

## Frequently Asked Questions

**ACSM advises all exam candidates to review the candidate handbook:**

**[www.acsm.org/candidatehandbook](http://www.acsm.org/candidatehandbook)**

### **When will the exam be available?**

The exam is currently available on-demand, with immediate results at over 4300 locations through Pearson VUE authorized testing centers. Candidates may pick the date, time and location of their exam.

### **How can I register for the exam?**

- Online at [www.pearsonvue.com/acsm](http://www.pearsonvue.com/acsm)
- Phone registration in the United States and Canada: 888-VUE-ACSM (883-2276)
- See the global directory at: [www.pearsonvue.com/contact/acsm](http://www.pearsonvue.com/contact/acsm)
- On site registration: any [Pearson VUE™ Authorized Center](#) worldwide

### **What should I expect when taking the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist examination?**

A body of knowledge delineated into Job Tasks and Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) has been developed specifically for the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist by subject matter experts (SMEs). The SMEs developed the Job Tasks and KSAs specifically for professionals working in public health at the national, state and/or local level.

The examination is composed of approximately 100-125 multiple choice questions drawn from the KSAs for the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist. It includes “trial” questions that are being tested for use in future examinations. These trial questions are randomly distributed throughout the exam and will not be counted in the final results.

You will not be allowed to bring any materials or equipment into the examination area. There are no calculations on the exam.

### **How long is the exam?**

Exam Time: 150 minutes (2.5 hours)

Total Exam Seat Time: 170 minutes (2 hours, 50 minutes); includes eligibility verification, a tutorial and a non-disclosure agreement prior to exam and then a 10 minute comment period following the exam (not required).

### **What are the minimum requirements to take the exam?**

- A Bachelor’s Degree in a health related field\* from a regionally accredited college or university, or

- A Bachelor's degree in any subject and 1,200 hours of experience in settings\*\* promoting physical activity, healthy lifestyle management or other health promotion.

*\*Examples: Exercise science; Exercise Physiology; Kinesiology; Physical Education; Sports Management; Athletic Training; Recreation; Nutrition; Health Education; Health Promotion; Public Health; Community Health; and Health Care Administration.*

*\*\* Examples: Education; Community/Public Health Setting; YMCA, Parks & Recreation, After School Programs; Worksite Health Promotion; Community Health; Health Education or Health Promotion; Federal, State, or Local Government; Health Care or Health Plan; Academia or University; Non-profit Organization; Commercial Health Clubs; Corporate Fitness Centers*

**What is a common work setting for individuals seeking this certification?**

See examples listed above \*\*.

**What are the recommended study materials? How can I find them?**

A list of recommended materials can be found at [www.acsm.org/paphs](http://www.acsm.org/paphs)

**How is the PAPHS certification different from the other ACSM certifications?**

Current ACSM certifications primarily address working with individuals or small groups. The PAPHS certification is for professionals desiring to work in a public health setting at the national, state and/or local level.

**Does the PAPHS certification qualify me to practice in the capacity of other ACSM certifications?**

The PAPHS certification is intended for professionals to support programs in a public health setting. While it is advantageous for someone with an ACSM certification to achieve this certification, it is designed for different settings and for different programming. To practice in the capacity of other ACSM certifications, that specific certification is required.

**Are there workshops or webinars to help me prepare?**

Workshops are not currently available, however, there will be workshops or webinars available in the near future. Please check back for more information at a later date.

**What will the exam cost?**

\$195 for eligible candidates and \$150 for ACSM Certified Professionals or NSPAPPH Members. The cost of the re-test is \$125. To receive the ACSM Certified Professional or NSPAPPH Membership discount, e-mail [certification@acsm.org](mailto:certification@acsm.org).

**Is there an ACSM member discount?**

There is not an ACSM membership discount for specialty certifications, however, there is an ACSM Certified Professional discount. See question above.

ACSM membership discounts apply to the ACSM Certified Personal Trainer<sup>SM</sup>, ACSM Certified Health Fitness Specialist, ACSM Certified Clinical Exercise Specialist and

ACSM Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist<sup>®</sup>. ACSM membership applications may be obtained by visiting [www.acsm.org/join](http://www.acsm.org/join), both printable and online applications are available. To view membership categories, fees, and benefits, visit [www.acsm.org/membership\\_options](http://www.acsm.org/membership_options). Should you have additional membership related questions, email [membership@acsm.org](mailto:membership@acsm.org).

