



Exam Candidate Handbook



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	
NESTA PFT Program Mission	3
About NESTA's Executive Certification Board	4
Scope of Practice of Fitness Trainers and Instructors	7
II. About the PFT Exam	
Candidate Eligibility	9
Registration	10
Fee Payment Options	10
Program Study Options	10
Exam Fees	12
Scheduling	12
Address Changes	13
Available Exam Locations	13
Alternative Testing Options	13
Individuals with Disabilities and Special Needs	14
Rescheduling and Cancellations	15
Refunds and Transfers	15
Extensions and Retakes	15
Confirmation and ID numbers	16
Exam Day	16
III. Exam Preparation	
Exam Content Areas	18
Detailed Objectives for Exam Content	18
References and Resource Materials for Exam Prep	19
IV. Exam Scoring, Certification and Ethics	
History of the Exam	20
Exam Scoring and Score Notification	20
Requests for Correct and Incorrect Answers	21
NESTA Certified PFT Code of Ethics	21
Cause for Disciplinary Action	23
Exam Score and Disciplinary Action Appeals	23
Reception of Certification	25
Recertification and Continuing Education Requirements	21

INFORMATION FOR NESTA PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER CANDIDATES

I. Introduction

The Mission of NESTA's Personal Fitness Trainer (PFT) Program

The National Exercise & Sports Trainers Association (NESTA) provides fitness certifications and continuing education for personal trainers, athletic coaches, group exercise instructors, life coaches and many other fitness professionals. NESTA is based in Rancho Santa Margarita, CA and has been in operation since 1992 with over 60,000 worldwide members. NESTA educational programs offer innovative animations and modern presentation techniques to enhance learning of the exercise sciences for real world health, fitness and performance applications through effective individualized program design. NESTA prides itself on providing progressive learning that is easy to understand and able to be applied immediately to help professionals build successful and profitable programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

The mission of NESTA's Certified Personal Fitness Trainer (PFT) Executive Certification Board (ECB) is to:

“Recognize individuals who are exceptionally qualified to provide individualized personal fitness training through safe, efficient and effective exercise programming for personal clientele and the public at large while striving to pave a new path of unparalleled professional excellence.”

In fulfillment of this mission the NESTA Executive Certification Board:

- Creates, develops and enforces performance standards for entry-level competency of certified personal fitness trainers
- Identifies a code of ethics and scope of practice for certified personal fitness trainers
- Develops and administers examinations that assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities consistent with professional data obtained from psychometrically validated survey information
- Establishes a code of ethics and a scope of practice for certified personal fitness trainers
- Provides a mechanism to “Recognize those individuals who continue to increase their professional qualifications through adherence to NESTA ECB continuing education standards, competence within the scope of practice, and ethical conduct and behavior in compliance with the continuing education requirements and code of ethics for NESTA's Certified Personal Fitness Trainer program.”

NESTA's Certified Personal Fitness Trainer (PFT) Program, validates that the candidate has entry-level application skills, knowledge, and commitment vital to a successful fitness

practice. The candidate may utilize multiple avenues for entry including: self-study, practical work experience including internships and apprenticeships, and two and four year collegiate-based fitness programs.

NESTA awards the title “Certified Personal Fitness Trainer” to those individuals who meet the continuing education, ethical conduct, professional behavior, and examination requirements set forth by the PFT Certification Board.

About NESTA’s Executive Certification Board (ECB)

The NESTA Executive Certification Board is the governing body of the NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Program, also known as the PFT. The Executive Certification Board is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the PFT exam, allocation of funds, policies and procedures, disciplinary action, selection of personnel and operational processes of the certification program. These processes shall be used to determine the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for beginning level competency in becoming a certified personal fitness trainer and continuing education requirements and standards for maintaining appropriate knowledge, skills and ability levels.

The NESTA Executive Certification Board (see Table 1A) is comprised of several committees, one of which is called the Job Task and Industry Analysis Committee. This group of individuals is responsible for the following:

- Determining what, when, and how job task and industry analyses should be conducted
- Developing a process for conducting a job task and industry analysis
- Working with NESTA staff and PFT Executive Certification Board vendors to develop a final report and distribute the results of job task and industry analysis

Upon selection by the NESTA Executive Certification Board’s Job Task and Industry Analysis Committee, subject matter experts gathered in October 2016 to restructure the current Personal Fitness Trainer Examination, and produce a new exam which cover the specific areas of knowledge, skills, abilities and tasks that were deemed crucial for entry level competency for a professionally certified personal fitness trainer. These specific areas were then formed into a job task questionnaire which was posted on the NESTA website and submitted by email to NESTA members in November 2016. Each area of skills and abilities, and tasks was rated by certified and/or degreed personal fitness trainers according to frequency and importance in professional scope of practice and job relevancy. NESTA contracted with PSI to psychometrically validate and evaluate the job task questionnaire and perform the job task analysis of the completed surveys. Only complete survey responses were utilized as quantitative data for the job task analysis. Completed surveys were analyzed to determine the performance domains for the NESTA Personal Fitness Trainer exam. Further detailed information regarding the exam formation process can

be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. The analyzed and psychometrically validated survey response data was brought to the NESTA ECB and board approval was obtained for the following effective exam content domains and weights for the PFT exam:

