



CANDIDATE GUIDE

CERTIFIED RECOVERY COACH (CRC)

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PURPOSE OF THE CANDIDATE GUIDE

The Written Examination for Certified Recovery Coaches is an examination that tests knowledge and skills about the recovery process. The exam is based on current research in the field.

The purpose of the Candidate Guide is to provide you with guidance for the CRC written examination process. By providing you with background information on examination domains and sample questions, your preparation for the exam can be enhanced.

EXAMINATION CONTENT

The 2008 Job Task Analysis for the CRC identified three performance domains. Within each performance domain there are several identified knowledge and skill areas that provide the basis for questions in the examination. This Candidate Guide contains detailed information on the domains, knowledge, and skill areas. The following is a list of the performance domains for the examination and the number of test questions in each.

RECOVERY COACH DOMAINS	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
Recovery Management	18
Education and Advocacy	12
Professional Ethics and Responsibility	20

DOMAINS

RECOVERY MANAGEMENT

Task 1: Engage the individual and establish rapport

Knowledge of:

1. Empathetic and active listening
2. Drug using culture
3. Recovery process and approaches to recovery
4. Personal strengths and limitations related to the provision of peer recovery services

Skill in:

1. Sharing compassion, empathy, respect, flexibility, and hope to all individuals, regardless of their degree of impairment, stage of recovery, or level of acceptance in the treatment and recovery process
2. Matching different communication styles of persons from the drug using culture
3. Recognizing the difference between addictive versus reality-based behaviors

Task 2: Recognize signs and symptoms of chemical dependency

Knowledge of:

1. Types of substances of abuse
2. Differences between use, abuse and dependence
3. Behaviors related to chemical dependency
4. Basic cultures, environments, terminology, and beliefs

Skill in:

1. Identifying signs and symptoms of intoxication, tolerance, and withdrawal
2. Identifying common behaviors displayed by substance users that can interfere with the recovery process
3. Recognizing the cultural differences with regard to chemical dependency among different groups

Task 3: Assist the individual to identify and prioritize strengths and needs.

Knowledge of:

1. Methods of identifying strengths and needs
2. Various strengths and needs related to recovery
3. Techniques that engage individuals to self-disclose

Skill in:

1. Engaging and communicating clearly and concisely with the individual
2. Matching your communication style with the individual
3. Demonstrating a desire and willingness to elicit the individual's viewpoints in identifying their own strengths and needs
4. Displaying respect for the individual's communication style

Task 4: Assist in the development and enhancement of the recovery plan.

Knowledge of:

1. Steps related to recovery
2. Different approaches to recovery
3. Recovery planning process
4. Effects of culture on the individual's beliefs and choices related to recovery
5. Recovery resources

Skill in:

1. Demonstrating patience, persistence, and optimism in helping to establish and maintain the individual's motivation
2. Assisting an individual in organizing and prioritizing their thoughts and actions related to the recovery plan
3. Collaboratively developing an integrated recovery plan
4. Identifying resources for and overcoming barriers to achieve the recovery plan goals
5. Navigating the resources and systems needed to advance the recovery plan
6. Writing clearly and concisely using person-centered language

Task 5: Identify emergency or crisis situations and facilitate access to appropriate resources.

Knowledge of:

1. Various crisis and emergency situations
2. Community crisis and emergency resources
3. One's own personal and cultural biases and limitations

Skill in:

1. Identifying crisis and emergency situations
2. Knowing when to refer an individual in a crisis and/or emergency situation to appropriate services and support
3. Negotiating and connecting individuals with resources and navigating the systems

EDUCATION/ADVOCACY

Task 1: Educate the person, family, and community about the disease of addiction and the recovery process.

Knowledge of:

1. The disease of addiction and the recovery process
2. Drugs of abuse, thoughts, behaviors, and subcultures
3. Pathways to recovery including treatment options
4. Other educational resources within the community

Skill in:

1. Communicating, presenting, and sharing information
2. Openness and respect for various approaches to recovery
3. Using your personal experiences to the benefit of others in their own recovery process

Task 2: Educate the person and their family about peer support systems in the recovery process.

Knowledge of:

1. Support and recovery groups in the local community
2. The history, value, and philosophy of specific peer and self-help groups
3. Alternative support resources

Skill in:

1. Communicating, active listening, and negotiating
2. Describing the group, their norms, and their purposes
3. Reviewing the potential benefits and drawbacks of available groups
4. Assisting in the selection of a group that best meets the individual's needs
5. Teaching behaviors for effective group participation

Task 3: Participate in various advocacy efforts in support of recovery.

