VASCULAR ACCESS CERTIFICATION
AND
RECERTIFICATION
CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

Expires 12/31/2024

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Section 1: General Information

Mission Statement

The mission of the Vascular Access Certification Corporation (VACC) is to certify vascular access healthcare professionals and related disciplines working in the field of vascular access through professional board certification.

Vision Statement

VACC is the pre-eminent certifying body for multi-disciplinary vascular access care, whose clinically valued certification results in improved patient safety, quality care, and positive outcomes.

What is Certification?

Certification is a voluntary process by which a nongovernmental agency formally recognizes specialized knowledge, skills and experience in a designated area. Certification establishes minimum competency standards in the specialty and offers recognition for those who have met the standards. A primary purpose of certification is the protection of the public through a means of measurement of current skills and knowledge through a standardized comprehensive examination.

Purpose of Certification / Recertification

The purpose of the certification and recertification process is to protect the public by:

1. Providing standardized measurement of current essential knowledge needed for persons practicing vascular access;
2. Encouraging individual growth and study, thereby promoting professionalism among professionals in vascular access and
3. Formally recognizing professionals in vascular access who fulfill the requirements for certification and recertification.

About the VA-BC™ Examination

The vascular access certification examination is the standardized measure of the basic knowledge, skills and abilities expected of professionals working in vascular access. The certification examination is offered two times per year at testing centers throughout the United States (to include US Territories), Canada, and select international sites. The certification exam is available only in English and all references used to develop it are US based and reflective of US clinical practice.

Certification through VACC is multidisciplinary in scope and includes the broad range of health care professionals and clinicians actively engaged in the practice of vascular access. Clinical professionals to include but not limited to; MD's, PA's, NP's, RN's, LPN/LVN's, RT's, RRT's, Infection Control, Educators, EMS professionals. Vascular Access Specialists provide care in many settings. Examples include but are not limited to acute care hospitals, outpatient settings, long term care facilities, homecare, Industry. Vascular Access Specialists are also university faculty, administrators or educators.

The certification exam is an objective, multiple-choice examination consisting of 150 questions (125 of these questions are used in computing the score, as discussed later in this handbook). The VA-BC™ exam test specifications are based on a Role Delineation Study, also known as a Job Task Analysis. This type of study is done every 4-5 years to assure that the examination content remains relevant and current to the specialty. The examination Test Specification is based on a Job Analysis done in 2020.

VACC is responsible for determining the examination content outline, specifications, maintaining an item bank of approved examination questions, approving the individual examination for administration, and setting the passing score for successful achievement.

Individual eligibility for admission to the examination is based on criteria set by VACC. Our testing company Prometric is responsible for the computerized testing sites, examination security, examination administration, scoring and statistical analysis of the examination.

The VA-BC™ examination is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NCCA accreditation signifies that the highest standards for establishing a valid, reliable, and secure certification process have been fulfilled.

Upon successful completion of the exam, the VA-BC™ credential is awarded for a three year period.

Eligibility Requirements

Practice in the area of vascular access is required for initial certification. Current practice in vascular access must use the knowledge and skills described in the content outline. The examination measures the basic knowledge, skills and abilities expected of professionals working in vascular access. Having a thorough and sound foundation of the knowledge and skills required for competent practice in vascular access is essential. Knowledge can be obtained through work experiences and independent learning, as well as through formal educational programs. These components afford the candidate exposure and professional development and education in the vascular access specialty. Each candidate should assess their own body of knowledge, skills and understanding of the specialty in deciding when to sit for the exam.

The Vascular Access Board Certification (VA-BC™) is designed for clinical professionals that actively work in the field of vascular access.

All Candidates must:

1. Have a minimum of a post-secondary education (diploma, Associate or Bachelor degrees, MD, PhD)

2. Be a credentialed healthcare professional in a clinical practice that requires skills in vascular access: (e.g.: MD, PA, NP, RN, LPN/LVN, RRT, RT, EMT, and healthcare educators that teach in these areas.)
   Rationale: The credential is intended for healthcare professionals and aims to be reflective of the work and experience needed to work in vascular access. Individuals who have not attained this minimum level of education would not have the training and experience to successfully pass the VA-BC exam.

3. Have a minimum of 1 year of professional experience. Practice in the area of vascular access is required for initial certification.
   Rationale: Based on the last job analysis and the detailed content outline, it was determined that the average vascular access professional would be able to obtain broad-enough experience with most of the content within 2,080 hours which is one-year of full time experience.

   The working definition of current clinical practice must include at least **two** (2) of the following activities:
   - Assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating the care and needs of patients and clients who require vascular access in the course of their care
   - Education of individuals in best practice as it pertains to vascular access
   - Development and revision of vascular access policies and procedures
   - Management of vascular access activities
   - Provision of consultation of vascular access activities.
   Rationale: Based on the latest job analysis, it was determined that the average vascular access professional would, in their day-to-day practice, engage in at least 2 of these 5 activities.

4. Attest they meet **one** of the following criteria:
   - Health Care Professional in the field of Vascular Access involved in assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating the care and needs of patients and clients who require vascular access in the course of their care.

- Professional working in a field that complements Vascular Access, such as Healthcare Educators, Administrators, Infection Control Professionals, Nutrition Support Professionals.

Rationale: As a multidisciplinary credential, these criteria allow for faculty who train vascular access professionals and individuals practicing in complementary fields to be eligible to sit for the exam.

- Self-employed individuals must meet the same practice criteria as above.

Certification is open to all qualified candidates; AVA membership is not required. Note-This certification is NOT intended for sales, marketing, or other non-clinical industry professionals, and all candidates must attest that they meet education and practice requirements, which is subject to verification by the Vascular Access Certification Corporation. For industry professionals interested in furthering their knowledge of Vascular Access, please review the Vascular Access Industry Partner™ Program found under the Industry Program tab on the VACC web site **www.vacert.org**

Eligibility Appeal

Candidates who believe that they have met the eligibility requirements as stated may appeal decisions of ineligibility. However, the eligibility requirements themselves may not be appealed. Appeals letters requesting reconsideration of applications must indicate the specific findings of ineligibility being contested and provide evidence of meeting those findings. Letters must be received by VACC with 15 days of notification of ineligibility.

Examination Dates and Fees

Application Dates	Early Registration *For December Testing* September 1-20 *For June Testing* March 1-20	Final Registration *For December Testing* September 21 – October 15 *For June Testing* March 21 – April 15
Exam Application *AVA Member Discounted Rate*	$400 *$300*	$475 *$375*
Retest (after failed attempt) *AVA Member Discounted Rate*	$375 *$275*	$375 *$275*

Late Fee (after posted deadline) — **Online Accepted Only** *AVA Member Discounted Rate*		$550 *$450*
Late Fee for RETEST Applications *AVA Member Discounted Rate*		$450 *$350*
** Mailed or faxed applications require a $25 administrative fee.		

The application fee may be paid by cashier's check, company check, money order, and personal check, MasterCard, Visa, Discover or American Express in US dollars. **Cash is not accepted.** Make checks payable to **Vascular Access Certification Corporation**.

Mailed or faxed applications must be in the VACC office by the registration cut off dates (both early and final dates apply) postmark date is not the date. All mailed or faxed applications will be subject to a $25 administrative fee.

