thing as *physiotherapy*, and *physical therapist* means the same thing as *physiotherapist*.

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1. General Information

About the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (The Alliance)

The Alliance, incorporated in 1992, is dedicated to developing and improving regulatory standards of practice for physiotherapists. Our member organizations regulate physiotherapy according to provincial and territorial legislation.

Purpose and Structure of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination

The Physiotherapy Competency Examination (PCE) tests whether qualified exam candidates have demonstrated a minimum standard of practice. The PCE ensures that members of the public will be safe when they interact with physiotherapists. It fairly and accurately evaluates how ready you are to practise physiotherapy. Most physiotherapy regulators in Canada include passing the PCE as part of their entry-to-practice process.

The PCE tests the essential knowledge, skills and abilities of physiotherapy practice. It tests history-taking, physical examination, data interpretation, clinical problem solving, treatment techniques, ethics, safety, interviewing and communication. The exam covers the core clinical practice areas: neuromusculoskeletal, neurological, cardiopulmonary-vascular and multisystem.

The PCE has two components: the **Written Component** and the **Clinical Component**.

You must successfully complete the Written Component (Qualifying Exam) before you can take the Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam).

Written Component (Qualifying Exam). This multiple-choice written exam tests your understanding of the principles and processes of physiotherapy practice. (See page 28 for details.)

Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam). This objective structured clinical exam (OSCE) tests your ability to safely and effectively apply the principles and processes of physiotherapy practice. (See page 29 for details.)

2. Eligibility

You must meet these eligibility requirements to take the Physiotherapy Competency Examination.

Eligibility Requirements for Canadian-Educated Candidates

- A minimum of 1,025 hours of supervised clinical practice, as well as completion of the clinical requirements for registration in the province in which you received your physiotherapy education.
- Proof of an entry-level degree in physical therapy from a physiotherapy program accredited with the Accreditation Council of Canadian Physiotherapy Academic Programs. **You must send a copy of your degree or diploma or an official transcript upon graduation. We cannot send your results on the Clinical Component to you until we receive proof that you have this degree.**
- Proficiency in English or French. (*Note: If you are graduating from an accredited Canadian physiotherapy program, we will consider you to be proficient in English or French.*)
- If you are enrolled in a Canadian physiotherapy program, you may complete the Written Component (Qualifying Exam) during your final term of academic study. Before the exam date we will confirm with your university that you are enrolled. You cannot take the Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam) until you have completed your course of study and are eligible for graduation.

Eligibility Requirements for Candidates Educated outside of Canada

- Successful completion of the Educational Credentials and Qualifications Assessment.² You must complete this before you apply for the Physiotherapy Competency Examination. The assessment determines whether your education and qualifications are substantially equivalent to those of a Canadian-educated physiotherapist.

² For current information on credentialing, and to receive a credentialing application, visit our website, www.alliancept.org, or contact our office.

3. Application Requirements and Deadlines

Applications

For each of the two exam components, you must submit

- a completed, signed application form (see page 2 for our mailing address.);
- full payment; and
- **two identical copies** of a current passport-sized **colour** photograph.

You can send your applications for both exam components at the same time.

We must receive your completed application, including photographs and full payment, no later than the application deadline for the component you selected. If your application is not complete, we will send it back to you.

Important Dates for the Physiotherapy Competency Examination in 2010			
Component	Exam Date	Application Deadline	Change and Withdrawal Deadline
Written Component	January 10	October 1, 2009	December 1, 2009
	March 6	December 1, 2009	February 1, 2010
	May 2	February 1, 2010	April 1, 2010
	July 10	April 1, 2010	June 1, 2010
	September 12	June 1, 2010	August 1, 2010
	November 6	August 1, 2010	October 1, 2010
Clinical Component	June 5	January 1, 2010	March 1, 2010
	November 21	June 1, 2010	August 1, 2010

The Alliance has a waiting list for all exams. If you apply after the deadline, we will place you on the waiting list. We will let you know within six weeks after the application deadline whether you can take the exam for which you applied.

Exam Components	
Candidates who successfully complete the Written Component in	are eligible to take the Clinical Component for the first time in
January or March 2010	June or November 2010
May, July or September 2010	November 2010 or in 2011
November 2010	2011

***Note:** You must complete the Clinical Component within two years of successfully completing the Written Component.*

4. Fees

You must pay fees in Canadian funds. Send your payment with your application form. We will not process your application if you do not include payment.

