NSCA®
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION

CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

How to Achieve an NSCA Certification

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2025

010825-MKT7575

NSCA CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

About this Handbook
This handbook provides information needed to earn and maintain certifications offered by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA). Individuals should review the process and requirements specific to each certification, and are expected to follow the policies as outlined not only within the handbook but also the NSCA Code of Ethics.

Statement of Nondiscrimination
The NSCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, veteran status, or any protected characteristic.

NSCA®
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION

NSCA.COM

TOLL FREE 800-815-6826 // **FAX** 719-632-6367 // **INTERNATIONAL** +1-719-632-6722

NSCA CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO GET CERTIFIED

APPENDICES

NSCA CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1978, The National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) is a nonprofit association dedicated to advancing the strength and conditioning and related sport science professions around the world.

The NSCA exists to empower a community of professionals to maximize their impact through disseminating evidence-based knowledge and its practical application by offering industry-leading certifications, research journals, career development services, networking opportunities, and continuing education. The NSCA community is composed of more than 50,000 certified members and other professionals throughout the world, who further industry standards as researchers, educators, strength and conditioning coaches, performance and sport scientists, personal trainers, tactical professionals, and other related roles.

CERTIFICATIONS OFFERED

Through highly regarded certifications, the NSCA sets a high standard of excellence for the industry. When you earn an NSCA certification, you elevate your credibility and join the ranks of some of the industry's top experts. Each certification is separate and distinct with the population being served identified by the scope of practice. Holding NSCA credentials demonstrates that you are dedicated to excellence and seek to perform at the highest level in your field.

CERTIFIED STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING SPECIALIST® (CSCS®)

The CSCS program, created in 1985, recognizes individuals with the knowledge and skills to design and implement safe, effective strength and conditioning programs for athletes in a team setting. Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialists are professionals who apply scientific knowledge to train athletes for the primary goal of improving athletic performance. They conduct sport-specific testing sessions, design and implement safe and effective strength training and conditioning programs, and provide guidance on nutrition and injury prevention. Recognizing that their area of expertise is separate and distinct, CSCS certificants consult with and refer athletes to other professionals when appropriate.

CERTIFIED PERFORMANCE AND SPORT SCIENTIST® (CPSS®)

Established in 2021, the CPSS is the NSCA's most advanced certification. The program certifies individuals who specialize in the application of scientific processes to improve individual and team athletic performance and decrease injury risk. The Certified Performance and Sport Scientist may be either a generalist, working across the breadth of scientific disciplines, or a specialist practitioner, who has training or applied experiences relevant to sport science and sports performance. Recognizing that their area of expertise is separate and distinct, CPSS certificants consult with and refer athletes to other professionals when appropriate.

NSCA-CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINER® (NSCA-CPT®)

With the growth of the fitness industry, there was a need for a prestigious and credible personal training certification. In 1993, the NSCA responded with the NSCA-CPT program. NSCA-Certified Personal Trainers are health and fitness professionals who use an individualized approach to assess, motivate, educate, and train clients regarding their health and fitness needs. NSCA-Certified Personal Trainers design safe and effective exercise programs, guide clients in achieving their personal health and fitness goals, and respond appropriately in emergency situations. Recognizing their own area of expertise, NSCA-CPT certificants refer clients to other healthcare professionals when appropriate.

CERTIFIED SPECIAL POPULATION SPECIALIST® (CSPS®)

The CSPS program was created in 2012 to certify fitness professionals who serve clients of all ages with chronic and temporary health conditions. Certified Special Population Specialists use an individualized, preventative approach in collaboration with healthcare professionals to assess, motivate, educate, and train their clients regarding their health and fitness needs. CSPS certification holders design safe and effective exercise programs, provide guidance to help clients achieve their personal health and fitness goals, and recognize and respond to emergency situations. Recognizing their areas of expertise, CSPS professionals receive referrals from and refer clients to other healthcare providers as appropriate.

TACTICAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING FACILITATOR® (TSAC-F®)

The TSAC-F program was established in 2012 to support those who lead fitness training for tactical professionals. Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitators apply scientific knowledge to improve performance, promote wellness, and decrease injury risk for military, fire and rescue, law enforcement, protective services, and other emergency personnel. They conduct needs analyses and physical testing sessions, design and implement safe and effective strength training and conditioning programs, and provide general information regarding nutrition. Recognizing their area of expertise is separate and distinct, TSAC-F certificants consult with and refer those they train to other professionals when appropriate.

Not sure which certification fits you?

Learn more about choosing the right certification for you at

NSCA.com/certification/certification-choose

HOW A CERTIFICATION EXAM IS CREATED

All NSCA certifications are based on the critical **k**nowledge, **s**kills, and **a**bilities (KSAs) needed to perform an identified job or role. The exam outline and questions are based on these KSAs. Passing an NSCA certification exam demonstrates you have the specialized knowledge, skills, and experience to perform a specific job or role.

ABOUT THE EXAMS

Each certification exam assesses how a candidate compares to a standard — a predetermined level of competence — established by industry experts. Identifying the appropriate KSAs, writing exam items, and determining the standard are all critical parts of the exam development process to ensure valid decisions can be made based on exam results.

The methods used to develop the NSCA certification exams adhere to the procedures recommended in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests (APA, NCME, AERA; 2014) and other relevant industry standards, including the Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures (SIOP, 2003) and Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs (NCCA, 2014).

JOB ANALYSIS

The NSCA typically carries out a job analysis every five years for each certification program to identify the critical KSAs needed to perform the job safely and effectively. The process is guided by a committee of industry experts — the Job Analysis Advisory Committee (JAAC) — who develop KSA surveys. The surveys are sent to a large, representative sample of NSCA certificants. The survey data is then analyzed and presented to the JAAC, who uses the data to guide the creation of a Detailed Content Outline (DCO) for the certification exam.

EXAM DEVELOPMENT

After the job analysis, subject matter experts serving on an Exam Development Committee (EDC) begin the development of the exam. Committee members are selected based on their expertise in relation to the DCOs, and receive training in item writing and reviewing (test question writing and review) by experts in testing and measurement. Before test questions can be used on an exam, they go through committee review and are then pre-tested. Pre-testing allows test developers to gather statistical data and evaluate new questions without affecting candidate scores. Pre-test questions are unscored and appear on exams interspersed among scored items. The EDC analyzes the statistical information gathered from pre-test questions to determine if they function properly and are ready to become scored questions.

STANDARD SETTING

The EDC determines the standard for an exam (also called the "cut-score" or "passing score") by applying a modified Angoff methodology. This accepted method requires EDC members to evaluate specific exam questions and estimate the proportion of minimally competent candidates who are expected to answer correctly. These estimates are statistically analyzed for consistency and then aggregated to arrive at the standard.

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

Each certification exam has a DCO that organizes KSAs into major domains and subcategories. Below are summaries of the exam content outlines by certification. The full DCOs are presented in **Appendix E** Some tasks in a fitness profession simply involve recalling facts or applying specific information, while other tasks require a complete evaluation of a situation. For that reason, the NSCA exams contain questions of varying levels of complexity.

CSCS Exam Content

The CSCS exam is divided into two sections. Section 1, **Scientific Foundations**, is a 1.5-hour examination consisting of 80 scored and 15 non-scored multiple-choice questions. Section 2, **Practical/Applied**, is a 2.5-hour examination consisting of 110 scored and 15 non-scored multiple-choice questions. 30-40 of those questions are video- and/or image-based. First-time candidates are required to complete both sections. Those who fail one of the two sections will only be required to retake the section that was failed. The failed section must be retaken within one year of the initial exam date. The full DCO is presented in **Appendix F**.

	Domain	Percent of Exam Section	Number of Questions
	SECTION 1: Scientific Foundations		
Exam Time: 1.5 hours	Exercise Science	55%	44
	Sports Psychology	24%	19
	Nutrition	21%	17
	Non-Scored Questions	-	15
	Total	**100%**	**95**
	SECTION 2: Applied/Practical		
Exam Time: 2.5 hours	Exercise Technique	36%	40
	Program Design	35%	38
	Organization and Administration	11%	12
	Testing and Evaluation	18%	20
	Non-Scored Questions	-	15
	Total	**100%**	**125**

CPSS Exam Content

CPSS is a two hour and 45 minute-examination consisting of 100 scored and 15 non-scored multiple-choice items allocated across four (4) domains and three (3) crosscutting concepts. The full DCO is presented in **Appendix G**.

	Domain	Percent of Exam Section	Number of Questions
Exam Time: 2.75 hours	Training Theory and Process	23-29%	23-29
	Needs Analysis	24-30%	24-30
	Acute and Chronic Monitoring	25-30%	25-30
	Communication and Education	19-24%	19-24
	Non-Scored Questions	--	15
	Total	**100%**	**115**

NSCA-CPT Exam Content

NSCA-CPT is a 3-hour examination that consists of 140 scored and 15 non-scored multiple-choice items, with 25 - 35 questions presented as video and/or image questions. The full DCO is presented in **Appendix H**.

	Domain	Percent of Exam Section	Number of Questions
Exam Time: 3 hours	Client Consultation/ Assessment	23%	32
	Program Planning	32%	45
	Techniques of Exercise	31%	43
	Safety, Emergency Procedures, and Legal Issues	14%	20
	Non-Scored Questions	-	15
	Total	**100%**	**155**

CSPS Exam Content

CSPS is a 2.5-hour examination consisting of 100 scored and 10 non-scored multiple-choice items allocated across four domains. The full DCO is presented in **Appendix I**.

	Domain	Percent of Exam Section	Number of Questions
Exam Time: 2.5 hours	Basic Pathophysiology and Science of Health Status or Condition, Disorder, or Disease	40%	40
	Client Consultation	19%	19
	Program Planning	31%	31
	Safety, Emergency Procedures, and Legal Issues	10%	10
	Non-Scored Questions	--	10
	Total	**100%**	**110**

TSAC-F Exam Content

TSAC-F is a 3-hour examination consisting of 130 scored and 20 non-scored multiple-choice items. The full DCO is presented in **Appendix J**.

	Domain	Percent of Exam	Number of Questions
Exam Time: 3 hours	Exercise Science	20%	26
	Nutrition	7%	10
	Exercise Technique	20%	26
	Assessment and Evaluation	13%	17
	Program Design	21%	27
	Wellness Intervention	11%	14
	Organization and Administration	8%	10
	Total	**100%**	**130**

ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION OF NSCA CERTIFICATIONS

Accreditation of Certifications

Accreditation is the formal recognition of a program that has demonstrated compliance with established quality standards and criteria set and evaluated by an accrediting body. The NSCA believes in adhering to the standards set by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Having a certification that is accredited by the NCCA sets you apart and ensures employers that you have the highest level of credibility for training clients and athletes. The CSCS, NSCA-CPT, and TSAC-F programs meet or exceed NCCA Standards. For more information, visit **NCCA accreditation**.

Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Science Professionals

The NSCA is one of four founding members of the Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Professionals (CREP). CREP's mission is to secure recognition of registered exercise professionals for their distinct and impactful roles in medical, health, fitness, and sports performance fields. The NSCA believes that collaborating with CREP will help in furthering the industry as a whole.

The United States Registry of Exercise Professionals

The United States Registry of Exercise Professionals® (USREPS®) is an internationally recognized registry of exercise professionals in the United States maintained by CREP. It supports the exercise professional who holds an NCCA-accredited exercise certification by serving as a clearinghouse for verification by employers, regulatory bodies, and consumers.

All CSCS, NSCA-CPT, and TSAC-F certified professionals in the United States are added to the Registry, and any newly certified professionals will be added once they become certified.

For more information about CREPS or USREPS, please visit **NSCA CREP/USREPS Partnership**.

Accredible

Along with CREPS/USREPS, NSCA Certifications are also logged through Accredible, offering immediate verifiable proof. Every credential issued is blockchain registered. That means NSCA certificates are much harder to fake. Credentials are encoded with metadata showing who issued the certificate or badge, who it was issued to, and details about the certification, including when it will expire. Clicking the badge or certificate opens an online verification page showing whether or not the certification is real. This system makes sure those who have put in the time and effort to pass an NSCA exam are the only people gaining the benefit of an NSCA certification.

NSCA CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

HOW TO GET CERTIFIED

The process for earning a certification can be summed up in a few steps:

1. Determine your eligibility
2. Prepare for the exam
3. Register for the exam (CPSS candidates must first apply)
4. Submit required documentation
5. Pass the exam

CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for an NSCA certification, candidates must meet all of the eligibility requirements for the certification program. The NSCA's five certification programs have different eligibility requirements. Additionally, all candidates and certificants must abide by the **NSCA Policies and Procedures**, including the **Professional Code of Ethics**.

Candidates must meet the age requirement, if applicable, before registering for a certification exam. Other requirements must be met within one year of receiving a passing exam score. For the CPSS, an application is required, and all requirements must be met prior to registering for the exam.

CSCS Requirements

1. Has earned a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution, or a degree in Physical Therapy or Chiropractic Medicine
2. Holds current CPR/AED certification
3. Receives a passing score on both the Scientific Foundations and the Practical/Applied sections of the CSCS exam within one year for each section

CPSS Requirements

1. Fulfill one of the following education and professional experience routes:
   - » **DOCTORAL DEGREE ROUTE:** A Doctoral degree in Sport Science or a closely related field

     Degree Options: A doctoral degree in an unrelated field, but with documentation of formal coursework in specific areas underlying sport science practice including bio-mechanics, physiology, psychology, nutrition, strength and conditioning, research methods, and statistics
   - » **MASTER'S DEGREE ROUTE:** A Master's degree in Sport Science or a closely related field AND 12 weeks of applied experience (480 hours)

     Degree Options: A Master's degree in an unrelated field, but with documentation of formal coursework in specific areas underlying sport science practice including bio-mechanics, physiology, psychology, nutrition, strength and conditioning, research methods, and statistics

     Applied Experience Options:
     A significant applied practitioner experience in a closely related field, including internships, fellowships, graduate assistantships, or full-time professional roles
   - » **BACHELOR'S DEGREE ROUTE:** Bachelor's degree AND three years of full-time experience

     Degree Options:
     - A Bachelor's degree in Sport Science or a closely related field
     - A Bachelor's degree in an unrelated field, but with documentation of formal coursework in specific areas underlying sport science practice including biomechanics, physiology, psychology, nutrition, strength and conditioning, research methods, and statistics

     Qualifying Full-Time Experience:
     Qualifying full-time experience requires being actively involved in a formal sport science-related professional role on a comprehensive full-time basis beyond the internship level. Qualifying full-time professional roles include work with sport or tactical athletes, sports teams, and in applicable research, analytics, and technology related disciplines.
2. Holds a current CPR/AED certification
3. Receives a passing score on the CPSS exam

NSCA-CPT Requirements

1. Is at least 18 years old
2. Has earned a high school diploma (or equivalent)
3. Holds a current CPR/AED certification
4. Receives a passing score on the NSCA-CPT exam

CSPS Requirements

1. Meet a minimum of at least one of the following options:
   - Holds a current NSCA certification (e.g., CSCS, NSCA-CPT, etc.) or an NCCA-accredited personal trainer certification

   OR
   - Has earned a Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution in Exercise Science or a related field (e.g., Physical Therapy, Chiropractic Medicine)

   OR
   - Current license as a physical therapist, physical therapist assistant, or athletic trainer

AND

2. Holds current CPR/AED certification
3. Has practical experience coaching/training individuals from special populations (250 hours)
4. Received a passing score on the CSPS exam

TSAC-F Requirements

1. Is at least 18 years old
2. Has earned a high school diploma (or equivalent)
3. Holds a current CPR/AED certification
4. Received a passing score on the TSAC-F exam

ACCEPTABLE ACCREDITATION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Only degrees granted by accredited colleges and universities can be used to satisfy the degree requirements for the CSCS, CPSS, and CSPS programs. The NSCA recognizes the following accrediting institutions for US colleges and universities as listed by the US Department of Education:

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Higher Learning Commission
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges and University Commission
- Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges
- Distance Education Accrediting Commission
- New York State Board of Regents, the Commissioner of Education
- Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, Accreditation Commission

Colleges and universities located outside the US must have recognition from that country's Ministry of Education.

FUTURE PROGRAMMATIC ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CSCS

Effective January 1, 2030, US candidates must hold a bachelor's degree from a CASCE-accredited program to be eligible for the CSCS Examination. This requirement will not affect candidates with a bachelor's degree from outside the US until January 2036. The current degree requirement for the CSCS exam will remain in place until December 31, 2029. Anyone who already holds the CSCS credential or earns it before December 31, 2029, will not be affected by the new degree requirement.

NSCA RECOGNIZED PROGRAMS

The NSCA Education Recognition Program (ERP) recognizes and distinguishes schools with standardized, approved strength and conditioning, or personal training curricula in undergraduate and graduate settings. The recognized programs are designed to prepare students for the NSCA-CPT and CSCS certifications. The knowledge students gain in these programs applies to the TSAC-F and CSPS exams, but does not often include instruction on practical application for the certification's specified population.

Approved Exercise Science-Related Fields

The NSCA recognizes many fields of study that relate to exercise science and will fulfill the degree requirement for CSPS. These include athletic training, biology, biomechanics, chiropractic, community health, exercise physiology, exercise science, health science, human movement science, kinesiology, medicine (e.g., MD, DO) nursing, nutrition, physical education, physical therapy, and sport science.

Approved Sport Science-Related Fields

Qualifying CPSS disciplines includes all of the following academic majors and underpinning major fields from regionally accredited institutions: allied health sciences, athletic training, biology, bio-medical sciences, bioengineering sciences, chemistry (general, molecular, biochemistry, neuroscience), chiropractic, exercise science, health education and promotion, human performance and movement studies, kinesiology, medicine, nutrition, physics, physical education teaching and coaching, physical therapy and rehabilitation science, physiology, sport and performance analytics, strength and conditioning, and therapeutic exercise and fitness.