There will be a $30 processing fee on any returned checks

Testing Locations

The VACC examination is computer-based and offered at Prometric testing sites located throughout the US (to include US Territories), Canada, and some international locations. The exam may also be taken via live remote proctoring. Candidates may take the exam Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays, during the entire month of June or December. Upon notification of acceptance, the candidate will schedule the exam with Prometric, the test vendor. Information on the scheduling of the exam will be included with the candidate's Authorization to Test letter (ATT). To find a testing center near you go to http://www.prometric.com/vacc and click on the "Locate a test Center" button.

Section 2: Application

Application Guidelines

Submission guidelines
- Online applications are preferred.
- All communication with applicants will be handled via e-mail only.

- Once an application has been reviewed and accepted, candidates will be sent an Authorization to Test letter (ATT) via email. Instructions on how to schedule an exam with Prometric will be included with the ATT.
- Mailed in applications must be typed or clearly hand-printed and be complete with registration fee and signatures on the Application and Confidentiality Statement. Incomplete applications will be returned unprocessed.
- An acknowledgement of receipt of the application will be provided via e-mail within 7 business days of receipt of the application in the VACC office.
- Once the on-line registration process with Prometric has been completed, an electronic confirmation will be sent to the candidate containing the candidate's name, identification number, address of the test center, the date of the test, and name of the test. If the candidate is registering at 1-800-899-3985, the candidate must give the Prometric operator his or her email address to receive an electronic confirmation. If a candidate loses the confirmation or has not received confirmation two weeks before the test date, he or she should contact VACC at 414-231-8222.
- There will be a $30 fee for all returned checks

If mailing, it is recommended that the application and payment be sent via USPS certified mail or via a traceable mailing method to:

Vascular Access Certification Corporation
555 E. Wells St.
Suite 1100
Milwaukee, WI 53202-3823
Phone: 414-231-8222
Fax: 414-276-3349

Special Accommodations

VACC will provide reasonable accommodations without charge for test candidates with disabilities that are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Candidates requesting special accommodations must submit the Special Accommodations Request Form found in the candidate handbook by mail or fax within 5 business days after submitting the online application, or with a paper application, submitted by mail or fax. All Special Accommodation Request forms are reviewed by VACC to ensure that it has been filled out and signed by a licensed professional or certified specialist who can evaluate and recommend the specific testing aids, or modifications being requested. After reviewing the request is sent to the testing company to make sure that they can accommodate the request. Applicants denied accommodation due to a determination that the request is not reasonable or will in some way compromise the integrity, validity and reliability of the examination may appeal the decision in accordance with the VACC

appeals procedures. All special accommodation forms and related documentation are confidential and will not be released without the written consent of the candidate.

If VACC approves the request, the candidate will receive a Notice of Approval from VACC along with the Authorization to Test letter. Approved ADA candidates must call Prometric's special conditions coordinator at 800-226-9406 to schedule an exam appointment.

Section 3: What to Expect on Test Day

Examination Schedule

Candidates must report to the test center no later than 30 minutes before the scheduled time of the exam. You have two and one half (2 ½) hours to take the exam. In addition, there is a separate 15-minute tutorial at the beginning of the exam and a separate 15-minute survey following the exam. There are no scheduled breaks.

Required Identification

Candidates must present a valid, non-expired form of identification prior to being admitted into the exam center or beginning a live remote proctored exam. The identification document must:

- Be government-issued (e.g., driver's license, passport, state-issued identification card or military identification card);
- Contain both a current photo and the candidate's signature; and
- Have a **first** and **last** name that exactly matches the name on the confirmation ticket (including designations such as "Jr." and "III"), middle names/initials are not required.
- Candidates who cannot provide the identification listed above, should contact Prometric before scheduling their exam appointment to arrange an alternative way to meet this requirement.

Important: Failure to provide appropriate identification at the time of the exam is considered a missed appointment. If a candidate misses an appointment, the candidate's exam fee will be forfeited, and the candidate will be required to register again and pay another examination fee. **If your name changes for any reason prior to your scheduled exam, you must contact VACC BEFORE going to the testing center, failure to do so will result in a missed appointment.**

Security Measures

Several security measures will be enforced during the exam administration. Be aware that you will be observed at all times while taking the exam. This observation may include direct observation by test center staff, as well as video recording of your testing session.

Exams cannot be viewed, copied, or studied by any individuals. Copying or retaining test questions or transmitting the test questions in any form to other individuals, organizations,

or study groups will result in forfeiting your right to have your exam scored and may result in civil prosecution and disciplinary action by VACC.

Testing Center Rules

To ensure that all candidates are tested under equally favorable conditions, the following regulations and procedures will be observed at each test center. Prometric reserves the right to audiotape and videotape any test session.

1. You may not use your own written notes, published materials, or other testing aids while at the testing center or during your test appointment. Any materials that you are allowed to use during the test will be provided to you by Prometric at the test site on the day of testing.
2. You will be continuously monitored by video, physical walk-throughs and the observation window during your test.
3. You must present valid (unexpired) and acceptable identification in order to take your test. (See "Identification required" in the above section.)
4. You are required to sign out on the test center roster each time you leave the test room. You must also sign back in and show your identification to the test center administrator in order to be readmitted to the test room.
5. You are prohibited from communicating, publishing, reproducing, or transmitting any part of your test, in any form or by any means, verbal, written, or electronic, for any purpose.
6. You must not talk to other candidates or refer to their screens, testing materials, or written notes in the test room.
7. You are allowed to bring your own soft earplugs or use test center-supplied sound dampening headphones in the test room.
8. Any clothing or jewelry items allowed to be worn in the test room must remain on your person at all times. Removed clothing or jewelry items must be stored in your locker.
9. You must not bring any personal/unauthorized items into the test room. Such items include but are not limited to outerwear, hats, food, drinks, purses, briefcases, notebooks, pagers, watches, cellular telephones, recording devices, and photographic equipment. Weapons are not allowed at any Prometric Test center. You will be asked to empty and turn your pockets inside out prior to every entry into the test room to confirm that you have no prohibited items.
10. You will be scanned with a metal detector wand prior to every entry into the test room. If you refuse, you cannot test.
11. You must return all materials issued to you by the test center administrator at the end of your test.
12. You are not allowed to use any electronic devices or phones during breaks.
13. Your test has one scheduled 15-minute break. Once you have answered questions 1-50, completed your review of your answers, and acknowledged you

have completed section one, the test timer will stop for up to 15 minutes. After acknowledging that you have completed the first section of the exam you will no longer be able to access the first section of the test content, including making changes to your answers. If you choose to take the scheduled break you will leave the testing room, adhering to all security protocols. If you have not returned and started the second section (questions 51-100) of the exam prior to the expiration of the 15 minutes, the exam clock will restart.

Unscheduled breaks are also permitted. The test timer will continue to count down during an unscheduled break.

Breaks are only permitted in order to access the bathroom or lockers. Candidates are not permitted to leave the test center during the test. The only exception is where restrooms are not located in the testing center and the candidate may leave only for the purpose of accessing the restroom, but first must notify the test center administrator.

14. Repeated or lengthy departures from the test room for unscheduled breaks will be reported by the test center administrator.
15. If you need access to an item stored in the test center locker during a break such as food, water or medicine, you must inform the test center administrator before you retrieve the item. During the test you are not allowed to access notes, books, reference materials or electronic devices.
16. You must conduct yourself in a civil manner at all times when on the premises of the test center. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards the test center administrator, or any other staff member of the test center, is considered misconduct and will be reported to the IRS.
17. To protect the privacy of all testers, the test center administrator can neither confirm nor deny if any particular individual is present or scheduled at the test center.
18. Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the test center.
19. **U.S. Candidates Only**- If you are wearing eyeglasses you will be required to remove them for visual inspection to ensure they don't contain a recording device. Large jewelry items must be stored in your locker due to concerns over concealed recording devices.