Registration and Exam Fees

Fees have two portions: a registration fee and an exam fee. We do not refund registration fees.

Component	Registration Fee	Exam Fee
Written Component (Qualifying Exam)	\$200.00	\$575.00
Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam)	\$200.00	\$1,000.00
Total	\$1,975.00	

Payment by Cheque or Money Order

Make cheques payable to “Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators.” You can pay by cheque in one instalment or two instalments. If you choose to pay in two instalments, you must send both instalments with your application form, but you can post-date the second instalment. See the payment schedule below for the date your second instalment is due. Your first cheque cannot be post-dated.

Payment Schedule for Cheque or Money Order					
EXAM DATE	Registration Fee	Exam Fee 1 st Instalment	Total for 1 st cheque	Exam Fee 2 nd Instalment	You can post-date the 2 nd cheque to:
Written Component (Qualifying Exam)					
January 10	\$200.00	\$287.50	\$487.50	\$287.50	December 1, 2009
March 6	\$200.00	\$287.50	\$487.50	\$287.50	February 1, 2010
May 2	\$200.00	\$287.50	\$487.50	\$287.50	April 1, 2010
July 10	\$200.00	\$287.50	\$487.50	\$287.50	June 1, 2010
September 12	\$200.00	\$287.50	\$487.50	\$287.50	August 1, 2010
November 6	\$200.00	\$287.50	\$487.50	\$287.50	October 1, 2010
Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam)					
June 5	\$200.00	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$500.00	March 1, 2010
November 21	\$200.00	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$500.00	August 1, 2010

Payment by Credit Card

You can pay your fees by credit card. Please visit The Alliance website, www.alliancept.org, for information on paying by credit card. Complete the credit card section of the application form to authorize credit card payment.

If you are paying by credit card, you must pay all fees for the Written Component in one payment. You can choose to pay for the Clinical Component in two instalments, following the schedule for cheque or money order on the previous page.

Service Fees

Non-Refundable Service Fees			
Service	Component	Date	Fee
Site Change Fee (to change <u>where</u> you write the exam)	Written Component	Before withdrawal deadline	No fee
		After withdrawal deadline	Cannot change site
	Clinical Component	Before withdrawal deadline	No fee
		After withdrawal deadline	\$100.00 (if change is possible)
Date Change Fee (to change <u>when</u> you write the exam)	Written Component	Before withdrawal deadline	First date change: No fee Subsequent changes: \$100.00
		After withdrawal deadline	\$100.00 ³
	Clinical Component	Before withdrawal deadline	\$100.00
		After withdrawal deadline	We will consider your request a withdrawal. ⁴
Re-scoring			\$100.00
Administrative Reconsideration			\$300.00
Appeal			\$300.00
Duplicate Results			\$25.00
Duplicate Certificate			\$25.00
Duplicate Receipt			\$25.00
NSF Cheque/Declined or Invalid Credit Card			\$75.00

³ If you change your exam date, we will use the withdrawal deadline of the original exam date you applied for to calculate your date change fees and refund if you withdraw. For instance, if the exam date you originally applied for was in January, we will consider December 1 your withdrawal deadline, regardless of the date you eventually write your exam. If you change your date after December 1, we will charge \$100 for each change. If you withdraw after December 1, you will not receive a refund. See refund policy, page 15.

⁴ See refund policy, page 15.

NSF Cheques and Declined or Invalid Credit Cards

If the bank returns your cheque to us because there is not enough money in your account (NSF), or if your credit card is declined or is not valid, you must replace the payment with a certified cheque or money order. We will consider your registration incomplete. You will not be eligible to write the exam unless we receive payment within 10 business days of the date on the notice we send to you.

Change of Exam Date

If you need to change the date of your exam, please send a Change of Exam Site/Date Form, which is available on our website, www.alliancept.org, under “Examinations.” See page 9 for the fees we charge to change the date of your exam.

Receipts

We will mail a receipt for your fees to you with your exam results after you have finished each component of the exam.

5. Exam Sites

We make every effort to assign you to the location that is your first choice.

Written Component

You can choose from the following sites:

Vancouver	London	Montreal	St. John's
Edmonton	Hamilton	Fredericton	Whitehorse
Saskatoon	Toronto	Charlottetown	
Winnipeg	Ottawa	Halifax	

Clinical Component

You can choose from the following sites:

Vancouver	Saskatoon (autumn only)	Toronto/Hamilton	Halifax
Edmonton	Winnipeg (autumn only)	Ottawa	

Some Clinical Component sites have both a morning session and an afternoon session. We will assign you to either the morning or the afternoon session.