ACCEPTABLE CPR/AED CERTIFICATIONS

Holding a current CPR/AED certification ensures you understand how to provide care for someone experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. Your CPR/AED certification must include a hands-on skills performance assessment to be accepted. This requirement helps protect the safety of clients and athletes and could help you save someone's life.

EXAM PREPARATION

From self-study, to clinics, to hands-on experience, the NSCA offers several optional resources to help you prepare for an NSCA certification exam. Start by determining what level your knowledge, skills, and abilities are compared to the requirements for the profession or job. Then assess which options work best for you.

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

Exam Prep Live Clinics are offered by the NSCA for the CSCS and NSCA-CPT exams. Clinics can be attended in-person or online and can be taken at any point in your preparation as they provide content focus and a comprehensive review of the more challenging exam content. These clinics are taught by experienced professionals who are ready to answer your questions.

DISCLAIMER: Exam Prep instructors do not have inside knowledge of the exam, their courses are based off of the publicly-available detailed content outline (DCO). Instructors use their classroom and industry expertise to provide a comprehensive review of the DCO.

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Applying exercise science in real life is challenging for many exam takers. Opportunities for hands-on learning include NSCA events and clinics, seeking mentorship from certified professionals, or attending industry recognized health and fitness workshops.

SELF-STUDY

For those choosing to study on their own, the NSCA Store provides a variety of options for each of the certifications from textbooks and study guides, to quiz questions and practice tests. Keep in mind, these are helpful resources but are not the sole source of information for the given exams.

Learn more with step-by-step guides that help you understand now to prepare for your exam:

CSCS CPSS NSCA-CPT CSPS TSAC-F

EXAM REGISTRATION PROCESS

Once you have satisfied the eligibility requirements for your chosen certification, reviewed this handbook, and feel you are prepared to pass the exam, you can register for your exam. Registering is a simple online process. After you complete the registration form and pay your exam fees, you will be able to schedule your exam. The registration process is not considered complete until all steps are met.

COMPLETE REGISTRATION

All NSCA certification candidates are required to register online for their certification exam at NSCA.com. You will receive a confirmation email, which will include your assigned customer ID number. Below is a step-by-step guide to registration and scheduling your exam.

For CPSS exam candidates ONLY: An approved application must be granted before you can register for the exam.

1. Navigate to **NSCA.com**
2. Create a new account or log in using your NSCA username and password
3. Verify your profile information (the first and last name must match your ID exactly)
4. Click on "Certification" on the main navigation bar, and select the certification you are interested in.
5. Confirm you have met the eligibility requirements
6. Click on the "...Exam Application" box
7. Follow on-screen prompts
8. Upload required documentation (CPR/AED, etc).
9. Request special accommodations (if applicable)
10. Affirm reading/understanding the Affirmation Statement
11. Proceed to checkout
12. Submit eligibility verification documentation to NSCA (see Eligibility Documentation)

Affirmation

NSCA exam candidates are required to complete and submit an affirmation on the registration form. Affirmations cover, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Submitted registration information found to be false will result in a revoked certification
- NSCA exam items, certification names, acronyms, and logos are protected under US copyright law
- Those who copy or distribute proprietary NSCA information will forfeit their registration fees and have their certification(s) revoked
- Certificants must comply with recertification policies to retain certification(s)
- Certificants read and understand the Certification Policies contained in this handbook
- Candidates and certificants must abide by the **NSCA Codes, Policies, and Procedures**

The complete Registration Affirmation can be found in **Appendix C**.

APPLICATION PROCESS—CPSS CANDIDATES ONLY

The CPSS exam has a two-step registration process. Applicants must submit all completed requirements and transcripts to the NSCA for review and approval before registering for the exam.

An application fee of $25 will be required to submit your application. If your application is approved, the $25 fee will be applied toward your exam fees. If your application is denied, the fee will be forfeited. A new application fee will need to be submitted after each denied application.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

The NSCA is committed to providing access to its programs and services for individuals with documented disabilities and ensuring equal opportunities for all qualified candidates. A disability is a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities. We are compliant with relevant accessibility laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The NSCA is also committed to ensuring that the security, integrity, and validity of the exams are not compromised.

Below you will find information provided for test candidates, evaluators, educators, and others involved in documenting a request for test accommodations. We strongly recommend that you share this information with your evaluator and with therapists, physicians, and other parties of interest, so the appropriate documentation can be assembled to support your accommodation request.

The information you provide will be used to assist NSCA in making an appropriate determination about your circumstances and your request for test accommodations. It also helps us understand the nature of the accommodation you are seeking and its relationship to the resources NSCA has at its disposal.

In situations when the NSCA cannot make provisions for a candidate's request because of operational or technical reasons, we will attempt to seek a mutually agreeable solution, although NSCA cannot guarantee that such a solution can be reached. Candidates are expected to participate in this dialogue in a timely way.

What Are Special Accommodations?

Special Accommodations are adaptations to access the test (e.g., CSCS exam) that can help ensure that the test measures what it is designed to measure. The purpose of special accommodations is to provide full access to the test and an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities required to be certified and demonstrate competence to practice in the profession. Accommodations do not promise improved performance, a passing score, test completion, or other specific outcomes.

Special accommodations are individualized and considered on a case-by-case basis. If you are seeking disability-related accommodations, you must provide evidence that your condition rises to the level of a disability. You must also provide information about functional limitations in areas central to daily life. Having a diagnosis or demonstrating that you meet diagnostic criteria for a particular disorder does not automatically entitle you to special accommodations. The NSCA does not require a diagnosis; however, it does require evidence that the disability may have a significant impact on your ability to access and take an exam.

Individuals with a disability can usually demonstrate a significant impact in a variety of different settings, such as school, the workplace, and other daily life activities. If you are working, it is helpful for us to see verification of any workplace accommodations that you need due to your disability.

Accommodations must be appropriate to the particular task and setting involved.

The decision to grant an accommodation and the type of accommodation granted is at NSCA's sole discretion. An accommodation is valid only for one exam or administration. You must submit a new request for accommodation for each exam or administration.

How to Apply for Test Accommodations

1. Submit your request at the time of registration so that there is time to process the request, and if anything is missing or unclear about your request, you will have sufficient time to provide us with additional information.
2. Read all NSCA's published information about accommodations, including the **Decision-Making Principles and Documentation Guidelines (Appendix A)**, and be sure your evaluator has read them as well.
3. Prepare your supporting evidence that conforms to the Decision-Making Principles and Documentation Guidelines.
4. Complete the **Accommodations Request Form (Appendix A)**. All accommodations requests MUST include supporting evidence that you have a disability and require accommodations to access the exam.
5. Submit your completed Accommodations Request Form and supporting documentation by email to **exams@nsca.com**. Ensure all documentation is legible, whether printed or on-screen. NSCA will confirm receipt of your request.
6. Wait for your request to be reviewed. Typically, you will hear back within 10 business days unless your request is unusually complex (in which case, we will keep you posted about the status of your request). Accommodations requests are reviewed in the order in which they are received. To treat all candidates requests in a timely and orderly basis, NSCA does not "expedite" requests.

The NSCA is unable to process incomplete requests. If your request is incomplete, meaning that it does not provide enough information to make a decision, we will notify you of the missing information. If you do not provide the information, your documents will be returned to you, or securely destroyed at your request.

Special Accommodations Decision-Making Principles

The NSCA is committed to providing accessible and equitable service to all exam candidates. We administer the certification exams in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. In reviewing accommodation requests, the NSCA must balance the rights of the individual exam candidate with our mandate to protect the security, fairness, validity, and reliability of the exams. We are committed to a fair review of each accommodation request and will review on a case-by-case basis. We may submit such requests to one or more independent, external experts for review and recommendation.

The NSCA bases decisions on the following fundamental principles:

1. The degree to which the individual has provided relevant evidence of a currently disabling condition. A letter verifying a diagnosis is not required or definitive. Evidence must be related to any required accommodations.
2. The degree to which the individual has provided current evidence that accommodations are needed to access the test.
3. The degree to which the requested accommodation is appropriate to the task and the setting.
4. The degree to which the requested accommodation(s) could reasonably be expected to mitigate the person's impairment (functional limitations) within the specific context of the exam.
5. The degree to which the NSCA can reasonably be assured that the requested accommodation would not significantly or negatively impact the security, integrity, and validity of the exam.
6. The degree to which the requested accommodation shows lack of interference with the NSCA's duty to deliver a legally valid and defensible entry to practice exam — ensuring a reliable and fair exam that assesses whether or not a candi-date has the abilities, knowledge, and skills to conduct safe and effective athlete/client training..

IMPORTANT: Candidates who have requested testing accommodations must receive an email from the NSCA indicating that the accommodations have been approved BEFORE scheduling their exam.

Once the approval email arrives, the candidate must call Pearson VUE at (800) 466-0450 to schedule an exam appointment. Candidates who schedule appointments through any other means (e.g., online, or via a different number) will not have their accommodations available at the appointment.

SUBMITTING EXAM ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION

Candidates have one year to submit eligibility documentation, with the exception of CPSS candidates who must submit their eligibility documents with their application. Exam results will become invalid if acceptable documentation is not processed by NSCA staff within one year of your passed exam date.

Documents allowed to be emailed should be sent to:

exams@nsca.com

Mailed documents should be sent to:

NSCA
Attn: Certification Department
1885 Bob Johnson Drive
Colorado Springs, CO, 80906 USA

Note: Documentation sent to the NSCA will not be returned. We prefer to receive documentation through email, but for those mailing, we recommend using a trackable service such as certified USPS, UPS, or FedEx. Retain your tracking info in case proof of mailing or a receipt is needed.

CPR/AED Certifications

Scanned, photocopied, and faxed copies of the CPR/AED certifications are acceptable. Front and back copies of the document are required.

Academic Transcripts

CSCS, CPSS, and CSPS only

For the CSCS, CSPS, and CPSS you must submit original, official transcripts from your college or university. Official transcripts must be sent directly from the registrar's office, and must confirm that the degree was conferred. For the CPSS, transcripts are required as part of the application process. For the CSCS and CSPS, you may submit transcripts within one year after the exam date. Even if you have passed your exam, you will not be certified until all required documents are received and processed by NSCA staff. Transcripts must be in an envelope with the registrar's stamp placed across the envelope flap. If you mail the transcript, the registrar's seal must remain intact. Transcripts will not be returned. The NSCA also accepts official electronic transcripts (e-transcripts) that are transferred using a secure document transfer program (e.g., escrip-safe, eDocs). Your transcripts should be sent to exams@nsca.com.

Transcripts with the following are not acceptable:

- ✕ Copy marked "student copy," "issued to student," or other similar language
- ✕ Photocopy
- ✕ Letter of degree status/verification
- ✕ Fax of the transcript

CPSS

Before registering for the CPSS exam, you must first submit an application along with eligibility documents. The documents required will depend on which experience route you choose (see page 6). Fill out the appropriate eligibility documents found in the appendix and **online**. You may submit these documents to **exams@nsca.com**. A $25 non-refundable application fee is due with each application. If you are approved, the fee will be applied to your registration fee.

CSPS

Depending on eligibility (see CSPS eligibility requirements), CSPS exam candidates must submit documentation of official transcripts, a professional license, or a copy of the certificate for an NCCA-accredited certification. Documentation is not required if an NSCA certification is being used to show eligibility. Practical experience information must be entered during the exam registration process. Candidates may provide these required documents directly to **exams@nsca.com**.

EXAM FEES

Credential	NSCA Student and Professional Members	Non-Members
CSCS*	$340	$475
CSCS | One Section (Retakes ONLY)	$250	$385
CPSS**	$340	$475
NSCA-CPT	$300	$435
CSPS	$340	$475
TSAC-F	$300	$435

** First-time CSCS exam candidates must register for the full CSCS exam.*

*** $25 exam application fee prior to the exam registration fee*

SCHEDULING AN EXAM APPOINTMENT

All NSCA Exams are administered year-round at Pearson VUE computer-based test centers. The TSAC-F exam is also available for online proctoring via Pearson's OnVUE platform. After successfully registering with the NSCA, you will receive an email from Pearson VUE within 10-15 minutes. This exam registration notice will contain scheduling instructions. Schedule your exam appointment directly with Pearson VUE through one of the following scheduling methods:

1. **Online**: Online registration scheduling at **pearsonvue.com/nsca**.

   OR

2. **Telephone**: Customer service representatives may be reached toll-free at (800) 505-7641 Monday through Friday 7:00 am to 7:00 pm Central Time.

NOTE: Candidates scheduling with a special accommodations request, should refer to the special accommodations on page 8.

Do not schedule an exam appointment until you have completed your exam registration on the NSCA website. Once you have successfully scheduled your exam appointment, you will receive an exam confirmation email.

Test Center Locations

Exams are administered at hundreds of locations around the world. You can view testing center locations online at **NSCA Pearson Vue Testing Locations**. Please note that certain test centers, such as those located on military bases, may not be accessible to the general public. View exam appointment availability at pearsonvue.com/nsca only after completing an exam registration on the NSCA website.

Exam Authorization Period

You will have 120 days from your exam registration date to sit for your exam. Those who are unable to take their exam within the 120 days must withdraw or extend their registration to avoid forfeiting their registration fees.

If you need to extend your exam authorization period, you may request an additional 120 days by contacting the NSCA certification department. The extension must be requested within the original 120-day authorization period. The extension fee is $100 and is not refundable. The new 120-day eligibility window begins on the day the extension form is processed.

Please contact the certification department at **exams@nsca.com** for more information.

Changes to Name or Contact Information

Name Changes

If your name has changed, you must contact the NSCA. We may request supporting documentation such as court documents or a marriage certificate. The name used to register for an exam must match the name on the valid ID presented at the test center.

Contact Information and Communications

All candidates and certificants are required to keep their contact information (e.g., email address, phone number, primary address) up to date with the NSCA to ensure that official communications and documents (e.g., your certificates, score reports) are received. You are encouraged to update necessary information on **NSCA.com**, but may also contact the NSCA in writing to request updates to your contact information. Also, as a condition of certification with the NSCA, you must agree to receive NSCA communications, including emails, with important information regarding your certification status (e.g., recertification notices, policy updates). This consent does not extend to promotional or other emails, which you may opt in or out of.

Canceling and Rescheduling Exam Appointments

You may reschedule or cancel an exam appointment at no charge within the 120-day authorization period through Pearson VUE. However, appointments must be rescheduled or canceled at least one business day (24 hours) before your appointment.

Registration Withdrawal and Refunds

You may withdraw your registration if you have not scheduled, missed, or taken the exam. To withdraw your registration, contact the NSCA at **exams@nsca.com** at least three business before your exam authorization period ends (120 days after registration). Candidates who successfully withdraw their registration will be provided a refund of their registration fees minus a $50 administrative fee. No other refunds or extension fees will be granted once you have withdrawn your registration.

Late Arrival

Allow yourself plenty of time to get to your testing center. Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes after their scheduled appointment time will only be allowed to test at the discretion of the testing center, and based on available capacity or other relevant factors. If the test center is unable to accommodate a late-arriving candidate, the candidate will be unable to take the test that day and will be recorded as a "no-show" for their appointment.

No-Shows

Candidates who do not arrive on time to take the exam or do not cancel or withdraw their registration, will forfeit the registration fee. To take the exam at a later date, no-show candidates are required to register and pay the full registration fee again.

Inclement Weather, Power Failure, or Emergency

In the event of inclement weather or a local or national emergency, contact Pearson VUE at (800) 505-7641 or go to **pearsonvue.com** to determine if your appointment will be affected. If the test center is closed and appointments are canceled, please wait two (2) business days before calling to reschedule your appointment.

If the test center is open, and you are unable to arrive on time for an exam appointment due to inclement weather or an emergency, you must contact the NSCA within one business day (24 hrs) to avoid being recorded as a no-show. Candidates may be asked to provide documentation to show that a failure to arrive on time was due to a legitimate emergency.

TAKING THE EXAM

CHECK-IN PROCESS

Before your exam day, review the test center location information in the confirmation email sent by Pearson VUE. On the day of your exam, we recommend that you arrive at least 15 minutes before your exam appointment time. Check-in procedures include verifying your ID, signature, biometric data, and abiding with the testing facility's Candidate Rules Agreement.

Candidate ID Requirements

Every candidate is required to present one form of a valid ID. It must include your name, photograph, and signature. Photocopies or expired identification will not be accepted. The first and last name you used to register for the exam must exactly match the first and last name on the ID that is presented on test day. All IDs required must be issued by the country where you are testing. If you do not have a qualifying ID issued from the country you are testing in, a passport that proves your country of citizenship is required. Candidates who do not present acceptable ID will receive a "no-show" result and forfeit their registration fees.

For candidates testing in China: The ID must be original and valid (unexpired) and have a photo but does not require a signature

Examples of acceptable forms of identification include:

- Government-issued driver's license
- State/country identification card
- Passport
- Military identification card
- Alien registration card (e.g., green card, permanent visa)

Security

Test centers utilize security measures, such as video and audio recording, to ensure that all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. All exam questions are the copyrighted property of the NSCA under federal copyright law, it is forbidden to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or display these exam questions by any means, in whole, or in part. Doing so may subject you to severe civil and criminal penalties. Before the exam begins, you will be asked to accept a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). Those who refuse the NDA will not be allowed to test and will forfeit their registration fees. There is a four-minute time limit on the NDA. If no response is provided after four minutes, the testing session is terminated and the exam registration is forfeited.

Candidate Rules Agreement and Misconduct

As part of your check-in process, you will be asked to read and agree to abide by the testing facility's Candidate Rules Agreement. These rules are in addition to the **NSCA Codes, Policies, and Procedures** and other affirmations made by candidates as part of the registration process. Any individual engaging in misconduct at the test center may be prevented from taking the exam, dismissed from the ongoing exam, and/or may have their scores invalidated.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings are not allowed in the testing room, except for the few exceptions noted below. Pearson VUE and the NSCA are not responsible for items left in the testing area. Secure lockers are available at select locations.