Content Area		# of Items
1	Business Applications	15
1.A	Marketing, Referrals, and Sales	5
1.B	Scope of Practice	5
1.C	Professional Liability	5
2	Program Design	25
2.A	Client Assessment and Evaluation	8
2.B	Program Development and Progression	8
2.C	Exercise Selection	9
3	Exercise Science	25
3.A	Anatomy	6
3.B	Exercise Physiology	7
3.C	Kinesiology and Biomechanics	7
3.D	Nutritional Science	5
4	Program Implementation	35
4.A	Exercise Techniques	10
4.B	Demonstration and Instruction	9
4.C	Emergency Intervention	5
4.D	Equipment and Exercise Environment	6
4.E	Motivation and Behavior Modification	5

The NESTA Executive Certification Board further agreed upon a 125 question multiple-choice exam with 120 minutes allowed for completion to be a sufficient objective assessment tool in determining entry level competency. A multiple choice exam format was chosen due to the need for an objective testing format. Of the 125 questions on the examination, 100 are scored questions that correspond to the content outline above. An additional 25 unscored questions are included among the scored items in order to test them out before using them as scored questions on future versions of the examination.

A minimum passing (cut) score of 71% was established for the PFT examination according to professional standards and legal guidelines. A comprehensive review of the PFT exam was performed by a panel of personal fitness training professionals of a representative diversity of professional and demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, cultural and ethnic background, years of experience, specialty areas, job title, and place of business). As part of this review, the panel established a definition of minimum acceptable competence for those who are entering the job role and then estimated the percentage of minimally-competent candidates who would answer each question correctly. Following the completion of item rating assignment, ratings are aggregated and the mean rating for all items is used to determine the cut score.

NESTA Boards and Committees	
Founding Executive Certification Board Members	
Frank McDermott	
Jack Bauerle	Ryan Campbell
Mike Reimann	Scott Somers
Current Executive Certification Board Members	
Josh Bowen, PFT - Chair (2nd term)	
Jesse Harper (2nd term)	Scott Sommers - Public Member (3rd term)
Jack Bauerle (3rd term)	Scott Welle (2nd term)
Mark Barriere, PFT (2nd term)	William Thomas (2nd term)
Robert Cuthbertson - Public Member (1st term)	Michelle McShane (1st term)
Job Task and Industry Analysis Committee	
Jesse Harper - C	Scott Welle
Mark Barriere	William Thomas
Michelle McShane	
Exam Development and Recertification Committee	
Jack Bauerle - C	William Thomas
Josh Bowen	Mark Barriere
Administrative Committee	
Josh Bowen - C	Jesse Harper
Scott Sommers	
Policies & Procedures Committee	
Scott Sommers - C	Jack Bauerle
Scott Welle	Robert Cuthbertson

Scope of Practice of Fitness Trainers and Instructors¹

Fitness trainers and instructors lead, instruct, and motivate individuals or groups in exercise activities, including cardiovascular exercises (exercises for the heart and blood circulation), strength training, and stretching. They work with people of all ages and skill levels.

Duties

Fitness trainers and instructors typically do the following:

- Demonstrate or explain how to perform various exercises and routines to minimize injuries and improve fitness
- Watch clients do exercises to ensure that they are using the correct techniques
- Provide alternative exercises during workouts or classes for different levels of fitness and skill
- Monitor clients' progress and adapt programs as needed
- Explain and enforce safety rules and regulations on sports, recreational activities, and the use of exercise equipment
- Give clients information or resources about nutrition, weight control, and lifestyle issues
- Give emergency first aid if needed

Both group fitness instructors and specialized fitness instructors plan or choreograph their own classes. Classes may include cardiovascular exercises, such as aerobics or dance; strength training, such as lifting weights; or both. Instructors choose music that is appropriate for their exercise class and create a routine or a set of moves for participants to follow. Some may teach prechoreographed routines that were originally created by fitness companies or other organizations.

Personal fitness trainers design and carry out workout routines specific to the needs of their clients. They may work with individual clients or teach group classes. In larger facilities, personal trainers often sell their training sessions to gym members. They start by evaluating their clients' current fitness level, personal goals, and skills. Then, they develop personalized training programs for their clients to follow, and they monitor the clients' progress.

Fitness trainers and instructors in smaller facilities often do a variety of tasks in addition to their fitness duties, such as tending the front desk, signing up new members, giving tours of the facility, or supervising the weight-training and cardiovascular equipment areas. Fitness trainers and instructors also may promote their facilities and instruction by various means, such as through social media, by writing newsletters or blog articles, or by creating posters and flyers.

1 Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, **Occupational Outlook Handbook, Fitness Trainers and Instructors**, on the Internet at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/personal-care-and-service/fitness-trainers-and-instructors.htm> (visited May 12, 2018).

Gyms and other types of health clubs offer many different activities for clients. However, trainers and instructors frequently specialize in only a few areas. The following are examples of types of fitness trainers and instructors:

Personal fitness trainers work with an individual client or a small group. They may train in a gym or in clients' homes. Personal fitness trainers assess the client's level of physical fitness and help them set and reach their fitness goals.

Group fitness instructors organize and lead group exercise classes, which can include aerobic exercises, stretching, or muscle conditioning. Some classes are set to music. In these classes, instructors may select the music and choreograph an exercise sequence. They may lead classes that use specific exercise equipment, such as stationary bicycles.