If you want to take the Clinical Component in **French**, you must choose the Ottawa site. (See Choice of Language, page 13.)

Site Assignment

We assign you to an exam site on a first-come, first-served basis, based on the date we receive your completed application.

The number of candidates who request each site affects site assignments. If too many or too few candidates register for the site you have chosen, we may assign you to a different site. We cannot guarantee that we will assign you to one of your preferred exam sites.

Site Change

If you need to change your exam site, send your request in writing by email, fax or letter on or before the deadline to change sites. (See page 2 for contact information.) Alternatively, you can send a Change of Exam Site/Date Form, which is available on our website, www.alliancept.org, under “Examinations.” You must send the site change fee with your request (see Service Fees, page 9).

If space is available at the new site **after we have assigned all candidates who selected it as their first choice**, we will consider your request. We will return your fee if we cannot change your site.

Travel and Accommodation

It is your responsibility to make your own arrangements for travel and accommodation. We do not provide maps or directions to exam locations.

The Written Component will take up to four hours, and the Clinical Component will take up to six hours. Make sure you allow enough time for the exam when you plan your travel.

You can contact us to find out your site assignment if you need to make travel plans before you receive your site confirmation.

6. Choice of Language

You can take the Physiotherapy Competency Examination in English or French.

Written Component (Qualifying Exam)

You can take the Written Component in either English or French at any site. You will receive the Written Component exam paper in the language you choose on your application. A copy of the exam paper in the other language will be available for reference during the exam.

Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam)

You can take the Clinical Component in either English or French. The examiners and standardized patients will speak to you in the language you select on your application form. We will give you written questions in both languages.

If you want to use French for any portion of the Clinical Component, you must take the Clinical Component at the Ottawa site. No other site offers the Clinical Component in French.

You must complete all clinical encounters in the language you choose on your application. For written questions, however, you can answer in either language **at the Ottawa site only**.

Change of Language

If you want to change the language in which you take either component of the exam, you must notify The Alliance in writing at least 30 days before the exam date. You cannot change languages within 30 days of the exam.

7. Registration Procedures

Receipt of Application

When we have processed your completed application, we will send you confirmation. We will include your site assignment and the *Orientation Resource* with your confirmation.

Registration Package

One month before the exam, we will send you an Entry Certificate along with instructions and information about your site. If you have not received a registration package two weeks before the exam, please contact us.

Exam Day Procedure

On the exam day, report to the registration desk, present your Entry Certificate and photo identification, and sign in.

Change of Information

If you change your name or contact information (address, telephone number or email), send us notification in writing.

If you change your name, you must provide a legal document, such as a marriage certificate, that verifies the change.

Please make all requests for change of personal information or exam date or site in writing by email, fax or letter (see page 2 for contact information). Or you can send a Change of Information Form, which is available on our website, www.alliancept.org, under “Examinations.”

Verification Request Form

Some provincial and territorial regulators will give you a temporary, restricted or supervised licence to practise physiotherapy if you send them verification that you have registered for the exam. If you want us to verify to a regulator that you have registered for the exam, please complete the Verification Request Form. You can download the Verification Request Form from our website, www.alliancept.org.

If you pay your fees by certified cheque, money order or credit card, we can send verification as soon as we have processed your payment. If you pay by personal cheque, we will send the verification after the bank has processed the first instalment of your fee. This can take up to 15 business days.

8. Refund Policy

Withdrawal

If you want to withdraw from the exam, please notify us in writing. We do not accept verbal withdrawals.

- If you withdraw before the application deadline for your original exam date, we will refund your exam fee. (See page 8 for exam fees.)
- If you withdraw after the application deadline but before the withdrawal deadline, we will refund half of your exam fee.
- If you withdraw after the withdrawal deadline for your original exam date, we will not refund your exam fee.
- Registration fees are not refundable.

Absence from the Exam with Extenuating Circumstances

If you cannot take the exam because of extenuating circumstances, you must notify The Alliance in writing within 14 days after the date of the exam. You can send your information before the exam, or up to 14 days after the date of the exam. If you notify us by this deadline, we will review your situation and consider refunding part of your exam fee.