Items Not Permitted

The following items are NOT allowed in the testing room:

- Electronic devices including:
  - Cell phones
  - PDAs
  - Calculators
  - Translators
  - Any other electronic devices
- Outerwear (e.g., coats or jackets)
- Hats, barrettes, and clips larger than ¼ inch or hairbands wider than ½ inch
- Wallets, watches, or jewelry wider than ¼ inch
- Backpacks, briefcases, purses, or other bags
- Notes, books, or translating devices
- Pens or pencils
- Food or drinks
- Water bottles
- Weapons of any kind

Permitted Items

Religious apparel is allowed in the testing room. The following items do not require pre-approval to be allowed in the testing room. They will be allowed in the testing room after visual inspection by the testing center staff. A visual inspection will be done by examining the item without directly touching it or you and without asking you to remove the item.

The presence of any other items in the testing room, including any medical equipment not listed below, must be requested and approved through the Special Accommodations process (**Appendix A**).

Comfort Aids Provided by Testing Center:

- Earplugs (available in select locations)
- Noise-canceling headphones (available in select locations)
- Tissues

Permitted Medicine and Medical Devices:

- Bandages
- Braces (including neck, back, wrist, leg, or ankle braces)
- Casts, including slings for broken/sprained arms and other injury-related items that cannot be removed
- Cough drops (must be unwrapped and not in a bottle/container)
- Eye drops
- Eye patches
- Eyeglasses (without case)
- Handheld (non-electronic) magnifying glass (without case)
- Hearing aids/cochlear implant
- Inhaler
- Medical alert bracelet
- Medical device attached to a person's body including, but not limited to, insulin pumps/remotes, TENS unit, spinal cord stimulator
- EpiPen
- Medical/surgical face masks
- Oxygen tanks
- Pillows/cushions
- Pills such as Tylenol or aspirin (must be unwrapped and not in a bottle/container)

Candidates may bring pills that are still in the packaging if the packaging states they MUST remain in the packaging, such as nitroglycerin pills that cannot be exposed to air. Packaging must be properly inspected.

Permitted Mobility Devices:

- Canes
- Crutches
- Motorized scooters/chairs
- Walkers
- Wheelchairs

Exam Supplies

The testing rules do not allow you to supply your own writing implements, notepads, or paper. Instead, you will be provided with an erasable note board and marker to use as scratch paper. The note board and marker must be returned to the test center staff at the end of the exam.

DURING THE EXAM

Questions and Comments About Exam Content

Questions concerning exam content may not be asked during the exam. You may provide written comments on any question during the exam by using the comment function in the exam software. The NSCA reviews all candidate comments as part of ongoing quality assurance procedures.

Breaks

You are permitted to take an unscheduled break whenever you wish. However, the exam timer will continue to run. The CSCS exam is the only exam with a scheduled break, which is a 15-minute break between exam sections, and does not count toward the exam time.

- All candidates are prohibited from accessing personal items, cellular phones, exam notes, and study guides during a scheduled or unscheduled break.
- During scheduled and unscheduled breaks, medical items (e.g., devices, medicine, food) may be accessed if necessary. For example, you may need to take medication or eat food at a specific time.
- Additional time for breaks is not provided unless as an approved special accommodation.

Leaving the Exam Early

Candidates must request the test center supervisor's permission to leave the exam.

EXAM RESULTS

Exam results are valid for one calendar year following your completion of the exam. Score reports are available at the test center immediately following the exam. After 24 hours, you may download your official score report from within your pearsonvue.com account.

EXAM SCORING

There are two types of scores you will receive after taking your exam — raw and scaled. To pass any NSCA certification exam, you must earn a scaled score of 70 or higher. Performance standards for all NSCA certification exams are represented as scaled scores. The NSCA uses **scaled scoring** to make sure the standard is applied consistently across multiple exam versions. For example, a scaled score of 75 obtained in 2013 is equivalent to a scaled score of 75 obtained in 2015, even though the exams of those years contained different questions. Keep in mind that scaled scoring is not the same as scoring on a curve or a percentage score.

Your raw score is the number of questions you answered correctly on your exam and will be listed on your score report to provide information about your strengths and weaknesses. It is not possible to relate your raw score directly to your scaled score. A raw score that equals a scaled score of 70 will not always be the same for every exam, as the actual questions contained on an exam change over time.

EXAM PASS RATES

The NSCA publishes pass rates for each certification exam along with the number of individuals who sat for each exam. This report is updated every spring and is available to view at **NSCA.com/nsca-exam-report**.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESULTS

Information about candidates and their exam results are considered confidential. An individual's exam results are never discussed over the phone or shared without written permission from that individual. Research and reports conducted on aggregate exam results do not contain identifiable candidate information and may be publicized by the NSCA (e.g., pass rates).

Release of Information

Both the NSCA and our testing agency are committed to protecting the confidentiality of our candidate's records. For this reason, exam scores are never released by phone or fax, even directly to candidates. Information regarding candidate scores is never released to any third party. However, we will verify an individual's certification status upon receipt of a written request.

In the event of a court order, the NSCA will release information as required by law. The NSCA will notify the exam candidate or certified professional that this information has been released, if specified by the court. If not specified by the court, the NSCA will not notify the exam candidate or certified professional that the court has ordered information.

Neither the NSCA, nor the NSCA Certification Committee members, or their respective staff are involved with the handling or scoring of exams in any way. That responsibility lies with the testing agency.

CANCELED SCORES

The NSCA is committed to upholding the integrity of its certification programs in a manner that is fair to candidates. When instances of equipment malfunction, candidate misconduct, or test administrator error are suspected and may impact the validity of exam scoring, the NSCA reserves the right to withhold, investigate, or cancel exam scores and results as appropriate.

AWARDING OF CERTIFICATION

Certification is granted once you pass the exam and have fulfilled all other certification requirements. You will receive online access to your credentials through the **Accredible** platform, where you can download a high quality and print-ready certificate. You will also gain access to your digital badge – a verifiable digital representation of your credential. You will be able to share your digital badge across your social platforms, including LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. If you prefer to receive a printed certificate in the mail, you may request a hard copy through your account in Accredible.

REMEMBER: Passing candidates are not officially certified until all required eligibility documentation has been submitted within the allotted time frame.

RETAKE POLICY

NSCA policy limits the number of times a candidate may attempt a certification exam and requires a wait period before retaking an exam.

- Candidates must wait at least 30 days to retake an exam from the most recent date the exam was taken. This waiting period allows for adequate time to study between exam attempts.
- Candidates will be not be able to register for a retake until after the 30 day waiting period has passed.
- Registering to retake an exam requires the purchase of the exam or exam section. Retakes are not discounted.
- A candidate may attempt an exam up to three times consecutively. After the third attempt and any subsequent attempts, the candidate must wait one year from the most recent test date before attempting another exam. This policy is in place for test security purposes.
- Candidates do not need to resubmit eligibility documents unless CPR/AED certification has lapsed.

CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Meet the eligibility requirements.**
- ☐ **Read the Certification Handbook.**
- ☐ **Obtain the appropriate preparation materials.**
- ☐ **Prepare for the exam.**
- ☐ **For CPSS exam candidates only— submit application for CPSS certification**
- ☐ **Submit required documentation.**
  - A photocopy (front/back) of your CPR/AED certification.
  - Official transcript and other documentation depending on eligibility requirements.
- ☐ **Register for the exam online.**
  - For CPSS exam candidates, an approved application is required prior to registering for the exam.
  - You will receive an email confirmation that you are authorized to take the exam and scheduling instructions within 2 - 3 business days of registration.
  - Once registered, you have 120 days to schedule and complete the exam.
  - Schedule your exam appointment with **Pearson VUE**.
- ☐ **Take the exam (passing is a scaled score of 70 for each exam).**
  - You will receive your exam results immediately following the exam.
  - Passing candidates are not certified until all eligibility requirements are completed within the allotted time frame.
- ☐ **Maintain your certification by keeping your knowledge and skills up-to-date with continuing education.**
  - Be sure to recertify at the end of each three-year recertification period.

INTERNATIONAL CANDITATES

The NSCA offers the CSCS and NSCA-CPT certifications in multiple languages through our international NSCA Affiliates in Japan, Italy, Spain, Korea, and China. International partners are responsible for the registration and recertification processes within their country. In select countries and locations, the CPSS, CSPS, and TSAC-F may be offered in English. The TSAC-F is offered in Korean.

To learn more about the registration process and availability of certification exams, international candidates should review the information available on the website of the NSCA Affiliate in their country. Links to the websites of NSCA's international partners can be accessed at **NSCA.com/About-us/international**. The NSCA cannot guarantee international candidates the same level of accessibility to certification exams and other NSCA products and services (e.g., continuing education) as US candidates.

NSCA® JAPAN
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION
NSCA-Japan.or.jp

NSCA® ITALY
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION
NSCAItalia.it

NSCA® SPAIN
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION
nsca.es

NSCA® KOREA
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION
nscakorea.com

NSCA® SHANGHAI
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION
NSCA-Shanghai.com.cn

NSCA® INDIA
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION
nscaindia.com

NSCA®
GLOBAL CHAPTER
GERMANY
nsca.de

PRIVACY POLICY

The NSCA is committed to the right of privacy for certificate holders and exam candidates. The NSCA will exercise care with customer property and personal information while under our control or used by the NSCA. The NSCA will handle and protect exam candidate property/information as is done with all NSCA property. Only authorized employees will have access to exam candidate files. The designated employees are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the information in those files

NSCA CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS REQUEST FORM

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

NSCA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. To ensure equal opportunities for all qualified candidates, NSCA will make reasonable testing accommodations when appropriate. Candidates with a documented disability that significantly impairs his or her ability to arrive at, read, or otherwise complete an NSCA certification exam, may request special accommodations.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted.

Requests for special accommodations must be made at the time of registration by uploading documentation during the application process.

NOTE: Candidates with approved testing accommodations must call Pearson VUE at (800) 466-0450 and request to speak with an Accommodations Coordinator to schedule an exam appointment. Candidates who schedule appointments through any other means (e.g. online, via a different number) will not have their accommodations available at the appointment.

Certification Candidate Information

Candidate's Name (First, Middle Initial, Last): _____

NSCA Customer ID: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Please provide written documentation supporting the accommodation you are requesting. The documentation must meet the following criteria:

- Documented on official letterhead from a licensed or certified health professional, appropriate for diagnosing and treating the specific disability
- Include a recommendation for the specific accommodation with current and detailed documentation supporting the request
- Provide evidence that similar accommodations have been made for the applicant in other educational, testing, or employment settings. If accommodations were not previously provided, describe why they were not provided but are required now.

Signature of Candidate

By signing below, I verify that the information provided on this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I authorize the release and disclosure of diagnostic information by healthcare providers, or other professionals having such information, for the purpose of allowing NSCA to make a determination regarding my request for a special testing accommodation. I understand that the NSCA will employ reasonable methods to help ensure that the information provided regarding my disability and request for accommodations will be treated as confidential.

Signature of Candidate: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS REQUEST FORM

Requested Accommodation(s)

Please indicate all accommodations that you are requesting.

- ☐ 1.5 x Exam Time
- ☐ Separate Room
- ☐ Reader
- ☐ Recorder
- ☐ Enlarged Font
- ☐ Other (please describe):

Signature of Qualified Professional

By signing below, I verify that the information provided on this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Qualified Professional: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Candidate

By signing below, I verify that the information provided on this form is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I authorize the release and disclosure of diagnostic information by healthcare providers, or other professionals having such information, for the purpose of allowing NSCA to make a determination regarding my request for a special testing accommodation. I understand that NSCA will employ reasonable methods to help ensure that the information provided to NSCA regarding my disability and request for accommodation is treated as confidential.

Signature of Qualified Candidate: _____

Date: _____

NSCA CPSS Eligibility

Full-Time Applied Experience Form

As part of the CPSS exam application, this form is used to report full-time work experience. Carefully fill out the following information to document and affirm a minimum of three years of full-time experience in a related sport science professional role. This form is **required for all applicants taking the bachelor's degree level eligibility route**. See program information for more details.

☐Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Ms. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Mx. First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____

NSCA ID# _____ *If you don't have an NSCA ID#, create a free account at NSCA.com/User-Registration*

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____ Date of Birth _____

DIRECTIONS FOR APPLICANT – PLEASE READ AND HAVE THIS SECTION COMPLETED BY YOUR HR DEPT OR SUPERVISOR

Qualifying Full-Time Experience or Self-Employed Experience:

Either HR or supervisor affirmation are required, in accordance with the standards and requirements listed. A description of duties performed must also be provided.

For self-employed applicants, additional references are required for verification.

Signed Affirmation Form:

This form covers an affirmation for a single full-time working role in a sport science related field. Applicants may submit multiple forms to fulfill the minimum time requirements for eligibility.

Qualifying full-time or self-employed work areas - Check ONE box below based on the title or primary job responsibilities of the role being reported on this form.

- ☐ Strength and conditioning (personal training and work with general population DOES NOT qualify)
- ☐ Sport/tactical athlete rehabilitation (e.g., sports medicine)
- ☐ Sport/tactical athlete nutrition
- ☐ Performance/sport-related data analytics
- ☐ Performance/sport-related testing/monitoring/technology (e.g., film and video analysis)
- ☐ Applied physiology/biomechanics laboratory
- ☐ Performance psychology/mental skills coaching

DIRECTIONS FOR SUPERVISOR, MANAGER, OR HR REPRESENTATIVE – PLEASE READ BELOW BEFORE SIGNING

Qualifying full-time experience **REQUIRES** being actively involved in a formal sport science-related professional role on a comprehensive full-time basis beyond the internship level. Qualifying full-time professional roles include work with sport or tactical athletes, sports teams, and in applicable research, analytics, and technology related disciplines.

***** For further clarity, qualifying full-time experiences are also defined as requiring a normal workload of 40 hours per week during preparatory, training, research, and/or developmental periods, making up the majority of the calendar year – a minimum of 1,560 hours annually. This minimum represents 40 hours per week for 10-month (39-week) academic/seasonal-type full-time positions, and over 30 hours per week for 12-month (52-week) full-time positions.**

Qualifying full-time practitioner experiences require the CPSS applicant to be involved with ALL of the following processes:

- Daily hands-on work and interaction with team, individual sport, and/or tactical athletes
- Conducting regular athlete performance testing/monitoring
- Data collection, processing, analysis, and reporting
- Use and direct application of performance technology

CPSS applicants must document full-time experience in ONE of the following ways:

- **HUMAN RESOURCES DOCUMENTATION:** Official HR documentation, letter, or signed job description confirming length and nature of full-time employment in a sport science-related position (as defined above). Contact information is required.
- **MANAGER/SUPERVISOR AFFIRMATION:** Supervisors and managers may sign the affirmation statement on this form to verify full-time employment of their employee in a sport science-related position. A brief description of the nature of full-time work performed and contact information are required.
- **SELF-EMPLOYMENT AFFIRMATION:** For self-employed CPSS applicants, this affirmation form must be self-completed and submitted with three additional relevant references from clients (18+), client parents, or representatives from contracted teams/sport organizations who can verify the nature of the work performed. Contact information is required.

SIGNED AFFIRMATION BY HUMAN RESOURCES REPRESENTATIVE (ALSO ATTACH ACCOMPANIED DOCUMENTATION)

By signing below, I verify that employee (name) _____ has been employed or contracted in a sport science-related role (defined above) on a full-time basis for three years according to the standards set forth by your company. If the employee has been employed for less than three years in a full-time capacity, list the total full-time months employed: _____

HR Representative _____ Title _____

Company Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Signature _____ Date _____

SIGNED AFFIRMATION BY MANAGER, DIRECT SUPERVISOR, OR SELF- EMPLOYED

By signing below, I verify my direct oversight over the CPSS candidate (list name) _____,

as a full-time employee for the following team/institution (list company) _____,

The CPSS applicant's official title (list title) _____.

Additionally, I verify that the CPSS candidate has been employed or contracted in a sport science-related role (defined above) on a full-time basis for three (3) years according to the requirements listed above. If the employee has been employed for less than three years in a full-time capacity, list the total full-time months employed: _____

» **Add brief description of the nature of work performed by the CPSS candidate (a signed job description may be attached):**

» ☐ Check this box if you are completing this form as SELF-EMPLOYED. *(Self-Employed Note: References Section Required)*

Supervisor / Manager Name _____ Title _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Signature _____ Date _____

THREE REQUIRED REFERENCES/CONTACT INFORMATION *(ONLY REQUIRED FOR SELF-EMPLOYED)*

Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Signature _____

Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Signature _____

Name _____ Relationship _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Signature _____

NSCA CPSS Eligibility

Part-Time Applied Experience Form

As part of the CPSS exam application, this form is used to document the minimum 12 weeks (480 hours) of applied sport science-related professional experience. This form is **ONLY accepted for applicants taking the graduate-level eligibility route**. Candidates with doctoral degrees in qualifying fields **DO NOT** need to complete this form. See program information for more details.

☐Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Ms. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Mx. First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____

NSCA ID# _____ *If you don't have an NSCA ID#, create a free account at NSCA.com/User-Registration*

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____ Date of Birth _____

DIRECTIONS FOR APPLICANT – PLEASE READ AND HAVE THIS SECTION COMPLETED BY YOUR SITE SUPERVISOR / ADVISOR

Qualifying Internships, Fellowships, Graduate Assistantships and Part-Time Employment:

Signed affirmation is required either by a site supervisor or academic advisor (specific to for-credit and on-campus internships) according to the requirements listed throughout this form.

Signed Affirmation Form:

This form includes signed affirmation of a single supervised applied practitioner experience in a sport science-related field. Applicants may submit multiple forms to fulfill the minimum time requirements for eligibility.

