



Certification, Registration and Recertification

(CRR2009)

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Introduction

The National Examining Board of Ocularists Certification Examination for ocularists is designed to assess the competence of the ocularist in performing the variety of health care and related functions and tasks normally encountered in the fitting and fabrication of ophthalmic prosthetics.

The National Examining Board of Ocularists, NEBO, is an independent board consisting of ocularists and members of related professions, including ophthalmology, orthotics and prosthetics and a public member.

The certification examination was designed by studying the work that ocularists do and the knowledge they rely on to perform their work competently. A nationally representative committee of highly qualified and certified ocularists carried out such a study to define precise content areas that are important, critical, and relevant to the profession. The results of the Role Delineation study included a set of specifications for the test.

Committees of highly qualified and certified ocularists then wrote and repeatedly reviewed the test questions. Psychometric procedures were applied in constructing the test to ensure that it is thoroughly representative of the domains against which the test is validated. The passing point was determined using the Angoff Modified Technique, a widely accepted criterion-referenced strategy for determining passing points. Thus, the expert judgment of professionals determined the content of the test and psychometric expertise ensured that the test questions measure what they are intended to assess.

Security is of the utmost importance throughout the test development and administration process. Examination materials are locked in a secure place before and following the test administration. During the administration of the tests, monitors supervise the testing conditions and examinees' behavior and note any irregularities. The performance of the examinees may also be analyzed statistically for the purpose of detecting and verifying fraud. Individuals who remove or attempt to remove examination material from the test site will be prosecuted. Examinations will not be processed for examinees who violate security.

Each item, on the written examinations, is worth one point. Candidates are advised to answer every question, since the final score is determined by the number of questions answered correctly. There is no penalty for guessing.

CASTLE Worldwide Services, Inc. (CASTLE) used a combination of advanced technology and a high degree of human expertise to produce accurate and reliable scores. Prior to scanning, answer sheets are reviewed individually for accuracy of name and I.D., bubbling, and for possible scanning difficulties (i.e., incomplete erasures, light bubbling, etc.). Examination sheets then go through double scanning and scan checking to detect possible errors in the scanning process. In addition to the computer scoring, some candidate sheets are manually scored and compared to the computer results (approximately 4% random check) for statistical verification.

Candidates are notified in writing regarding whether they have passed or failed the examination. Test scores are confidential, and will be disclosed to no one via phone or facsimile. Test score reports may be released to individuals other than authorized NEBO personnel only with written request by the candidate.

Examination

The National Examining Board of Ocularists Certification Examination (offered in English only) is divided into two (2) parts (A and B).

Part A.....The Written Section of the Certification Examination is a 150 question multiple choice examination. Questions are contained in a Question Booklet--answers are recorded on a separate Answer Sheet. The examination is criterion referenced, i.e., every effort has been made to assure that all questions in the examination relate to tasks performed or knowledge and skills needed to perform as a fitter and fabricator of ophthalmic prosthetics.

Example: Which of the following professional titles refers to the fitter and fabricator of ophthalmic prosthetics?

- a) optometrist b) optician
- c) ocularist d) oculist

Answer: c) ocularist

The Written Examination will, therefore, include questions from four general categories. 31.94 (%) percent of the examination will relate to the fitting of ophthalmic prosthetics, 35.20 (%) percent to the fabrication of ophthalmic prosthetics, 16.72 (%) percent to evaluation and the remaining 16.14 (%) percent to questions related to general care and hygiene. Three (3) hours and thirty (30) minutes are allowed for the completion of the exam.

Proctors will assure the absolute integrity of the examination. Seating will be predetermined by committee.

Part B..... The Fabrication Section or practical part of the Certification Examination requires that the examinee demonstrate his/her ability to fabricate (from specifications

in a fabrication kit) the two most commonly encountered types of prostheses, i.e., the conventional prosthesis (thick) and the scleral shell prosthesis (thin).

Examinees are given up to ten (10) days to complete fabrication of both the conventional and scleral shell prostheses. All work is done in the laboratory of the examinee by the examinee. The painting of iris, vascularization, tinting, and finishing of the scleral shell are carefully monitored by a proctor appointed by the National Examining Board of Ocularists.

Validity of Scores

The integrity of the scores awarded examinees for their performance on NEBO examinations is protected by every means available. All possible efforts are expended to assure that the tests are administered under standard conditions and in conformity with the principles on which the test and its scoring are founded. These efforts are made to assure that no examinee or group of examinees receives, either advertently or inadvertently, unfair advantages in the test.

Any score that the National Examining Board of Ocularists determines does not represent a reasonable assessment of the examinee's knowledge or competence, sampled by the examination, shall be deemed irregular. The answer sheets of all examinees are monitored and may be analyzed statistically for purposes of detecting irregular scores.

Any inappropriate behavior during the administration of an examination, such as giving or obtaining unauthorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or statistical analysis of answer sheets, constitutes sufficient cause to invalidate an examinee's score and/or terminate his or her participation in the examination and/or take other appropriate action.