Some examples of extenuating circumstances are illness, pregnancy, breastfeeding, or a death in the family.

- If you were ill, you must send us a doctor's note that confirms the diagnosis.
- If you were pregnant or breastfeeding, you must send us a doctor's note that confirms the date of delivery.
- If there was a death in your family, you must send us a copy of the death certificate.

We consider refunds for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Unsuccessful Result in the Written Component (Qualifying Exam)

If you pre-register for the Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam) but do not successfully complete the Written Component (Qualifying Exam), you will receive a full refund of the Clinical Component exam fee. We will not refund the Clinical Component registration fee.

9. Scoring

We score the two parts of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination independently. You must successfully complete the Written Component (Qualifying Exam) to advance to the Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam). You must successfully complete the Clinical Component to receive a certificate of successful completion of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination.

Written Component (Qualifying Exam)

To pass the Written Component, you must achieve an overall score of 330 or higher on the standard score scale. You can find information on standard score scales in Frequently Asked Questions in the Exam section of our website, www.alliancept.org.

Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam)

You must meet three criteria to pass the Clinical Component:

1. Total score criterion: you must achieve a minimum overall score
2. Number of stations criterion: you must pass a minimum number of stations
3. Critical incident criterion: you must demonstrate safe and professional actions and behaviours at the entry-to-practice level

The Board of Examiners sets the passing scores. These scores may vary from exam to exam, depending on the difficulty and content of each exam.

The Board of Examiners reviews all actions or behaviours that the physiotherapist examiners consider unsafe or unprofessional. If your unsafe actions or unprofessional behaviours are too serious or too numerous, the Board of Examiners will determine that you have not met the minimum standard for entry to practice.

For more information on scoring, see Frequently Asked Questions in the “Exam” section of our website, www.alliancept.org.

10. Results

We will send your exam result **by mail** to the address on file. **Do not telephone, fax or email the office for your results.** You must notify us in writing if you change your address. We mail results for the Written Component within six weeks of the exam, and we mail results for the Clinical Component within 12 weeks of the exam.

We will also post a list of the results on our website, *www.alliancept.org*, on the same day that we mail the results. You will need your candidate Personal Identification Number (PIN) to find your result on this list.

Taking the Exam Again

If you fail a component of the PCE, you can rewrite the failed component twice. You must take it again within two years of the failed exam. You **cannot** register for consecutive sessions of the Written Component.

If you fail a component three times, you will not be eligible to take the component again until you complete further preparation that our Director of Examinations considers satisfactory. We will give you detailed information if this happens.

If you fail a component four times, you will not be eligible to take the component again until you complete further preparation that our Board of Examiners considers satisfactory. We will give you detailed information if this happens. The Board of Examiners can decide to not allow you to take the component a fifth time.

If you fail a component five times, you will not be eligible to take it again.

Re-scoring

We verify exam scores before we release the results.

If you want to have your exam scored again, send a written request to The Alliance within 30 days of the date on your result letter. You can pay the re-scoring fee by personal cheque, credit card, certified cheque or money order (see Service Fees, page 9). Re-scoring involves checking to make sure that you received credit for all correct answers. Overall results rarely change following re-scoring. If re-scoring changes your exam result from a fail to a pass, we will refund your re-scoring fee.

Administrative Reconsideration

If you request administrative reconsideration, the Director of Examinations will appoint an investigator to review your request. The investigator will consider the reasons you requested administrative reconsideration, and will review your supporting documentation and any additional relevant materials. The investigator will conduct any interviews he or she thinks necessary. The investigator will decide if the issues you raised could have put you at a disadvantage compared to other candidates.

Criteria for Administrative Reconsideration

We will do an administrative reconsideration for three types of issues:

1. Illness on the day of the exam.
2. Administrative issues on the day of the exam. If the circumstances of your exam affected your exam performance in a negative way or placed you at a disadvantage compared to other candidates, you may be eligible for administrative reconsideration. These circumstances could include exam procedures that are significantly different from The Alliance's standard exam procedures.
3. Extraordinary circumstances. If extraordinary circumstances beyond your control, such as a family emergency, could have affected your exam result, you may be eligible for administrative reconsideration.

Process for Administrative Reconsideration

If you are requesting administrative reconsideration for any reason other than illness, we must receive your written request at our office within 30 days of the date on your results letter. If you are requesting administrative reconsideration because of illness, we must receive your written request within 14 days of the exam.