Qualifying internship, fellowship, graduate assistantship or part-time work areas – check <u>ONE</u> box below based on the title or primary job responsibilities of the internship, fellowship, graduate assistantship, or part-time employment being reported on this form.

- ☐ Strength and conditioning (personal training and work with general population DOES NOT qualify)
- ☐ Sport/tactical athlete rehabilitation (e.g., sports medicine)
- ☐ Sport/tactical athlete nutrition
- ☐ Performance/sport-related data analytics
- ☐ Performance/sport-related testing/monitoring/technology (e.g., film and video analysis)
- ☐ Applied physiology/biomechanics laboratory
- ☐ Performance psychology/mental skills coaching

DIRECTIONS FOR SITE SUPERVISOR OR ADVISOR – PLEASE READ BELOW BEFORE SIGNING:

Qualifying applied practitioner experiences MUST BE a formal internship, fellowship, graduate assistantship, for-credit or non-credit hands-on performance laboratory work experience, formal documented volunteer experience, or part-time employed practitioner experience.

Qualifying applied practitioner experiences require the CPSS applicant to be involved with <u>ALL</u> of the following processes:

- Daily hands-on work and interaction with team, individual sport, and/or tactical athletes
- Conducting regular athlete performance testing/monitoring
- Data collection, processing, analysis, and reporting
- Use and direct application of performance technology

Supervisors/advisors must be CPSS certified, or appropriately certified/licensed in their field (e.g., CSCS, ATC, PT, RD, CMPC). The NSCA recognizes NCCA accredited credentials and international equivalent accreditations and licenses.

NSCA CPSS Eligibility | Part-Time Applied Experience Form

By signing below, I verify my direct oversight over the CPSS applicant (list name) _____,

in completing approved applied practitioner experience at (list team/institution) _____, **AND** that the actual experience of the CPSS candidate listed above meets the above listed requirements.

List the CPSS applicant's official job/position title: _____

Unless specifically noted, my signed affirmation documents that the above-listed field experience meets the full 12-week (480-hour) requirement to be eligible for the CPSS exam. The 12-week (480-hour) total may reflect the comprehensive work performed including working with athletes, daily staff meetings, staff project collaborations, preparation, planning and set-up, staff in-services/workshops/training, and data analysis/reporting.

If the CPSS applicant's experience did not fulfill the full 12-week (480-hour) requirement, how many weeks/hours of applied practitioner experience did the candidate complete at your site (list total weeks/hours or write "n/a")? _____

Supervisor / Advisor Name_____ Credentials _____

Job Title _____

Email_____ Phone _____

Signature _____ Date _____

NSCA CPSS Eligibility

Minimum Academic Requirement Course Descriptions Form

As part of the CPSS exam application, this form is used to submit a summary course description of the eligible coursework referencing the Minimum Academic Requirements. You will need to include course descriptions as listed in the college or university course catalog. If the course catalog is listed online, you may include a direct link to the course listing. This information will be verified by submission of your official academic transcripts. Submission of this form is **ONLY required for candidates with CPSS non-qualifying degrees**.

☐Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Ms. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Mx. First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____

NSCA ID# _____ *If you don't have an NSCA ID#, create a free account at NSCA.com/User-Registration*

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____ Date of Birth _____

Minimum Academic Requirements

For individuals with degrees in non-related fields, academic transcript documentation must include sport science-related coursework. Coursework must cover at least FOUR of the six categories below. List a minimum of ONE course for each of the categories you are reporting.

1. **Biomechanics and Human Movement** (e.g., biomechanics, functional anatomy, human motor learning and control, or lifespan motor development)
2. **Physiological Disciplines** (e.g., anatomy and physiology, endocrinology, exercise physiology, or neuroscience)
3. **Coaching, Psychology, and Sociocultural Elements of Sport** (e.g., athlete counseling; child and adolescent psychology; coaching theory, philosophy, principles, or ethics of sport coaching; philosophical or sociological perspectives of sport; psychology of the college-aged adult; or performance psychology)
4. **Nutrition** (e.g., general nutrition and health, nutritional biochemistry, or sport and performance nutrition)
5. **Strength and Conditioning and Training Theory** (e.g., exercise programming, exercise testing and prescription, graded exercise testing, program design for injury prevention, or strength and conditioning)
6. **Research Methods and Statistics** (e.g., research methods, research design, understanding sport or performance research, data collection and analysis, statistics, quantitative or qualitative research, data science and analytics, or sport technology)

Course Number	Institution	Full Course Title	Course Catalog Description
e.g., AXES 470	Example University	Strength & Conditioning	*"This course is designed to provide students information for the design and implementation of a successful strength and conditioning program. Emphasis is placed on assessment of athletic performance, description and analysis of sport movement, and designing weight training programs to enhance performance variables. Application of these principles occur through the exploration of muscu-loskeletal flexibility, speed, agility, quickness, strength, and power."*

APPENDIX C: REGISTRATION AFFIRMATION

Please review and accept the following affirmation statement.

I accept the conditions set forth by the NSCA Certification Committee concerning the administration, reporting of examination scores, and the certification and recertification processes and policies listed in the NSCA Certification Handbook. I attest that the information contained in this registration is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and is made in good faith.

I understand that if any information is later determined to be false, the NSCA Certification Committee reserves the right to revoke the certification that has been granted on the basis thereof. I also understand that any irregularity including, but not limited to, copying answers; permitting another person to copy answers; falsifying information required for admission to the examination; impersonating another exam candidate; falsifying education or credentials; or providing and/or receiving unauthorized advice about exam content before, during or following the examination in connection with any NSCA Certification examination could result in immediate revocation of my certification.

I further understand that the examination questions, certification names/acronyms and logos are protected under U.S. copyright law and, as such, willful infringement of the copyright is a federal crime. I recognize that any unauthorized possession of, use or distribution of or the act of providing access to NSCA Certification examination questions, certificates, NSCA Certification logos, abbreviations relating thereto and any other NSCA Certification documents and materials may result in immediate revocation of my certification.

I also recognize and acknowledge that I will abide by the recertification requirements established in order to remain certified.

Do you agree to the affirmation statement listed above?*

☐ Yes, I agree

NSCA®
NATIONAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ASSOCIATION

HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR CERTIFICATION

NSCA Recertification Policies and Procedures

2024-2026 REPORTING PERIOD

011724-MKT4821

INTRODUCTION

YOUR DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT

Holding an NSCA certification demonstrates that you are a dedicated, hardworking strength and conditioning professional. It also means you belong to the NSCA community, a global group of like-minded professionals striving to positively impact the health, lives, and athletic performance of others.

Your NSCA credentials indicate you have the specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a specific job. An NSCA certification on your resume is the stamp of approval employers look for. They instantly understand the quality of your education and your ability to apply evidence-based research.

AN ONGOING COMMITMENT

It is important to remain competent in your field and continue to be educated about the constantly changing world of strength and conditioning. Maintaining your certification shows your commitment to your career, and ensures you are equipped to do your job to the best of your ability.

MAINTAINING YOUR CERTIFICATION

No matter which certification you hold — Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist® (CSCS®), Certified Performance and Sport Scientist® (CPSS®), NSCA-Certified Personal Trainer® (NSCA-CPT®), Certified Special Population Specialist® (CSPS®), and/or Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator® (TSAC-F®) — there are vital parts to maintaining your credentials. There are two options for becoming recertified:

OPTION 1	OR	OPTION 2
Complete and report a certain number of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and pay the recertification fee		Retake and pass the appropriate certification exam

Whether you choose Option 1 or Option 2 for recertification, you **must maintain CPR/AED certification** throughout the three-year recertification cycle. You may renew your CPR/AED through an online program, if your CPR/AED certification did not lapse. If there is a lapse of your CPR/AED certification, then you must attend the CPR/AED course in person to earn that certification again.

Note: Those who do not fulfill the recertification requirements from one of the options above before the recertification deadline of December 31, 2026, will lose their certification status. To become certified again, they will be required to retake and pass the appropriate certification exam and will be issued a new date of certification and a new certification number.

WHY CPR/AED CERTIFICATION IS REQUIRED

Your CPR/AED certification could help you save a life when every minute counts. Protecting the safety of your clients and athletes is first and foremost. A current CPR/AED certification means you have learned how and when to provide care for someone experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. Requiring this certification every cycle encourages you to refresh your memory and stay up to date on the latest techniques.

WHY CONTINUING EDUCATION IS REQUIRED

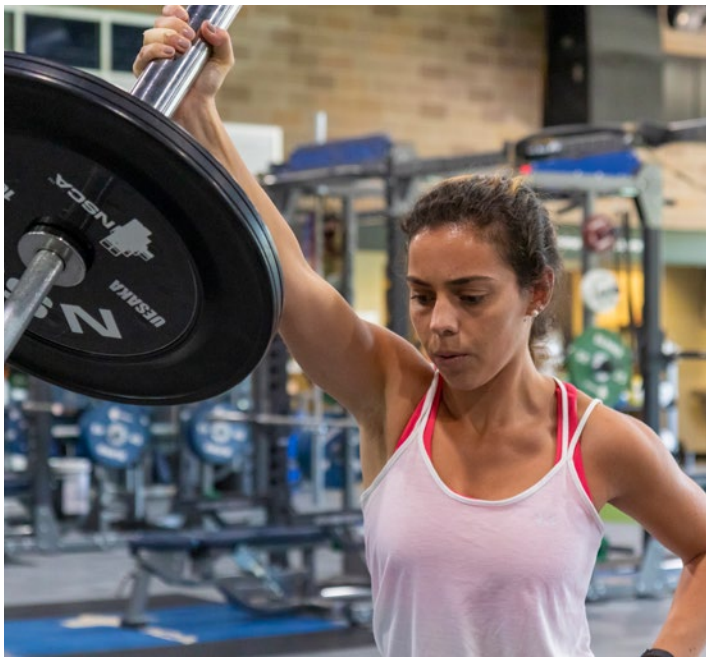
Continuing education is a critical part of any trusted certification program. Continuing education keeps your knowledge and skills sharp so that you can perform at a high level in the industry and retain the credibility your certification delivers. Some common ways to participate in continuing education include attending industry events, completing pre-approved home studies, volunteering your professional expertise with the NSCA, or contributing an article to an NSCA publication.

CONTINUING EDUCATION BENEFITS

Continuing education is a lifelong learning journey. The strength and conditioning industry continually evolves with new scientific knowledge and research, training techniques, equipment, and industry laws and regulations. When you are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills, you gain the advantage of that understanding and can outperform those who do not. Keeping up to date also makes a difference in the lives of your clients and athletes, ensuring they receive the highest standard of service possible.

THE RECERTIFICATION CYCLE

The NSCA recertification is based on a three-year cycle, ensuring NSCA-certified individuals stay up to date across industry trends, technology, regulations, and laws. Three years also grants the time to gain continuing education units without causing a significant disruption or difficulty. We are currently in the 2024-2026 cycle, and the deadline for recertifying is December 31, 2026 for **all** certified individuals.



BREAKING DOWN THE CEU

WHAT IS A CEU?

CEU stands for Continuing Education Unit, and it is simply the way we measure your continuing education. CEUs range across a variety of topics. For example, you could pursue CEUs in nutrition, anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, or sports psychology. You can earn CEUs in various ways such as attending in-person or virtual events, writing an article for publication, leading an NSCA Special Interest Group (SIG), or taking and passing a quiz.

HOW ARE CEUS CALCULATED?

The amount of CEUs you earn is generally based on the number of contact hours (or actual clock hours) you spend to complete an activity or event. For example, one contact hour equals 0.1 CEU, and 10 contact hours would equal 1.0 CEU.

Not all CEU activities are based on actual clock hours. There are exceptions, such as college or university courses, where one semester credit hour equals 0.5 CEU and one quarter credit hour equals 0.3 CEU. For example:

- A 3-unit, semester-long exercise physiology course equals 1.5 CEUs
- A 4-unit, quarter-long functional anatomy course equals 1.2 CEUs

HOW MANY CEUS DO I NEED?

The required number of CEUs needed to recertify is based on your certification date and where it falls within the three-year cycle. Refer to the table below to determine the number of CEUs you will need and the related fees. All CEUs must be earned between the date of your certification (or the beginning of the recertification cycle, whichever is later) and the end of the recertification cycle on December 31, 2026.

Note: Activity completed before an achieved certification, or the start of the current recertification cycle, cannot be applied for CEUs during the current cycle. (CEUs can still be applied during a different cycle for reinstatements and appeals.)

Individuals with Multiple Certifications

If you hold multiple NSCA credentials, you do not need to submit 6.0 CEUs separately for each certification. For example, if you became CSCS and NSCA-CPT certified before January 1, 2024, you are only required to submit a total of 6.0 CEUs for the 2024-2026 reporting period.

A more complex scenario exists if you became CSCS and NSCA-CPT certified at different times during the 2024-2026 reporting period. Special attention must be paid to the dates on your certificates to ensure that the required CEUs are completed after those dates. Please contact the NSCA if there is any confusion regarding your recertification requirements.

ORIGINAL CERITIFICATION DATE (SHOWN ON CERTIFICATE)	CEUS REQUIRED	CATEGORY A MAXIMUM	CATEGORY B MAXIMUM	CATEGORY C MAXIMUM	CATEGORY D MAXIMUM	MEMBER FEE FOR EACH CREDENTIAL HELD	NON-MEMBER FEE FOR EACH CREDENTIAL HELD
If certification was earned before 2024*‡	6.0	5.5	4.0	5.5	4.0	$65	$90
If certification was earned during 2024*^	4.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.0	$55	$80
If certification was earned during 2025*^	2.0	1.5	1.0	1.5	1.0	$45	$70
If certification was earned January 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026^	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	$35	$60
If certification was earned July 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026	0	0	0	0	0	$0	$0

** You must obtain CEUs from at least two categories.*

‡ All CEUs must be earned after January 1, 2024, even if certification was earned prior to this date.

^ All CEUs must be earned after the date of certification

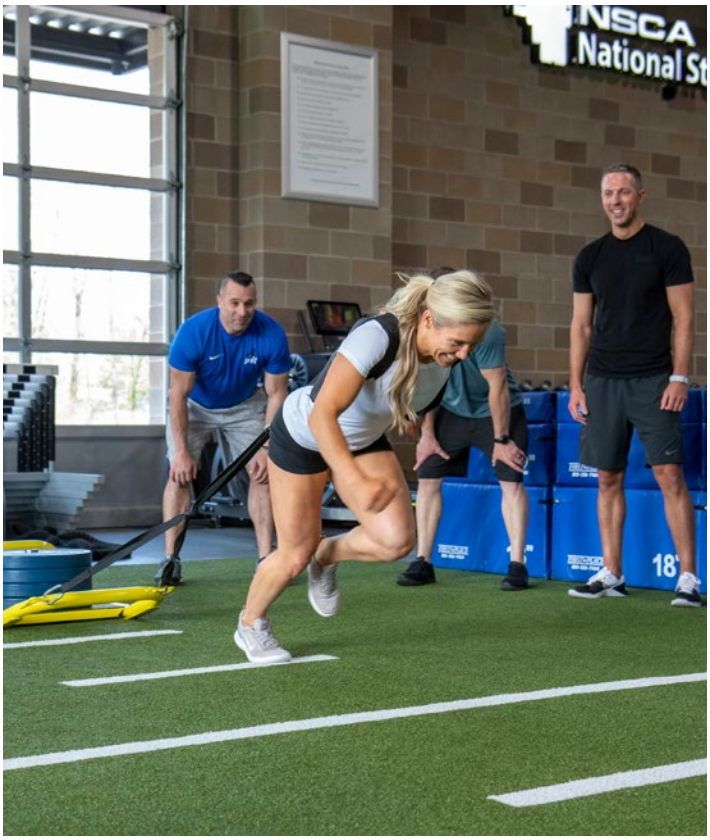
Recertification with Distinction (*D)

Recertified with Distinction (*D) is a program that honors certified professionals who have met a high standard for continuing education, and are acknowledged for their significant role and participation with the NSCA. The Recertified with Distinction program benefits those who qualify, by enhancing their professional status and by providing public recognition including:

- A specially designed certificate honoring the accomplishment
- The right to use the trademark protected "*D" as an extension of their CPSS, CSPS, CSCS, NSCA-CPT, and/or TSAC-F credential(s)
- Special notation on NSCA conference badges

To qualify for Recertified with Distinction status, certificants must:

1. Meet the standard recertification requirements established by the NSCA for the current recertification period
2. Acquire a total of 10.0 CEUs from NSCA activities in a recertification period (the requirements are not prorated for those certified after January 2024, and CEU category maximum rules do not apply)
3. Select the path to recertify with distinction. If you have questions or need assistance email recertify@nsca.com.



ACCEPTABLE CONTENT FOR CEUS

Only continuing education content that relates to the scope of practice and Detailed Content Outline (DCO) of an NSCA certification exam will be accepted. Below are some examples of acceptable and unacceptable content. **If you have questions about the acceptability of a particular activity's content, contact the NSCA prior to engaging in the activity for credit.**

Examples of Acceptable Content:

- Anatomy and physiology
- Nutrition
- Biomechanics
- Organization and administration
  - *Refer to current DCO for allowed content*
- Training techniques
- Sport psychology
- Program design
- Testing, monitoring, and evaluation
- Exercise technique
- Return to play reconditioning
- Coaching
- Training theory
- Research methods
- Statistics
- Application of performance technology

Examples of Unacceptable Content

- Surgery
- Diagnosing
- Kinesio taping
- Treatment
- Radiology/imaging
- General business
- Group fitness/holistic activities
- Unrelated alternative health topics (e.g., hypnosis, acupuncture)
- Allied health topics beyond the NSCA credential scope of practice (e.g., athletic training, physical therapy, or massage therapy specific techniques)

Please note that an activity may only be reported once per recertification cycle, even if completed multiple times. For example: If you recertify First Aid multiple times within one recertification cycle, it can only be reported one time, or if you present on the same presentation to different audiences, that presentation can only be reported one time for the 2024-2026 recertification period.

