

Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR)
Entry-level Registration Examinations for Dietitians and Dietetic Technicians
Frequently Asked Questions
September 2021

Examination Format and Development Information

1. How often are examinations administered?

Examinations are administered year-round. Test sites are typically open Monday through Friday, with some centers also open on Saturdays.

2. Where are examinations administered?

CDR's testing agency, Pearson VUE, has over two hundred fifty approved examination test centers nationwide, conveniently located in professional office spaces. A Pearson VUE Test Center Locator can be found on the CDR/Pearson VUE homepage (www.pearsonvue.com/cdr) under the "Find a Test Center" header. Candidates are shown test appointment availability at the time of their exam registration. Center locations are subject to change.

3. How often does the examination content outline (test specifications) change?

The content outline changes every 5 years following the review and analysis of the Dietetics Practice Audit. The last audit was conducted in 2020. The entry-level registration examinations for dietitians and dietetic technicians will be updated to reflect the revised test specifications on January 1, 2022. The current content outline took effect January 1, 2017 (based on the 2015 audit).

2017-2021

| | Dietitians | | Dietetic Technicians | |
|-------------------|--|-----|---|-----|
| Domain I | Principles of Dietetics | 25% | Nutrition Science and Care for Individuals and Groups | 44% |
| Domain II | Nutrition Care for Individuals and Groups | 40% | Food Science and Food Service | 24% |
| Domain III | Management of Food and Nutrition Programs and Services | 21% | Management of Food and Nutrition Services | 32% |
| Domain IV | Foodservice Systems | 14% | | |

2022-2026

| | Dietitians | | Dietetic Technicians | |
|-------------------|--|-----|---|-----|
| Domain I | Principles of Dietetics | 21% | Nutrition Science and Care for Individuals and Groups | 41% |
| Domain II | Nutrition Care for Individuals and Groups | 45% | Food Science and Food Service | 21% |
| Domain III | Management of Food and Nutrition Programs and Services | 21% | Management of Food and Nutrition Services | 38% |
| Domain IV | Foodservice Systems | 13% | | |

4. How many questions are on the registration examination for dietitians?

The multiple-choice examination is variable in length. Each examinee will be given, and must receive, a minimum of one hundred and twenty-five (125) questions: one hundred (100) scored questions and twenty-five (25) pretest questions in order for the examination to be scored. The maximum number of questions possible is one hundred and forty-five (145): one hundred and twenty (120) scored questions, and twenty-

five (25) un-scored pretest questions. If less than 125 items are answered when the two and one-half (2 ½) hour testing period has ended, the candidate will receive a failed score of 2, indicating inconclusive.

5. How many questions are on the registration examination for dietetic technicians?

The multiple-choice examination is variable in length. Each examinee will be given, and must receive, a minimum of one hundred and ten (110) questions; eighty (80) scored questions and thirty (30) pretest questions in order for the examination to be scored. The maximum number of questions possible is one hundred and thirty (130); one hundred scored questions and thirty (30) un-scored pretest questions.

6. What is computer adaptive testing (CAT)?

Computer adaptive testing (CAT) is a specific type of computer-based testing. An adaptive test is commonly shorter than a traditional paper-and-pencil test. CAT also results in more measurement efficiency as it administers questions that provide the most information about the examinee's competence.

Examination Authorization and Fee Payment

7. How long after candidates complete registration eligibility requirements (academic and supervised practice) will it take to be authorized to test?

The entire process, from the time CDR receives the candidate eligibility information to the time the candidate receives the Pearson VUE Authorization to Test email will be less than a week.

8. How much is the examination fee?

The examination fee for dietitians is \$200 and \$120 for dietetic technicians.

9. Does the authorization to take the examination expire?

Yes. Authorization to test expires after the test is taken or one year after receipt of the Authorization to Test email (whichever occurs first). This means that examinees have 365 days from receipt of the Authorization to Test email from Pearson VUE to schedule, pay, and complete the examination. If examinees take the test and are unsuccessful, they must contact CDR in order to re-establish eligibility to take the test again. It is important to note that some employers and licensure boards may establish shorter limits on the testing authorization period.

Examination Experience

10. How much time do candidates have to complete the examination?

Examination testing appointments are three (3) hours; two and one-half (2 ½) hours to take the examination, twenty (20) minutes to complete an introductory tutorial, and ten (10) minutes to complete the post examination survey. The timer/clock will begin with question one of the examination. Candidates will have two and one-half (2 ½) hours to complete the examination once the timer/clock begins. The examinee will have the option to hide the clock during the examination. Examination candidates must respond to the minimum number of examination questions (125) in order for the exam to be scored. If the candidate does not respond to the minimum number of questions within the time allowed (two and one-half (2 ½) hours), the examination will shut down and the exam will be scored as a failure, since it was inconclusive. Please see the answer to Question 5 for more information.

11. Are candidates given an opportunity to become familiar with the computer before beginning the test?

Yes. Exam candidates can take a tutorial on the computer prior to beginning the actual examination. This tutorial includes detailed instructions on taking the computerized examination and provides an opportunity to respond to practice questions. In addition, prior to the exam appointment, there is a practice test available at www.pearsonvue.com/CDR for candidates to download to experience the navigation of exams and use of the on-screen calculator.