- Please submit, in writing, a confidential letter describing the health issues, administrative issues or extraordinary circumstances that you believe affected your result. Your letter must show a cause and effect relationship between the issues you raise and your exam performance. Include specific details about administrative issues or extraordinary circumstances.
- Include payment for the full administrative reconsideration fee. You can pay the administrative reconsideration fee by personal cheque, credit card, certified cheque or money order (see Service Fees, page 9).

Please deliver or mail the required documents (your letter plus any supporting documentation) and fees to our office to the attention of the Director of Examinations. The administrative reconsideration, conducted by our staff, includes an administrative and statistical audit of test sheets and other documents, as well as interviews with physiotherapist examiners, standardized patients and site staff, as required.

Supporting Documentation

- If your request for administrative reconsideration is based on illness, send medical documentation from a licensed or registered healthcare practitioner.
- If your request for administrative reconsideration is based on extraordinary circumstances, send any available relevant supporting documentation.

Outcome of Administrative Reconsideration

If we find that the issues you identified could have significantly affected your results, the outcome of your administrative reconsideration **may** include

- allowing you to repeat the exam component without counting the failed attempt in your exam history;
- refunding your administrative reconsideration fee, if we find that administrative issues are the deciding factor in granting the reconsideration; and
- not charging the exam fee for your next exam attempt.

We will not change a fail to a pass in an administrative reconsideration.

Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your administrative reconsideration, you may choose to appeal. In an appeal, we review all the information related to your performance to determine whether the issues you raised could have significantly affected your result. We also determine whether you were treated fairly in the administrative reconsideration process.

We will provide detailed information on appeal procedures in our response to your administrative reconsideration.

Criteria for Appeal

- You must request an administrative reconsideration and receive the response to that request before you can request an appeal.
- You must request an appeal in writing. Include a confidential letter describing the issues on which you are basing your appeal.
- We must receive appeal requests at our office no more than 30 days after the date on your administrative reconsideration response.
- You must include payment for the full appeal fee. You can pay the appeal fee by personal cheque, credit card, certified cheque or money order (see Service Fees, page 9).

Process for Appeal

Please deliver or mail the required documents (your letter plus any supporting documentation) and fees to our office to the attention of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO will assemble an appeal panel to consider all the information related to your performance, including your administrative reconsideration and any additional information you provide.

Supporting Documentation

If you appeal your administrative reconsideration, we will already have your relevant documents on file. You can submit more documents relevant to your appeal, such as further explanation or details of the issues, or more medical documentation. We will not consider letters of reference or information about your performance in undergraduate placements in your appeal.

Outcome of Appeal

If the appeal panel finds that the issues you identified probably would have significantly affected your results, it may grant your appeal. The outcome of a successful appeal **may** include

- allowing you to repeat the exam component without counting the failed attempt in your exam history;
- refunding your administrative reconsideration fee;
- refunding your appeal fee; and
- not charging the exam fee for your next exam attempt.

In limited circumstances, the appeal panel may decide to change a fail to a pass.

The decision of the appeal panel is final.

11. Additional Information

Limitations

We cannot advise or provide details on matters under the jurisdiction of other institutions or governments, such as

- regulations, statutes or policies governing physiotherapy licensing or registration;
- opportunities for general or specific experience;
- training or employment opportunities;
- agreements between physiotherapy licensing bodies within or outside Canada;
- the conditions imposed by the Government of Canada for immigration;
- scholarships or funding; and
- income tax deductions.

Limits of The Alliance's Liability

Before you register for the PCE, you must read and understand the limits of liability. You must tell interested parties, such as potential or current employers, about the limits of liability.

While the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators takes reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information, resources and reports, neither The Alliance nor any of its officers, employees or agents shall be responsible for damages or losses in the event of any errors or omissions, or liable for any damages or losses incurred by a candidate, an employer or a contractor as a result of any decision made by or on behalf of The Alliance or any of its officers, employees or agents. This means that The Alliance is not responsible for impacts of a personal, professional or financial nature. This includes such impacts as loss of income, loss of salary, and expenses incurred by an employer, a contractor or a candidate.