**Where can I take the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist examination?**

At a Pearson VUE authorized testing center. There are over 4300 Pearson VUE authorized testing centers in 166 countries. To locate a testing center near you, please visit [www.pearsonvue.com/acsm](http://www.pearsonvue.com/acsm)

**After completing the exam, when will I receive my results?**

You will receive your results immediately upon completion of the exam in a printed score report. The score report will include your scaled score out of 800 and the percent that you answered correctly in each competency. If you pass, a certificate will be sent to you in 6-8 weeks.

**If I do not pass the exam, how quickly can I take a re-test?**

Re-test candidates will receive a re-test promotional code (promocode) on the results printout. You may retake the exam 15 days following your initial exam and every 15 days following until a passing score is achieved.

**What are the continuing education requirements?**

Individuals who receive a passing score will be required to earn 45 continuing education credits specific to the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist.

**Can I use the same continuing education credits (CECs) to renew the specialty certification that I use to renew my ACSM certification?**

CECs from an ACSM certification can also be applied for an ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist if the content covered in the course includes information covered in the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) of the specialty certification.

**Will ACSM be offering continuing education opportunities for the specialty certification?**

ACSM and NSPAPPH will be providing self-study opportunities for the specialty certification as well as working with programs that exist in the industry to award continuing education credits.

**Can I earn continuing education credits for taking a specialty certification?**

ACSM Certified Professionals can earn 10 ACSM CECs to apply for their current renewal cycle if they pass a specialty certification.

**What other exams does ACSM offer?**

ACSM currently offers four other certifications. ACSM Certified Personal Trainer<sup>SM</sup>, ACSM Certified Health Fitness Specialist, ACSM Certified Clinical Exercise Specialist and ACSM Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist<sup>®</sup>. Additionally, ACSM offers other specialty certifications, the ACSM/NCPAD Certified Inclusive Fitness Trainer and the ACSM/ACS Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer. For more information, visit [www.acsm.org/certification](http://www.acsm.org/certification).

**Are there more specialty certifications available through ACSM?**

Yes, ACSM offers a specialty certification for fitness professionals to work with individuals with disabilities, the ACSM/NCPAD Certified Inclusive Fitness Trainer. Also, ACSM offers a specialty certification for fitness professionals to work with cancer survivors or those undergoing treatment, the ACSM/ACS Certified Cancer Exercise Trainer. Additional ACSM specialty certifications are planned. For all available exams, visit [www.acsm.org/certification](http://www.acsm.org/certification).

**Will the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist examination be available internationally?**

Yes, the **ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist** exam will be available in English at any Pearson VUE authorized testing center worldwide. Please visit [www.pearsonvue.com/acsm](http://www.pearsonvue.com/acsm) for international testing centers.

**Is the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist exam available in foreign languages?**

Translated exams will be made available in different languages as demand dictates. Currently, the exam is available at any worldwide Pearson VUE authorized testing center in English.

**What is the passing score for the ACSM/NSPAPPH Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist exam?**

The passing score for all ACSM certification exams is set in advance and applied to all candidates' exam results. Similar to exam scoring for a wide variety of other high stakes, national standardized exams (e.g., GRE, SAT, GMAT, etc.), ACSM certification exams are reported on a 200-800 score scale.

Specifically, all candidates are expected to meet the passing standard of a scaled score of 550 in order to receive a "Pass" on any respective ACSM certification exam. This passing standard is based upon the expectations of the subject matter experts/test developers across all topics of the competency areas, as related to each respective credential's examination blueprint. Passing candidates are expected to answer a sufficient number of test questions correctly that demonstrates a summative amount of knowledge at a level of at least minimal competency or the lowest acceptable score to pass the exam.

Finally, each content area is weighted proportionally, based on the results of a periodic comprehensive job task analysis/role delineation study. In other words, some content

areas are more important (thus, have more questions) and count more with respect to the overall score than other content areas. On the score report, candidates receive their overall score, their pass/fail status, as well as a breakdown by each specific content area (either by a percentage or a sub-section scale score, respectively).