WAYS TO EARN CEUS

CEUs can be obtained in a wide variety of ways. They are divided into the four following categories:

Category A | Attendance

Attend clinics, conferences, seminars, workshops, or live-streamed events. The content provided must be related to the scope of practice and/or be consistent with the DCO for the NSCA certification held.

Note: Live attendance does not need to be pre-approved.

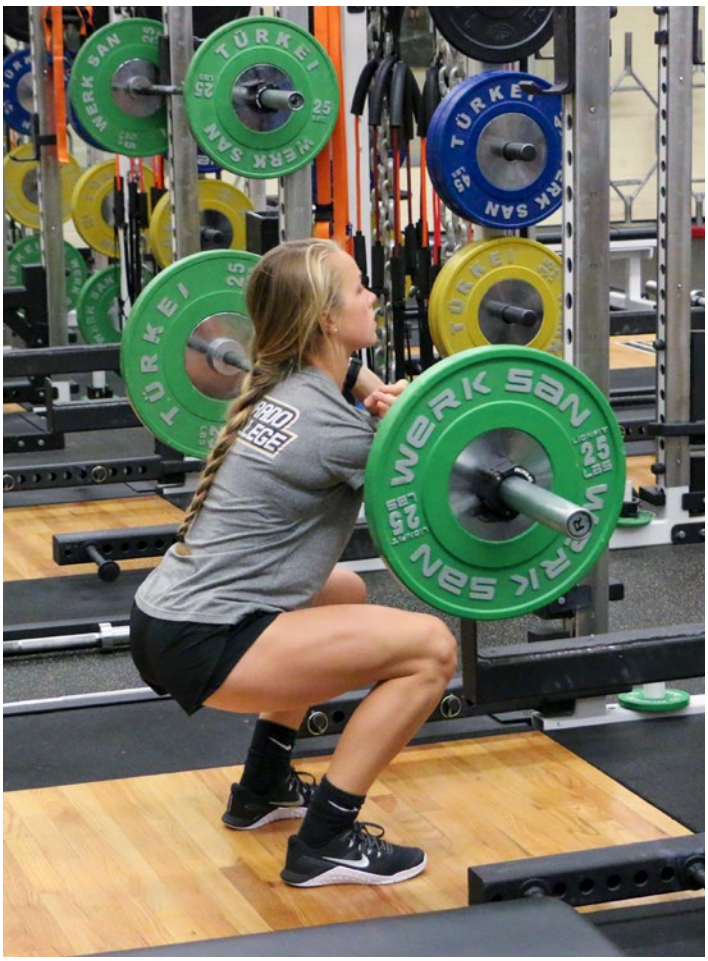
Note: Recorded webinars need to be pre-approved and fall under Category C.

Category B | Share Your Expertise

- **NSCA Volunteer Work** | Serve one year as a State or Provincial Director or as a member of an NSCA committee, Special Interest Group (SIG) Executive Council, Board of Directors, or editorial and grant reviewers.
- **Presentations** | Participate as a speaker or panelist at clinics, conferences, seminar, workshop, etc.

  Note: Teaching academic courses does not qualify for CEUs.
- **Publications** | Publish works in which the certified individual serves as author or co-author.

  Note: Item must be published during the current recertification cycle. CEUs are not applied for articles that are published ahead of print.



Category C | Educational Activities

- **First Aid** | Complete the requirements for certification or recertification in **First Aid.**
- **Post-certification College Course Work** | Successfully complete post-certification college/university-level courses with a grade of "C" or higher. The course must be related to the scope of practice and/or is consistent with the DCO for the NSCA certification. A grade of Satisfactory or Incomplete will not be accepted.

  Note: Teaching academic courses does not qualify for CEUs.

  Note: College courses must be started after the date of certification (during the current reporting cycle) and completed before the recertification cycle ends.

  Note: Dissertations CEUs will only be awarded upon completion of the dissertation. CEUs will not be awarded for continual credit progress per quarter/semester/trimester.
- **Internships** | (non-college credit) Complete a 150-hour internship relevant to strength and conditioning or personal training.

  Note: All activity must be related to the scope of practice and/or be consistent with the DCO for the NSCA certification held.
- **Earning an NSCA Certification Not Currently Held** | Individuals already holding an NSCA certification may obtain CEUs by earning an additional NSCA credential.
- **Earning an NCCA-accredited certification** | The NSCA will award CEUs when a CSCS, CPSS, NSCA-CPT, CSPS, or TSAC-F certified individual passes a certification exam offered by a fitness, sport, or exercise organization program currently accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

  Note: Required coursework completed in the process of earning a non-NCCA-accredited certification may be reported according to usual recertification guidelines.

  Note: CEUs will be awarded at the time of the original certification only. Recertifying the NCCA-accredited certification does not qualify for CEUs.
- **Pre-Approved Home Study Courses** | Complete pre-approved home study courses offered by other organizations/businesses and approved by the NSCA. Check the NSCA website, under "Continuing Education," for the current pre-approved course listings.
- **Personal Development** | Any activity undertaken to keep current with the NSCA certification held, and does not fit into another category, is considered personal development. Some examples of activities include reading journals, magazines, and books as well as listening to podcasts that are related to strength and conditioning and/or personal training; participating in self-improvement seminars; and/or completing home studies that are not pre-approved.

Category D | Quizzes and Assessments

Passing a quiz found on the NSCA website based on articles in the *Strength and Conditioning Journal* and/or NSCA videos.

Note: CEUs can only be reported once per activity. For example: If you give the same presentation on 2 different dates, you cannot report it twice.

CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORY	ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF CEUs AWARDED	REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION*†
A ATTENDANCE	**Live Attendance**	Attending strength and conditioning and/or personal training clinics, conferences, seminars, workshops, or live-streamed events, etc. *Note: Recorded webinars must be pre-approved*	0.1 CEU per hour of attendance (e.g., 8-hour clinic x 0.1 CEU = 0.8 CEU) *Note: A maximum of 2.0 CEUs may be earned for any one event*	Photocopy of attendance certificate or letter verifying participation ddate, number of hours for non-NSCA events, and an outline of the event may be requested (this activity is applicable for *D if NSCA event)
B SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE	**NSCA Volunteer Work**	Serving as a State/Provincial Director, NSCA committee member, on the NSCA SIG Executive Council, or on the NSCA Board of Directors	0.5 CEU per year of committee involvement *Note: CEUs are applied after a full year has been served.*	(This activity is applicable for *D)
		NSCA editorial and NSCA grant reviews	0.1 CEU per review	(This activity is applicable for *D)
	Presentations	Serving as a speaker or panelist at clinics, conferences, seminar, workshop, etc.	1.0 CEU per hour of presentation *Note: A maximum of 2.0 CEUs allowed for each presentation*	Photocopy of brochure or flyer showing participation, a letter of verification from the event host, or an outline of the event may be requested (this activity is applicable for *D if presented at an NSCA event)
	Publications	Authoring or co-authoring articles, abstracts, chapters in books, or full books *Note: Item must be published during the current recertification cycle*	**Articles:** 1.5 CEUs for NSCA publications 1.0 CEU for peer-reviewed journals 0.5 CEU for all others **Abstracts:** 1.0 CEU per published abstract **Chapters of books:** 1.5 CEUs per published chapter **Books:** 3.0 CEUs per published book	**Articles/Abstracts:** Photocopy of periodical cover and first page of article/abstract **Chapters/Books:** Photocopy of book cover and table of contents (this activity is applicable for *D if NSCA publication)
C EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	**First Aid**	Becoming certified or recertified in First Aid *Note: Can only be reported once per recertification cycle.*	0.5 CEU awarded at time of certification/recertification	Photocopy of certification card or certificate
	College Course Work	Passing post-certification college course work	0.3 CEU per quarter credit hour 0.4 CEU per trimester credit hour 0.5 CEU per semester credit hour *Note: A maximum of 2.0 CEUs per course may be earned*	Photocopy of grade report or unofficial transcript A course outline may be requested
	Internships	Completion of non-academic credit granting internship of at least 150 hours	2.0 CEUs per internship	Photocopy showing internship completion (this activity is applicable for *D if NSCA internship)
	Earning Additional Accredited Certifications	Earning an additional NSCA certification not currently held	2.0 CEUs per additional NSCA certification	Photocopy of certificate (this activity is applicable for *D if additional NSCA certification is earned)
		Earning a fitness, sport, or exercise nutrition certification from other NCCA-accredited program	2.0 CEUs per NCCA-accredited certification	
	Pre-Approved Home Studies	Successfully completing a pre-approved home study course through another organization *Note: Course must be listed on NSCA's pre-approved list*	CEUs awarded for pre-approved courses only; refer to course listings at NSCA.com for number of CEUs awarded	Photocopy showing course completion from pre-approved provider (Human Kinetics courses are applicable for *D)
	Personal Development	Educational activities not covered by any other category (e.g., reading articles, journals, or books; listening to or speaking on a podcast; passing quizzes; or completing home studies not pre-approved)	0.5 CEU per year	Statement of nature of activities completed
D QUIZZES AND ASSESSMENTS	**NSCA Quizzes**	NSCA SCJ quizzes, RSCC quizzes NSCA video quizzes, or USADA quiz	0.2-1.0 CEUs for each quiz that is submitted and passed *Note: CEU values vary per quiz*	(This activity is applicable for *D)

†Documentation only required if selected for an audit or requesting an appeal or reinstatement.

WHERE TO FIND CEU OPPORTUNITIES

The NSCA works diligently to provide new and ongoing CEU opportunities — these include setting up industry events, creating quizzes, offering volunteer opportunities, and accepting contributions to NSCA publications. We have also partnered with a variety of third-party providers who are approved to offer additional CEU opportunities. These (or A list) can be found on the NSCA website.

REPORTING YOUR CEUS

Periodic reporting of your CEUs is required to ensure that all certified individuals are adhering to the continuing education requirements. We encourage self-reporting, as it helps our certificants plan out their own continuing education opportunities while bestowing a sense of responsibility and accountability.

The NSCA's online CEU reporting process is a convenient way to review, record, and edit activities. To access the online CEU reporting page, visit **nsca.com/recertify**.

Online reporting allows certified individuals to:

- View certification summaries
- Determine CEUs required
- Review category maximums
- View certification number
- Determine certification expiration date
- Track accumulated CEUs
- Record and edit CEUs
- Submit recertification fee(s)

A paper application is available for individuals without internet access; however, it must be requested in writing.

NSCA CEUs Reported on Your Account

When you obtain CEUs through the NSCA, those CEUs will be applied in your recertification record. This process can take a few weeks to be reflected in your account. The following CEUs will also be applied toward Recertified with Distinction (*D®).

- Attending or presenting at NSCA events
- Authoring articles, abstracts, and/or books for NSCA publications
- Passing NSCA quizzes
- Participating on NSCA committees
- Serving as an NSCA State/Provincial Director
- Serving as an NSCA SIG Executive Council Member
- Serving on the NSCA Board of Directors
- Earning additional NSCA credential(s)

Note: NSCA/Human Kinetics home study courses must be self-reported

Documenting Your CEUs

Keeping documentation of CEUs is the responsibility of each certified individual. A record of all documentation must be maintained for completed activities; see the table on the previous page for documentation requirements.

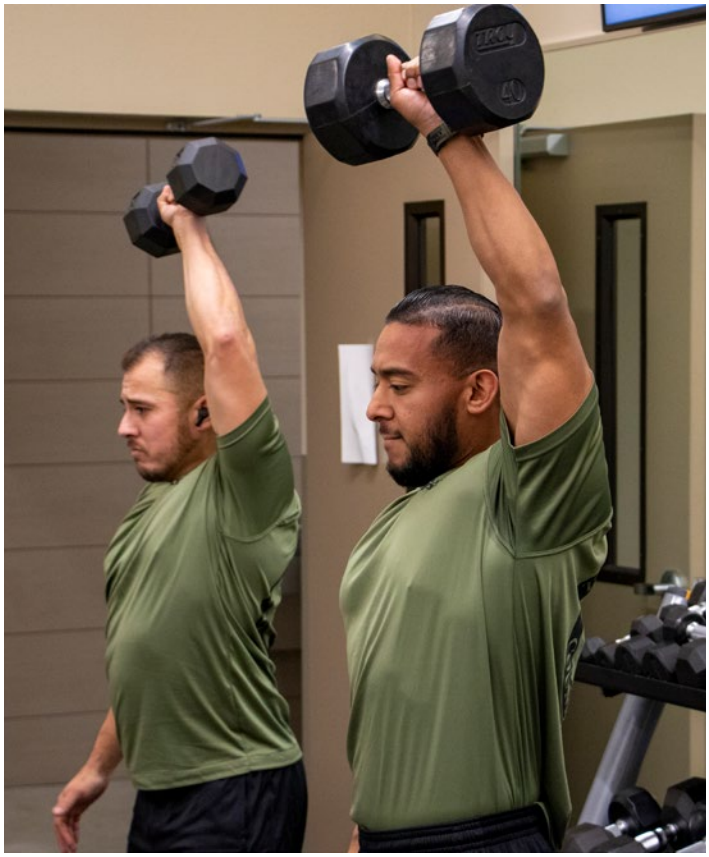
Documentation does not need to be submitted to the NSCA for the standard recertification, unless requested, and/or in conjunction with the random recertification audit conducted at the conclusion of a recertification cycle. Certificants may upload documentation at the time of reporting CEUs online.

Note: Documentation is required when requesting an appeal or reinstatement or if selected for audit.

Random Audit

The NSCA conducts a random audit of a percentage of certified individuals that complete the recertification process. Those individuals selected for the audit will be required to submit their CEU documentation to the NSCA for verification. CEU documentation will be required to be uploaded for each CEU reported.

Those selected for audit will be notified at the time they submit their recertification fee. Once notified, certified individuals have 45 days to submit the documentation that supports the information previously reported online or on the CEU Reporting Form. If supporting documentation is not provided within the time allotted (45 days), does not substantiate the activities reported, or is found inadequate of meeting CEU requirements (i.e., activity falls outside the scope of practice for the NSCA certification held), then the conditions for recertification will have not been met. Those individuals will have their certification revoked. Refunds will not be given for the recertification fee or fees paid to the NSCA for CEUs in the event of a failed audit.



RECERTIFICATION FEE

The recertification fee is the fee you will pay at the end of the recertification cycle, after you have reported your required CEU amount. Be aware of additional fees within the NSCA that are distinct, such as membership, liability insurance, Recertified with Distinction (*D), and RSCC. Your recertification fee is a separate cost, and must be paid in order for your recertification process to be complete.

ORIGINAL CERTIFICATION DATE (SHOWN ON CERTIFICATE)	MEMBER FEE FOR EACH CREDENTIAL HELD	NON-MEMBER FEE FOR EACH CREDENTIAL HELD
If certification was earned before 2024*‡	$65	$90
If certification was earned during 2024*^	$55	$80
If certification was earned during 2025*^	$45	$70
If certification was earned January 1, 2026 to June 30, 2026^	$35	$60
If certification was earned July 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026	$0	$0

FAILURE TO REPORT AND APPEALS

Once certified, you will continue to be certified as long as you fulfill the minimum CEU requirements, maintain your CPR/AED certification, and pay your recertification fee before the deadline. Alternately, you may continue your certification by passing the appropriate certification exam before the deadline and maintain your CPR/AED certification. The NSCA Certification Committee will be notified of those failing to meet CEU requirements so that appropriate actions may be taken. Those who fail to meet the recertification requirements will be sent a Notice of Certification Revocation.

REINSTATEMENT

Sometimes, life gets in the way and certifications may lapse. Thankfully, if your NSCA certification has expired, and you maintained your CEUs, you can ask to receive reinstatement. To petition the NSCA for reinstatement, please perform the following steps:

1. Submit the Reinstatement application, along with documentation that all required CEUs were earned within the missed recertification period(s) and earned in accordance with the requirements of the recertification policy in effect at that time
2. Submit CEU documentation for listed CEUs (acceptable documentation can be found on page 31 in the Certification Handbook)
3. Present verification of current CPR/AED certification
4. Pay reinstatement fee, plus all related recertification fees of previous recertification period(s)

The fee for reinstatement is $200 plus previously unpaid recertification fees. The appropriate forms can be found online at **NSCA.com/certification/recertification**.

If you are granted reinstatement, you will maintain your original certification date, but a new certification number may be issued. If your request is denied, you may appeal to the Certification Committee. The Certification Committee will review appeals at the Committee's next scheduled meeting and render a final decision.

APPEALS

Appeals may be made for revocation letters, audit results, or not meeting recertification requirements due extenuating circumstance(s). Those wishing to appeal can do so by completing the appeals application through the **Certification Overview page**. Appeals must include an explanation as to why the appeal is being requested, requested outcome of appeal decision, and include all relevant supporting documentation. The Certification Committee will review appeals at the Committee's next scheduled meeting and render a final decision. Appeals will not be accepted for those who have missed two or more recertification cycles. The individual must retake the exam at that point.

Note: There is a $50 appeal fee, which is due at time of appeal submission. This fee may be returned upon full or partial approval of appeal.

Note: The Certification Committee meets twice a year (spring and fall). Appeals cannot be expedited.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The NSCA Disciplinary Procedures were established as a means to enforce the NSCA Professional Code of Ethics and protect the public, as well as the integrity of NSCA certification programs. Consistent with the obligation of candidates and certificants in regards to the NSCA Professional Code of Ethics, the Disciplinary Procedures provide a formal process for submitting complaints of unethical behavior to NSCA for consideration and investigation. The NSCA Professional Code of Ethics and the NSCA Disciplinary Procedures are found within the NSCA Codes, Policies, and Procedures (Appendix E), or online at **NSCA.com/codes-policies-procedures**.

Any action taken by the NSCA Ethics Committee affecting the status of an exam applicant or candidate, or of a certified individual may be appealed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the NSCA Codes, Policies, and Procedures (Appendix E).