By registering for and participating in the PCE, you agree that you will take no legal action or other proceedings against The Alliance or any of its officers, employees or agents for anything done in good faith related to the PCE, including any errors, omissions, neglect or default. You also agree to fully release and indemnify The Alliance, its officers, employees and agents for any such actions or proceedings. This means that The Alliance will not be responsible for any loss of income or other expenses incurred by you or an employer or contractor due to a decision made by The Alliance related to the PCE, and that you agree not to take legal action against The Alliance.

Financial Assistance

We do not offer financial assistance or information on possible sources of financial assistance. We cannot dismiss or change exam fees except as noted elsewhere in this handbook.

The Alliance is a non-profit organization. The money we need to administer the Physiotherapy Competency Examination comes from the exam fees we collect.

Research

We conduct research using non-identifying exam data, and we may also provide this data to external researchers. Non-identifying exam data is data from your exam, such as your answers and marks, that does not include your name or identification number and cannot be traced back to you. By signing the application form, you are consenting to the use of non-identifying data for research purposes.

Privacy Policy

We collect, use and disclose our candidates' personal information responsibly and only as permitted by law. Please see our Privacy Policy for more details. It is available online at our website, www.alliancept.org.

12. Confidentiality and Security of Exam Material

The Alliance maintains strict security over exam content before, during and after the exam to eliminate unfair advantages among candidates and to avoid the costs of replacing exam questions if cheating occurs.

All exam materials are protected by copyright. Our security measures protect exam material while it is being developed and reviewed; while it is being reproduced, transported and disposed of; and while it is being presented on the exam day.

We strictly enforce the rules of conduct for the Physiotherapy Competency Examination, as described on page 24. Candidates who disobey the rules of conduct may be asked to leave the exam site, may not receive results of the exam, or may have their results cancelled.

Please note that we may use monitoring and surveillance technologies to detect and document cheating.

13. Rules of Conduct for the Physiotherapy Competency Examination

By participating in the Physiotherapy Competency Examination, you agree to the following rules:

1. The Physiotherapy Competency Examination and its contents are the exclusive property of the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators (The Alliance).
2. You cannot remove any part of the Physiotherapy Competency Examination from the exam site.
3. Your behaviour before, during and after the exam cannot disturb other candidates or cause them anxiety. Do not make disruptive comments about the exam, unnecessarily question exam policies and procedures or engage in other behaviour that could disturb other candidates.
4. If you cheat, as defined below, we may ask you to leave the exam site, we may decide not to mark your exam or we may take other appropriate action.
5. Cheating refers to anything that could affect your results, the results of another candidate or the results of a potential future candidate. Some examples of cheating are:
 - a. Non-registered individuals posing as registered candidates
 - b. Bringing study materials to the exam room(s)
 - c. Giving or receiving help during the exam
 - d. Engaging in any conduct during the exam that disturbs other candidates
 - e. Removing or trying to remove exam materials from the exam site
 - f. Receiving or distributing information about the Written Component or the Clinical Component **either before or after** the exam.⁵ You cannot share information about the diagnoses, tasks or activities that are included in the exam. Do not discuss information about Clinical Component stations with other candidates or examiners even after the exam.

⁵ You must maintain the same strict confidentiality with station information that you would with patient information. Candidates who have failed the exam but who learn about questions and stations in discussions after the exam will have an unfair advantage on future exams. (In other words, they can pass a station because they already know about the station.)

Actions of The Alliance in the Event of Suspected Cheating

1. If the exam personnel suspect that you are cheating, they may take your exam materials, as well as any other documents, objects or materials that could be used for cheating, and make you or others leave the exam site. The exam personnel report any suspected cheating to the Director of Examinations of The Alliance.
2. The Director of Examinations conducts appropriate investigations into all alleged cheating. You will have an opportunity to submit a written response to the allegation of cheating.
3. The Exam Steering Group reviews the results of the investigation, including your response. It asks for any additional investigations it believes are necessary and makes one of the following decisions:
 - a. Declare that we cannot confirm whether you cheated.
 - b. Declare that you may have cheated, and recommend appropriate sanctions.
4. The Exam Steering Group will forward a declaration of possible cheating to the Evaluation Services Committee. The Evaluation Services Committee will review the investigation and the recommended sanctions and will make one of the following decisions:
 - a. Declare that we cannot confirm that you cheated.
 - b. Declare that you did cheat, and approve the sanctions.
5. If the recommended sanctions include a permanent ban on testing, termination of a contract or initiation of legal action, the Evaluation Services Committee will forward the recommendation to the Executive Committee for review and approval.
6. If the Exam Steering Group or the Evaluation Services Committee declares that we cannot prove cheating occurred, we will release your score, if possible, or we will let you take the next available exam without charge.
7. The Alliance reserves the right to begin an investigation into suspected cheating at any time before, during or after the PCE is administered.
8. If the Evaluation Services Committee declares that cheating did occur, one or more of the following will happen:
 - a. We will record your exam result as “undetermined.”
 - b. If we allow you to take the exam again, we will take special measures (at your expense) to prevent you from cheating again.
 - c. We will report findings to the physiotherapy regulators.

