

# Certification Examination for Research Administrators



## Candidate Handbook 2025

Application Deadline*	Testing Window
April 9, 2025	May 10- May 24, 2025
October 1, 2025	November 1 – November 15, 2025

**\*Applications will not be accepted after 11:59pm Eastern on this date**

Administered by:



1350 Broadway, Suite 800 | New York, NY 10018

[www.ptcny.com/contact](http://www.ptcny.com/contact)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTACT INFORMATION.....	2
ATTENTION CANDIDATES.....	2
CERTIFICATION.....	3
REASONS FOR CERTIFICATION .....	3
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS .....	3
THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS.....	4
COMPLETION OF APPLICATION .....	5
EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULING .....	6
EXAMINATION FEES .....	8
TEST ACCOMMODATIONS .....	9
PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION .....	9
WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE TESTING CENTER.....	11
RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION.....	12
TESTING CONDITIONS OR EXAMINATION FEEDBACK.....	13
SCORING OF EXAMINATION.....	13
REPORT OF RESULTS .....	14
EXAMINATION SECURITY .....	13
ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION & RECERTIFICATION .....	14
CODE OF ETHICS.....	15
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT .....	15
REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION .....	15
CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION .....	16
CRA BODY OF KNOWLEDGE .....	17
SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.....	23
REFERENCES.....	24
ONLINE PRACTICE TEST.....	25

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*This Handbook contains necessary information about the Certified Research Administrator® Examination, retain it for future reference. Candidates are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. This Handbook is subject to change.*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

<p><b>Professional Testing Corporation (PTC)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.ptcny.com">www.ptcny.com</a></p> <p>(212) 356-0660</p> <p><a href="http://www.ptcny.com/contact">www.ptcny.com/contact</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply for examination</li> <li>• Obtain general application information</li> <li>• Obtain information about testing policies</li> <li>• Transfer to a new testing period</li> <li>• Request Test Accommodations</li> <li>• Request Score Verification</li> <li>• Questions about score reports</li> <li>• Miscellaneous inquiries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prometric</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.prometric.com/RACC">www.prometric.com/RACC</a></p> <p>(800) 741-0934</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule test appointment</li> <li>• Reschedule test appointment (within a testing period)</li> <li>• Cancel test appointment</li> <li>• Find directions to test site</li> <li>• Questions regarding testing sites and appointments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.racc-cert.org">www.racc-cert.org</a></p> <p>(303) 433-4446</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body of Knowledge Review sessions</li> <li>• Eligibility Petition Form</li> <li>• Recertification Information</li> </ul>

## ATTENTION CANDIDATES

- This handbook contains necessary information about the RACC Certified Research Administrator® Examination.
- It is required reading for those applying and taking the examination.
- All individuals applying for the examination must comply with the policies, procedures, and deadlines in this Handbook and attest to this by signing the Candidate Attestation found on the application. Retain this handbook for future reference.
- This handbook is subject to change. See [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) for handbook updates.

**ACCESSING CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT ANY TIME WHILE YOU ARE TAKING THE EXAM IS PROHIBITED. YOU CAN ONLY REMOVE SNACKS, DRINKS, MEDICINE, OR PERSONAL HEALTHCARE ITEMS FROM YOUR LOCKER- NO BACKPACKS, BAGS, POCKETBOOKS OR CLOTHING CAN BE REMOVED WHILE YOUR EXAM IS IN SESSION.**

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## CERTIFICATION

The Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC) promotes the concept of voluntary certification by examination for all research and sponsored programs administrators. After passing this examination, an individual earns the Certified Administrator® (CRA®) designation. Certification is just one part of a process called “credentialing”. It focuses specifically on the individual and is one indication of current competence in this specialized field. Certification in research and sponsored programs administration is highly valued and provides formal recognition of basic knowledge in this field.

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## REASONS FOR CERTIFICATION

1. To provide documented evidence to a current or potential employer that an individual has been examined by an independent professional certifying organization and found to possess a certain level of basic knowledge of research and sponsored programs administration.
2. To provide personal and professional satisfaction of achievement of meeting established criteria indicating the attainment of a level of basic knowledge that is customary to be a professional in the field of research and sponsored programs administration.
3. To demonstrate commitment to the profession and to one's peers that an individual has taken the time and effort, beyond job experience, to learn the Body of Knowledge, thus exhibiting a significant responsibility to working in the profession of research or sponsored programs administration.