APPENDIX E: EXAM DETAILED CONTENT OUTLINES

INTRODUCTION

The NSCA (as previously mentioned), develops a Detailed Content Outlines (DCO) for each certification. These documents categorize the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for professional practice into domains, subdomains, and tasks. Additionally, the DCO provides candidates with the number and type of questions found on the exam within each domain.

Below is an excerpt from the domain Testing and Evaluation from the Practical/Applied section of the CSCS exam. There are a total of three subdomains (A, B, and C) and eight tasks (two listed under sub-domain A, three under B, and three under C). A total of 20 questions will be found within the exam for this domain of which three will be recall, 11 application, and six analysis. These questions are not evenly distributed across the tasks. Therefore, certificants should always prepare for any content to be assessed using any question format (formats are explained in the next section). Concepts not listed in the DCO will not be included on the exam. Preparation for each certification exam should be focused on the concepts that are listed in the appropriate DCO.

EXCERPT FROM THE CSCS PRACTICAL/APPLIED DCO

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS	Cognitive Level			
	Recall	Application	Analysis	Total Items
4. TESTING AND EVALUATION	**3**	**11**	**6**	**20**
A. Select and Administer Tests to Maximize Test Reliability and Validity				
1. Tests based upon the unique aspects of a sport, sport position, and training status				
2. Test administration procedures that use equipment, personnel, and time efficiently				
B. Administer Testing Protocols and Procedures to Ensure Reliable Data Collection				
1. Testing equipment and its proper use				
2. Testing procedures (e.g., warm-up, how to test, proper rest between trials)				
3. Testing to assess physical characteristics (e.g., bodyweight, girth, body fat, height) and evaluate performance (e.g., muscular strength, power, anaerobic capacity, muscular endurance, aerobic endurance, agility, speed, flexibility)				
C. Evaluate and Interpret Test Results				
1. Validity of test results				
2. Typical vs. atypical test results based on a sport or sport position				
3. Design or modification of the training program based on test results (i.e., determine which outcome of training needs to be improved in a future program)				

EXAM QUESTIONS

Format

Exam questions (also called "exam items") all share the same selected-response format — multiple-choice questions. Candidates select the best answer from three presented options (e.g., a, b, or c). Some questions will reference an image or video, and others may be a description of a situation, or "case." The exams do not include essay-type or other constructed-response questions that require test-takers to write their own answers.

Complexity

Even though all exam items share the same format, they differ in terms of complexity. Different levels of cognition (e.g., recall, application, or analysis) are required to determine the best answer. The knowledge, skills, and abilities of a candidate include both simple and very complex tasks. The candidate may need to recall facts or apply information, while at other times they may need to conduct an evaluation of a situation to determine the best course of action. Therefore, the questions on the exams are written at different levels of complexity. Definitions of the cognitive levels and examples are provided below:

Recall

Recall questions require a candidate to recognize information such as concepts, principles, facts, or procedures. These questions ask for information that is easily found in a manual, textbook, or other resources. Recall questions can generally be reduced to "what is x?"

Example: Which of the following is a characteristic of fast-twitch muscle fibers?

A. high power output

B. high resistance to fatigue

C. low contraction speed

Application

Application items require candidates to apply knowledge that is dependent upon a situation. Examples of application exam questions include basic calculations and identifying relationships between concepts. Questions may be posed as "if, then" situations; e.g., "if this variable is present, then this outcome will occur."

Example: A strength and conditioning professional is working with a 20-year-old collegiate athlete who has a resting heart rate of 60 bpm. Using the Karvonen formula, what is this athlete's exercise heart rate at an exercise intensity of 85%?

A. 196 bpm

B. 187 bpm

C. 179 bpm

Analysis

Analysis items require candidates to consider and evaluate several pieces of information, or variables, to arrive at the most appropriate answer. Examples of analysis questions include complex calculations and the identification of patterns in data.

Example: A 21-year-old, 5 ft, 10 in. (170 cm) collegiate Division I soccer forward weighing 165 lb (74.8 kg) has the following assessment results:

Body fat:	12%
Back squat:	285 lb (129.2 kg)
Vertical jump:	23 in. (58.42 cm)
5-10-5:	4.5 sec
40 m sprint:	7.5 sec

Which of the following is the MOST important to improve?

A. strength

B. speed

C. agility

Example Answers
Recall: A
Application: C
Analysis: B

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
1. EXERCISE SCIENCES	**14**	**24**	**6**	**44**
A. Apply Knowledge of **Muscle** Anatomy and Physiology				
1. Muscle anatomy (e.g., muscle group names, specific muscle names, muscle fiber/cell structure)				
2. Muscular dynamics involved during movement patterns (e.g., sliding filament theory, type of muscle action)				
B. Apply Knowledge of **Neuromuscular** Anatomy and Physiology				
1. Neuromuscular anatomy (e.g., motor unit, muscle fiber type, muscle spindle, Golgi tendon organ)				
2. Neuromuscular responses to exercise (e.g., motor unit recruitment patterns, nerve conduction, summation)				
C. Apply Knowledge of Basic Principles of **Biomechanics** Regarding Exercise Selection, Execution, and Sport Performance				
1. Kinematic principles of movement (e.g., anatomical planes of movement, joint angles, velocity)				
2. Kinetic laws and principles of movement (e.g., momentum, torque, power, work, force, center of gravity, impulse, center of pressure, force-velocity curve, force-time curve, isometric/isotonic/isokinetic, lever systems)				
3. Role of muscles in movement (e.g., agonist, antagonist, synergist, neutralizer, stabilizer)				
D. Apply Knowledge of **Bone and Connective Tissue** (tendons and ligaments) Anatomy and Physiology				
1. Bone and connective tissue anatomy				
2. Bone and connective tissue responses to exercise and training				
E. Apply Knowledge of **Bioenergetics and Metabolism**				
1. Characteristics of the energy systems				
2. Effects of manipulating training variables (e.g., mode, intensity, duration, volume, and work:rest ratio) to target specific energy systems				
F. Apply Knowledge of **Neuroendocrine** Physiology				
1. Functions of hormones (e.g., testosterone, growth hormone)				
2. Neuroendocrine responses to exercise and training				
G. Apply Knowledge of **Cardiopulmonary** Anatomy and Physiology				
1. Cardiopulmonary anatomy (e.g., structure of the heart, vascular system, lungs)				
2. Cardiopulmonary responses to exercise and training				

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
H. Apply Knowledge of **Physiological Adaptations** to Exercise, Training, and the Impact of Recovery Strategies				
1. Adaptations to metabolic conditioning				
2. Causes, signs, symptoms, and effects of unsafe training and detraining				
3. Sleep (e.g., sleep deprivation, disordered sleep)				
4. Techniques and strategies for recovery				
I. Apply Knowledge of the Special Considerations of the **Differences among Athletes** (e.g., age, sex, training status, specific sport or activity)				
J. Apply Knowledge of **Scientific Research and Statistics** in the Exercise Sciences				
1. Understand the scientific process				
2. Read, review, and evaluate various sources of information				
3. Understand reliability and validity				
2. SPORT PSYCHOLOGY	**6**	**11**	**2**	**19**
A. Apply Knowledge of Psychological Foundations of Performance				
1. Motivational theory and techniques (e.g., imagery techniques, reinforcement strategies, confidence, positive self-talk)				
2. Attentional control and decision-making (e.g., focus, arousal management)				
B. Apply Knowledge of Motor Learning and Skill Acquisition Techniques (e.g., feedback, practice conditions, attention and focus, learning styles, instructional strategies, internal and external cuing)				
C. Recognize Indicators of Mental Health Issues in Athletes				
1. The psychological impact of injury in sport				
2. The signs, symptoms, and psychological impacts of common mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, stress, depression)				
3. The signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with eating disorders and disordered eating				
4. The signs and symptoms of substance misuse				

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS	Cognitive Level			
	Recall	Application	Analysis	Total Items
3. NUTRITION	**5**	**8**	**4**	**17**
A. Apply Basic Knowledge of Nutritional Factors Affecting Health				
1. Health-related application of nutrition concepts (e.g., food groups, food exchanges, glycemic index, caloric vs. nutrient dense foods)				
2. Health factors associated with dietary choices (e.g., a high intake of cholesterol, triglycerides, and/or saturated fat, low intake of calcium and iron, food sensitivities and allergies, alternative nutritional approaches)				
3. Effects of hydration status and electrolyte balance/imbalance on health				
B. Apply Basic Knowledge of Nutrition to Maximize Performance				
1. Training/nutritional programs that produce specific changes in body composition (e.g., fat loss or lean body mass increase)				
2. Composition and timing of nutrient and fluid intake before, during, and after an exercise session or a sport event				
3. Nutritional factors that affect muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, and aerobic endurance				
4. Nutritional needs for various training and health status of athletes				
C. Apply Basic Knowledge of the Effects, Risks, and Alternatives of Common Supplements, Performance-Enhancing Substances, and Methods				
1. Ergogenic aids and dietary supplements (e.g., creatine, carbohydrate loading, caffeine)				
2. Performance-enhancing substances and methods (e.g., anabolic steroids and blood doping)				
3. Impact of alcohol and drugs on performance				
Totals for SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS section:	**25**	**43**	**12**	**80**

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline PRACTICAL / APPLIED	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
1. EXERCISE TECHNIQUE	**7**	**22**	**11**	**40**
A. Teach and Evaluate **Movement Preparation** (soft tissue and flexibility/mobility, PNF, CNS prep, dynamic stretching)				
1. Preparatory body limb and position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
2. Execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
3. Cuing and coaching, monitoring for safety				
4. Assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
B. Teach and Evaluate **Resistance Training** Exercise Technique				
1. Free weight training equipment				
a. preparatory body and limb position (e.g., grip, stance, alignment)				
b. execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
c. spotting procedures and technique, cuing and coaching, monitoring for safety				
d. assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
2. Resistance machines (e.g., pulley, cam, hydraulic, friction, air, tubing)				
a. preparatory body and limb position (e.g., grip, stance, alignment)				
b. execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
c. spotting procedures and technique, cuing and coaching, monitoring for safety				
d. assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
3. Alternative modes (e.g., core, stability, balance, calisthenic, body weight only)				
a. preparatory body and limb position (e.g., grip, stance, alignment)				
b. execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
c. assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
4. Non-traditional implements (e.g., logs, tire-flipping, heavy ropes, kettlebells, heavy medicine balls)				
a. preparatory body and limb position (e.g., grip, stance, alignment)				
b. execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
c. assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
C. Teach and Evaluate **Olympic Weightlifting and Plyometric** Exercise Technique				
1. Preparatory body and limb position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
2. Execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
3. Assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline PRACTICAL / APPLIED	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
D. Teach and Evaluate **Speed/Sprint Technique** (e.g., resisted and assisted sprinting, speed-strength)				
1. Preparatory body and limb position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
2. Execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
3. Assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
E. Teach and Evaluate **Agility** Technique (e.g., forward, backward and lateral movements; turn, transition, acceleration, and deceleration maneuvers)				
1. Preparatory body and limb position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
2. Execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
3. Assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
F. Teach and Evaluate **Energy Systems Development**				
1. Aerobic conditioning activities (e.g., treadmill, bicycle, rowing machine, stair stepper, elliptical trainer, walking, jogging, running, swimming)				
a. machine programming and setup				
b. preparatory body and limb position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
c. execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
d. assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
2. Anaerobic conditioning activities (e.g., conditioning drills, heavy rope training, intermittent training)				
a. execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
b. assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				
G. Teach and Evaluate **Recovery Techniques** (e.g., hydrotherapy, sleep, hydration, soft tissue, compression, static stretching exercises)				
1. Preparatory body and limb position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
2. Execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing, focus, arousal)				
3. Assessment, correction, and modification of exercise technique				

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline PRACTICAL / APPLIED	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
2. PROGRAM DESIGN	**2**	**18**	**18**	**38**
A. Conduct Needs Analysis				
1. Evaluation of the sport (movement, physiological injury analysis)				
2. Assessment of the athlete (training status, physical testing and evaluation, primary resistance training goal)				
Based on the outcomes of a needs analysis, design training programs that maximize performance and minimize injury potential, incorporating the following steps:				
B. Incorporate Various Training Methods and Modes				
1. Different types of training methods and modes (e.g., resistance, plyometric, speed/sprint, interval, agility, aerobic, flexibility)				
2. Combinations of various training methods and modes to reach a certain goal or outcome (e.g., muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, power, aerobic endurance)				
C. Select Exercises				
1. Exercises specific to movement patterns of a particular sport (e.g., an exercise and its application and effectiveness for a sport, an exercise and movements involved in a sport, an exercise and muscles used in sport)				
2. Exercises (e.g., power, core, assistance, structural) based upon the type or number of the involved muscle group or groups (e.g., what exercise trains certain muscle(s), how to change an exercise to change the involved muscles)				
3. Exercises based upon the type of kinetic chain movement (e.g., open or closed)				
4. Exercises to minimize injury potential (e.g., hamstring versus quadriceps, upper body versus lower body)				
5. Exercises to promote recovery				
D. Apply the Principles of Exercise Order				
1. Order of exercises based on the training goal				
2. Variations in exercise orders (e.g., large to small muscle groups, alternating push with pull, alternating upper body exercises with lower body exercises)				
3. Variations in exercise modes (e.g., explosive training, strength training, warm-up/ workout/cool-down, energy system training prioritization)				
E. Determine and Assign Exercise Intensities (e.g., load, resistance, heart rate)				
1. Methods for assigning an exercise load (e.g., a percent of the 1RM or the athlete's body weight, RM loads, RPE) or exercise heart rate (e.g., a percent of maximum heart rate or functional capacity, the Karvonen method)				
2. Load or exercise heart rate based on the training goal (e.g., muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, power, aerobic/anaerobic endurance)				

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline PRACTICAL / APPLIED	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
F. Determine and Assign Training Volumes (defined as sets x reps)				
1. Outcomes associated with the manipulation of training volume				
2. Volume based on the training goal (e.g., muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, power, aerobic/anaerobic capacity)				
G. Determine and Assign Work:Rest Periods, Recovery and Unloading, and Training				
1. Work:rest periods and recovery (e.g., muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, power, aerobic/anaerobic capacity)				
2. Training frequency (e.g., muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, power, aerobic/anaerobic capacity, exercise recovery)				
H. Determine and Assign Exercise Progression (e.g., mode, intensity, duration, frequency)				
I. Identify Periodization Models and Concepts and How to Apply Them				
1. Periodization (e.g., the periods/phases/cycles, the types of training programs associated with the periods/phases/cycles)				
2. Training variations based on a sport season (e.g., a certain training period, phase, or cycle for a specific sport season)				
3. A periodized program specific to the athlete's demands of a sport, position, and training level (e.g., annual plan)				
J. Design Programs for Athletes During the Injury/Reconditioning Period (e.g., assigning exercises for a given acute or chronic injury or condition in collaboration with allied health professionals)				
3. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION	**8**	**4**	**0**	**12**
A. Organizational Environment				
1. Determine the policies and procedures associated with the safe operation of the strength and conditioning facility (e.g., facility/equipment cleaning and maintenance, rules, scheduling, emergency procedures)				
2. Determine the primary duties and responsibilities of the members of the strength and conditioning staff				
3. Engage in effective communication and collaboration with team coaches, athletic trainers, sports medicine professionals, support staff, administration, media				
B. Determine the Design, Layout, and Organization of the Strength and Conditioning Facility (e.g., flooring, ceiling height, mirror placement, ventilation, lighting, characteristics of the equipment) Based on Athletic Needs and Industry Safety Standards				

CSCS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline PRACTICAL / APPLIED	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
C. Professional Practice				
1. Identify and work within the scope of practice for the strength and conditioning staff				
2. Abide by the NSCA Codes, Policies, and Procedures				
3. Abide by standards and practices of relevant governing bodies related to the implementation of the strength and conditioning program				
4. Recognize and respond to symptoms of unsafe training practices (e.g., overuse, overtraining, temperature-induced illness)				
5. Recognize when to refer an athlete to and collaborate with allied health professionals (e.g., athletic trainer, physical therapist, physician, registered dietitian, sport psychologist)				
D. Identify Common Litigation Issues Associated with Organizational Environment, Physical Environment, and Professional Practice and Ways to Reduce or Minimize the Risk Liability Within the Facility				
4. TESTING, ONGOING MONITORING, AND DATA EVALUATION	**3**	**11**	**6**	**20**
A. Select Appropriate Evidence-Based Tests to Maximize Test Reliability and Validity				
1. Tests based upon the unique aspects of an exercise classification, sport, sport position, health, and training status				
2. Test administration procedures that use equipment, personnel, and time efficiently				
B. Administer Testing and Implement Monitoring Protocols and Procedures to Ensure Reliable Data Collection and Safe Performance				
1. Testing and monitoring equipment and its proper use				
2. Testing and monitoring procedures (e.g., warm-up, how to test, proper rest between trials, athlete readiness)				
3. Testing to assess physical characteristics and workloads (e.g., anthropometrics, physiological and mechanical stress) and evaluate performance (e.g., muscular strength, power, aerobic/anaerobic capacity, muscular endurance, agility, speed, flexibility)				
C. Evaluate and Interpret Results				
1. Validity of test results				
D. Typical vs. atypical results based on a sport, sport position, and the individual				
E. Design or modification of the training program based on results to ensure safe performance (e,g., determine which outcome of training needs to be improved in a future program)				
Totals for PRACTICAL/APPLIED section:	**20**	**55**	**35**	**110**