12. Will a calculator be provided at the test center?

Yes. An on-screen calculator is included in the exam and is the preferred calculator. A simple, handheld test center calculator can be issued to the candidate, upon request. Candidates are not permitted to bring their own calculator. The calculator (either version) should be examined and tested by the candidate prior to the beginning of the examination.

13. Are the test questions in multiple-choice format?

Yes. Each question has four answer options.

14. Are the test questions numbered?

Yes. The examination questions are numbered.

15. Are candidates allowed to change question responses, skip questions, or review question responses?

No. Each question requires a response in order to continue the examination process. Once a candidate answers a question and continues to the next question, the candidate is not permitted to review or change previous examination questions/responses.

16. Why are there more pretest questions on the registration examination for dietetic technicians than the registration examination for dietitians?

It is important that new questions be pre-tested for both examinations on a regular basis. The registration examination for dietetic technicians was only administered once per year until 1996 and coupled with a small examinee volume reduced the number of pretest questions administered each year. With computerized testing and year-round administration, CDR has been able to pretest more questions and increase the bank of questions.

Examination Scheduling, and Test Center Issues and Protocols

17. How should I report scheduling problems?

Contact Pearson VUE's Candidate Service Center at 888-874-7651, if there is a problem or difficulty experienced during the scheduling process.

18. How should I report onsite testing problems?

If there is a problem or technical difficulty during testing, please notify the test center personnel/ proctor immediately. Candidates are responsible for following the instructions for notifying the proctor of a testing problem.

Special Accommodations

19. Does CDR make special accommodations for examinees with disabilities?

Yes. Reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities, provided appropriate medical documentation is submitted with the request for special testing accommodations, will be made. Refer to the Handbook for Candidates (page 3, Testing of Candidates with Disabilities) for specific documentation requirements. All evaluations will be done by Pearson VUE staff who are knowledgeable about the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Study Guides

20. Are there any other materials available to assist candidates in preparing to write the examination?

CDR publishes two study guides; Study Guide for the Registration Examination for Dietitians and Study Guide for the Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians. Both study guides include a comprehensive study outline, list of references and a practice examination. A practice examination is provided in both hard

copy and online versions. The online version has been designed to simulate the actual computerized examination.

CDR does not endorse any particular preparation program or offering but does encourage prospective credentialed practitioners to use a variety of resources that reflect their learning styles and needs. Purchasing a certification preparation product is NOT required and CDR does not guarantee that an individual will pass based on the purchase of a certification preparation product.

Score Reports: Candidates

21. When do examination candidates receive their score report?

Score reports are distributed to examinees as they leave the test center.

22. What information is included on the candidate score report?

The score report includes the candidate's scaled score and the scaled score required to pass the examination. In addition, the score report will also document the candidate's scaled sub-scores.

January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021

| | Sub-Score Titles | Registration Examination for Dietitians | Registration Examination for Dietetic Technicians |
|----|----------------------------------|---|---|
| I | Food and Nutrition Sciences | Domains I and II | Domains I |
| II | Food Service Systems/ Management | Domains III and IV | Domains II and III |

23. What is the minimum passing scaled score?

The minimum scaled score required to pass the examination is twenty-five on a scale of one to fifty.

24. If a candidate decides to stop the examination before responding to the minimum number of questions required to make a pass/fail decision, will the candidate's score be reported as a "fail?"

No. If a candidate chooses to stop the examination before answering or not responding to the minimum number of questions required to make a pass/fail decision, the examination will not be scored. The candidate will receive a form documenting their decision to quit the examination. The candidate must contact CDR to be reauthorized to test. No refunds will be provided.

Score Reports: Academic Programs

25. Do dietetics education program directors receive institutional score reports?

Yes. Program directors receive institutional reports in February and August of each year. The institutional score report includes scaled scores for program graduates, percentile ranks, national mean scores, institutional examinee mean scores, and scaled sub-scores. Examination candidate names are only included if the candidate previously authorized release of scores with the candidate name.

Examination Reauthorization

26. How soon can unsuccessful candidates retake the registration examination?

Following an unsuccessful examination attempt, candidates are allowed to retest after forty-five calendar days. They must reauthorize with CDR and pay the current examination fee. Candidates may reauthorize and reschedule before the forty-five day wait period is over, but the examination appointment itself needs to occur on or after day 46.

27. Under what conditions must the candidate reauthorize with CDR?

The candidate must reauthorize to test (See page 2 of the *Handbook for Candidates* for instructions on reauthorizing.):

- a** When the candidate fails the examination;
- b** When the candidate's one-year authorization period ends;
- c** When the candidate fails to cancel the testing appointment within the specified timeline;
- d** When the candidate arrives late for the scheduled testing appointment; or
- e** When the candidate does not complete the examination during the testing appointment.

28. How often may candidates take the registration examination?

Once a candidate establishes eligibility to take the examination there is no limit on the number of times a candidate may take the examination, provided the candidate waits the required forty-five days between test dates. State licensure candidates must check with their state licensure board for any state specific requirements regarding retesting for licensure purposes only.