



# NCCAOM Student Webinar

November 4, 2021

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### Question 1: Why attendees are muted?

**Answer:** This webinar is an informational event. Students and applicants were invited to join this webinar to learn about NCCAOM certification and state licensure process. All attendees are provided with a dashboard and can ask questions and leave a comment. The comments are answered and posted to the NCCAOM website.

### Q 2: Are the NCCAOM exams given in-person or online?

**Answer:** NCCAOM Exams are administered year-round and **in-person** at PearsonVUE testing centers across the world. In the United States, all testing center locations are opened at 100% capacity and abide by state mandated social distancing and mask requirements. Candidates can schedule their exams at any time.

### Q 3: Can students start taking tests when they are close to graduating?

**Answer:** Students due to graduate before December 31, 2021 can apply and start taking their exams before their graduation date. **Students who graduate in 2022 and later must graduate before sitting for the exams.**

### Q 4: How long does it take for the NCCAOM to review documents from ICD?

**Answer:** The International Verification Review Process varies on a case-by-case basis. Once ICD evaluation has been received by the NCCAOM and the application for NCCAOM Certification is submitted, it may take 6 - 8 weeks for evaluation and processing by the NCCAOM staff.

### Q 5: I have applied for OM certification, do I need to take all 4 exams before I can be licensed in a state that doesn't require Herbal boards or can I take Foundations, Acupuncture, and Biomedical only, get licensed and take Herbal boards later?

**Answer:** The candidate may satisfy state licensure requirements and apply for state license to practice (by passing some board exams) before they complete their NCCAOM Certification. However, the candidate should keep in mind that all



requirements for NCCAOM Certification must be completed within 4 years of the application submission date. If NCCAOM Certification is not completed due to missing requirements, the application expires and must be re-submitted.

### Q 6: Will we be changing the NCCAOM OM certification not use "oriental"? How does this impact those who have that certification with that word now?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM is working through a very complicated process to remove the term "Oriental" from its name and certificate program(s)/exams. Once a new name has been agreed upon by the profession, the NCCAOM will gradually work through the renaming process. Stay tuned for a nation-wide survey announcement on the Renaming of our Profession.

### Q 7: How to not publish address in the FAP Directory when practicing out of my home?

**Answer:** A Listing in the FAP Directory is a voluntary benefit provided to all NCCAOM certified Diplomates. If a Diplomate chooses not to be listed in FAP, he/she can opt out as follows:

1. Login to their NCCAOM online account,
2. Click on "Update Profile" option in the left side bar
3. Scroll down to the bottom of the page
4. Select "I do not want to be listed in FAP" in FAP preferences and save changes.

### Q 8: Can I submit a State Verification Request once my certification is completed in my account? Or do I need to wait for the official paper certificate?

**Answer:** Once the candidate satisfies all requirements for NCCAOM Certification, the application for certification is finalized and the candidate becomes certified. Email notification is sent to the newly certified Diplomate at the email address on file. The newly certified Diplomate can then submit a State Verification Request for his/her state licensing application.



## Q 9: Why do I need to submit the State Verification request, if I have passed the CALE?

**Answer:** Each candidate must work with the state regulatory agency of their choice to clarify specific state requirements. 46 states plus the District of Columbia require NCCAOM exams and/or certification as a pre-requisite for state licensure. Each applicant must provide a direct verification of their NCCAOM credentials by submitting the State Verification Request.

## Q 10: Can we apply for 2 or more state license at the same time?

**Answer:** Candidates can submit an application for state license to practice in more than one state, however, they have to submit a state verification request for each state separately.

## Q 11: I already paid the \$500 for AC certification when I graduated from my Master's program. Now I got my Graduation from my Doctor's in TCM so do I have to pay the \$500 again? and how can I request to add the Authorization letter for the Herbal exam??

**Answer:** Once all exams for Acupuncture Certification are passed, the candidate will be an NCCAOM Diplomate of Acupuncture. As a certified Diplomate, the Diplomate has an option to convert to OM Certification by submitting a "Conversion to OM" online application. The application fee is \$100, and the Diplomate is then eligible to take the CH exam.

## Q 12: My application was for certification in OM that requires all 4 exams. If I no longer want to take CH exam, do I have to apply and pay for the certification without herbs?

**Answer:** If the candidate applies for OM Certification but later decides not to take the CH exam, there is an option to change his/her application to AC Certification. Once the candidate passes three exams (ACPL, FOM and BIO), the option to "Downgrade to AC" Certification will appear on Candidate's profile. The candidate can submit a short application, pay the \$100 fee, and their Certification type will change to AC.