In addition, the Executive Committee **may** approve the following sanctions:

- d. We may permanently ban you from testing. This means you would not be eligible to write the exam again.
- e. We may take legal action against you.

We do not need to hold a hearing if we give you at least two weeks to respond in writing to the allegation of cheating. You can appeal the Evaluation Services Committee’s decision (see page 20).

14. Accommodation of Special Needs

When appropriate, we may be able to make alternative accessible arrangements available to candidates who have special needs.

If you want accommodation for a physical, cognitive or other special need, please complete a written request for accommodation **when you apply for the exam**. This includes any medication you want to bring into the exam. We must receive documentation (such as educational assessment, doctor's letter, etc.) with your application. We consider requests for accommodation of special needs on a case-by-case basis.

We will not consider requests received fewer than 30 days before the Written Component or fewer than 60 days before the Clinical Component, except in unusual circumstances, such as a recent injury.

By requesting accommodation for special needs, you agree that The Alliance may disclose your name and the accommodation provided to you to physiotherapy regulators.

15. Orientation Resource

When we send confirmation that we have processed your application, we will also send the *Orientation Resource*. The *Orientation Resource* includes

- information on preparing for the exam;
- information on exam-day procedures;
- a description of what is included on the exam;
- Written Component sample questions; and
- Clinical Component sample stations.

We will send one *Orientation Resource* to you in each calendar year. If you take a second exam in the same year, we will not send you another *Orientation Resource*.

16. Contacting The Alliance

Our contact information is on the second page of this handbook.

The exam department will answer any questions you have about the exam, policies and applications. Whenever you phone or write to us, please tell us your personal identification number (PIN).

If you want to authorize someone else to represent you and to act or receive information on your behalf, you need to sign a power of attorney document. After you send us an original notarized⁶ power of attorney, we will give information, correspondence and results to you or to your representative. We will not give information to your representative over the telephone.

For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, please see our website, www.alliancept.org,

⁶ Notarized means that the document has been certified by a person who is authorized to administer oaths and certify documents. In Canada, this person is called a notary public or a commissioner of oaths.

17. Description of the Exam

Written Component (Qualifying Exam)

The Written Component is a four-hour written exam with approximately 200 multiple-choice questions that assess your knowledge of all functions and practice areas. Approximately 80 percent of the questions on the Written Component are associated with a vignette (a case scenario). The remaining 20 percent of the questions are stand-alone items. The *Orientation Resource* has sample questions.

The exam will test you on physiotherapy functions: assessment and evaluation; interpretation, planning, intervention and re-evaluation; and professional responsibilities. The questions will be distributed across these functions approximately as follows:

- assessment and evaluation (34–36 percent)
- interpretation, planning, intervention and re-evaluation (49–51 percent)
- professional responsibilities (14–16 percent)

Questions will be distributed across areas of practice approximately as follows:

- the neuromusculoskeletal system (49–51 percent)
- the neurological system (19–21 percent)
- the cardiopulmonary-vascular system (14–16 percent)
- multisystem (14–16 percent)

The questions are multiple-choice, with four possible answers. You must choose the one best answer for each question.

If you would like to use ear plugs during the exam, you must bring your own. You can also bring bottled water. We will not permit any other equipment or food in the exam area. You will receive detailed information on exam-day procedures with your registration package.

Clinical Component (Physiotherapy National Exam)

The Clinical Component is approximately three and a half hours long, with extra time for registration, orientation and breaks, for a total time of approximately five hours. We will assign you to either a morning session or an afternoon session.

In the Clinical Component, you move through a series of 16 clinical stations. In each station, a brief written statement will introduce a clinical problem and ask you to obtain a focused history, conduct a focused physical examination, plan or perform an intervention and, in some cases, answer some written or oral questions.