If questions arise. Test center administrators are not allowed to answer any questions pertaining to the examination content. If you do not understand a question on the examination, you should answer the question to the best of your ability.

Failure to follow any of these security procedures may result in the disqualification of your examination. The IRS takes candidate misconduct,

including cheating, very seriously. If the IRS determines that a candidate is culpable of misconduct or has cheated, the candidate will be subject to a variety of penalties including, but not limited to, invalidation of test scores, disqualification from subsequent test administrations, and civil and criminal penalties. In cases where candidate misconduct or cheating is discovered after a candidate has obtained an Enrolled Agent card, the IRS may rescind the card.

VACC utilizes the professional test provider, Prometric, and all testing center rules are regulated by them. More information about specific Prometric testing center rules can be found at **what to expect on test day**.

Live Remote Proctored Exam Rules

To ensure that all candidates are tested under equally favorable conditions, the following regulations and procedures will be observed when conducting the exam via live remote proctor. Failure to follow any of these security procedures may result in the disqualification of the candidate's examination.

The following are the testing rules enforced during live remote proctored administrations:
- All candidates must have valid, non-expired, government-issued photo ID to be admitted to the exam;
- Your office or home setting must meet the following requirements:
    - Testing location must be indoors (walled), well lit, free from background noise and disruptions.
    - No third party may be present in the room or enter the room for the duration of the exam. If this occurs, your exam will be terminated and/or your results invalidated.
    - Your workstation and surrounding area must be free of pens, paper, electronic devices, etc.
    - No content that could potentially provide an unfair advantage during your exam, including that posted on walls or within your immediate area, should be present during your exam session.
    - Two tissues are permitted at workstation, but must be inspected by the Proctor prior to start of exam.
- You will be required to show your workstation and surrounding area.
- You will be required to empty and turn all pockets inside-out and raise shirt sleeves above your wrists prior to every entry into the online test. If you are wearing eyeglasses you will be required to remove them for visual inspection to ensure they don't contain a recording device.
- Large jewelry items must be removed from your person prior to and throughout the duration of the exam.

- If you have long hair that covers your ears, you will be asked to pull your hair back to ensure nothing is attached to your ear that could provide an unfair advantage (such as a Bluetooth earpiece).
- Leaving the camera view while the exam is in progress is strictly prohibited unless otherwise specified by the client sponsor.
- Breaks are not scheduled during the exam. Unscheduled breaks may be taken on a case-by-case basis. Candidates taking a break will not be able to return to previous items on the exam.
- The following items are prohibited while taking your remote proctored exam:
  - Unauthorized personal items may not be accessible while testing. Such items include, but are not limited to: outerwear, hats, food, drinks, purses, bags or briefcases, notebooks, watches, cell phones, electronic devices, or wearable technology.
  - Eating, drinking, smoking, and chewing gum are prohibited during the exam.
  - Written notes, published materials, and other testing aids are strictly prohibited.
  - Light clothing items removed for comfort such as sweaters, suit jackets, scarves, etc., must be hung on the examinee's chair, not placed in laps or on the workstation desktop. Outerwear such as heavy coats, parkas, raincoats, etc., is not permitted in the immediate testing area.

More information on system requirements and preparing for a live remote proctored exam, please refer to the [ProProctor user guide](#).

If Questions Arise

If at any time during the test a candidate has a problem with his or her computer or needs the test center administrator for any reason, the candidate should raise his or her hand. Test center administrators are not allowed to answer any questions pertaining to the test content. If a candidate does not understand a question on the test, he or she should answer the question to the best of his or her ability. VACC will investigate any testing irregularities that are reported by the candidate or testing company. Candidates must report all issues to the Testing Center Administrator (TCA) before leaving the test center. Issues can be reported on the exam exit survey but must be brought to the attention of the TCA during the exam/before leaving the test center.

Group Irregularities

Unlike cases of individual candidate misconduct, occasionally testing irregularities occur that affect a group of test takers. Such problems include, without limitation, administrative errors, defective equipment or materials, improper access to test content and/or the unauthorized general availability of test content, as well as other disruptions of test

administrations (e.g. natural disasters and other emergencies). When group-testing irregularities occur, Prometric will conduct an investigation to provide information to VACC. Based on this information, VACC may direct Prometric either not to score the test or to cancel the test score. When it is appropriate to do so, the Board will arrange with Prometric to give affected test takers the opportunity to take the test again as soon as possible, without charge. Affected test takers will be notified of the reasons for the cancellation and their options for retaking the test. The appeal process does not apply to group testing irregularities.

Section 4: Certification Policies

Changing Test Appointment within the Testing Window

If you wish to change your exam date or time, you must do so no later than five (5) calendar days prior to your appointment using the Reschedule/Cancel option on the Prometric web site **prometric.com/vacc** or by contacting Prometric's automated voice response system at: 1-888-736-0134 (in North America) or by contacting Prometric's Regional Registration Center (outside North America); the Web is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You may reschedule your appointment for no fee if it is 30 or more days before the scheduled test date. There is a $25 charge payable to Prometric to reschedule or cancel 5 to 29 days prior to your exam date. If it is less than five days prior to end of your testing window or test date, you will be unable to reschedule or cancel. You must appear and sit for the exam or all fees will be forfeited.

Candidates may cancel or change a test appointment as follows:	Fee:
30 or more days before scheduled test date	No fee
5-29 days before scheduled test date	$25 (payable to Prometric at the time the change/ cancellation is made)
Less than 5 days before test date	Candidate forfeits all fees

Transferring To the Next Available Testing Window

Candidates can request to transfer rather than withdraw to the next examination administration window. A transfer allows the candidate to postpone their test to the next testing cycle without losing all of their fees. (restrictions may apply).

Candidates can request to transfer if they have canceled their examination appointment with Prometric (if applicable) within the specified timeframe (at least 5 days before the scheduled appointment).

To request a transfer, candidates must submit a written or online request to VACC. Request forms can be found online at **transfer form**. Remember that candidates with a scheduled examination appointment must first cancel their appointment by the deadline date before requesting a transfer.

All requests for a transfer must be received on or before the last day of the examination administration window to be eligible for a transfer.

Requests for transfers received after the last day of the examination administration window will not be processed.

Candidates who do not sit for the examination at the next testing window forfeit all fees. In the event of circumstances outside the control of the candidate (ie. Injury, sickness, inclement weather), the candidate may request a subsequent transfer by contacting the VACC Business Office in writing at info@vacert.org. Requests for a subsequent transfer will be reviewed and decided on by the Executive Director. If a subsequent transfer is approved, the candidate must follow the same procedures as the initial transfer.

Candidates who are requesting and approved for a transfer will be required to pay a **$25 reprocessing fee**. It is the candidates' responsibility to supply VACC with any contact information changes **PRIOR** to the next application acceptance date. In addition, if the fees for a subsequent examination have changed, the candidates must pay the differences in fees.

Recertification candidates who apply to renew by testing and subsequently transfer to a test date that falls after the expiration of their credential must meet all eligibility criteria for initial certification and may not use the credential after it expires.

Cancel Policy/ Requesting a Refund

Candidates who have scheduled an examination appointment as well as those who have not scheduled an appointment with Prometric may withdraw from the VA-BC™ examination and request a refund. The steps for withdrawing/cancelling and requesting a refund are below.