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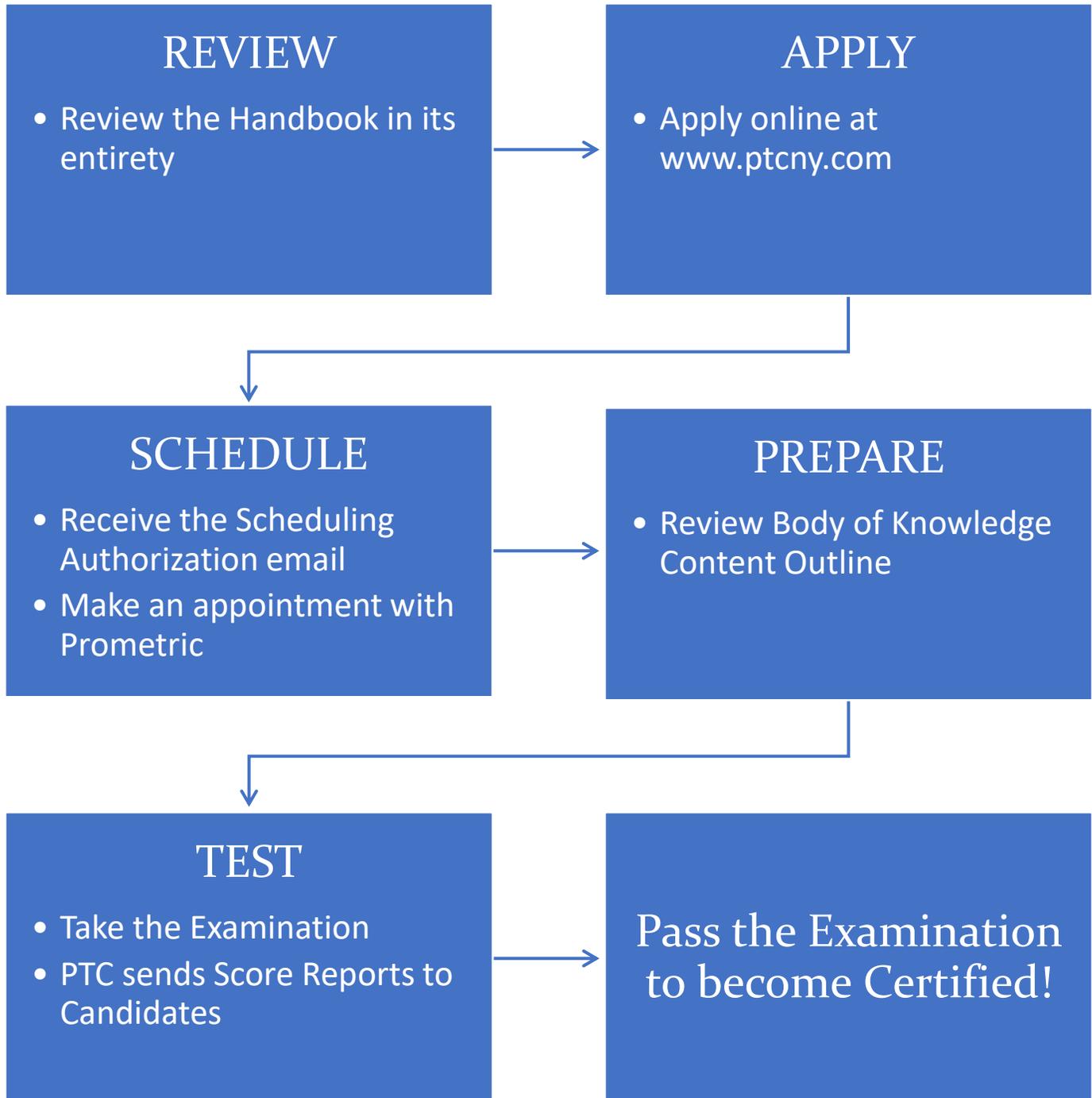
## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS\*

1. Bachelor's or advanced degree and three (3) years of professional experience in research administration or sponsored programs administration either in a sponsoring or recipient organization or the equivalent in a self-funded organization;  
OR
2. An Associate's degree and five (5) years of professional experience in research administration or sponsored programs administration either in a sponsoring or recipient organization or the equivalent in a self-funded organization;  
OR
3. No degree and six (6) years of professional experience in the research administration or sponsored programs administration either in a sponsoring or recipient organization or the equivalent in a self-funded organization.

\* If you do not have the required experience for your level of education, you may petition for a waiver to take the exam. To do so, access the examination Petition on RACC's website [HERE](#).

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## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS



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## COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

### **Step 1 – Fill Out the Application**

- Go to <http://www.ptcny.com/test-sponsors/RACC> or [www.racc-cert.org](http://www.racc-cert.org)
  - View testing periods and application deadlines
  - Fill out online application completely and upload supporting documentation.
    - Use your first and last name exactly as it appears on your current driver's license, passport, state issued non-driver ID or military ID.
    - Applications are not complete until all information, documentation, and payment has been provided.
    - When you start a new application, you will be asked to create a user account and password. This account will be used to access your score report after the exam. Keep this information for later use.

### **Step 2 – Submit Exam Fee and Application for Review**

PTC will send you an email that says that your payment and application have been received and are being reviewed. Allow up to 10 business days for review.

### **Step 3 – Receive Application Status Update**

- After your application is reviewed PTC will update you with another email.
  - **REOPENED FOR MORE DOCUMENTS**
    - This means we are missing the required documentation. Follow the directions in the email.
    - Applications that are incomplete as of 21 days before the start of the testing window will be refunded minus the administration fee (see fees page 9).
  - **REJECTED**
    - This means you are not eligible to take the exam. The reason will be explained in the email.
    - Rejected applications will be refunded minus the administration fee (see fees page 9)
  - **APPROVED**
    - This means your application is approved. You will move on to Step 4.

### **Step 4 – Receive Scheduling Authorization and Schedule Testing Appointment**

- Approved candidates will receive an email with their Scheduling Authorization within 11 weeks before the start of the testing window. Scheduling Authorization emails come from [notices@ptcny.com](mailto:notices@ptcny.com). Do not lose this email.
- If you don't receive your Scheduling Authorization email 3 weeks before the start of your testing window, contact PTC.