Eligibility Criteria -

CERTIFICATION Examination -

ALTERNATIVE I

The applicant must have completed the education program of the American Society of Ocularists to be eligible to sit for this years examination. An individual may also sit for this years examination when it can be reasonably determined that he/she will have completed all required training and/or experience before the offering of next years examination. (Approximately one calendar year.) (See insert -Eligibility Criteria Deadline, page 1)

ALTERNATIVE II - Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent. The applicant must also have (or will have) completed 10,000 hours (40 hours/week maximum) of training and/or experience in the fitting and fabrication of ophthalmic prostheses (artificial eyes) to be eligible to sit for this examination. The 10,000 hours must begin with 4,000 hours of supervision by a board certified ocularist. Applicants who have not or are unable to verify such supervision would require an additional 4,000 hours of experience for a total of 14,000 hours. An individual may also sit for this years examination when it can be reasonably determined that he/she will have completed all required training and/or experience before the offering of next years examination. (Approximately one calendar year.) (See insert- Eligibility Criteria Deadline, page 1)

Certification will be awarded to candidates qualifying under Alternatives I and II after:

a) achieving a passing grade in both Parts A and B of the examination,

- b) completion of all the required education, training and/or experience requirements,
- c) paying the required examination fees.

All requirements must be fulfilled before certificates are awarded.

REGISTRATION

All Board Certified Ocularists must register three years after date of certification and/or recertification. **Failure to Register or allowing his/her Certificate to expire will result in Certification expiration (loss of BCO designation.).**

Registration Requirements

- a) 50 NEBO approved continuing education credits. (Credits must be earned during a period of four (4) years prior to July in the year of Registration). Example: If your Certificate expires June, 2010, you must Register in the Fall, 2009. Credits are valid from July, 2005 - July, 2009.
- b) Payment of required fee.

Failure to Register or allowing his/her Certificate to expire will result in Certification expiration (loss of BCO designation-see Certification Expiration, page 9).

A new certificate will be issued upon completion of registration requirements.

RECERTIFICATION

Board Certified Ocularists must recertify every six years. (Recertification year is the last 2 digits of your ID# on your certificate or in the National Registry Listings.) **Failure to Recertify or allowing his/her Certificate to expire will**

result in Certification expiration (loss of BCO designation-see Certification Expiration, page 9).

Recertification Requirements

Process I

- a) accumulate 100 NEBO approved CE credits including 80 category A or B and 20 category A, B and/or C credits (Credits must be earned during a period of seven (7) years prior to July in the year of Recertification). Example: If your Certificate expires June, 2010, you must Recertify in the Fall, 2009. Credits are valid from July, 2002 - July, 2009.
- b) pay the recertification examination fee.
- b) achieve a passing grade in the continuing competence assessment (Part A, Written) examination
- c) pay the recertification examination fee.

Process II

- a) accumulate 300 NEBO approved CE credits including 240 category A or B and 60 category A, B and/or C credits. (Credits must be earned during a period of seven (7) years prior to July in the year of Recertification). Example: If your Certificate expires June, 2010, you must Recertify in the Fall, 2009 Credits are valid from July, 2002-July, 2009.
- b) pay the recertification examination fee.

Failure to Recertify or allowing his/her Certificate to expire will result in Certification expiration (loss of BCO designation-see Certification Expiration, page 9).

Certification Expiration: What it means.

When your Certificate expires as a result of your failure to Register or Recertify, you must remove any mention implied or written of NEBO Board Certification (BCO) in any form [3rd party payers (insurance, Medicare, etc.), telephone

advertising, literature, stationary, presentations, digital graphics, slides, books, etc.] as soon as possible. Failure to comply may result in legal action due to misrepresentation of qualifications to both professional and public concerns.

You will lose your privileges and will no longer be Board Certified. You will not be reissued a certificate and your name will not be listed in the National Registry.

You can recertify by either 1) submit 100 approved CE Credits (80 A or B and 20 A, B and/or C) and achieve a passing grade in the next Recertification Exam (Process I) or 2) submit 300 approved CE Credits (240 A or B and 60 A, B and/or C)(Process II). A fee is also required regardless of the process used to accomplished recertification. See insert-page 1

Application Deadline

All applications for Certification and Recertification must be submitted approximately 90 days prior to Examination date. (See insert -Application Deadline, page 1)

Applications received after the due date will not be processed for the current examination and will be returned.

Examination Schedule

Test Day

7:30 AM Continental Breakfast

8:00 A.M. -8:30 A.M. Registration

8:30 A.M. -12:00 P.M. Written/Recertification Exam

Fabrication will be conducted at the laboratory of the examinee. Arrangements for time and location **must** be made immediately after receipt and approval of application.

National Registry

An official listing of all Board Certified Ocularists in good standing will be printed and published by NEBO annually.