Step One

If you have a scheduled examination appointment, you must first cancel your appointment with Prometric **at least 5 calendar days** before your scheduled appointment date (additional fee may apply). To cancel your examination appointment, contact Prometric at **prometric.com/vacc**. **If you fail to cancel your exam within 5 calendar days, you will forfeit all fees**. After you have canceled your examination appointment, proceed to Step 2.

If you have not scheduled your exam appointment, proceed to step two.

Step Two
To withdraw/cancel from the examination and obtain a refund, all candidates must notify VACC of their intent to withdraw by submitting a completed copy of the Request for Refund form found online at **refund form** by mail, email, or fax. Candidates will receive a refund minus a **$50 administrative fee**. All refund requests must be received (not postmarked) on or before the last day of the examination administration window in order to be eligible for a refund. Requests for refunds received after the last day of the examination administration window will not be processed.

Candidates who submit a Request for Refund but did not cancel their examination appointment with Prometric or did not cancel at least five days before their scheduled appointment date will forfeit all fees.

Requests for refunds received after the last day of the examination administration window will not be processed.

Refunds will be issued no later than 4 weeks after the examination window closes and will be made in the same manner the payment was made in.

No Show/Late Arrival

Candidates will not be permitted to take the exam if they present themselves less than fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled start time for taking the exam and are refused admittance to the exam.

Candidates who do not appear for their scheduled examination appointment, or who do not cancel their appointment within the specified time frame (at least 72 hours before the schedule appointment) will be considered no-shows and will forfeit all fees.

Candidates who do not have a scheduled appointment with Prometric and who do not request a refund on or before the last date of the examination administration window will be considered no-shows and will forfeit all fees.

Emergencies

Every attempt will be made to administer all examinations as scheduled. However, should any problems occur due to the testing vendor, the exam will be rescheduled at no cost to the candidate.

If the exam is unable to be administered or if any candidate is unable to arrive at a designated exam site because of inclement weather, terrorist acts, a natural disaster, or other unforeseen emergencies beyond control of the candidate as determined by the Vascular Access Certification Corporation, the candidate may receive an extended testing window (to be determined on an individual basis) and be allowed to reschedule the examination without being charged a re-examination fee. Candidates must contact VACC as soon as possible if they are unable to take the exam due to an emergency.

Candidates that cancel due to illness must be prepared to show proof from a medical provider.

Section 5: The VA-BC™ Examination Test Specification Structure (Blueprint)

VACC offers the VA-BC™ certification examination to professionals working in the field of vascular access.

The test consists of 150 test questions. Of these, 125 questions will be used to calculate your test score. The remaining 25 items serve as pretest questions, and do not affect your score. Pretest questions are administered to evaluate the item's difficulty level for possible inclusion as a scored question in future exams. These pretest questions are dispersed throughout the exam and cannot be identified by the candidate. The test content outline identifies the areas that are included in the examination. The percentage and number of scored questions in each of the major categories is shown below.

Candidates have two and one half (2 ½) hours to take the exam. In addition, there is a separate 15-minute tutorial at the beginning of the exam and a separate 15 minute survey following the exam. There are no scheduled breaks.

A detailed content outline serves as the basis for the development of the examination and its test specifications. A valid examination accurately reflects the knowledge and skills required for competent practice. All questions appearing on the examinations have been validated using accepted psychometric rating scales. Content expert volunteers in the field of vascular access develop the questions on the examination. The Test Committee reviews and finalizes all questions for the examination. Each stage of the VACC examination development is an intensive peer review process. Each scored examination question has

been verified for accuracy and referenced to a published source that is not more than five years old. Information found in references that may be slightly older than five years have been deemed to still be current and relevant.

Content Outline

The test specifications that follow are based on a job analysis—a survey that determines the activities and job requirements for a vascular access clinician. To ensure the exam is current, a job analysis is conducted approximately every five years. The findings of VACC's most recent job analysis, conducted in 2020, were implemented with the June 2021 exam. The major purpose of this job analysis was to identify the tasks and knowledge that are important for competent performance by professionals who are involved in vascular access. The development of an examination is based on validated tasks and knowledge identified through the job analysis process.

The use of a job analysis (also known as practice analysis; role and function study; or role delineation study) to define the content domain(s) is a critical component in establishing the content validity of the credential. Content validity refers to the extent to which the content covered by an examination is representative of the tasks and knowledge of a job (tasks, knowledge, skills, or abilities).

The exam consists of four-option, multiple-choice questions written at three different cognitive levels:

Recall: The ability to recall or recognize specific information.

Application: The ability to comprehend, relate, or apply knowledge to new or changing situations.

Analysis: The ability to analyze and synthesize information, to determine solutions, and/or to evaluate the usefulness of a solution.

These categories represent an organized way to identify the performance that clinicians will use on the job.

The content outline is presented below by Domain and then as a complete exam blueprint.

Category	Domains of Practice	Percentage	# of questions
I	Clinical Knowledge and Application	65%	81
II	Interpersonal and Communication Skills	15%	18
III	Professional Development	10%	13
IV	Legal and Ethical Considerations	10%	13

Content Area	Percentage Weight	Number of Items
Vascular Access Certification Corporation (VACC) **Vascular Access Board Certified (VA-BC™) Examination** **2020 Job Analysis** **Approved Test Specification**		
DOMAIN CATEGORY I: Clinical Knowledge and Application	**65%**	**81**
A. Device Assessment and Selection		
1. Central venous access devices		
2. Peripheral intravenous devices		
3. Dialysis, apheresis and aquapheresis catheters		
4. Intraosseous devices		
5. Arterial catheters		
6. Pulmonary artery catheters		
7. Device characteristics (e.g., single versus multi-lumen devices, optimal insertion and tip location)		
B. Patient Assessment		
1. Vascular pathology (e.g., impact of disease processes on vascular access)		
2. Device selection (e.g., infusion therapy, alternative to IV placement, vesicants and osmolality)		
3. Patient specific characteristics (e.g., compromised skin integrity, product reaction) and resources to maintain vascular access devices		
4. Imaging technology (e.g., ultrasound, transillumination, fluoroscopy / venogram, chest x-ray)		
C. Preparation		
1. Infection prevention procedures, concepts and principles (e.g., sterile field, aseptic non-touch technique [ANTT], common pathogens)		
2. Anatomy and physiology		
3. Growth and development implications		

Content Area	Percentage Weight	Number of Items
DOMAIN CATEGORY I (continued): Clinical Knowledge and Application	**65%**	**81**
D. Insertion		
1. Vascular access device and insertion components		
2. Insertion techniques (e.g., Modified Seldinger)		
3. Flushing and locking solutions / procedures		
4. Imaging technology (e.g., ultrasound, infra-red, transillumination)		
5. Laboratory values relevant to device placement and maintenance		
6. Tip location and confirmation systems		
7. Engineered securement devices		
8. Complications and emergency interventions (e.g., inadvertent arterial puncture, pneumothorax, catheter tip malposition, nerve injury)		
E. Care and Maintenance of Vascular Access		
1. Insertion / exit site assessment		
2. Lumen patency and catheter clearance (e.g., flushing protocol, occlusion therapy)		
3. Infusion equipment and add-on supplies (e.g., needleless connector)		
4. Dressing change procedure		
5. Patient / caregiver education		
6. Care plan throughout the healthcare continuum (e.g., catheter insertion information, care and maintenance instructions, patient restrictions)		
7. Vascular access device removal (e.g., removal length of PICC, removal complications, patient tolerance of removal procedure)		
F. Troubleshooting, Complications, and Interventions		
1. Post-insertion risks and complications (e.g., extravasation, thrombosis, infection, catheter tip migration, occlusion, nerve damage, phlebitis)		
2. Pharmacologic interventions (e.g., catheter clearance, antibiotic lock, ethanol lock, extravasation treatment)		
3. Catheter repair / exchange		
4. Other complications (e.g., central vein occlusion, internal fracture, compromised skin integrity)		