The Scheduling Authorization includes important information including:

- Your PTC Candidate ID number
- Instructions on how to make your Exam appointment with Prometric.

**Applicants who are not approved to sit for the examination or whose applications are incomplete 21 days prior to the first day of the testing window will receive a refund of their application fee minus the \$75 administrative fee. Refunds will be processed approximately 30 days after the end of the testing period.**

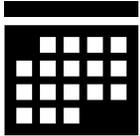
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## EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION AND SCHEDULING

The Certified Research Administrator® Examination is administered during an established two-week testing window daily, excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by Prometric.

### Scheduling Examination Appointments

Follow the steps on your Scheduling Authorization to schedule your examination appointment with Prometric.



- Appointment times are first-come, first-served, so schedule your appointment as soon as you receive your Scheduling Authorization.
- **Candidates who wait until the last minute run the risk of missing out on their preferred date, time, and/or testing center. Candidates unable to schedule an appointment will forfeit their fees.**

After you make your test appointment, Prometric will send you a confirmation email with the date, time, and location of your exam. Check this confirmation carefully and contact Prometric at (800) 741-0934 if you do not receive this email confirmation or if there is a mistake with your appointment.

**Note:** International candidates may also schedule, reschedule, or cancel an appointment online [HERE](#).

#### **IMPORTANT!**

You **MUST** present your current driver's license, passport, or U.S. military ID at the test center. Expired, temporary, or paper driver's licenses will **NOT** be accepted.

The first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization **MUST** exactly match the first and last name on your photo ID.

**Fees will not be refunded for exams missed because of invalid ID.**

## Rescheduling Examination Appointments within a Testing Period

Candidates can reschedule their examination appointments within the same testing period as long as the request is submitted within the timeframe described below. Reschedule within the permitted time frame by calling or going to the Prometric website [HERE](#).

Time Frame	Reschedule Permitted?	Stipulations
Requests submitted 30 days or more before the original appointment	Yes	None
Requests submitted 5 to 29 days before the original appointment	Yes	Candidate must pay Prometric a rescheduling fee of \$50.
Requests submitted less than 5 days before the original appointment	No	Candidates who do not arrive to test for their appointment will be considered a no-show and all their examinations fees will be forfeited. Candidates will need to reapply and pay full examination fees for a future testing period.

## Transferring to a New Testing Period

Candidates unable to take the examination during their scheduled testing period may request a **ONE-TIME** transfer to a future testing period. **There is a transfer fee of \$255.00.** After you have transferred once by paying the \$255.00 fee, you will need to pay the full examination fee in order to transfer a second time; so, *plan carefully*.

**Note:** requests to transfer to a new testing period must be received within 60 days of your originally scheduled testing period. You must transfer to one of the two upcoming testing periods after your originally scheduled period. For example, if you are transferring from the May 2024 testing period, you must transfer to the November 2024 or May 2025 testing period.

Candidates wishing to transfer to a new testing period need to follow the steps below.

1. Go to PTC's [Online Applications System](#).
2. Click "Transfer Existing Application."
3. PTC Support will send you an email letting you know your transfer application was approved and that you can log back into your application and pay the one-time \$255.00 transfer fee.

Call PTC at 212-356-0660 if you have any questions regarding the transfer process.

If candidates are unable to attend the examination on the date for which they registered and elect not to transfer to another testing period, the application will be closed and all fees will be forfeited. There will be no refund of fees.

The transfer fee is based on costs and is not punitive in nature. The transfer fee must be paid at the time the request is approved.

Note: Transferring your Examination only refers to instances when a candidate is unable to take their exam during a testing period for which they have already applied. Candidates who did not pass their examination and are retaking the examination need to pay the full Examination Fee.

## Failing to Report for an Examination



If you fail to report for an examination, you will forfeit all fees paid to take the examination. A completed application form and examination fee are required to reapply for the examination.

## EXAMINATION FEES

Fee Type	Amount	Details
Application Fee	US \$395.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-refundable</li> <li>• Non-transferable</li> <li>• Includes testing center fees</li> </ul>
Rescheduling Fee (29-5 days prior to scheduled appointment; see page 6)	US \$50.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Applies to candidates who need to move their appointment within their current testing period</b></li> <li>• Payable directly to Prometric</li> <li>• Reschedule with Prometric online or over the phone</li> </ul>
Transfer Fee (Moving to a new testing window; see page 8)	US \$255.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Applies to candidates who need to move to a new testing period</b></li> <li>• Must submit new application &amp; fee to PTC</li> </ul>



- **There will be no refund of fees unless applicants are ineligible for the examination.**
- **Ineligible candidates will be refunded their fees minus an administrative fee.**
- **No refunds will be issued for applying for the incorrect examination or testing period, for failing to make an examination appointment, or for failing to appear at your scheduled appointment.**

**Be advised: Prometric does not have the authority to grant transfers to another testing period or refunds.**

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## TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

RACC and PTC support the intent of and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will take steps reasonably necessary to make testing accessible to persons with disabilities covered under the ADA. According to the ADA, an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (such as seeing, hearing, learning, reading, concentrating, or walking) or a major bodily function (such as neurological, endocrine, or digestive system).