Knowledge of:

1. Personal rights and responsibilities
2. Barriers and discriminatory practices related to the recovery process
3. Negotiation strategies
4. Appropriate use of assertiveness skills
5. Service systems and resources including local, state, and national recovery advocacy efforts

Skill in:

1. Encouraging empowerment in others
2. Promoting confidence and self-efficacy
3. Role modeling skills to empower individuals to advocate for themselves
4. Negotiating skills
5. Connecting people with resources and navigating systems
6. Networking

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Task 1: Behave in an ethical manner by adhering to the Certified Recovery Coach code of ethics and standards of practice.

Knowledge of:

1. Certified Recovery Coach code of ethics and, if applicable, agency code of ethics and policies
2. Consequences of violating codes of ethics
3. Professional standards of behavior
4. Confidentiality
5. Overt and subtle forms of stigma and discrimination
6. Professional and personal boundaries

Skill in:

1. Translating professional codes of ethics into appropriate behavior
2. Recognizing and maintaining professional and personal boundaries
3. Working with a culturally diverse population
4. Recognizing and addressing personal and institutional biases and behaviors in relation to the targeted population
5. Communicating effectively
6. Maintaining confidentiality

Task 2: Maintain strict confidentiality regarding information received during the provision of peer recovery services.

Knowledge of:

1. Federal, state, and local confidentiality rules and regulations and related areas
2. Benefits and protections of confidentiality laws and regulations
3. Consequences of violating confidentiality
4. Reporting system requirements related to confidentiality

Skill in:

1. Interpreting and applying policies, procedures, and regulations
2. Communicating the protections, benefits, and consequences of confidentiality laws and regulations
3. Helping individuals navigate the systems as they pertain to confidentiality

Task 3: Continue personal growth through active participation in the recovery process.

Knowledge of:

1. Self-directed recovery process
2. Critical components of the personal recovery process
3. Personal strengths and limitations (i.e. spirituality, social, emotional, acceptance, boundaries)

Skill in:

1. Recognizing the difference between personal recovery and that of others
2. Self-motivation towards personal growth
3. Identifying one's own strengths and limitations to enhance own recovery
4. Maintaining one's own involvement in the recovery process

Task 4: Engage in continuing professional development relative to peer recovery services.

Knowledge of:

1. Methods for evaluating personal training needs
2. Certification and credentialing requirements
3. Current resources in chemical dependence and the recovery process

Skill in:

1. Assessing training and development needs
2. Selecting and accessing training programs
3. Applying practical and professional knowledge and experience

Task 5: Advocate for resources and support of recovery services.

Knowledge of:

1. Appropriate advocacy related to recovery services and resources
2. Ethical standards as they relate to advocacy
3. Current issues pertinent to the recovery community
4. Local, regional, state, and national advocacy organizations and systems

Skill in:

1. Identifying appropriate advocacy issues
2. Utilizing appropriate behaviors in support of advocacy efforts
3. Understanding and utilizing local, regional, state and national advocacy organizations and systems
4. Accessing advocacy resources

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The questions on the CRC examination were developed from the domains identified in the 2008 Job Task Analysis. Multiple sources were utilized in the development of questions for these exams. Each question is linked to one of the knowledge and skill areas identified in each domain.

The following is taken from the instructions that will be read to you prior to taking the examination:

The questions in the examination are multiple choice with four (4) choices: A, B, C, and D. There is only one correct choice for each question. Carefully read each question and all the choices before making a selection. Choose the single best answer. Mark only one answer for each question. You will not be given credit for any question for which you indicate more than one answer. It is advisable to answer every question, since the number of questions answered correctly will determine your final score.

Following are sample questions that are similar to those you will find in the CRC exam.

1. A good definition of denial is:

- A. a common defense mechanism.
- B. conscience lying.
- C. the ability to turn down a drink or a drug.
- D. minimizing the amount you drank or used.

2. What are common signs of alcohol withdrawal syndrome?

- A. Body aches, disorientated, and agitated
- B. Sweating, nausea, and increase in body temperature
- C. Tremors, sweating, mild agitation, anxiety, increased heart rate and blood pressure
- D. Increase heart rate, increase blood pressure, and cold sweats

3. The most commonly abused substance is:

- A. marijuana.
- B. nicotine.
- C. heroin.
- D. cocaine.

4. Adolescents often resist treatment because of:

- A. a lack of employment.
- B. peer pressure.
- C. a lack of education.
- D. the stigma of addiction.

5. A boundary violation is committed when an individual:

- A. develops a social relationship with the client after services end.
- B. accepts gifts from the individual receiving the services.
- C. has a dual relationship with a client.
- D. all of the above.