Content Area	Percentage Weight	Number of Items
DOMAIN CATEGORY II: Interpersonal and Communication Skills	**15%**	**18**
A. Interpersonal Communication		
1. Communication with patient / caregiver (e.g., risks, benefits and alternatives; device care; infection prevention)		
2. Communication with patient / caregiver with additional needs (e.g., developmental/ cognitive deficit, psychosocial concerns)		
3. Cultural competency (e.g., cultural and religious differences, family involvement, language barrier)		
4. Collaboration with patient's care team		
B. Mentoring and education		
1. Educational / staff development opportunities (e.g., quality improvement, hospital committees, early assessment for vessel preservation)		
2. Infection control measures and techniques		
DOMAIN III: Professional Development	**10%**	**13**
A. Evidence-based Practice and Continuing Education		
1. Evidence-based practice guidelines (e.g., AVA, INS, MAGIC, KDOQI, ACCP, SHEA)		
2. Process improvement initiatives and outcome evaluation (e.g., implementation of new techniques and / or products)		
3. Professional practice and development (e.g., seminars, webinars, conferences, certification)		
4. Critical analysis of published research (e.g., research methodologies)		

Content Area	Percentage Weight	Number of Items
DOMAIN CATEGORY IV: Legal and Ethical Considerations	**10%**	**13**
A. Legal Considerations		
1. Professional codes of conduct, professional guidelines, scope of practice and standards of care		
2. Legal principles in the practice of vascular access (e.g., consent, liability, HIPAA)		
3. Documentation requirements		
4. Manufacturer's guidelines for product use (e.g., Instructions for Use [IFUs], expiration dates, off-label use)		
B. Ethical Considerations		
1. Patient advocacy (e.g., patient preferences, end of life care)		
2. Reporting requirements (e.g., MAUDE database, Joint Commission [JC], state health department)		
3. Fiscal responsibility (e.g., accurate recording of charges, use of supplies and equipment, use of time)		
Total	**100%**	**125 items**

Exam References

Selected References for the VACC Examination

These references were used to develop test items; this list is not intended to be all-inclusive. This reference list contains journals, textbooks, and web sites that include information of significance to vascular access. Exam questions are written from the core references. After carefully reviewing the test blueprint and identifying learning needs, exam candidates should identify those references determined to be most valuable based on their individual learning needs.

1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/index.html

2. Association for Vascular Access Pediatric Special Interest Group. *Best Practice Guidelines in the Care and Maintenance of Pediatric Central Venous Catheters.* 2nd Edition, Association for Vascular Access. 2015; Herriman UT.

3. Association for Vascular Access. *Resource Guide for Vascular Access.* www.avainfo.org/page/resourceguide Association for Vascular Access. 2021; Herriman, UT.

4. CDC 2011 Guidelines. www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/bsi-guidelines-2011.pdf

5. Infusion Nurses Society. *Infusion Therapy Standards of Practice.* 2021; Norwood, MA.

6. Institute for Healthcare Improvement. www.IHI.org

7. The Joint Commission (2023). *National Patient Goals.* Retrieved from www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/NationalPatientSafetyGoals

8. National Kidney Foundation. *Kidney Disease Outcomes Quality Initiative Guidelines.* Retrieved from https://www.kidney.org/professionals/guidelines/guidelines_commentaries/vascular-access

9. Oncology Nursing Society. *Access Device Standards of Practice for Oncology Nursing.* 2017; Pittsburgh, PA.

10. OSHA. *Bloodborne Pathogens and Needlestick Prevention.* Retrieved from https://www.osha.gov/bloodborne-pathogens

11. Gorski L. *Philips's Manual of I.V. Therapeutics: Evidence-Based Practice for Infusion Therapy.* 7th Edition, 2018; Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company.

12. The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America. *Strategies to Prevent Central Line–Associated Bloodstream Infections in Acute Care Hospitals: 2014 Update.* Retrieved from www.pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24915204/

13. Weinstein SM, Hagle ME. *Plumer's principles & practice of intravenous therapy,* 9th Edition, 2014; Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

14. Moreau, Nancy. *Vessel Health and Preservation: The Right Approach for Vascular Access*, 2019, Springer. Retrieved from: www.springer.com/gp/book/9783030031480

Section 6: Studying for the Exam

Steps to Prepare for the Exam

Candidates should prepare thoroughly prior to taking the VA-BC™ examination. VACC does not offer study materials for the VA-BC exam, but we do provide everything possible to help you walk into the testing center prepared to succeed. Study ideas can be found on the VACC web site https://www.vacert.org/how-to-study/

1. Download and fully review the Candidate Handbook. You are responsible for knowing all the information contained in it.
2. Review the Test Content Outline (Test Blueprint) to familiarize yourself with the content areas that will be on the test. Pay attention to how each content area is weighted, as the weight corresponds with the percentage of scored items on that topic. Identify which areas are your strengths and weaknesses and focus your studies on your weaker areas.
3. Use the Certification Readiness Tool found on the VACC web site here https://www.vacert.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/crt.pdf to rate your relative knowledge and experience as an indicator of how prepared you are for each section and where to invest of your study focus.
4. Review references that are used to create many of the items on the exam.
5. Take the Practice Questions to practice answering questions in a computer-based format and become familiar with the type of questions you can expect to find on the actual VA-BC™ exam found here https://www.vacert.org/practice-test/ .
6. Review the Certification Toolkit https://www.vacert.org/certification-toolkit/

Review Courses

Several organizations offer courses on preparing for the exam. Some certification candidates find it helpful to organize study groups. Please refer to the Content Outline in section 5 of this Handbook for specific topic areas to study.

VACC does not conduct certification review courses or recommend specific courses.

When evaluating a potential course, remember the quality of the course may be related to the ability and expertise of the individuals who conduct it. VACC cannot be responsible for errors in the content of any review course.

Be cautious about courses or resources that claim or imply direct knowledge of specific VACC examination content. VACC does not release test items, except for sample items published on the VACC website. Additionally, the subject matter experts who develop VACC tests are not permitted to conduct review courses while working on test development, or for two years after.

There are a variety of tools to aid in preparation, including practice tests and preparation courses.

References

Section 5 of this handbook contains a list of core references used to develop the questions and that can be used to prepare for the examination. These references should not be considered the only possible study option, nor should examination candidates feel like they need to read all of the references. After carefully reviewing the test structure and identifying individual learning needs, examination candidates should identify additional references and study opportunities as necessary.

Section 7: Examination Results

Examination Results Report

You will receive an official result report via e-mail within one (1) hour of completing your exam to the e-mail address that Prometric has on file. The result report provides information on whether you passed or failed the examination. You will NOT receive a result report by mail.
The "Total Scaled Score" will determine whether a candidate has passed the exam. This scaled score is statistically derived from the candidate's raw score. The passing score reflects the minimum amount of knowledge a committee of experts has determined to be appropriate for certification, according to accepted testing development guidelines.
Scores will not be reported if misconduct at the test center is reported or if confidentiality is broken.

Pass
If you pass the exam your score report will indicate PASS. Retain your results report for future reference.