Specialized fitness instructors teach popular conditioning methods, such as Pilates or yoga. In these classes, instructors show the different moves and positions of the particular method. They also watch students and correct those who are doing the exercises improperly.

Fitness directors oversee the fitness-related aspects of a gym or other type of health club. They often handle administrative duties, such as scheduling personal training sessions for clients and creating workout incentive programs. They may select and order fitness equipment for their facility.

Work Environment

Fitness trainers and instructors held about 299,200 jobs in 2016. The largest employers of fitness trainers and instructors were as follows:

Fitness and recreational sports centers	59%
Civic and social organizations	11
Self-employed workers	11
Educational services; state, local, and private	5
Government	4

Fitness trainers and instructors may work in standalone fitness centers or centers maintained by other types of establishments for their employees or for members of civic and social organizations. Some work in clients' homes.

Work Schedules

Fitness trainers and instructors may work nights, weekends, or holidays. Some travel to different gyms or to clients' homes to teach classes or conduct personal training sessions. Some group fitness instructors and personal fitness trainers hold full-time jobs in other fields and teach fitness classes or conduct personal training sessions during evenings or weekends.

NOTE: While the above scope of practice is adapted from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, NESTA certifies Personal Fitness Trainers globally.

The Purpose of this Handbook

The information in this candidate handbook will provide you with the tools and information you need to take the NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Exam. The following information outlines the exam registration process, candidate eligibility, exam content and preparation, and certification guidelines.

II. About the PFT Exam

Candidate Eligibility and Exam Process Overview

- As it is required for most forms of liability insurance, applicants must be at least 18 years of age with a high school diploma prior to enrolling or applying to take the PFT exam.
- CPR certification is mandatory for all personal fitness trainers and is required by many places of employment, and is a prerequisite for achieving NESTA certification.
- There are no educational prerequisites or requirements for taking the exam. All age-eligible applicants with a high school diploma are encouraged to register.
- Once registration has been submitted, age and education level eligibility is validated and payment is received, exam candidates will receive a confirmation notice and a candidate number by email and/or phone. This candidate number is required in order to make an appointment to take the exam at a PSI testing center location of candidate choice.
- PSI is our computer-based testing provider and has test facilities internationally (note, for candidates outside North America, the testing fee increases by \$45 for proctoring services). See <https://candidate.psiexams.com/catalog/displayagencylicenses.jsp?catalogID=334> for a complete list of Certified PFT test sites.
- Confirmation by email and/or phone will include a toll free number to call for exam registration dates and times in your area. Candidates should schedule exams two or more weeks prior to intended exam date to ensure exam date and time availability at the testing center location of choice.
- Exams must be taken within 90 days of purchase. Any exam not taken within 90 days from date of exam purchase will become null and void.
- Upon successful completion of the exam, the application will be a NESTA “Certified Personal Fitness Trainer” for four years and may use the mark “PFT” after their name and highest level of degree. *NOTE: those found improperly using the PFT when not currently certified will be asked to remove the mark by the NESTA ECB. If the request is not followed, the ECB will seek legal action for trademark infringement.*

Registration

Registrations/orders must be received through one of the three following methods:

- Fill out and submit your registration online at www.pft.nestacertified.com
- Print and fax your completed registration and fee payment information to:
949-589-8216, c/o PFT Executive Certification Board, Exam Registration
- Print and mail completed application and include fee payment information to:
NESTA Executive Certification Board
31441 Santa Margarita Pkwy, A-365
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2123 USA
- If you have questions and need to contact a NESTA representative you may do so by sending an email to: cs@NESTAcertified.com or by calling the NESTA offices at 1-877-348-6692.

Fee Payment Options

Payments must be paid in full before taking the exam. Payment plans are available for Complete Study Package (see below), but final payment must be made before exam access is granted.

NESTA allows for the following payment methods:

- Credit Card/Debit/Check Card
American Express
MasterCard
Visa
- Cashier's/Company Check
- Money Order

Return Policy

Online Programs Return Policy

Please review our refund policy carefully. The following programs, services, membership subscriptions and fees are all non-refundable. No trial periods, no refunds:

- * Online delivery, digital and downloadable programs are non-refundable
- * Monthly membership fees are non-refundable
- * Exam/retest fees are non-refundable
- * Shipping fees are non-refundable
- * Clothing is non-refundable

Program Study Options

Potential NESTA certificants and exam candidates may choose from any one of the following options listed with descriptions below. These are optional and are not the best or only means of preparation for the PFT exam. Each option includes the NESTA PFT Exam, although individuals may also choose the Exam Only option. Exam candidate preparedness

should be based upon individual comprehension and the ability to apply information within the exam content areas listed later in this handbook.

Study Options (described below)

Complete	\$477
Master	\$997
Exam Only	\$349

Complete - \$477

Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam with Downloadable Interactive Manual, Video Lectures and Audios.

- i. Manual uses interactive animations to explain scientific concepts and their applications for the personal fitness trainer. Each chapter contains study questions.