Examination Results

Examination results will be mailed approximately four (4) months after ALL applicants have completed all sections of the examination.

Re-Examination Provisions

The examination consists of 2 sections, Written (MCQ) and the Fabrication (FAB). Any section an examinee passes will be valid for six (6) years. If certification is not completed within that six (6) year period, the previously passed section will have to be retaken and passed. There will be a waiting period of six (6) months before the Written section may be retaken following the annual examination. The Fabrication section is only offered annually as a retake.

Offsite MAKEUP Exams

The Offsite MAKEUP MCQ exam must be administered within 60 days following the Fall scheduled exam. NEBO must be contacted at least one (1) week prior to the scheduled exam. Permission is granted on an individual and as needed basis.

Offsite RETAKE Exams

Offsite Retake MCQ exam will be available following a waiting period of six (6) months after the scheduled Fall exam.

(The fees for Offsite MAKEUP and Retake exams reflect additional administrative cost incurred by the Testing Service and NEBO for offsite and individual testing.)

Fees

Certification See insert-page 1.

Registration See insert-page 1.

Recertification See insert-page 1.

(The fees for Offsite MakeUp and Retake exams reflect additional administrative cost incurred by the Testing Service and NEBO for offsite and individual testing.)

OFFSITE MAKEUP EXAM

MCQ See insert-page 1.

In Canada, ADD See insert-page 1.

OFFSITE Recertification MAKUP EXAM

MCQ See insert-page 1.

In Canada, ADD See insert-page 1.

Offsite Retake MCQ exam will be available following a waiting period of six (6) months after the scheduled Fall exam.

OFFSITE RETAKE EXAM

MCQ See insert-page 1.

In Canada, ADD See insert-page 1.

OFFSITE Recertification RETAKE

MCQ See insert-page 1.

In Canada, ADD See insert-page 1.

A processing fee will be charged for all rejected applications. See insert-page 1.

Fees for Re-Examination

Part A, Written See insert-page 1.

Part B, Fabrication See insert-page 1.

Both sections See insert-page 1

Photographs

Four (4) passport type photographs of the applicant must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the application for application approval.

One (1) Digital Photo emailed to nebo@neboboard.org with “picture” in the subject line

Admission Forms

Admission Forms will be mailed to eligible applicants approximately three (3) weeks prior to the examination date.

Withdrawals, Cancellations and Refunds

Applicants who are registered for the examination and who fail to appear forfeit their entire examination fee.

Applicants who voluntarily withdraw, in writing and received by NEBO fifteen (15) days or more prior to the examination, will receive a full refund, less a processing fee. If applicant withdraws within fifteen (15) days of the examination, the examinee will receive a fifty (50%) percent refund. Any other refund will be at the discretion of the National Examining Board of Ocularists.

Appeals

A. Any individual, whose application for examination has been refused or returned, shall have the right to a written statement concerning the basis for refusing or returning the application which states the deficiency or deficiencies contained therein. A refund of all fees minus any

administrative costs are to be refunded. The Examining Board may refuse an application for reasons including, but not limited to the following: false and misleading written statements concerning certification, accreditation, designation, and or education.

B. Due to deadlines for the examination applications a timely and prompt appeal and response is necessary so that in the event the applicant is found eligible to take the certification exam, there will be time to coordinate the exam for them. An applicant who is determined to be ineligible for the certification exam has up to 14 days to appeal the decision. This must be in writing and directed to the executive director. The executive director will then have up to 14 days to respond to the applicant with a decision following the receipt of the written appeal. Criteria for eligibility are forwarded to the executive committee along with the appeal and the appeal is voted upon.

C. If you believe that a discrepancy exists in the scoring or reporting of your test results, you may request re-scoring of the written or fitting portion of the examination. Your examination will be inspected and re-scored upon receipt of the hand-scoring request form and the applicable fee. Requests for re-scoring answer sheets must be received by CASTLE no later than 30 days following release of the examination results. Requests beyond this time period will not be processed.

D. An Individual who is determined not to be certified has up to 30 days to appeal the decision. This must be in writing and directed to the executive director. The executive director will then have up to 30 days to respond to the applicant with a decision following the receipt of the written appeal. Necessary information is forwarded to the executive committee along with the appeal and the appeal is voted upon.

Applications are available from:

http://www.neboboard.org/exam_applications.htm

or

David M. Bulgarelli, Executive Director
National Examining Board of Ocularists, Inc.
625 First Avenue, Suite 220
Coralville, IA 52241-2101
(319) 339-1125—(319) 354-3465 fax

Applicants to this examination shall be considered without discrimination as to age, sex, race, religion, national origin, handicap or marital status.

The National Examining Board of Ocularists has achieved the distinction of being an Accredited Certification Organization and Full Member of The National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). The accrediting body for NOCA is The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). Accreditation and membership in NOCA are reserved for only those organizations that meet the most rigid standards of excellence in test development and administration in health care certification.