In addition, passing candidates will receive a digital badge by e-mail prior to the beginning of the certification period. The digital badge will be sent to the primary e-mail address provided in the application. Your digital badge will contain a PDF of your certificate and wallet card that can be printed for free and or shared immediately.
You may begin to use your VA-BC™ designation on the first of the month after passing your exam; July 1 for tests taken in June and January 1 for tests taken in December.

Fail

For individuals who fail the exam, the report provided with diagnosis information will help identify strengths and weaknesses in each of the content areas covered by the VACC examination. Candidates should use the information to identify areas where additional study may be needed before retesting. The diagnostic level definitions are:

- **Proficient** – The score obtained is at or above the acceptable level, demonstrating an acceptable understanding of the content. A review of this area may be helpful prior to re-taking the exam.
- **Marginal** – The score obtained is marginally unacceptable, indicating that understanding of this content does not appear to be strong. Additional study is suggested.
- **Deficient** – The score obtained is below an acceptable level. Substantial study of this content area is recommended prior to re-taking the exam.

Score reports will carry the following disclaimer regarding how to interpret these definitions: "Please note that due to the small number of items at the domain level, the domain diagnostic level description information derived from your test result may not be reliable and is intended only for providing guidance in case you want to take the test again."

Due to the need to maintain test security, examination questions and answers will not be released to candidates.

How to Interpret the Score

How is the cut-score (the passing score) determined for a test?

A criterion-referenced or standard-setting procedure and expert judgment are used to identify the passing point. A candidate's ability to pass the exam depends on the amount of knowledge he or she displays, not on the performance of other individuals taking the exam.

The reason for calculating scaled scores is that different forms or versions of the exam may vary in difficulty. As new versions of the exams are introduced, a certain number of questions in each content area are replaced by new questions. These changes may cause one version of the exam to be slightly easier or harder than another version.
To adjust for these differences in difficulty, a statistical procedure called "equating" is used. The goal of equating is to ensure fairness to all candidates. In the equating process, the minimum raw score (number of correctly answered questions) required to equal the

passing scaled score is statistically adjusted (or equated). For instance, if the exam is determined to be more difficult than the base form of the exam, then the minimum raw score required to pass will be slightly lower than the base passing raw score. If the exam is a bit easier, then the passing raw score will be slightly higher. Equating helps ensure that the passing scaled score represents the same level of knowledge, regardless of which version of the exam a candidate takes.

You need a total test scale score of at least 90 to pass the VACC examination. Scores are determined by converting the number of questions answered correctly to a scale score that ranges from 30 to 140. **PLEASE NOTE THAT A SCALE SCORE IS NEITHER THE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED CORRECTLY NOR THE PERCENTAGE OF QUESTIONS ANSWERED CORRECTLY.**

Cancelled Scores

VACC is concerned with only reporting valid scores. On rare occasions, circumstances may invalidate test scores. VACC retains the right to cancel or withhold any exam scores. Invalid scores fall into two categories:

1. Doubts may be raised by the test center administrator or another candidate of suspected misconduct or cheating by a candidate. A candidate is expected to cooperate with any investigation to determine if the score is invalid.

2. In rare instances, there may be a problem with the examination materials or the test site; such situations will be investigated. The exam will not be invalid in these instances.

In addition, VACC may cancel or invalidate any candidate's score if, upon investigation, violation of the testing and/or candidate validation policies is established.

Re-examination

Only candidates that have failed the exam may repeat it. Candidates cannot retake the exam during the same test cycle but must wait until the next regular scheduled testing cycle in the months of June or December for a total of 2 times per year. Candidates will need to submit a new application and the retest examination fee if they wish to pursue certification. There is no limit on the number of times a candidate may take the VACC examination. However, to avoid over exposure to exam items and to provide additional time to study and prepare for the exam candidates who do not pass the examination after three consecutive attempts are required to wait a minimum of one year before retaking the examination. The one year waiting period will allow for the development and introduction of enough new items into the item bank to prevent the exam taker from encountering a significant number of the same items during their next attempt. If the three failures occurred over a period of more than three years, the candidate may retake the examination without waiting a minimum of one year.

Section 8: Recertification Guidelines

The purpose of requiring certification renewal is to provide a means for expanding knowledge and reinforcing skills through participation in professional development activities to ensure the VA-BC's continued competence relevant to vascular access. The requirements for recertification support VACC's commitment to enhance the continued competence of the individual and validate, through certification, a specialized body of knowledge for professionals working in the field of vascular access. VACC has developed a three-year recertification cycle to ensure that the VA-BC professional is exposed to new developments, technological innovations and clinical advancements within the field of vascular access. Maintaining an active certification status through recertification is the way in which certified professionals demonstrate to the public that they have current and up-to-date knowledge and experience. These opportunities not only lead to enhanced knowledge for the certified vascular access professional but ultimately, to quality patient care.

General Guidelines

The VA-BC™ credential remains valid for three years. Certificants have two options for recertifying. Because exam forms and knowledge change over time candidates may choose Option 1 (one) which is to retake the exam. Option 2 (two) is to obtain 30 Continuing Education Credits. **All Continuing Education Credits must be related to vascular access**.

Those who pass a December VACC examination can begin using the designation VA-BC on January 1. The certification period is January 1 through midnight December 31 (3 years later). Continuing Education Credits must be earned during this time frame. Only Continuing Education Credits obtained within that period can be submitted for recertification.

Those who pass a June VACC examination can begin using the designation VA-BC on July 1. The certification period is July 1 through midnight June 30 (3 years later). Continuing Education Credits must be earned during this time frame. Only Continuing Education Credits obtained within that period can be submitted for recertification.

To ensure continued exposure to the most current practice in vascular access credits must be earned throughout the certification cycle, at a minimum beyond one single year.

Recertification information and reminders will be e-mailed at least 10 months before the expiration date. It is the responsibility of the VA-BC professional to meet recertification requirements and submit a complete recertification application and appropriate fee before published deadlines. Failure to receive a renewal notice does not relieve the candidate of the responsibility to apply for certification renewal by the published

application deadline. The candidate is responsible for contacting VACC with any change in address or name.

ALL Certificants must continue to meet certification eligibility criteria.

Option 1: To Recertify by Taking the Exam

To recertify by examination candidates must apply before their expiration date. Candidates are subject to all policies and pricing in effect for all certificants at the time of application published in the Candidate Handbook. A VA-BC professional who fails an attempt to recertify by exam can reapply to take the exam in the following exam administration. The VA-BC designation becomes invalid until candidate successfully retakes the VACC Examination. Candidates choosing to recertify by exam forfeit the option to recertify by continuing education credit.

Option 2: To Recertify by Continuing Education Credits

All certificants must upload proof of at least 30 continuing education credits into the Candidate Portal before being able to submit the recertification application. See page 29 for instructions.

Certificants may recertify every three years by obtaining 30 Continuing Education Credits. Credits must be earned throughout the certification cycle, at a minimum beyond one single year. **All Continuing Education Credits must be related to vascular access.**

The Continuing Education (CE) Credits encompass a wide spectrum of activities that VACC believes reflect continual learning opportunities. These activities validate the professional's knowledge; strengthen the vascular access professional by reinforcing essential skills and developing new skills. These opportunities not only lead to enhanced knowledge for the certified vascular access professional but ultimately, to quality patient care. Candidates for recertification should choose those professional development activities that provide them with the most benefit, keeping in mind that the length and rigor of a program contribute to its value.