The following content areas are covered within the PDF manual:

- Chapter 1 - Introduction to Personal Training
- Chapter 2 - Exercise Physiology
- Chapter 3 - Kinesiology and Functional Anatomy
- Chapter 4 - Applied Biomechanics
- Chapter 5 - Flexibility
- Chapter 6 - Nutrition
- Chapter 7 - Special Populations
- Chapter 8 - Assessments
- Chapter 9 - Program Design
- Chapter 10 - Exercise Application
- Chapter 11 - Exercise Psychology
- Chapter 12 - Safety, Injury Prevention and Treatment
- Chapters 13-14 - Business Applications for the Personal Trainer

- ii. Video Lectures: 10 hours of presentations which coincide with chapter topics

- iii. Sample PFT Exam

- 125 question sample exam with questions formatted as they would be on the actual PFT exam
- Unlike the actual exam, the applicant will be told which specific answers they missed

Master - \$997

Includes all Complete Items plus the following:

Biomechanics Specialist (BMS)

Functional Training Specialist (FTS)

Core Conditioning Specialist (CCS)

Speed, Agility, & Quickness Specialist (SAQ)

Master Personal Fitness Trainer Exam

Completion of a research paper which requires a program design of a complete macrocycle.

Exam Only - \$349

125 question, 120 minute proctored multiple choice exam

No study materials are included with this option

Study materials are not required and not necessary to pass the NESTA PFT Exam provided exam candidates are competent and knowledgeable in the performance areas listed in Section III of this handbook. Optional additional reference and resource materials for study within these performance areas are listed at the end of Section III. The use or purchase of these materials is not required and is not the best or only means of preparation for the exam.

Exam Fees*

Registration Fee	\$349
Extension Fee	\$95
Rescheduling Fee (<48 hour notice)	\$95
Retake Fee	\$199
Proctoring Fee** (if outside North America)	\$45

*Initial registration and payment of extension, rescheduling or retake fees grants the exam candidate an additional 90 days to take their exam. The sum total of exam extensions, reschedules and/or retakes will not be granted for greater than 12 months or one calendar year. After one year from initial registration exam candidates will be required to pay an additional registration fee to take the exam.

**Candidates outside of North America or those who require a private proctor due to a scheduling hardship (see next page) must pay an additional \$45 proctoring fee.

Scheduling

After registering for the PFT exam, exam candidates will receive an exam eligibility ID number by email. Exam candidates should then follow the process below to schedule their exam and are encouraged to make their appointment 15-30 business days or more in advance to guarantee their date, location and time of choice.

1. <https://candidate.psiexams.com/>
2. Click on “Create” and complete the account set-up form. If you already have an existing account, choose “Schedule an Examination” and login.
3. Click on “View all my activities”
4. If you do not see your PFT exam shown, click on “Find My Records”
5. Choose “Certification/Professional Associations”

6. Select “National Exercise and Sports Trainers Association”
7. Enter your NESTA_ID_Number or Eligibility Number
8. Choose the City or Zip Code where you’d like to test, choose the preferred location, and view available dates/times.
9. Once confirmed, you will receive an email confirming your time and location for testing.

To make an appointment by phone:

- Call PSI at 1-800-733-9267
- Have your exam eligibility ID number available
- Confirm chosen date, time and location for your exam

Address Changes

Address changes can be made by filling out the Address/Information Change Form available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. NESTA requires exam candidates to maintain current name, mailing address, phone number and email information.

Available Exam Locations

1. To view exam sites go to <https://candidate.psiexams.com/testdate/testdate.jsp>
2. Select “Certification/Professional Associations”
3. Select “National Exercise and Sports Trainers Association”
4. Enter the preferred zip code or city and choose the preferred location to check availability.

Alternative Testing Options for Scheduling Hardship

Exam candidates who can effectively show hardship in taking the NESTA PFT Exam at a PSI testing center (e.g. due to travel distances greater than 2 ½ hours driving time or 100+ miles) within the required 90 day exam preparation period will be allowed the opportunity for a privately proctored exam. Candidates will need to complete and submit a Proctor Petition and Application found in the External (non-PSI) Proctor Information/Application at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. In addition, the applying proctor must fill out and submit a Proctor Agreement Form for approval by the NESTA ECB for taking the exam which includes a non-disclosure agreement. This can all be found in the External (non-PSI) Proctor Information/Application document mentioned above. There is a \$45 fee for submission review.

Exam candidates should view the External (non-PSI) Proctor Information/Application document at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/> for more information and guidelines about private proctoring of the NESTA PFT Exam.

Additional policy and procedural information regarding “Private Proctoring” of exams can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>

Such proctors include teachers, professors, librarians, fitness managers or other acceptable professionals who have neither a business nor personal relationship with the exam candidate. It is the responsibility of the exam candidate to find a proctor that is acceptable to NESTA by filling out and submitting the External (non-PSI) Proctor Information/Application at least 30 days prior to preferred exam date or exam deadline. Testing location, must also meet guidelines as explained in the External (non-PSI) Proctor Information/Application. Students must of access to a computer and a secure, reliable internet connection in order to take the test. Failure to submit a completed proctor agreement 30 days prior to exam schedule date or exam deadline may result in a loss of examination opportunity and forfeiture of exam fees. The External (non-PSI) Proctor Information/Application is available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>.

Individuals with Disabilities and Special Accommodation Needs

Individuals having a disability requiring special accommodations must fill out the “Request for Special Accommodations” form. Supporting evidence (e.g. letter from licensed physician or other applicable professional, on letterhead, addressing the stated disability and need for the requested accommodation) must be submitted at least 30 days prior to desired test date. Reasonable accommodations provide candidates with documented disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (or the Canadian/Australian equivalent), a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential knowledge being measured by the examination.