CSCS SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following shoulder movements and planes of motion are associated with the upward movement phase of the side lateral shoulder raise exercise?
   A. flexion/transverse
   B. abduction/sagittal
   C. abduction/frontal
2. An untrained college-aged athlete begins a resistance training program. After training for three weeks, her strength increases dramatically. Which of the following is the most influential factor responsible for this improvement?
   A. decreased cross-sectional area of Type I fibers
   B. increased number of muscle fibers
   C. improved neuromuscular efficiency
3. What is the minimum amount of carbohydrates that a 132-lb (60-kg) competitive Olympic triathlete should consume on a daily basis?
   A. 120 g
   B. 480 g
   C. 960 g
4. When running, which of the following contributes the most to minimizing the braking effect of a heel foot strike?
   A. eccentric hip flexion
   B. concentric hip extension
   C. eccentric knee extension
5. Which of the following components of mechanical load is the least important for stimulating new bone formation?
   A. rest period
   B. magnitude
   C. rate of loading

Answers: (1) C (2) C (3) B (4) B (5) A

CPSS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Crosscutting Concept			Total # of Questions
	Scientific Disciplines	Assessment Technology	Scientific Research Process	
1. TRAINING THEORY AND PROCESS				**23-29**
A. Understand the relevant theory and principles that underpin training				
B. Design or evaluate a performance program based on sound programming and periodization principles around the constraints of the training environment (e.g., equipment, location, time of year, athlete history, sport)				
C. Understand the multiple dimensions (e.g., psychological, physical, sport development, personal growth, nutrition, recovery, interventions) of athlete preparation in relation to training process				
2. NEEDS ANALYSIS				**24-30**
A. Research factors related to success in a sport (e.g., organizational, motion, dynamics, biomechanical demands, tactical patterns, technical requirements, injury) through qualitative and quantitative methods				
B. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) that relate to performance				
C. Identify environmental/situational constraints that may impact performance				
D. Develop benchmarking (e.g., normative data) around attributes needed for success				
E. Establish assessment strategies to evaluate performance status				
F. Establish a resource option to help understand loads as it relates to the sport (e.g., internal loads, external loads)				
G. Identify acquired research and development activities that will facilitate performance planning, ongoing monitoring, and assessment				
3. ACUTE AND CHRONIC MONITORING				**25-30**
A. Select appropriate and feasible assessment tools to track the KPIs identified in the needs analysis				
B. Design robust data capture protocols that enable appropriate analysis				
C. Analyze data and apply results to each specific KPI (e.g., training, athlete response)				
D. Use data-driven outcomes to make recommendations, support the decision-making process, and/or directly intervene				
E. Evaluate the efficacy of existing assessments, protocols, applications, and interventions (e.g., quality assurance process)				
4. COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION				**19-24**

APPENDIX G: CPSS DETAILED CONTENT OUTLINE

CPSS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Crosscutting Concept			Total # of Questions
	Scientific Disciplines	Assessment Technology	Scientific Research Process	
A. Understand general communication and education strategies for delivering information to the athletes, coaches, high-performance team, management, or sport science community.				
B. Understand current pedagogical techniques (cognitive, learning theories, practical) for designing and delivering education/training opportunities on sport science topics to other members of the high-performance team and administrators.				
C. Understand creative and efficient solutions to disseminate situationally-appropriate and timely information and data to a target audience (e.g., athletes, coaches, performance team).				
D. Translate research and theory to inform best practice within the constraints of the performance program.				
E. Collaborate with other professionals in finding customized performance solutions				
Totals	**33-38**	**23-27**	**35-41**	**100**

CPSS CASE STUDY AND SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Sport Information

Sport: Track: 400m

Level: Collegiate Division 1, Conference Championship Contributing Level Athlete – Not National / Olympic Level

Position: A 100-400m sprinter who is also used on relays. High volume contributor to the team.

Season: Last week of off-season training (August) before pre-season training beings in the fall semester (Sept – Dec)

Athlete Information

Age: 22

Gender: Female

Other Information: Height = 5'7"

Condition: Athlete is cleared to train but has been at home working remotely with athletic trainer or strength and conditioning coach

Task Information

Injury History: The athlete has a history of patellar tendinopathy (jumper's knee) and shin splints. The athlete previously dealt with these injuries during conference championships last season (May) and after school ended went home to rest and train on her own during the summer / off-season.

Current Situation: The athlete states she is "not feeling explosive during lifts," "has no kick during running workouts," and her "shins have been killing her since the 4th of July".

Current Reports from other Professionals: The strength and conditioning coach notes that they have observed a decrease in the athlete's reported lifting intensity and her written feedback, via the team's online strength and conditioning software program, is noticeably shorter and generic. Performance data is presented from the athlete's eight (8) previous workouts, conducted over the last three weeks. All testing was done in the beginning of the days training session.

Table 1. Performance Data from the Last 8 Workouts, Over the Past 3 Weeks

		Workout							
Evaluation	Personal Best	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Body Weight		144 lb (65.3 kg)	146 lb (66.2kg)	145 lb (65.8 kg)	148 lb (67.1 kg)	144 lb (65.3 kg)	151 lb (68.5 kg)	147 lb (66.7 kg)	146 lb (66.2 kg)
Total Training Volume Change Compared to Previous Workout			+5%	+5%	+5%	-12%	-8%	-5%	-5%
Vertical Jump	19.25 in (48.9 cm)	18.75 in (47.63 cm)		18.25 in (46.36 cm)		17.5 in (44.45 cm)		17.4 in (44.2 cm)	
Squat (3RM)	245 lb (111 kg)	215 lb (97.5 kg)		210 lb (95 kg)		215 lb (97.5 kg)		210 lb (95 kg)	
Clean (1RM)	185 lb (84 kg)		175 lb (79 kg)		175 lb (79 kg)		180 lb (81.6 kg)		175 lb (79 kg)
3x200-meter with 3:1 Rest - Goal Time 26.0 Seconds Per Run	25.6 / 25.4 / 25.9	25.7 / 26.1 / 26.0			26.3 / 26.5 / 26.8				27.9 / 27.8 / 28.1
Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) for the Entire Training Day (1 rest, 10 maximal)	NA	7	8	9	10	10	10	10	10

** RM = Repetition maximum, Blank = Did not complete that session*

1. What phase is the most likely contributor to the decrease in vertical jump height over the last eight workouts?
   A. transitioning from initial alarm stage to resistance
   B. transitioning from resistance to exhaustion
   C. competitive supercompensation
2. What is the most likely contributor to the decrease in sprint performance over the last eight workouts?
   A. overtraining
   B. undertraining
   C. injury
3. Based on the results from the table, which of the following performance indicators gives the sport scientist the most information to determine how to adjust the training load of the athlete?
   A. squat
   B. clean
   C. sprint time
4. What training focus should the sport scientist recommend on the track to improve sprint performance?
   A. sport psychology sessions and a maximum speed and power development program for 4-6 weeks
   B. acceleration and hypertrophy development, for 4 weeks followed by maximal speed and strength development for 6 weeks
   C. Proper rehabilitation from injury coupled with sport psychology sessions and a return to play protocol for 6 weeks
5. Which of the following is the greatest risk of the shin splints injury recurring?
   A. increase the hamstring to quad ratio strength
   B. increase volume of high-intensity plyometrics
   C. improvement of landing and push-off mechanics in plyometric training
6. Which of the following performance data give the sport scientist the most information to determine how to adjust the training load of the athlete to elicit the best adaptive response to avoid overtraining?
   A. body weight, intensity, frequency
   B. frequency, volume, intensity
   C. body weight, volume, frequency

Answers: (1) B (2) A (3) C (4) C (5) B (6) B

NSCA-CPT® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
1. CLIENT CONSULTATION & ASSESSMENT	**8**	**18**	**6**	**32**
A. Initial Interview				
1. Determine compatibility between a client and a personal trainer				
2. Administer a client-personal trainer and/or a client-personal trainer-fitness facility agreement				
3. Administer an informed consent and liability waiver form				
4. Administer an assessment inventory on attitude and readiness				
B. Medical History and Health Appraisal				
1. Administer a detailed medical history/health appraisal form and a lifestyle questionnaire (including exercise and injury history)				
2. Obtain a medical release from the client's primary physician, if necessary				
3. Interpret medical history/health appraisal form and lifestyle questionnaire				
4. Refer a client to and/or seek input from an appropriate healthcare professional based on information in the medical history and health appraisal				
5. Maintain a network of allied health care professionals				
C. Fitness Evaluation				
1. Conduct fitness evaluation including:				
a. vital signs (heart rate, blood pressure)				
b. height				
c. weight				
d. body composition				
e. girth measurements				
f. muscular strength				
g. muscular endurance				
h. speed/agility/power				
i. cardiovascular endurance				
j. flexibility				
k. postural alignment/muscle balance				
2. Conduct movement assessments				
3. Conduct reevaluation and reassessment				
4. Interpret the results of a health/fitness evaluation or reevaluation				
5. Refer a client to and/or seek input from an appropriate healthcare professional based on the fitness evaluation results				

NSCA-CPT® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
D. Basic Nutrition Review				
1. Identify the personal trainer's scope of practice regarding nutritional recommendations				
2. Conduct a review of a client's dietary habits (e.g., recall, history, food log)				
3. Communicate and educate using information from peer-reviewed resources regarding general nutrition, supplements, nutrient timing, hydration, and daily caloric needs				
4. Recognize the signs and symptoms of disordered eating and eating disorders				
5. Refer client to and/or seek input from an appropriate healthcare professional based on the basic nutritional review results				
2. PROGRAM PLANNING	**19**	**14**	**12**	**45**
A. Goal Setting				
1. Establish needs and goals by discussing the results of an initial interview, medical history and health appraisal, and fitness evaluation with a client				
2. Establish needs and goals by discussing the results of dietary habit log with a client				
3. Establish needs and goals by discussing health-related lifestyle habits (e.g., smoking, alcohol use, drug use) with a client				
4. Determine the motivational/coaching techniques (e.g., reward system, reinforcement strategies, mental imagery techniques, visualization, use of technology) that will be effective for a client				
B. Program Design				
1. Select the exercise modality or type				
2. Select the warm-up/cool-down exercises				
3. Determine the order of exercises or exercise components				
4. Determine the exercise intensity or workload				
5. Determine exercise duration				
6. Determine exercise frequency				
7. Determine the rate of exercise progression				
8. Determine program modifications based upon the results of reevaluation and reassessment				
C. Training Adaptations				
1. Explain exercise-induced changes to body structures				
a. muscles				
b. tendons, ligaments, and connective tissue				
c. bone and cartilage				
d. adipose tissue (fat stores)				
2. Explain exercise-induced changes to body systems				
a. neuromuscular				
b. cardiorespiratory				
c. metabolic				
d. endocrine				
e. psychological				

NSCA-CPT® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
D. Special Populations				
1. Recognize and determine (if appropriate) the capacities and limitations of a client with a specialized need or condition				
a. age-specific conditions (e.g., older adults, prepubescents, adolescents)				
b. female-specific conditions (e.g., prenatal, postpartum, postmenopausal)				
c. individuals with psychological disorders/conditions (e.g., depression, disordered eating, eating disorders)				
d. individuals with orthopedic disorders/conditions (e.g., arthritis, osteoporosis/ osteopenia, amputations, musculoskeletal trauma, rhabdomyolysis)				
e. individuals with cardiovascular disorders/conditions (e.g., hypertension, hyperlipidemia, post-cardiac)				
f. individuals with metabolic disorders/conditions (e.g., overweight, obese, diabetes, metabolic syndrome)				
g. individuals with respiratory disorders/conditions (e.g., asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)				
h. individuals with genetic, cognitive, or neurological disorders (e.g., epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, paralysis, Parkinson's disease, Down's syndrome, traumatic brain injury, Alzheimer's disease)				
i. individuals training for a certain sport or competition (e.g., athletes)				
j. individuals with fibromyalgia				
k. individuals with cancer				
l. individuals with immunological and hematological disorders (e.g., AIDS, HIV, chronic fatigue syndrome, anemia, auto-immune disorders, bleeding or clotting disorders)				
2. Modify the exercise program within the scope of medical recommendations (if appropriate) to coincide with the limitation and capacities of a client with a specialized need or condition				
3. Refer a client to and/or seek input from an appropriate healthcare professional based on the specific needs of the client				
3. TECHNIQUES OF EXERCISE	**8**	**15**	**20**	**43**
Evaluate exercise technique (including body position, speed/control of movement, movement/range of motion, progression, cueing, muscular involvement, breathing, spotting/safety guidelines, and functional movement)				
A. Machine Resistance Exercises (e.g., plate-loaded, selectorized, hydraulic, air, friction, rod)				
B. Free Weight Exercises (e.g., barbells, dumbbells)				
C. Flexibility Exercises (e.g., static, ballistic, dynamic, PNF, active-isolated stretching)				
D. Calisthenic and Bodyweight Exercises (e.g., yoga, pull-up, push-up, torso exercises, suspension training)				
E. Sport-Specific/Performance-Related Activities (e.g., plyometrics, sprinting, agility drills, reaction)				
F. Cardiovascular Machines (e.g., treadmill, stationary bike, rowing machine, stepping and climbing machine, elliptical trainer, upper body ergometer)				
G. Non-Machine Cardiovascular Activities (e.g., running, walking, swimming, aerobic dancing)				
H. Alternative Training Activities (e.g., tire flipping, weighted carries, weighted bags, ropes, chains, stability balls, kettlebells, medicine balls, resistance bands, balance, club, sled, manual resistance)				

NSCA-CPT® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total Items
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
4. SAFETY, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, AND LEGAL ISSUES	**7**	**11**	**2**	**20**
A. Safety Procedures				
1. Maintain exercise equipment				
2. Establish an exercise environment consistent with industry standards				
3. Respond to symptoms of overtraining, overuse injuries, and temperature-induced illness				
B. Emergency Response				
1. Perform basic first aid consistent with industry standards				
2. Perform CPR and use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) consistent with industry standards				
3. Implement a plan to respond to an emergency in an exercise facility (e.g., fire, environmental disasters, medical situation, security threats)				
C. Professional, Legal, and Ethical Responsibility				
1. Recognize litigation issues and circumstances				
2. Maintain a professional client-personal trainer relationship (all forms of communication)				
3. Maintain client-personal trainer confidentiality				
4. Ensure documentation is obtained, maintained, and secured relating to professional, legal, and ethical responsibilities (e.g., incident reporting, PAR-Q+, HIPAA, compliance, facility maintenance requirements)				
Totals	**42**	**58**	**40**	**140**

NSCA-CPT SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following describes when the personal trainer should administer a medical history questionnaire to a client?
    A. before the fitness evaluation
    B. immediately after the first exercise session
    C. during the physician's medical examination
2. A moderate intensity (8 - 12RM loads) resistance training program involving one minute rest periods between sets and exercises is designed primarily to improve a client's
    A. strength
    B. hypertrophy
    C. power
3. A personal trainer offers free sessions to clients who achieve their goals within a predetermined amount of time. Which of the following describes this motivational technique?
    A. intrinsic motivation
    B. achievement motivation
    C. positive reinforcement
4. What is the day's caloric intake of a client who consumed 100 g of protein, 450 g of carbohydrates, and 40 g of fat in one day?
    A. 5310 kcals
    B. 4180 kcals
    C. 2560 kcals
5. A client's 10RM in the bench press exercise is 150 lb (68 kg). Which of the following is this client's estimated 1RM?
    A. 170 lb (77 kg)
    B. 200 lb (91 kg)
    C. 230 lb (105 kg)

Answers: (1) A (2) B (3) C (4) C (5) B

CSPS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			
	Recall	Application	Analysis	Total # of Questions
1. BASIC PATHOPHYSIOLOGY AND SCIENCE OF HEALTH STATUS OR CONDITION, DISORDER, OR DISEASE	**8**	**22**	**10**	**40**
A. Cardiovascular: Individuals with:				
1. Myocardial infarction				
2. Angina				
3. Hypertension				
4. Peripheral vascular disease (e.g., deep vein thrombosis, peripheral artery disease)				
5. Congestive heart failure				
6. Valvular disorders				
7. Revascularizations				
8. Conduction defects or disorders (e.g., atrial fibrillation, pacemakers)				
B. Pulmonary: Individuals with:				
1. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (e.g., emphysema, chronic bronchitis)				
2. Chronic restrictive pulmonary disease (CRPD) (e.g., fibrosis, sarcoidosis)				
3. Asthma				
4. Pulmonary hypertension				
C. Metabolic: Individuals with:				
1. Diabetes mellitus (Type 1 and 2)				
2. Overfat				
3. Pre-diabetes				
4. Metabolic syndrome				
5. Thyroid disorders (hypo/hyperthyroidism)				
6. End stage renal disease				
D. Immunological and Hematological: Individuals with:				
1. AIDS/HIV				
2. Chronic fatigue syndrome				
3. Fibromyalgia				
4. Anemia				
5. Auto-immune disorders (e.g., lupus, rheumatoid arthritis)				
6. Bleeding/clotting disorders				
E. Musculoskeletal/Orthopedic: Individuals with:				
1. Osteoporosis and other low BMD conditions				
2. Limb amputations				
3. Osteoarthritis				
4. Lower back conditions				
5. Chronic musculoskeletal conditions (e.g., OA, osteoporosis, low back pain)				
6. Frailty				
7. Joint disorders (e.g., muscle, labrum, ligament, cartilage, tendons)				

CSPS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
8. Joint replacements (e.g., shoulder, knee, hip)				
9. Sarcopenia				
10. Posture conditions				
11. Cystic fibrosis				
F. Neuromuscular: Individuals with:				
1. Stroke or brain injury				
2. Spinal cord disabilities				
3. Multiple sclerosis				
4. Cerebral palsy				
5. Down's syndrome				
6. Parkinson's disease				
7. Epilepsy				
8. Balance conditions				
9. Muscular dystrophy				
G. Post Rehabilitation: Individuals with:				
1. Musculoskeletal disorders/conditions				
2. Cardiopulmonary disorders/conditions				
3. Neuromuscular disorders/conditions				
H. Individuals with Cancer				
I. Female-Specific Conditions				
1. Pregnant and postpartum				
2. Female athlete triad				
3. Menopausal/post-menopausal				
J. Individuals with Behavioral/Psychological Disorders				
1. Disordered eating patterns				
2. Body image				
3. Depression				
4. Chemical dependency				
K. Older Adults				
L. Children and Adolescents				
2. CLIENT CONSULTATION	**6**	**13**	**0**	**19**
A. Determine the Fitness Professional's Role in the Wellness Continuum				
1. Align goals of the medical professional, client, and fitness professional				
2. Maintain lines of communication with the primary healthcare provider				
3. Optimize communication between the fitness professional and medical professionals				
4. Verify physician's clearance to exercise				