NOTE: To help to ensure that the CE activities are of the highest quality, CE credits must come from a nationally approved or recognized continuing education provider to include state licensing boards or national professional organizations. Any other CE entity should be approved by the VACC Board of Directors prior to taking the activity to ensure compliance with the renewal policy. VACC retains the right to review all CE programs for quality, relevance of content, and effectiveness of delivery method.

- Credits must be earned throughout the three-year certification cycle, at a minimum beyond one single year.
- Continued education credits may not be carried over from one recertification cycle to another.

- Continuing education credits must be earned from vascular access related sessions. Conferences, seminars, workshops, and online courses are acceptable.
- Credits must come from more than one source.
- Renewal applications are due 30 days before the end of the certification cycle.
- Continuing education credits are defined in Activity Matrix below:

Category	Activity- Continuing education may include any of the following:	Continuing Education Credits
1	**Conference, Seminar, Workshop on a topic related to Vascular Access:** Each 50-60 minute session including questions and answers.	1
2	**Continuing Education (CE's) on a topic related to Vascular Access:** 1.0 CE awarded by program sponsor.	1
3	**Completion of Academic Courses on topics related to Vascular Access:** 1 semester hour credit.	5
4	**Completion of Academic Courses on topics related to Vascular Access:** 1 quarter hour credit.	3
5	**Completed Master's Thesis or PhD Dissertation** on a topic related to vascular access from an accredited institution.	10
6	**Completed Presentations:** *A maximum of 10 contact hours may be earned in this category* **Poster Presentation:** a presentation may not be submitted more than once, (if you present the poster more than once you may only count it ONE TIME) includes preparation time	1

Category	Activity- Continuing education may include any of the following:	Continuing Education Credits
	Presentations: each hour-a presentation may not be submitted more than once, (if you teach the same program several times you may only count it ONE TIME) includes preparation time The number of credits that are awarded is based on the number of minutes YOU actually teach. Do not include the number of hours a co-presenter has taught when calculating hours	2
7	**Publications of Vascular Access related topic(s):** *a maximum of 10 contact hours may be earned in this category with the exception of published books*	
	• Abstract accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, includes preparation time	1
	• Article: a minimum of three-page article accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, includes preparation time	3
	• Chapter in a book published on a topic related to vascular access	5
	• Book published on a topic related to vascular access	15

CE Record Retention
It is the responsibility of each certificant to maintain records documenting contact hour activity.

Acceptable Documentation for Category 1 and 2
Certificates of attendance that include your name, date of attendance, title of program, and contact hours or CE's awarded.

Acceptable Documentation for Category 3 and 4

Academic courses offered by accredited colleges or universities that relate to vascular access are acceptable activities. A formal transcript or grade report which clearly states (1) whether credit is given in semester hours or quarter hours; (2) grade; and (3) date of the course is required as documentation Educational credits will only be awarded if a passing grade was granted

Acceptable Documentation for Category 5
Copy of the Dissertation or Thesis Committee signature page

Acceptable Documentation for Category 6
A written copy of the presentation; a document from the organizational sponsor verifying presentation activity and explaining the time and content of the presentation; if available, a summary of the evaluations from the event; and a personal record of actual presentation preparation time.

Acceptable Documentation for Category 7
A complete copy of each publication and a personal record of actual publication preparation time.

Denial of Recertification

Recertification by Option 2 may be denied for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to meet criteria of 30 hours of continuing education or acceptable credits
- Falsification or misrepresentation of continuing education information or any information required to meet eligibility criteria
- Failure to apply before the VA-BC published deadlines
- Failure to provide continuing education credit by the deadline specified, when proper documentation or additional information is requested
- Failure to submit the recertification fee payment

If recertification is denied, the recertification application fee will not be refunded.

Candidates Denied Renewal by Option 2 May Retest
Candidates who are denied renewal by education credits may apply to take the test during the next available testing window. The credential may not be used after expiration until the candidate passes the test.

Candidates Denied Renewal by Option 2 Will Not be Refunded
Candidates who apply for renewal by option 2 and are denied by VACC will not be granted a refund of the renewal fee. This includes candidates who are denied renewal due to

insufficient points, insufficient documentation, or failure to submit audit documentation or other documentation requested by VACC.

Revocation of VA-BC Credential

Failure to meet the criteria listed above will result in the immediate revocation of the VA-BC credential at the anniversary deadline of the certification. Any VA-BC who does not meet the continuing education recertification requirements or who fails to recertify by successfully passing the examination will be permitted to apply for the next regularly scheduled examination period. The candidate may NOT use the VA-BC credential during the interim and certification will only be reinstated following the successful completion (passing score) of the examination.

Audit of Information Submitted

VACC reserves the right to audit any or all applications and supporting documentation submitted by certification and recertification candidates. To ensure the integrity of the recertification process, up to 15% of recertification applications are randomly selected from the application database for audit. VACC will notify any audited candidate who does not meet the recertification requirements. All candidates, regardless if audited or not will receive a confirmation e-mail within 14 calendar days of the application deadline.

Recertification Process

Renewal Notice
You will receive your first renewal notice at least 10 months prior to the end of your certification cycle via e-mail. Failure to receive a renewal notice does not relieve the candidate the responsibility to apply for certification renewal by the published application deadline.

Submission of a recertification application or examination application attests that you have read this Candidate Handbook thoroughly and agree to be bound by all policies and procedures described here.

To Recertify by Examination:
Follow the instructions found in section 3.3 of this manual. You must have the following information available 1) your VA-BC certification number (located on your certificate and wallet card) 2) your AVA membership number (if you wish to receive the member fee discount) 3) your credit card information.

To Recertify by Continuing Education Credits:

All certificants must upload proof of at least 30 continuing education credits related to vascular access into the Candidate Portal before being able to submit the recertification application. You may upload your CE documentation at any time prior to the due date. Once you have documented your 30 CE credits, you may proceed to the Recertification by CE application and complete the application process. Please note however, that ALL recertifications will be reviewed and approved/declined during the month that your credential is set to expire. All renewals will become active on **July 1st** or **January 1st** (following the expiration of your current credential). Early submission does not affect this processing timeline.

You Will Need the Following Information to Log in Your Continuing Education Hours:

- Activity date
- Brief description/name of activity
- Number of credits earned
- Electronic copy to upload (word, PDF, JPEG)

1. Sign into the Candidate Portal located on the VACC home page in the upper right-hand corner, enter your last name and certification number.
2. Click on "My CEU" and follow the prompts.
3. Once at least 30 CE credits have been uploaded the recertification application button will be activated so it can be submitted.
4. Click on "Recertification Application", fill it out/make any changes and submit payment.
5. If a candidate mails or faxes an application the candidate is responsible to upload proof of credits prior to VACC staff entering the application into the VACC database. NOTE: dates and deadlines fees apply

Submit the forms and fee by the deadline.
Mailed forms must be received (not postmarked) in the VACC office by the deadline.

Your certification number is listed on your certificate and wallet card.

All candidates will receive notification of certification approval/suspension within 14 calendar days from the application deadline. Candidates who pass their recertification will be e-mailed a digital badge to the e-mail address on file prior to the credential expiration. The digital badge will contain a PDF of your certificate and wallet ID card.

Your credential expires at the end of three years at midnight on December 31 or midnight June 30. Applications are due 30 days prior to the certification expiration.

Early and final application rates apply.