Reasonable accommodations are determined based on:

- the individual’s specific request;
- the individual’s specific disability;
- documentation submitted; and,
- the appropriateness of the request.”

Requests are decided upon an individual basis by the NESTA ECB liaison. Approved accommodations will be provided by the testing vendor or the approved proctor by email. Accommodations usually include an allowance for increased examination time. Accommodation requests will be acknowledged through email and/or phone notification within 7-10 business days of initial request.

For individuals who require a reader, separate accommodations or other requirements please state your needs and requirements in detail on the Request for Special Accommodations Form available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. Requests will be considered and a response will be delivered within 10 business days.

Additional policy and procedural information regarding individuals with disabilities or in need of special accommodations for exams can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>.

Rescheduling and Cancellations

Exam candidates must cancel or reschedule their exam at least 48 hours prior to a scheduled exam. If cancellation is made in less than 48 hours from the scheduled exam the exam opportunity will be forfeited and retake/rescheduling fees will apply.

Call PSI at 1-800-733-9267 to cancel or reschedule exam.

Refunds and Transfers

Online education is non-refundable. Exam candidates who have either taken their exam, cancelled within 48 hours of exam appointment or who did not show up for their scheduled exam appointment will forfeit their exam fees and will not be eligible for a refund. Transfers of examination opportunities will not be allowed. Only the individual whose name is listed as the original exam candidate will be eligible to utilize the purchased exam opportunity.

Refund requests due to emergency situations or extenuating circumstances will require a petition to the NESTA ECB explaining the circumstances involved and their nature in keeping the exam candidate from making the scheduled appointment. The Petition Request Form can be found at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. Petition requests will be considered by the NESTA ECB and a response will be delivered to the exam candidate within 10 business days.

PSI hours of phone service operation:

Monday - Friday: 7:30am-10:00pm (Eastern Standard Time)

Saturday: 9:00am-5:30pm (Eastern Standard Time)

Additional policy and procedural information regarding refunds and transfers can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>

Extensions and Retakes

Exams must be completed within 90 days of exam purchase. Paid extensions, retakes or rescheduled exams allow for an additional period of 90 days. Credit card payments can be made by calling 1-877-348-6692. Extensions or retakes will not be permitted beyond 12 months from exam purchase date. After 12 months exam candidates will be required to repay initial registration costs in order to register for and take the exam.

Exam extension need due to emergency or extenuating situations is evaluated on an individual basis. Individuals requesting such extensions should fill out the petition form available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. Petitions for nonpaid extensions or retakes must be written and submitted using this form

prior to receiving approval. When granted, petitions for extension are typically granted for 30 additional days without charge. All requests for nonpaid extensions or retakes due to extenuating circumstances require exam candidates to petition within 30 days following exam appointment or exam expiration date.

If a candidate does not pass the NESTA PFT exam, they must wait a minimum 30 days before the candidate is allowed to retake the exam. In order to preserve item security and motivate candidates to pass, a candidate will be allowed five consecutive attempts to pass the exam per five-year period, after which they are excluded from taking the exam again in that period.

Confirmation and ID numbers

Exam confirmations with testing ID numbers will be submitted by email within 24-72 business hours following exam registration or extensions. Once the exam has been scheduled, NESTA will have no other correspondence until the exam has been completed and scores have been received.

Exam Day

- 1) Plan on arriving at least 30 minutes prior to actual appointment time to allow for processing and entry into examination room.
- 2) Exam candidates must provide one valid government-issued ID bearing photo & signature. If the ID does not have either the photo or signature, a secondary ID must be presented.

Acceptable forms of photo identification include:

- Driver's license
- Passport
- Military identification
- Employee identification card

Acceptable forms of non-photo identification include a credit card or check card.

- 3) Must have current Emergency Cardiac Care (CPR) Certification. Photocopies of current and valid CPR cards are acceptable. Applicant can show EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) card in place of CPR card. Applicant can show BLS (Basic Life Support) card in place of CPR card. A letter from an Agency stating that the applicant has passed their CPR or their BLS (Basic Life Support) course is allowed.

Note: American Red Cross now issues a CPR certificate that does NOT have a signature.

Note: CPR for the Professional Rescuer is an accepted CPR course.

- 4a) Computer-based testing (PSI):

- Personal items other than those provided by PSI will not be allowed into the computer based exam room

- Electronic equipment (cell phone, smart phone, laptop, table computer, etc.), portable listening or recording devices (MP3 player, iPod, etc.), cameras or other photographic equipment, devices that can access the internet or other electronic or communication devices. No watches that beep or have an alarm
- No food or drink is allowed into exam room.

4b) Computer-based testing (approved Proctor):

- Electronic equipment (cell phone, smart phone, laptop, table computer, etc.), portable listening or recording devices (MP3 player, iPod, etc.), cameras or other photographic equipment, devices that can access the internet or other electronic or communication devices.
- No watches that beep or have an alarm
- No food or drink
- Purses and backpacks to be placed at the back of the room

5) Exam candidates who miss their scheduled appointment will lose their exam opportunity and forfeit their examination fees. Exam candidates arriving late will not be admitted to take their exam and will forfeit their examination fees. At least 48 hour prior notice to PSI at 1-800-733-9267 is required for rescheduling or canceling an exam in order to avoid loss of examination fees and purchased exam opportunity. All rescheduled exams will be scheduled through PSI. Missed exams and retakes must be purchased through NESTA and an ID must be provided from NESTA prior to exam scheduling with PSI.