CSPS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
B. Perform Health Appraisal				
1. Understand basic medical terminology				
2. Interpret medical history (e.g., contraindications, continuity of care, goal viability)				
3. Administer lifestyle questionnaire				
4. Interpret "levels of pain" or prognosis (severity of condition; e.g., Kurtzke expanded disability status scale)				
5. Interpret medical documentation				
6. Document subjective client feedback and observations relevant to medical condition				
7. Contact medical professionals for needed information or clarification on medical history, restrictions, etc.				
8. Identify signs and symptoms that indicate an individual should be referred for medical care				
9. Understand the roles of health professionals that prescribe exercise (e.g., physicians, physical therapists, occupational therapists, athletic trainers)				
10. Perform nutritional review				
C. Fitness Evaluation				
1. Conduct fitness evaluation				
a. vital signs (e.g., heart rate, blood pressure)				
b. height and weight				
c. body composition (e.g., "Bod Pod" and DXA reports)				
d. girth measurements				
e. muscular strength and endurance				
f. speed/agility/power				
g. cardiovascular endurance (e.g., submaximal VO2 max test on treadmill and bike)				
h. flexibility				
i. lipid profile				
j. lung function				
k. postural assessment				
l. balance				
m. functional assessment				
n. evaluations specific for individuals with limited ability (e.g., 6-min walk, modified sit-and-reach from a chair, 8 lb. curl test, chair stands)				
2. Prioritize need for clients with multiple diseases				
3. Adjust fitness evaluation based on medical conditions and restrictions				
4. Determine testing measures for the client				
5. Document client progression with objective and subjective criteria				

CSPS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
3. PROGRAM PLANNING	**3**	**18**	**10**	**31**
A. Develop SMART Goals				
1. Manage fear and expectations				
2. Increase functional capacity				
3. Improve health risk factors (e.g., muscle wasting)				
4. Improve confidence and self-image				
5. Improve quality of life				
B. Program Design				
1. Develop individual training programs that are adapted to specific health condition (types, duration, frequency, intensity, progression, rest)				
2. Develop group training programs that are adapted to specific health condition (types, duration, frequency, intensity, progression, rest)				
3. Identify exercises indicated and contraindicated for client's condition				
4. Identify environmental risks (e.g., MS and heat tolerance)				
5. Evaluate communicable disease risk (client to fitness professional or fitness professional to client)				
6. Modify the warm-up and cool-down program to coincide with the limitations and capacities of a client				
7. Modify the exercise program to coincide with the limitations and capacities of a client				
8. Instruct a client on therapeutic exercise technique and equipment (including body position, speed/control of movement, movement/range of motion, breathing, and spotting/safety guidelines)				
a. aquatic				
b. range of motion				
c. exercise with accessory equipment (e.g., chairs, walker/cane, gait belt)				
d. balance/perturbation training				
e. partner-assisted (support person and conduction exercises beyond the medical fitness center/facility, or how they can help during the process of exercise)				
f. home programs				
9. Understand exercise-induced changes to body systems				
a. neuromuscular system				
b. cardiorespiratory system				
c. musculoskeletal system				
d. endocrine system				
e. psychological				

CSPS® EXAMINATION Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level: Recall	Cognitive Level: Application	Cognitive Level: Analysis	Total # of Questions
C. Apply Motivational/Coaching Techniques				
1. Motivational interviewing				
2. Stages of change				
3. Transtheoretical model				
4. Behavioral economics				
5. Planned behavior theory				
6. Cognitive theory				
7. Relapse prevention				
8. Positive psychology				
9. Solution-focused coaching				
D. Monitor Client Outcomes				
E. Recognize Need for Referral to Healthcare Professional				
4. SAFETY, EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, AND LEGAL ISSUES	**4**	**6**	**0**	**10**
A. Comply with Scope of Practice Requirements B. Practice Safety Procedures C. Follow Emergency Procedures D. Recognize Professional, Legal, and Ethical Responsibilities E. Comply with HIPAA Regulations				
TOTAL ITEMS	**21**	**59**	**20**	**100**

CSPS SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. The initial strength training program for a client with Stage I hypertension should include which of the following variables?

	Reps	% 1RM	Rest Periods
A.	8	80	1 min
B.	10	60	1 min
C.	12	40	1 min

2. Which of the following exercises are contraindicated for a client who suffers from spondylolysis?
   A. lying trunk extension
   B. lat pulldown
   C. abdominal curls

3. A 25-year-old male client visits his physician because he wants to begin an exercise program. Results of a maximal graded exercise test indicate he has episodes of supraventricular tachycardia at a heart rate of 160 bpm. The physician clears him for exercise. Based on this information, which of the following should the fitness professional do?
   A. perform a cardiorespiratory evaluation up to 85% of the age-predicted HRmax
   B. recommend a heart-healthy diet and begin a low-intensity exercise program
   C. conduct a fitness examination using 150 bpm as the maximum heart rate

4. A client has been medically diagnosed as having tendonitis of the supraspinatus. Which of the following exercises is contraindicated?
   A. supine triceps extension
   B. dumbbell pullover
   C. seated row

SCENARIO

A new 45-year-old female client is a business owner and has three small children. Her medical history reveals the following:

Height: 5 ft 5 in (165 cm)
Weight: 220 lb (100 kg)
TC: 290 mg/dL
Triglycerides: 214 mg/dL
ECG: Normal
Blood pressure: 115/100 mm Hg
Resting heart rate: 68 bpm
Maximum heart rate: 179 bpm
Additional history: Congenital heart murmur
Gained 80 lb (36.3 kg) within the last 2 years
Family history: Mother had a malignant breast tumor removed
Aunt died of breast cancer at age 41
No family history of coronary artery disease

Her primary goals are to "get healthy" and "increase stamina" to keep up with her children. The client states that she feels very flexible in her low back and legs. Her ankles sometimes swell. She owns a treadmill and enjoys walking.

END OF SCENARIO

5. Which of the following is this client's major coronary risk factor?
    A. known heart murmur
    B. diastolic blood pressure of more than 90 mm Hg
    C. ankle edema

Answers: (1) C (2) A (3) C (4) B (5) B

Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator (TSAC-F) Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
1. EXERCISE SCIENCES	**7**	**13**	**6**	**26**
A. Apply Basic Concepts of Anatomy and Physiology to Describe Responses to Exercise and Occupational Job Tasks Under Load.				
1. Muscle anatomy (e.g., muscle group names, specific muscle names)				
2. Bone and connective tissue anatomy				
3. Cardiopulmonary anatomy				
B. Apply Basic Concepts of Neuromuscular Anatomy and Physiology to Describe Responses to Exercise				
1. Neuromuscular anatomy (e.g., motor unit, Type I and II fibers, muscle spindles, stretch-shortening cycle, Golgi tendon organs)				
2. Neuromuscular responses to exercise (e.g., chronic neuromuscular adaptations, motor unit recruitment patterns, nerve conduction, summation)				
C. Apply the Basic Principles of Biomechanics to Exercise Selection Relative to Occupational Job Tasks				
1. Kinetic laws and principles of movement (e.g., lever systems, momentum, work, isometric/isotonic/isokinetic)				
2. Kinematic laws and principles of movement (e.g., velocity, anatomical planes of movement, joint angles)				
3. Relationship of type of muscle action (e.g., isometric, concentric, and eccentric) to force production (e.g., force-velocity and torque-velocity relationships)				
4. Muscle dynamics and the role of muscles in movement (e.g., agonist, antagonist, synergist, stabilizer)				
D. Describe Bioenergetics and Metabolism in Relation to Exercise and Occupational Job Tasks (e.g., names and characteristics of energy systems, effects of manipulating training variables)				
E. Describe the Endocrine (Hormonal) Responses to Exercise and Stress				
1. Explain acute responses and chronic adaptations of the endocrine system to exercise and occupation-related job tasks in high stress situations				
2. Recognize the causes, signs, symptoms, and effects of overtraining caused by occupational environments or inappropriate exercise				
F. Describe Physiological Adaptations to Exercise Designed to Improve Physical Performance (e.g., aerobic endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, speed and agility, muscular power, flexibility)				
1. Explain physiological implications related to age, sex, and training status				
G. Explain Overtraining, Detraining, and Retraining				
1. The usual time course of detraining and retraining				
2. Minimum training requirements to maintain training adaptations				
3. Risks and outcomes of overtraining (e.g., excess volume and/or intensity, single modality training)				

Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator (TSAC-F) Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
H. Identify Environmental Concerns (e.g., heat, cold, altitude, smoke, uneven terrain) for Tactical Populations				
1. Physiological adaptations to diverse environmental conditions				
2. Environmental illnesses (e.g., heat and cold injuries, altitude sickness) and their predisposing factors				
3. Effect of environmental conditions on physical performance and work capacity on diverse tactical populations				
4. Process and time of acclimatization/adjustment				
5. Recognize limitations to physical exercise in adverse conditions and manipulate training programs accordingly				
6. Effects of apparel selection and impacts on thermoregulation				
2. NUTRITION	**5**	**4**	**1**	**10**
A. Explain Nutritional Factors Affecting Health and Performance				
1. Health-related and performance-related application of food (e.g., food groups, food exchanges, ChooseMyPlate.gov, nutrient density)				
2. Basic nutritional needs of tactical populations (e.g., proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals)				
3. Chronic disease risk factors associated with dietary choices				
4. Effects of fluid and electrolyte balance/imbalance on health and performance				
5. Effects of unpredictable and/or prolonged schedules during deployment, field exercise, and shift work on nutritional status				
B. Explain Nutritional Strategies for Optimizing Body Composition and Maximizing Physical Performance and Recovery				
1. Timing and composition of nutrient and fluid intake before, during, and after an exercise session, operation, mission, or shift				
2. Nutritional factors that affect muscular endurance, hypertrophy, strength, and aerobic endurance				
3. Nutrition strategies to mitigate unpredictable and/or prolonged schedules during deployment, field exercise, and shift work				
C. Recognize Adverse Signs, Symptoms, and Behaviors Associated with Eating Habits that Indicate the Need for Referral to a Registered Dietician				
D. Explain the Benefits, Risks, and Proper Use of Common Dietary Supplements and Ergogenic Aids (e.g., creatine, protein, caffeine, steroids)				
1. Benefits and side effects of dietary supplement use				
2. Understand the lack of supplement regulation and benefit of third-party testing				

Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator (TSAC-F) Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
3. EXERCISE TECHNIQUE	**6**	**13**	**7**	**26**
A. Teach Safe and Effective Exercise Techniques				
1. Preparatory body and limb position (e.g., stance, posture, alignment)				
2. Execution of technique (e.g., body and limb positions, movement mechanics, breathing)				
3. Identification and correction of improper exercise technique				
4. Spotting				
B. Explain a Dynamic Warm-Up that is Specific to the Prescribed Exercise Plan				
C. Explain Resistance Training Exercise Modes				
1. Free weight training equipment				
2. Resistance machines				
3. Bodyweight resistance (e.g., proprioception, functional movement)				
4. Alternative Implements (e.g., rope climbing, sleds, load carriage)				
D. Explain Plyometric Exercise Techniques				
1. Recognize the difference between acceleration and maximal speed and their application				
E. Explain General Agility Techniques				
1. Reactive multidirectional movement to include stopping, starting, dropping, and rising				
2. Explain the difference between change of direction and agility				
F. Explain Anaerobic and Aerobic Endurance Exercise Modes				
1. Cardiovascular exercise modes (e.g., machine and non-machine)				
2. Occupational-specific activities (e.g., load carriage)				
G. Explain Flexibility and Mobility Exercise Modes				
1. Static stretching exercises				
2. Proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF) stretching				
3. Dynamic and ballistic stretching exercises				
4. Myofascial release (e.g., foam rolling)				
4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION	**4**	**9**	**4**	**17**
A. Administer Assessments				
1. Identify assessments used by tactical organizations (e.g., physical fitness tests, job suitability tests, fitness for duty test)				
2. Select and explain assessments based upon the unique occupational demands, administrator and equipment availability, time constraints, and training status				
3. Develop alternative assessments and make reasonable accommodations based on individual capabilities and limitations				
4. Establish a plan for frequency of assessment				
5. Administer occupationally-specific assessment protocols and procedures to ensure accurate and reliable data collection				
B. Evaluate Assessment Results				

Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator (TSAC-F) Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			
	Recall	Application	Analysis	Total # of Questions
1. Interpret individual and group assessment performance				
2. Use assessment results to design or modify training programs				
3. Evaluate assessment results to show programmatic progress				
5. PROGRAM DESIGN	**8**	**10**	**9**	**27**
A. Perform a Needs Analysis Based on Job Requirements				
1. Identify critical job tasks				
2. Identify physiological requirements and injury risk factors associated with critical job tasks				
3. Identify energy systems associated with critical job tasks				
B. Identify Circumstantial/Lifestyle Factors				
1. Professional factors (e.g., work schedule, environmental factors)				
2. Personal factors (e.g., family obligations, personal fitness goals)				
C. Identify Current Health, Fitness, and Performance Status				
1. Identify individual physical capabilities and limitations (e.g., age, sex, training status, injury status)				
2. Evaluate fitness and performance status against mandatory occupational requirements				
D. Design Training Programs that Maximize Performance, Reduce Injury Risk, and Increase Long-Term Wellness				
1. Target specific performance outcomes by manipulating training variables (e.g., mode, intensity, duration, volume, work:rest ratio)				
2. Incorporate various training methods and modalities (e.g., resistance, plyometric, speed/sprint, agility, aerobic, anaerobic, flexibility, mobility)				
3. Utilize the concept of specificity				
4. Optimize muscle balance and movement patterns				
5. Apply the principles of exercise order based on the goal of the training session				
6. Establish appropriate exercise progression/regression				
7. Apply the principles of periodization based on occupational demands				
8. Develop appropriate training variations based on environmental constraints and occupational tempo				
9. Identify training objectives for each phase of rehabilitation and reconditioning, and modify program based on capabilities and limitations				
E. Identify Need for Recovery and Appropriate Modes				
1. Passive versus active recovery				
2. Individualized recovery methods (e.g., alternative workouts, cryotherapy, percussive therapy, massage, meditation)				

Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator (TSAC-F) Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
6. WELLNESS INTERVENTION	**5**	**7**	**2**	**14**
A. Describe Advantages of Performing Various Types of Physical Activities				
B. Describe the Benefits of Intentional Application of Recovery Strategies (e.g., passive and active, sleep hygiene)				
C. Describe and Mitigate Risk Factors Associated with Common Chronic Injuries/Diseases within Tactical Populations				
D. Understand How Lifestyle and Occupational Stress Affects Health, Wellness, and Performance				
E. Understand Basic Resiliency and Coping Skills (e.g., goal setting, motivational techniques, mental imagery, emotional regulation)				
7. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION	**2**	**6**	**2**	**10**
A. Understand the Organization and Flow of the Training Area				
1. Identify specific space and equipment needs of the population(s) that will use the training area				
2. Apply strategies to arrange and space the equipment within the training area				
B. Execute Policies and Procedures for the Training Area				
1. Recognize the primary duties and responsibilities of the various personnel in the training area				
2. Enforce rules for using the training area based upon current industry best practices and organizational guidelines				
C. Create and Ensure a Safe Training Environment				
1. Identify pre-participation screening and medical referral requirements for program participants				
2. Establish checklists and schedules for equipment maintenance and cleaning				
3. Identify and mitigate common risks within the training environment				
4. Follow procedures to respond to emergencies				
5. Maintain appropriate training records				
6. Identify needs and strategies to accommodate dynamics/logistics of training large groups (e.g., limited equipment, experience level of the tactical population, supervision of training)				
D. Understand Professional and Legal Responsibilities				
1. Identify common litigation issues and methods for reducing and/or minimizing the risk and liability				
2. Know when to refer an individual to and/or seek input from appropriate healthcare professionals (e.g., chronic disease, eating disorder behavior, supplement use, injury, pain, behavioral health issues)				

Tactical Strength and Conditioning Facilitator (TSAC-F) Detailed Content Outline	Cognitive Level			Total # of Questions
	Recall	Application	Analysis	
E. Identify Metrics that Show Program Effectiveness (e.g., establish key performance indicators [KPIs], program participation, cost savings, impact on population performance or health)				
F. Understand the role of the interdisciplinary performance team				
Totals	**37**	**62**	**31**	**130**

TSAC-F SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Compared to a standard pull-up, the concentric force generated by the latissimus dorsi muscle during a kipping pull-up is _____.
   A. higher
   B. lower
   C. equal
2. Which of the following pairs of exercises will best help a firefighter develop the type of strength needed when walking downhill while carrying heavy pack loads?
   A. half-squats, slow lunges
   B. power cleans, depth jumps
   C. deadlift, bench press
3. Which of the following will improve bone density the most?
   A. bicycle
   B. treadmill
   C. elliptical
4. Which of the following actions can lead to hyponatremia during exercise in the heat?
   A. drinking too much water
   B. drinking too little water
   C. consuming salt tablets
5. Which of the following activities would benefit the most from erythropoietin (EPO) use?
   A. 200-m sprint
   B. 15 box jumps
   C. 15-mile bike ride

Answers: (1) B (2) A (3) B (4) A (5) C

1885 BOB JOHNSON DRIVE, COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO 80906 // 719.632.6722 // NSCA.COM