Application Dates and Fees for recertification by Option 2: Recertification by CE's

Date & Deadlines

VA-BC Obtained	VA-BC Expires	VA-BC Renewal Documents and Fees Due Date
December 2024	December 31, 2027	December 1, 2027
June 2023	June 30, 2027	June 1, 2027
December 2023	December 31, 2026	December 1, 2026
June 2023	June 30, 2026	June 1, 2026
December 2022	December 31, 2025	December 1, 2025
June 2022	June 30, 2025	June 1, 2025
December 2021	December 31, 2024	December 1, 2024
June 2021	June 30, 2024	June 1, 2024

Recertification Fees

Recertification Application Dates	Early Registration *June Recertification* August 1 – March 20 *December Recertification* February 1 – September 20	Final Registration *June Recertification* March 21 – June 1 *December Recertification* September 21 – December 1
Online Application *AVA Member Discounted Rate*	**$340** *$240*	**$390** *$290*
Mail/Fax Application *AVA Member Discounted Rate*	*$365* *$265*	**$415** *$315*
Late Application (June 1-June 30 or December 1-December 31) *AVA Member Discounted Rate*		**$465** *$365*
Late after suspension prior to next test cycle (July 1-August 31 or January 1-February 28)		**$540** *$440*
Retest (See Getting Certified)		

Section 9: Code of Ethics for Vascular Access Professionals

The VA-BC™ certification promotes high standards of patient care that includes enforcing standards of ethics among Certified Professionals and among candidates for certification. The purpose of this code is to identify the obligations of all vascular access board certified individuals inherent in their professional roles. All certificants and candidates must adhere to the VACC Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics is intended to promote the protection, safety, and welfare of patients, and promote the wellbeing of their significant others. By signing the "Candidate Application and Confidentiality Statement" you have accepted and are bound to this Code of Ethics.

Professionals certified by the Vascular Access Certification Corporation will:

1. Respect the basic human rights and the dignity of all patients, without consideration of social or economic status, race, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, personal attributes, nature of the health problem(s), or any other factors.

2. Protect the patient and significant others from harm and advocate for their welfare.

3. Maintain confidentiality of patient and significant others' information, except when disclosure is required by law.

4. Utilize technology appropriately when conducting vascular access assessments and interventions.

5. Utilize the most recent research and educational information as the basis for health care practices.

6. Maintain the knowledge and skills necessary for competent practice in the clinical practice setting.

7. Demonstrate respect for one's personal self-worth and the self-worth of others, while preserving the integrity of the profession.

8. Report known or suspected violations made by VACC certified professionals and other health care professionals engaged in VACC assessments and interventions.

9. Contribute to the ever-evolving body of vascular access knowledge.

10. Demonstrate respect for the cultural and ethnic background of professional colleagues.

Section 10: Policies

Appeals

An appeals process is available to individuals seeking an amendment of a decision regarding eligibility for certification, failure of the examination, sanction, or revocation of certification. All written appeals should be sent to VACC, Attn: Appeals, 555 E. Wells St., Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202 stating the concern and reason for the appeal.

VACC will review the letter. A response from the VACC will be forwarded within 15 business days of receipt of the appeal letter. The response will detail the reasons the request has been approved or not approved. Should the candidate not be satisfied with the decision rendered, the candidate may submit a written appeal to VACC within fourteen (14) days. VACC will review the appeal submission and accompanying documents and make a determination. Candidates will be notified of VACC's decision within forty-five days (45) of receipt of the request. The decision of VACC will be final.

The full VACC Appeals policy can be found on the VACC web site at
https://www.vacert.org/policies-procedures/

Fraudulent Use of VA-BC™ Credential

VACC shall thoroughly investigate all reports of an individual fraudulently using the VA-BC™ credential. If proof is obtained that an individual who is not authorized to use the VA-BC™ credential has used the credential, VACC shall write a letter to the individual stating that VACC has documented proof that the individual has used the VA-BC™ credential and that VACC has no record of the individual's certification or renewal of expired certification. The individual shall be requested to provide proof of current VACC certification (e.g., prove that certification was obtained under a different name) or immediately discontinue use of the credential. The individual shall be informed that if fraudulent use of the credential continues, VACC shall take the appropriate action against the individual.

Discipline and Complaints

VACC enforces the Code of Ethics for Vascular Access Professionals for all VA-BC™ certificants and individuals in the process of obtaining VA-BC™ certification. VACC will investigate reported violations of the Code of Ethics for Vascular Access Professionals. Complaints regarding alleged violations should be reported to VACC in writing and should include a detailed description of factual allegations supporting the charges and any relevant supporting documentation. Information submitted during the complaint and investigation process is considered confidential and will be handled in accordance with

VACC's Confidentiality policy. Adverse disciplinary decisions made by VACC (or its sub-committees) may be appealed.

Confidentiality of Records

Candidate and certificant information is confidential and will not be released or given to anyone other than to legally-required agencies. The Exam Security Policy provides information on confidentiality.

VACC maintains all applications, test results and other pertinent information for the certification program. The application, exam format, results and any other pertinent information are considered confidential and privileged information and will not be revealed to anyone without the applicant's written permission unless required by law.

VACC certification staff and its testing agency are the only individuals allowed access to the certification files. VACC certification staff will only verify that an individual is certified and will not reveal whether an individual has even applied for the exam. No personal information about the applicant or certificant will be revealed unless written permission has been obtained from the certificant or applicant.

Nondiscrimination Policy

VACC does not discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or marital status. The VACC examination will be offered to candidates in environments that meet the standards established by the American Disability Act (ADA).

Certification Mark Use

Vascular Access Board Certified (VA-BC™) is a professional certification in the field of vascular access. The VA-BC™ credential signifies that an individual has passed an examination that has been designed to meet stringent certification industry standards and best practices in the United States. VACC grants limited permission to individuals who have met all of the certification eligibility criteria, passed the exam, and received notification of certification from VACC to use the VA-BC™ designation that has been granted to them. Use of the VA-BC™ credential by individuals who have not been granted certification, or who have failed to properly maintain certification in good standing, is prohibited. Improper use of the credentials may result in disciplinary action.

Special Accommodations Request Form

VACC will provide reasonable accommodations for test candidates with disabilities that are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Candidates requesting special accommodations must submit the Special Accommodations Request Form by email or fax within 5 business days of applying online, or with a paper application. VACC reserves the right to review any request for accommodations and have such request considered by its own experts to ensure an appropriate level of accommodations and protect the integrity of the examination and the certification.

Candidate Information

_____

Last Name   First Name   Middle Initial
_____

Home Address
_____

City   State   Zip/Postal Code   Country
_____

(Area Code) Work Phone Number   (Area Code) Home Phone Number

_____

Email Address (please provide an individual or personal email address, not a group mailbox that is shared in the workplace)

_____

Special Testing Accommodations

I request special accommodations as follows (check all that apply):

☐ Special seating or other physical accommodation
☐ Extended testing time (check one)   ☐ Extra 30 min   ☐ Time and a half
☐ Double time   ☐ Separate testing room

☐ Other (please describe_____

Signature_____Date_____

Professional Documentation
(professional evaluation must have been made no earlier than 3 years prior to application)

I have evaluated *(candidate's name)*_____

on _____/_____/_____ *(date)*

in my capacity as a _____ (professional title).
The candidate discussed the nature of the examination to be administered. It is my opinion that because of this candidate's disability, described below, he/she should receive the special testing accommodations requested above.

Description of disability:
_____

_____

Professional's

Name:_____Credentials_____

Address:_____

City_____State_____Zip/Postal Code_____

Telephone_____ Email Address_____

Professional License Number_____

State of License Issue_____

Signature:
_____Date_____

Return this completed form to VACC with your certification test application by email (info@vacert.org) or fax to 414-276-3349 within 5 days of applying online.