6) In the event of PSI site closure the day of the exam or weather emergency preventing an exam candidate from making their exam appointment, an extension opportunity will be provided by NESTA following the required filing of a request for an extension by the exam candidate. This request must be submitted and received by NESTA within 5 business days following scheduled exam appointment.

7) Should a candidate be caught cheating by a proctor, they forfeit their right to ever become certified by NESTA. Should they wish to appeal this decision, the candidate may follow the appeals procedures as described later in this handbook.

III. Exam Preparation

PFT exam candidates are allowed 90 days (the equivalency of one college level quarter of class study) to prepare for and take their exam following purchase/registration. A college course may require as much as five hours of class and an additional 5-10 hours per week of study. In this manner, exam candidates may require as much as 60-180 hours of study in preparation for the exam over a 90 day period (1-3 hours of study per day in a 5 day week). Study preparation time will vary depending upon individual comfort with exam content domains and performance areas and ability to apply current knowledge.

Within each chapter of the PFT manual the candidate will find “Exam Alerts” to identify potential exam topics.

Additional reference and resource materials are listed later in this section.

Exam Content Areas

The PFT exam is defined by four content areas determined to be of primary importance based upon data gathered from an extensive job task questionnaire and analysis of currently certified personal fitness trainers and fitness professionals in 2016. Each exam content area is broken down by number of exam questions and percentage of questions in the table below.

NESTA Personal Fitness Trainer Exam breakdown

Content Area	Questions	Percent
1) Business Applications	15	15%
2) Program Design	25	25%
3) Exercise Science	25	25%
4) Program Implementation	35	35%
Pilot Items	25	0%
Totals	125	100%

There are a total of 125 exam items on the NESTA PFT exam. The exam includes 100 items that are scored and used to determine whether a candidate passes or fails the PFT exam. In addition, the exam includes a total of 25 pilot test questions have been added to the NESTA certification exam to help ensure that the administration and scoring of the PFT exam is conducted in a fair and valid manner. The pilot test questions are not scored, have no impact on a candidate’s outcome, and are used solely for research and development purposes.

The pilot test questions are primarily used to aid in the development of future exams. Specifically, pilot test questions provide an opportunity to determine the psychometric quality of the test questions before they are included on future exams. Pilot test questions can also help ensure that future exams are psychometrically equivalent to previous exams. Lastly, pilot questions can be used to identify group differences on the test items.

Exam candidate will be allowed 120 minutes to complete the 125 question multiple choice exam. A raw score of 71 is required for passing in order to achieve PFT certification.

Detailed objectives for exam content

Recognition and understanding of the following concepts and their application is indicative of basic level competency to provide safe, efficient and effective exercise programming for individualized personal fitness training.

Content Area		# of Items
1	Business Applications	15
1.A	Marketing, Referrals, and Sales	5
1.B	Scope of Practice	5
1.C	Professional Liability	5
2	Program Design	25
2.A	Client Assessment and Evaluation	8
2.B	Program Development and Progression	8
2.C	Exercise Selection	9
3	Exercise Science	25
3.A	Anatomy	6
3.B	Exercise Physiology	7
3.C	Kinesiology and Biomechanics	7
3.D	Nutritional Science	5
4	Program Implementation	35
4.A	Exercise Techniques	10
4.B	Demonstration and Instruction	9
4.C	Emergency Intervention	5
4.D	Equipment and Exercise Environment	6
4.E	Motivation and Behavior Modification	5

Reference and Resource Materials for Exam Prep

Reference and resource materials are listed according to specific area of performance in preparation for the NESTA PFT Exam. No reference or study material coverage will guarantee passing of the PFT Exam. However, becoming familiar with these references and study materials and knowledgeable of their content will greatly enhance the knowledge and abilities of a professional Personal Fitness Trainer. Purchase or use of these or any study materials is optional and is not the best or only means of exam preparation.

Business Applications

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapters 1, 13, and 14
- NESTA Business Applications Audio mp3
- The Business of Fitness: Understanding the Financial Side of Owning a Fitness Business, Plummer, T. 2003
- The Psychology of Selling, Tracy, B. 2002
- American College of Sports Medicine's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription, American College of Sports Medicine. 2005
- NESTA Sports Injury Specialist Program

Program Design

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapter 7-9, and 12
- NESTA Program Design Audio mp3
- Periodization: Theory and Methodology of Training, Bompa, T. 1999

- American College of Sports Medicine's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription, American College of Sports Medicine. 2005
- NESTA Sports Injury Specialist Program

Exercise Sciences

(Exercise Physiology, Kinesiology, Anatomy, Biomechanics, Nutrition)

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapters 1-4, 6
- Kinesiology of the Musculoskeletal System, Neumann, D. 2002
- Diagnosing and Treatment of Movement Impairment Syndromes, Sahrmann, S. 2001
- Nancy Clark Sports Nutrition Handbook

Program Implementation

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapter 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 11
- NESTA Warm-Ups and Stretching Video
- NESTA Exercise Application Videos
- The Essentials of Resistance Training: The Basic Training Video Series, Purvis. T. 1999

IV. Exam Scoring , Certification and Ethics

History of the Exam

Pass rates were calculated for all the exams administered in 2017. Of the 724 candidates who took the exam in 2017, 70.72% (n = 512) passed and 29.28% (n = 212) failed.