The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and test accommodations is confidential and is not included in scoring or reporting.

All approved testing accommodations must maintain the psychometric nature and security of the examination. Accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature or security of the exam will not be granted. Note that accommodations for an examination (test accommodations) may not be the same as accommodations provided by your employer for your job. You can find more information about testing accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)).

Requests for Test Accommodations must be uploaded with the candidate's application and fees at least 8 weeks before the start of your testing period. You must complete and upload both Part 1 and Part 2 of this Form at the same time. Missing information or incomplete Forms will result in a delay in processing. **If your Form is incomplete and/or not received at least 8 weeks before the start of the testing period, we cannot guarantee that we can make these test accommodations in time for you to test and you may need to transfer to another testing period and pay the transfer fee.**

To request test accommodations, follow these 3 steps:

1. Download the Request for Test Accommodations Form, available from [www.ptcny.com](http://www.ptcny.com) or by calling PTC at (212) 356-0660.
2. Complete Test Accommodations Form with your doctor/healthcare professional.
3. Upload the completed and signed Request for Test Accommodations Form with the online exam application. Submit your application at least 8 weeks prior to the start of your chosen testing period.

### NOTES:

- Only those requests made and received on the official Request for Test Accommodations Form will be reviewed.
- All requests must be made at the time of application. Accommodations cannot be added to an existing exam appointment.
- Do not go to [www.prometric.com](http://www.prometric.com) or contact Prometric to request test accommodations as they are not authorized to approve accommodations. All requests for test accommodations must be submitted on the PTC Request Form.

- If you need to use your cell phone or another electronic device to monitor a medical condition, such as diabetes, be sure to include this on Part 1 of the Request for Test Accommodations Form so that we can notify Prometric in advance.
- If you are a nursing parent and will need to use a breast pump during your exam, complete Part 1 of the Request for Test Accommodations Form and submit it at least 8 weeks before your testing period to allow time to make suitable arrangements at the test center.
- Only pre-approved test accommodations will be permitted on the day of the examination. Test center personnel are not authorized to make any changes to the test accommodations on the day of the testing session and any such change may result in your examination score being canceled.

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## PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION

- Check your driver’s license, passport, non-driver state issued ID or U.S. Military ID.
  - Is it expired?
  - Does the first and last name on your ID match the first and last name on your Scheduling Authorization email?
  - Proctors at the Prometric testing center will refuse admission to candidates with expired ID, IDs with names that do not match their records, and temporary paper IDs. Candidates will be marked as no-shows and will forfeit their exam fees.
- Check your PTC Scheduling Authorization email and Prometric Appointment Confirmation email to make sure everything is accurate (i.e., your first and last name, exam name, appointment date, time and location).
- Make yourself familiar with the location of your test center and parking options and check the weather and traffic conditions before you leave for the test center. Allow plenty of time as late arrival may prevent you from testing.
- In the event of inclement weather, check the Prometric website for [site closures](#).
- Prometric’s website provides information on what you can expect on your test day, including a walkthrough of [check in and security procedures](#).
- This Handbook provides the Content Outline for the Examination (see appendix). Use this to help you start studying for the examination.
- Review the Prometric exam software tutorial here:  
<https://ptcny.com/pdf/prometricsoftwaretutorial.pdf>

Review What to Expect at the Test Center and Rules for the Examination on the next pages before your appointment.

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## WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE TESTING CENTER

- Candidate Check-In
  - Candidates will be asked to:
    - present their IDs.
    - empty and turn out their pockets.
    - walk through a metal detector or get “wanded”.
  - Eyeglasses, jewelry, and other accessories will be inspected.
    - Jewelry other than wedding and engagement rings is prohibited.
    - Leave these at home or place them in your locker.
  - Religious headwear may be worn into the testing room; however, it is subject to inspection by test center staff.
  - Prometric provides lockers to store purses, backpacks, mobile phones, jackets, food, drinks and medical supplies.
  - Water in a clear plastic containers (no labels) may be brought into the testing room.
- During the Exam
  - No breaks are scheduled during the exam.
  - Candidates are only permitted to leave the testing room to use the restroom or access food, drink, or medicine from their assigned locker. The exam timer will NOT be paused.
  - Smoking is prohibited at the testing center.
  - All examinations are monitored and may be recorded in both audio and video format.
- Keep in mind:
  - Other exams will be administered at the same time as your examination.
  - You may hear ambient noises such as typing, coughing, or people entering and exiting the testing room that cannot be avoided.
  - Prometric is unable to provide a completely noise-free environment.
  - Headphones may be requested to minimize the impact of ambient noise.
  - Proctors will periodically walk through the testing room as part of their monitoring process.
  - See [Prometric’s website](#) for more information about what to expect on testing day.

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## RULES FOR THE EXAMINATION

Read the information below carefully. You are responsible for adhering to the examination rules while at the testing center.

⇒ DO NOT BRING

These items are strictly prohibited at the testing center. Leave these items in your car or your assigned locker.

- Cell phones and all other electronic devices
- Watches
- Jackets/coats/bulky clothing such as sweatshirts
- Hats (except hats worn for religious reasons)
- Jewelry, including watches and wearable technology.