In the Clinical Component, the questions will be distributed across physiotherapy functions approximately as follows:

- assessment and evaluation (30–40 percent)
- interpretation, planning, intervention and re-evaluation (45–55 percent)
- professional responsibilities (10–20 percent)

Questions will be distributed across areas of practice approximately as follows:

- the neuromusculoskeletal system (45–55 percent)
- the neurological system (15–25 percent)
- the cardiopulmonary-vascular system (10–20 percent)
- multisystem (10–20 percent)

On an exam of 16 stations, 8 will be neuromusculoskeletal stations, 3 to 4 will be neurological, 2 to 3 will be cardiopulmonary-vascular and 2 to 3 will be multisystem.

The guidelines we use to administer the Clinical Component and train the physiotherapist examiners and standardized patients are the same for all sites. Physiotherapist examiners use predetermined station content checklists to assess your performance. These measures ensure that the Clinical Component is objective. Physiotherapist examiners give scores based on your performance at each station. The overall score for the exam is the sum of station scores.

During clinical encounters and at written stations, you may be asked to perform, demonstrate or list a specific number of responses. We assume that you will choose the best of the options available to you. In many stations, the best answer will be worth extra marks.

You must bring a lab coat and your own diagnostic kit (stethoscope, reflex hammer, goniometer and measuring tape). We will not allow any other equipment or food in the exam area. We will provide refreshments during the exam. You will receive detailed information on exam-day procedures with your registration package.

We will provide hand sanitizer so you can clean your hands at the beginning of each station. The examiners do not give you marks for cleaning your hands, but they will remind you. You should take all other infection control precautions as indicated by the clinical situation.

18. Station Descriptions for the Clinical Component

There are two types of clinical stations: couplet stations and ten-minute stations.

Written instructions are posted outside each exam room and inside each station.

Couplet Stations: Five-Minute Clinical Encounter plus Five-Minute Written Station

1. Five-Minute Clinical Encounter

We will ask you to do one or more of the following:

- Obtain a focused history.
- Conduct a focused physical examination.
- Perform an intervention.

A physiotherapist examiner will watch you and assess your performance using a predetermined checklist.

2. Five-Minute Written Station

After each five-minute clinical encounter, you must complete a five-minute written station consisting of short-answer questions. The questions will ask you to do one or more of the following:

- Record findings from the previous clinical encounter.
- Suggest a physiotherapy intervention.
- Interpret x-rays, laboratory results, etc.
- Suggest an investigation or management plan.

A signal system is used to time the stations. You must wait for the signal before moving from one station to the next. The signal sounds to start the station, again when 30 seconds remain, and again at the end of five minutes, when you must leave the room. You have one minute to move from one station to the next.

Ten-Minute Stations

Ten-minute stations assess your ability to obtain a history, conduct a physical examination, demonstrate interviewing and communication skills, apply treatment skills or perform interventions. A physiotherapist examiner will watch you and assess your performance using a predetermined checklist.

A signal system is used to time the stations. You must wait for the signal before moving from one station to the next. A signal sounds to start the station, again when two minutes remain, and again at the end of ten minutes, when you must leave the room. You have two minutes to move from one station to the next.

In most ten-minute stations, you will interact with a standardized patient for ten minutes. In a few stations, you will interact with the patient for eight minutes, and then for two minutes the physiotherapist examiner will ask you brief questions related to the case. The examiner will listen to your answers and evaluate them using a predetermined checklist. Instructions posted outside the stations will let you know which stations have examiner questions.

Please keep this handbook until you receive your exam results.

Order Form for Resources

These resources may help you prepare for the Physiotherapy Competency Examination:

- **DVD:** a 10-minute video about the exam
- **Orientation Resource:** information about the exam and sample questions

You can find more resources on our website, including general information, credentialing forms, exam application forms, a list of English and French physiotherapy terms used in the exam and answers to frequently asked questions.

www.alliancept.org

Name:		
Address:		
	Postal Code:	
Telephone (H):	Telephone (B):	
Resources Order Form		Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> DVD:	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French	\$10.00
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Orientation Resource:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> French	\$35.00
All candidates receive a complimentary CD orientation resource with their application receipt.		
Shipping and Handling:	<input type="checkbox"/> within Canada, add C\$5.00 <input type="checkbox"/> to USA, add C\$5.00 <input type="checkbox"/> to overseas, add C\$10.00	
Total:		

Please send a cheque or money order in Canadian funds payable to “Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators.”

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