Exam Scoring and Score Notification

Exam candidates will be notified of unofficial exam scores immediately following the computer-based exam. Candidates will receive a score report immediately following completion of their exam. This exam score report will include pass/fail report for each of the four content areas covered in the exam in order to inform students of strengths and weaknesses in each subject domain. Score status is pass/fail only with exam candidates needing total scores of at least 71 questions correct to pass the exam. A sample score report is available online at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>. These scores are unofficial until verified. Official notification of pass or failure will be delivered by email from NESTA within four weeks or 20 business days from the date of actual exam. In the event email is not provided, accurate or available, official notification will be delivered by phone and/or mail within four weeks or 20 business days from the date of actual exam. A four week time frame is necessary to verify exam scores and validate candidate eligibility. Exam candidates must achieve a raw score of 71 or higher to achieve PFT certification.

Requests for correct and incorrect answers

In order to preserve the integrity and validity of the PFT exam, exam candidates will not be informed of questions answered correctly or incorrectly. Only overall scores will be made known. Exam candidates can request a hand-scored answer sheet for \$25 (specific exam questions and correct answers will not be given) to view correctness of exam scoring. Such requests can be made by filling out the Request for Hand Scoring Form available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>

NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Code of Ethics

When you order any NESTA (or NESTA affiliate) educational or business program, you accept and agree to adhere to the NESTA Code of Ethics. You hereby certify that the information given to NESTA is true, complete and correct. You further understand if any of this information is later determined to be false, NESTA reserves the right to revoke any certification (or certificate) that has been granted on the basis hereof. You further understand that NESTA certification does not certify or in any way guarantee the quality of your work as an NESTA-certified professional. You therefore agree to indemnify and hold harmless NESTA, its officers, directors and staff from any claims due to negligence, omission or faulty advice that you may give to clients as a NESTA certified professional. You further recognize that NESTA is not responsible for any actions or damages incurred or taken by any person arising out of your work, intentions or actions as a NESTA certified professional.

As a NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer you must recognize the importance of a set standard and scope of professional and ethical conduct in providing personal fitness training services to clientele and the general public.

Professional and ethical concerns or issues arise when professionalism and ethics are either not known or not fully understood. The NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Code of Ethics represents a professional standard that must be upheld at all times when performing the duties of a professional personal fitness trainer.

Certified Personal Fitness Trainers must:

- 1) Provide the highest level of professional fitness training services on the basis of objective and unbiased research and scientific information in accordance with local, state and federal laws
- 2) Respect the rights, opinions and decisions of other certified personal fitness trainers and members of the general public
- 3) Provide a safe and enjoyable training environment through meaningful and appropriately challenging programming. Never create an environment whereby a client might feel threatened, intimidated, or fearful.
- 4) Distinguish between personal convictions and professional duties and responsibilities

by not allowing personal beliefs and biases to interfere with the greater goals of health, fitness and performance

- 5) Pursue efforts that serve the needs of clientele, fellow professionals and public members, not those which merely advance private and personal interest or gain
- 6) Accept responsibility for their own actions in success and in failure
- 7) Refer clients to appropriately qualified professionals when client need is greater than the trainer's abilities
- 8) Seek to research and learn on a daily and continuous basis in professional development and fitness practice applications
- 9) Maintain the confidentiality of personal client information and written records
- 10) Strive to provide fair and equitable treatment to all individuals and groups both personally and professionally

Reporting of Conduct Violations

In order to ensure the validity and professional meaningfulness of the NESTA PFT Certification and processes, certified and non-related or non-certified individuals are asked to report concerns of ethical or professional misconduct by NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers to the Executive Certification Board's Policies and Procedures Committee for consideration. This will help to ensure the professional fitness practice of NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers and fair treatment for public members, employers and clientele.

Report conduct violations and concerns by completing and submitting the Report of Conduct Violations Form available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>.

All involved parties either reporting ethical or professional misconduct or accused of such misconduct will remain private and undisclosed to any other individual or entity unless legal ramifications require such disclosure. Factual evidence must be discovered and revealed in order for any disciplinary action to be mandated by the Executive Certification Board.

All responses to the Policies and Procedures Committee regarding professional and ethical misconduct must be in writing. Correspondences from the ECB will also be provided in writing.

In the event a disciplinary action is determined necessary, the accused individual or party will have 30 days to file an appeal to the Policies and Procedures Committee for consideration.

The goal of the Policies and Procedures Committee is to ensure ethical and professional practice and conduct by setting forth fair and reasonable expectations for NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers and creating an avenue for enforcement of these expectations.

Cause for Disciplinary Action

In addition to the above mentioned ethics that must be upheld, certification will be denied, suspended or revoked should any of the following additional situations occur:

- 1) Falsification of personal information or NESTA documentation
- 2) Assistance of another exam candidate during an exam
- 3) Duplication or unauthorized possession of exam questions or answers
- 4) Unauthorized usage of NESTA logos, trademarks, or certification titles
- 5) Inability to fulfill recertification requirements and apply for recertification within the required time frame (four years from certification date)

Exam score and disciplinary action appeals

All appeals or concerns regarding the accuracy or validity of specific exam questions or in response to disciplinary actions from the NESTA Executive Certification Board should be directed in writing to:

NESTA Executive Certification Board
31441 Santa Margarita Pkwy, A-365
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2123 USA

Appeals will not be considered beyond 90 days from an Executive Board Decision to revoke or deny certification or beyond 90 days from exam date for exam score appeals.