⇒ You may NOT access the following at any time during your exam or breaks: papers, books, any reference materials; electronic devices including your cell phone. Candidates may access the following items from their locker: snacks, drinks, medicine, or other personal healthcare items.

⇒ No questions concerning content of the examination may be asked during the examination session. Carefully read the directions that are provided on screen at the beginning of the examination session.

⇒ You are prohibited from leaving the testing room while your examination is in session, except for going to the restroom. Candidates who do go to their lockers or the restroom will need to repeat the security screening before being permitted to reenter the testing room. **Candidates who leave the center will have their examinations terminated.**

⇒ See [Prometric's statement on Test Center Security](#) for more information.

Contact PTC [HERE](#) or at (212) 356-0660 with any questions about the examination rules.

**Irregular or improper behavior that is observed, made apparent by statistical analysis, or uncovered by other means before, during or after the examination will be considered a violation of these rules and may constitute grounds for invalidation of a candidate's examination. RACC will initiate an investigation and request suitable analyses and appropriate documentation.**

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## TESTING CONDITIONS OR EXAMINATION FEEDBACK

Any candidate who feels that the examination effort was negatively impacted by the test center conditions should notify the proctor immediately. The situation should also be reported to PTC [HERE](#) within 15 days of the test appointment. Any comments about the test itself should also be reported to PTC [HERE](#) within 15 days of the test appointment.

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## EXAMINATION SECURITY

Candidates seeking admission to take the examination do so for the purpose of pursuing registration, and for no other purpose. Because of the confidential nature of the examination, candidates may not make or keep copies, excerpts, or notes of examination materials, and to not use or divulge information learned from the examination. The examination is the exclusive property of RACC and candidates may not use examination information in any way without the express prior written consent of RACC.

The Certified Research Administrator® Examination is confidential. Candidates are required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the start of the examination.

Candidates agree to abide by the testing rules in effect at the time of their test appointment. RACC, PTC, and/or Prometric staff may refuse a candidate admission to the examination if they do not have the proper identification as detailed in the Candidate Handbook. Candidates who do not abide by the testing rules may have their exam terminated during the exam administration in order to maintain a secure and proper exam administration and/or exam scores invalidated.

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## SCORING OF EXAMINATION

The passing score for the Certified Research Administrator® Examination is determined using a criterion-referenced method such as the modified Angoff. This technique is a criterion referenced methodology where a panel of subject matter experts carefully evaluate each item on the examination and estimate the probability that each individual question will be answered correctly by a minimally competent/just qualified candidate. The recommended passing score is then reviewed and approved by RACC. Once the passing score is set, this standard is upheld for all future forms of the examination.

Since every examination form is made up of a different mix of items, the difficulty level may vary slightly from form to form. To ensure fairness and consistency across examination forms, a statistical process called equating is used to account for these small and unintended differences in difficulty among different examination forms by appropriately adjusting the passing point to ensure comparable levels of knowledge on each form is required to pass the examination.

Scores on the Certified Research Administrator® Examination are reported using scaled scoring, which converts the candidates' raw score (i.e., total number of correct questions) onto a consistent and standardized scale. Scaled scores are not "number correct" or "percent correct" scores. Scaled scores allow candidate scores to be comparable from one exam form to the next. The scale range for the examination is 200 to 800 with a passing point of 500.

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## REPORT OF RESULTS

Test results are not released at the testing center but will be sent via email approximately one month following the close of the testing period. This is necessary to allow for the psychometric review and administrative time required to ensure accurate and reliable scores. Scores on the major areas of the examination and on the total examination will be provided. Successful candidates will also receive an e-certificate from the RACC via email.

### Confidentiality of Examination Scores

RACC or PTC will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to RACC or PTC.

### Requesting an Examination Score Verification

Candidates who fail the examination may request a score verification of their data file. Score verification is a manual check of the data file by the testing service to determine if there have been any errors in scoring. Although the probability of such an error is extremely remote, this service is available. Requests for score verification must be received by PTC no later than 90 days after the date of the examination by completing and returning the Examination Score Verification Request form on [www.ptcnyc.com](http://www.ptcnyc.com) with payment of \$35. Candidates who fail the examination will not be permitted to see the examination questions. For reasons of test security, no candidate is allowed to review the examination or any of its items.

To ensure correct reporting of results, PTC automatically performs a score verification of examinations of candidates who score within 3 points of passing as a quality control measure. Thus, it is extremely doubtful that any examination results will change from “fail” to “pass” through score verification.

### Reexamination

The Certified Research Administrator® Examination may be taken as often as desired upon submission of a new application and payment of the applicable fee. There is no limit to the number of times the examination may be repeated.

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## ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION & RECERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who pass the examination will be certified for a period of three years, are eligible to use the designation CRA® after their names and will receive a certificate from the RACC. A registry of Certified Research Administrators® is maintained by the RACC and may be reported in its publications. Further information concerning the CRA® credentialing program and information regarding preparation for the examination may be found at the [RACC website](#). An annotated list of the CRA® Body of Knowledge may be found in the [CRA® Body of Knowledge](#) section of the website.

The CRA® designation is awarded for a period of three (3) years, at which time a CRA® must recertify for an additional three (3) years by one of two methods:

1. Earning 42 contact hours of education credits during the preceding 3 years, related to Research Administration and submitting an online CRA recertification application.
2. Re-taking and passing the CRA® examination.