6. What are the only exceptions to breaking confidentiality?

- A. The life of the client or someone else is at risk
- B. The person is diagnosed with HIV
- C. The client's mother/father asks for information
- D. Discussing the client with your sponsor

ANSWER KEY

Question 1	A	Recovery Management
Question 2	C	Recovery Management
Question 3	B	Education and Advocacy
Question 4	D	Education and Advocacy
Question 5	D	Professional Ethics and Responsibility
Question 6	A	Professional Ethics and Responsibility

SAMPLE EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

The examination consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. One hour and fifteen minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) have been provided for completion of the written examination.

SCHEDULE

8:30 - 8:45 a.m.

8:45 a.m.

8:45 – 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m.

10:15 a.m.

ACTIVITY

Candidates are admitted and registered

Candidates are seated

Instructions are given, materials are distributed

Examination begins

Examination ends, materials are collected

TAKING THE EXAMINATION

The CRC examination follows a 4-option multiple-choice format. Questions of this type begin with a stem, the premise statement, and are followed by four options. In answering the questions, candidates should read the stem and options carefully. They should then select the one best answer and fill in the letter on the answer sheet that corresponds to the best answer for the question.

The test measures the three major Performance Domains about the recovery process. Test questions are designed to assess knowledge as well as the candidate's ability to work with those in recovery from alcohol and other drug abuse. Successful candidates will draw on knowledge, analysis, and application to identify the one best option.

In taking the test, you may find it helpful to eliminate obviously incorrect responses after the first reading so as to increase the probability of selecting the best response. If you determine that there are two or more reasonable options, you should select the most plausible choice.

The questions in the examination are multiple choice with four (4) choices marked A, B, C, and D. There is only one correct choice for each question. Carefully read each question and all of the choices before making a selection. Choose the single best answer. Mark your answer on the answer sheet by blackening the circle under the letter of your choice.

Mark only one answer for each question. You will not be given credit for any question for which you indicate more than one answer. Be certain to mark your answer on the correct line and in the correct column for the question you are working on.

Read each question carefully. Choose the best answer for each question. If you change your answer, make sure that you completely erase your previous answer.

It is advisable to answer every question since the number of questions answered correctly will determine your final score. You may bring a watch in order to budget your time.

EXAMINATION RULES

No books, papers, or other reference materials may be taken into the examination room.

No examination materials, documents, or memoranda of any type may be taken from the room by any candidate.

The examination will be given only on the date and time noted on the Admission Letter. If an emergency arises and you are unable to take the examination as scheduled, you may call the DCB Office.

No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination period. The candidate should listen carefully to the directions given by the Proctor and read the directions carefully in the examination booklet.

SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIONS

Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in test administration may request specific procedure changes, in writing, to DCB, no fewer than 60 days prior to the scheduled test date. With the written request, the candidate must provide official documentation of the disability or religious issue. Candidates should contact DCB on what constitutes official documentation. DCB will offer appropriate modifications to its procedures when documentation supports the need for them.

ADMISSION TO THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

Upon fulfillment of the appropriate eligibility requirements and completion of the application process for CRC, you will be seated for the examination. DCB will send you an admission letter confirming your enrollment approximately two (2) weeks prior to the examination date. This admission letter will also contain the reporting time, test time, location, contact person, and other relevant information.

Your admission letter and a PHOTO IDENTIFICATION CARD (Work ID, Driver's License, etc.) must be presented for entrance to the examination.

EXAMINATION DATES

The CRC examination may be administered up to four times per year in March, June, September and December. The exact date, time, and location of the examination will be provided to you after your CRC application has been submitted to and approved by DCB.

SCORING

DCB will score all examinations and mail score reports to candidates. Scores will be broken down by category so that candidates can see areas of strength and weakness. This process takes approximately three to four weeks.

The passing point is fixed to assure that all candidates must achieve the same score to be granted certification. To achieve a passing score, candidates must correctly answer 37 questions out of 50 total questions.

TEST DISCLOSURE

If candidates wish to appeal their scores on the written test, they must submit a written request to DCB within 30 days of the postmark on the test score report. Candidates should be aware that test security and item banking procedures do not permit candidate's access to test questions, answer keys, or other secure materials.

RE-TESTING

Candidates who fail the test may re-test if they choose. Candidates must re-test at least one time in the 12-months following the date of the test they failed. All reasonable requests will be considered if a candidate is unable to re-test within the 12-month time frame. Such requests for additional time beyond the 12-months must be submitted in writing to DCB prior to the 12-month deadline.

REFERENCES

The following resources were used as the basis for most of the questions on the CRC examination. Consulting these references may be beneficial to you as you prepare for the exam. Please note that not all questions on the exam came from these references.

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National Institutes of Health & National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. *Alcohol: A Women's Health Issue*. 2003.

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