NESTA will not discuss or respond to questions or concerns regarding the exam without written appeal. Appeals will not be considered for rescoring or for adjustments to completed exams. Appeals and concerns will be considered for future examination content only. For more information, please refer to the NESTA ECB Policies and Procedures Manual.

Appeals Policy

An individual who is found responsible through the disciplinary hearing process or who wishes to appeal a specific situation involving policy or procedure of the Executive Certification Board (ECB) may appeal the outcome of the hearing or situation. The appeal is not a rehearing of a case, and requires completion of the Appeals Form to the ECB specifically stating grounds for desired appeal and any supporting documentation or pertinent information.

The only situations in which appeal may be sought are as follows:

- Where new information has become available following the hearing or situational outcome that would likely change the decision for disciplinary sanction or action
- Where procedure errors within the hearing or certification process are alleged which substantially affect the fairness of the hearing or situational outcome
- Where the determination of responsibility is inconsistent with the weight of the information/evidence available

- Where individual believes there may have been an error or mistake in exam grading (hand scoring of an exam may be requested; however, payment of a separate hand scoring fee is required) Appeals will neither be heard on the basis of age eligibility (only applicants 18 years or older may sit for the PFT exam) nor in question involving specific examination questions for purposes of changing exam scores. Individuals less than 18 years of age may not sit for the PFT exam. Individuals found to have falsified documentation regarding their age will not be allowed to sit for future PFT exams for a period of 5 years. Determination by the ECB that age documentation has been falsified is not subject to appeal. As exams are offered continuously throughout the year, exam questions are reviewed at least annually by the ECB and are only subject to alteration or removal for future exams. The accuracy, validity, reliability or efficacy of exam questions is not reviewable as pertaining to past exams.

Appeals Process

The Policies and Procedures Committee (PPC) will review the appeal, hearing documentation, and any other information or evidence included in the hearing or specific situation. In cases of certification denial, suspension or revocation as a result of a disciplinary hearing, the accused individual(s) may make a written request by use of the Appeals Form to meet with the PPC in person or by means determined between the PPC chairperson and the accused (phone, internet email, or other reasonable means of communication). If granted, the accused individual(s) will meet privately (by predetermined communication format determined by the ECB and equitable to the individual) with the PPC or committee (of at least three people) designated by the ECB chairperson. This appeals committee may then consult with other ECB members or involved parties in order to substantiate appropriate grounds for the appeal and seek further information, evidence, or clarification. If the grounds for appeal are substantiated, the committee substantiating the appeal may determine a final resolution to the case or refer the case to the ECB chairperson for further review and/or scheduling of a new hearing. If the case is referred for a new hearing, the committee hearing and substantiating the appeal may recommend that alternative actions be considered, including, denial, suspension or revocation of certification. A written decision will be mailed (by either US Postal or electronic mail) to the candidate and ECB chairperson within 30 days or one calendar month from receipt of appeals form unless the individual submitting the appeal is otherwise notified by an ECB representative. Appeals will not be considered beyond appeals submission more than 90 days from an Executive Board Decision to revoke or deny certification or beyond 90 days from exam date for exam score appeals. NESTA will not discuss or respond to questions or concerns regarding the exam without written appeal.

Appeals will not be considered for rescoring of, or adjustments to administered exams. Appeals and concerns will be considered for future examination content at the sole discretion of the ECB. All appeals or concerns regarding the accuracy or validity of specific exam questions or in response to disciplinary actions from the NESTA Executive

Certification Board should be directed in writing to:

NESTA Executive Certification Board
31441 Santa Margarita Pkwy, A-365
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Reception of Certification

Certificates will be awarded to all exam candidates receiving a 71% or higher passing score on the PFT exam. Upon passing the NESTA Executive Certification Board (ECB) will authenticate scores and examinee eligibility. PFT Certificates can be expected within four weeks or 20 business days of passing the PFT examination.

Recertification and Continuing Education Requirements

NESTA PFT certified members will be required to complete 4.0 CEUs of continuing education over four years in order to maintain certification. A CEU is a Continuing Education Unit quantified in increments of 0.1 and is roughly equivalent to one hour of live workshop or distance learning study (programs will vary in CEU credit recognition). Updated information on acceptable coursework and live study for NESTA CEU recognition with CEU credit hours is available at <http://www.NESTApft.com/continuing-education-recertification.html>.

Additional policy and procedural information regarding appeals, disciplinary, certification and recertification policies can be found in the Policies and Procedures and Recertification Manuals available at <http://pft.nestacertified.com/nesta-personal-fitness-trainer-certification-forms/>.

NOTE: It is the policy of the NESTA Executive Certification Board that no exam candidate for personal fitness trainer certification be discriminated against based upon race, color, religion, creed, gender, age, national origin, disability, marital status, ancestry, sexual orientation, military discharge status, source of income, ethnicity, or any other status protected by law.

Number of Active NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers (PFT) on December 31, 2017: 6,990.