Reminders about recertification will be sent by way of email, beginning approximately three (3) months before the dates of recertification.

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## **CODE OF ETHICS**

Certificants are expected to practice and uphold the following principles in the discharge of their professional responsibilities. A candidate is required to sign the following statement as part of his/her application process:

I agree that I shall:

- perform my duties with honesty, diligence, and responsibility
- conduct myself free of personal and professional conflicts or the appearance of impropriety
- remain mindful as a steward of the funds I assist in requesting and managing have been provided fundamentally for the public good
- be prudent in the use and protection of sensitive information/data
- act in good faith promoting ethical integrity in all of our actions
- in public forums, maintain respectful communication about others in the profession

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## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

The Research Administrators Certification Council (RACC) and its Board of Directors recognizes, values, and celebrates diversity of persons and experiences in its mission to certify and uphold research administration standards to advance the profession. RACC is committed to promoting a culture of integrity, competency, and inclusion. Every person meeting RACC's minimum qualifications has a right to take a certification exam or recertify their credential, without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, social class, sexual orientation, ability, personality, or background. Each RACC certificate holder has a right to fair and respectful treatment, equal access to RACC resources, and equitable opportunities to contribute to RACC's success.

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## **REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION**

Certification may be revoked by the RACC for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an application.
2. Misrepresentation of certification status.
3. Breach of existing ethical standards of professional practice.

An appeals mechanism for challenging revocation of certification is available.

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## CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION

The Certified Research Administrator® Examination is a computer-based examination composed of a maximum of 200 multiple-choice, objective questions of which 175 are operational items that will count toward a candidate's score and 25 pilot questions. The 25 pilot questions are randomly distributed throughout the examination and do not count toward a candidate's score. Candidates are given a total testing time of three-point-five (3.5) hours. The content for the examination is described in the Body of Knowledge on the next page.

The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in research administration and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the RACC.

RACC, with the advice and assistance of the Professional Testing Corporation, prepares the examination.

The Certified Research Administrator® Examination will be weighted in approximately the following manner:

I.	Collection and Dissemination of Information	44%
II.	Legal Requirements and Sponsor Interface	20%
III.	Financial Management	21%
IV.	General Management	15%

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# CRA BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

Current as of May 31, 2021

## I. COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

### A. Research Development

1. Communication
  - a. Manage internal funding programs
  - b. Manage limited submissions process
  - c. Facilitate faculty contact with program officers
  - d. Read professional newsletters/updates
  - e. Read professional listserv postings
  - f. Read internal organization documents
  - g. Serve as liaison among various constituencies
  - h. Serve on an external or internal proposal review panel
  - i. Write/distribute a newsletter
2. Find Funding
  - a. Work with development officers
  - b. Identify and distribute funding opportunities
  - c. Manage electronic funding opportunity systems
  - d. Create an electronic funding alert profile
3. Obtain sample successful proposals
4. Identify potential collaborator opportunities

### B. Proposal Development, Review, and Submission

1. Proposal Development
  - a. Obtain collaborator/sub-recipient proposal documentation
  - b. Read/review sponsor/application guidelines
  - c. Meet with project director/investigator for proposal development
  - d. Determine project director/investigator eligibility
  - e. Provide guidance and explanations of proposal requirements to project director/investigator/staff
  - f. Prepare a proposal budget
  - g. Write proposals
  - h. Assist project director/investigator with writing proposals
  - i. Generate administrative components of a proposal
  - j. Assist project director/investigator/staff with preparation of proposals
  - k. Respond to questions from proposal applicants
  - l. Complete agency forms and packages for electronic submissions
  - m. Complete agency forms and packages for paper copy submissions
2. Proposal Review
  - a. Justify sub-awardee cost
  - b. Review a proposal budget
  - c. Edit proposals
  - d. Request missing application materials
  - e. Ensure proposals meet grant application requirements
  - f. Conduct review of a proposal
  - g. Prepare internal proposal routing forms

- h. Provide institutional assurances, representations, and certifications for proposals
- i. Adjust application budget based on current salary cap
- j. Verify facilities and administrative rate and associated base/exclusions for grantee
- k. Follow up on missing information needed by sponsors
- 3. Proposal Submission
  - a. Approve a proposal for submission
  - b. Obtain necessary institutional approvals for submissions
  - c. Act as authorized institutional signatory for proposal submissions
  - d. Submit proposals electronically
  - e. Submit paper copies of proposals
  - f. Prepare overnight and other packages for delivery
- 4. Compile institutional proposal data and enter into database
- 5. Enter proposal data into financial
- 6. Provide overall management of application process, including timelines and internal/external deadlines necessary for successful submission
- 7. Manage internal proposal record throughout the submission process
- C. Compliance
  - 1. Provide guidance on definition of human subjects research and possible exemptions
  - 2. Facilitate pre- and/or post-award site visits
  - 3. Alert investigators to potential regulatory non-compliance
  - 4. Monitor award reports and other deliverables
  - 5. Collect time/effort reports and review for accuracy prior to certification
  - 6. Monitor award progress
  - 7. Administer clinical trial agreements
  - 8. File invention statements
  - 9. Verify that awardee is not debarred/suspended
  - 10. Monitor research-related travel
- D. Subrecipient Monitoring
  - 1. Create sub-award agreement
  - 2. Negotiate sub-awards
  - 3. Monitor sub-recipients
  - 4. Respond to sub-recipient questions
- E. Account Management
  - 1. Request/establish an advance account
  - 2. Enter award data into financial system
  - 3. Establish an award account
  - 4. Manage award close out process

## II. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND SPONSOR INTERFACE

- A. Research Ethics and Compliance
  - 1. IRB
    - a. Verify Institutional Review Board training
    - b. Attend Institutional Review Board meetings
    - c. Prepare Institutional Review Board reports
    - d. Maintain Institutional Review Board records

2. IACUC
  - a. Attend Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee meetings
  - b. Prepare and maintain Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee reports
  - c. Verify Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee training
3. Radiation Safety and Bio Safety
  - a. Prepare and maintain biohazard report
  - b. Attend meetings on biohazards
  - c. Verify biohazard training
  - d. Attend meetings on radiation
  - e. Prepare and maintain radiation reports
  - f. Verify radiation training
4. Export Control
  - a. Determine export control applicability
  - b. Coordinate compliance with export control regulations
5. Financial Conflict of Interest
  - a. Collect conflict of interest disclosures
6. Responsible Conduct of Research
  - a. Conduct responsible conduct of research training/certification and maintain those records
7. Sexual Harassment
  - a. Conduct sexual harassment training and maintain those records
  - b. Investigate financial or regulatory non-compliance allegations
  - c. Development corrective action plans for regulatory non-compliance
  - d. Assist in preparing protocols for regulatory committee
  - e. Develop research compliance plan
- B. Sponsor & Award Terms and Conditions
  1. Award Negotiation and Acceptance
    - a. Read sponsor policy statements
    - b. Review award terms and documents
    - c. Negotiate award terms
    - d. Review terms and conditions of an award with project director/principal investigator/staff
    - e. Accept and sign awards from sponsor
    - f. Apply or remove restrictions to notice of award
    - g. Coordinate legal review of awards
  2. Award Management
    - a. Review sub-awards
    - b. Request approval for foreign awards
    - c. Suspend or terminate an award
    - d. Process no cost extension requests
    - e. Submit revised budgets
    - f. Obtain sponsor prior approval for re-budgeting, effort reduction, and/or requisitions (when necessary)
  3. Prepare request for Application/Agency Program Announcements
  4. Read sponsoring agency newsletters/updates
  5. Read federal regulations
  6. Inform senior administration of new policies/regulations

7. Explain internal/external policy changes to project director/investigator/staff
- C. Intellectual Property & Technology Transfer
1. Write a non-disclosure agreement
  2. Write a material transfer agreement
  3. Identify and negotiate intellectual property issues in awards
  4. Collect intellectual property disclosures
  5. Notify sponsor/funding agency of intellectual property disclosed
  6. File a patent application
  7. Negotiate intellectual property licenses

### III. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- A. Audit & Compliance
1. Explain internal controls used to maintain compliance with internal and external rules and regulations
  2. Alert investigators to potential financial non-compliance
  3. Prepare for single audit
  4. Work with auditors
  5. Develop corrective action plans for financial non-compliance
  6. Provide copies of audit upon request
- B. Award Administration & Monitoring
1. Cost Sharing
    - a. Verify cost sharing
    - b. Monitor cost share funds
    - c. Request cost share account numbers
    - d. Review cost share plan to meet requirement
  2. Subrecipient Monitoring
    - a. Conduct a risk analysis of sub-awardees
    - b. Collect sub-recipient financial reports
  3. Compensation Reporting
    - a. Verify time and effort reports
    - b. Request/enter payroll allocation and corrections
    - c. Manage principal investigator and other key personnel effort on sponsored projects to ensure minimum effort requirements are met
  4. Financial Reporting
    - a. Review award budgets and enter into system of record
    - b. Request account numbers for new awards
    - c. Monitor financial performance of sponsored projects
    - d. Approve revised budgets
    - e. Respond to investigators' questions about allowability of costs
    - f. Respond to investigators' questions about availability of funds
    - g. Re-budget awards
    - h. Reconcile monthly financial statements
    - i. Manage internal discretionary and research spending accounts
  5. Manage components of a project director/investigator award transfer or relinquishment
  6. Respond to questions from award recipients

- C. Billing and reporting
  1. Draw down sponsor funds
  2. Prepare financial status reports
  3. Prepare and submit sponsor financial report
  4. Prepare invoices
  5. Approve invoices
  6. Monitor accounts receivable
- D. Facilities & Administration
  1. Prepare facilities and administrative cost rate proposal
  2. Prepare materials for external preparation of a facilities and administrative rate proposal
  3. Distribute facilities and administrative cost recovery
- E. Procurement
  1. Approve requisitions and journal vouchers
  2. Coordinate purchase of major equipment
  3. Monitor requisitions for accuracy and compliance

#### **IV. GENERAL MANAGEMENT**

- A. Human Resources
  1. Write job descriptions
  2. Serve on a search committee
  3. Interview project staff
  4. Hire project staff
  5. In collaboration with Human Resources, process personnel action forms
  6. Manage research administration staff
  7. Conduct performance evaluations
- B. Training & Professional Development
  1. Develop training materials
  2. Develop a research administration education curriculum
  3. Develop a research administration education certificate program
  4. Plan research related outreach functions
  5. Participate in professional development activities
  6. Lead training sessions
  7. Present at professional development conferences
  8. Network with colleagues on sponsored program issues
  9. Serve in a leadership role in a professional organization
- C. Institutional Service
  1. Form a committee
  2. Serve on organizational committees
  3. Provide award data for institutional needs
  4. In collaboration with appropriate departments, prepare a space allocation report
  5. Educate students about the research enterprise
  6. Serve as an institutional representative to an external organization
  7. Participate in misconduct investigation
- D. General Office Management & Procedures
  1. Answer general procedural questions
  2. Learn new computer systems and programs
  3. Manage equipment service contracts

4. Attend staff meetings
  5. Prepare minutes from meetings
  6. Maintain web pages and social media
  7. Perform general office duties
  8. Develop internal routing forms
  9. Develop internal reports
  10. Participate in the development of policies and procedure
- E. Contracted Services
1. Contract with outside grant writers
  2. Hire consultants to assist with proposals

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## SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

In the following questions, choose the one best answer.

1. Which of the following government publications serves as a comprehensive handbook of current federal government funding programs?
  1. Federal Yellow Book
  2. Annual Register of Grant Support
  3. Guide to Funding in Higher Education
  4. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
  
2. Where can the cost principles be found within the Uniform Guidance?
  1. Subpart A
  2. Subpart B
  3. Subpart E
  4. Subpart F
  
3. If a grant includes items of equipment which came to the grantee institution as part of the award, the grantee institution
  1. has legal responsibility for the equipment.
  2. is not entitled to use, retain, or dispose of the equipment.
  3. must transfer equipment if principal investigator leaves grantee institution.
  4. is required to have a maintenance contract.
  
4. A research administrator (RA) serves as a primary liaison between the administrator's organization and which of the following?
  1. National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director
  2. Program Officer
  3. Grants Management Specialist
  4. Director of the Office of Extramural Awards
  
5. Which of the following is most closely responsible, on a day-to-day basis, for enforcement of the Federal Animal Welfare Act?
  1. Office of Human Research Protection
  2. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
  3. Department of Health and Human Services
  4. American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care

ANSWER KEY	
Q	A
1	4
2	3
3	1
4	3
5	2

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## REFERENCES

The following references may be of some help in preparing for the examination. The list does not attempt to include all acceptable references, nor is it suggested that the Certification Examination for Research Administrators is based entirely on these references or that RACC endorses these publications. In some cases, individual experience is the best reference.

### **FEDERAL FUNDING AGENCIES**

- Department of Health and Human Services
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Institutes of Health
- National Science Foundation:
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Energy

### **FEDERAL REGULATIONS**

- 2 CFR 200: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards
- Federal Acquisition regulations

### **ONLINE SERVICES/DATABASES**

- Grants.gov
- FedBizOpps

### **PERIODICALS**

- *Journal of Research Administration*, Falls Church, VA: Society of Research Administrators International.
- *Research Management Review*, Washington, DC: National Council of University Research Administrators.

### **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

- Association of University Technology Managers
- Council on Governmental Relations
- Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable
- National Council of University Research Administrators
- SRA International

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## ONLINE PRACTICE TEST

### WHAT IS IT

A practice test consisting of 75 questions with a testing time of 2 hours taken over the Internet.

### WHY TAKE IT

To experience taking a computerized exam, to review content included in the Certified Research Administrator® Examination, and to learn more about question format, style, and level of difficulty.

### SCORE REPORT

After completing the online practice test, you will receive an instant score report showing test performance in each of the content areas. The score report does not provide correct answers or indicate which questions were answered correctly and incorrectly.

**NOTE:** The online practice test is an optional tool candidates may use as they prepare for the certification examination. While the practice test may help candidates identify areas of strengths and weakness, it should not be used as the only means to determine candidate preparedness or readiness to test. Since the practice test is NOT intended to be a study guide nor the sole source of preparation for the actual certification examination, candidates are NOT provided with the answer key, rationales for each question, nor notification of which specific items were answered correctly or incorrectly.

Though the specific questions that are on the practice test will not appear on the actual certification examination, it allows candidates to become familiar with the style of questions that may be asked. The instant score report received after practice test submission shows overall test performance as well as performance in each of the content areas. Candidates may find this information useful in determining future study needs. Once the practice test is scored, candidates cannot return to the test to review the questions. Performance on the practice test does not guarantee similar performance on the actual certification examination.

The PTC Online Testing System does not demonstrate the testing software used during the certification examinations. Those who purchase the online practice test should be aware that they will use a different testing platform when they take certification examinations at designated proctored testing centers.

The practice test is not a requirement for certification eligibility nor does it contribute in any way to success on the certification examination. There are many ways candidates should prepare for the certification examination. Candidates should use a variety of resources and consider their own education and experiences. Review the content outline and reference materials listed in the handbook for additional exam-related information.

### CONTENT INCLUDED

- I. Project Development and Administration
- II. Legal Requirements and Sponsor Interface
- III. Financial Management
- IV. General Management

### FEE

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