### Q 13: Does each state submit their own version of the adaptive exams?

**Answer:** States do not have their own version of the exams. 46 states plus the District of Columbia rely on the NCCAOM certification exams for state licensure that assess basic knowledge, skills and abilities needed to practice acupuncture.

### Q 14: How long does it take for NCCAOM to upload the test result to state?

**Answer:** Once the State Verification Request has been received at NCCAOM and all state requirements (exams/certification) are satisfied, the Verification Report is generated and uploaded to the state portal on the same business day. However, if state requirements (exams/certification) are not completed, the state verification request is delayed or possibly canceled.

### Q 15: I already finished the MSAc and am finishing the MSTOM in April. I have taken the Acupuncture exam so far. Will I be able to start taking the exams before graduation?

**Answer:** A candidate may complete all exams for Acupuncture Certification and become an NCCAOM Diplomate of Acupuncture. As a certified Diplomate, they have an option to convert to OM certification by submitting a “Conversion to OM” online application. The application fee is \$100, and the Diplomate is then eligible to take the CH exam.

### Q 16: If I am concurrently in a MSOM and doctorate program, do I have to wait until I finish the doctorate to apply, or can I apply after finishing the MSOM?

**Answer:** Once you graduate from the MSOM program, you can apply for NCCAOM Certification and start taking the exams.



### Q 17: For OM certification, if I pass 3 Exams, can I get the certificate for AC first, then do herb later to complete OM?

**Answer:** If a candidate applies for OM Certification but later decides not to take the CH exam, there is an option to change his/her application to AC Certification. Once the candidate passes three exams (ACPL, FOM and BIO), the option to “Downgrade to AC” certification will appear on Candidate’s profile. The candidate can submit a short application, pay the \$100 fee, and their Certification type will change to AC.

### Q 18: Why mailing the certification process takes 6 weeks?

**Answer:** Wall certificates for NCCAOM Diplomates are printed by a third-party printing company. An order for certificate printing is placed with the printing company twice a month. The wall certificate and ID card are printed, boxed, and shipped to a Diplomate via USPS. This process usually takes 4 – 6 weeks.

### Q 19: Why are the exams adaptive vs linear?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM's primary exam administration format is Adaptive. After NCCAOM conducts a Job Analysis (every 5 years), exam administration format is switched to Linear for a short period of time to introduce new exam questions. Once the new questions are calibrated and approved, the exam format is switched back to Adaptive.

### Q 20: Is there a place without an adaptative exam? do we have a choice not to take those?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM's primary exam administration format is Adaptive meaning all NCCAOM exams are administered in Adaptive format at all PearsonVUE testing centers.

### Q 21: Why you cannot skip a question and continue the exam, then return to the question you skipped without spending so much time on that one question?

**Answer:** With Adaptive exam format, the algorithm selects questions based on whether the candidate answered the previous question correctly or incorrectly, making it a





primary reason why the candidate cannot go back to previously answered/skipped question(s).

## Q 22: Can I request a reevaluation of my test results?

**Answer:** A candidate may request that their exam be re-scored within 30 days of receiving initial notification that they failed the exam. The score verification process is simply a manual check of the computer's scoring, conducted by NCCAOM Testing staff, to ensure that all responses were accurately recorded. Score verification does not include a review of examination content or reconsideration of the correct answer to any item. Candidates who would like to submit a score verification request should complete the [NCCAOM® Score Verification Request form](#). An invoice will be issued on your NCCAOM online portal where you will apply payment. Individual items and exam content will not be discussed or considered during the score verification process.

Please note that the NCCAOM does not encourage score verification requests. We enforce strict quality control procedures to ensure exam results are accurate before they are released to candidates. Every exam is scored independently by two professional testing companies to ensure each item is scored accurately and the overall score is correct. In addition, both testing companies have multiple checks in place to flag anomalies in test data that require investigation. Due to the thoroughness of the NCCAOM's examination scoring procedures, no errors have ever been identified from a score verification request.

## Q 23: I heard in the past the tests were not so complex as the tests that we have today. How can we make sure the test makers are doing the right job?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM exams are created and updated based on the occupational Job Analysis conducted every 5 - 7 years. For more details on NCCAOM exam content creation, please read an article posted in Acupuncture Today "[Creating National Exam Content: The Importance of a Job Analysis Study](#)" (if digital edition, click "Read on Mobile" blue button for better reading format).



**Q 24: We did not have the requirements in the test in the past compared to the new tests we are taking. Is that mean the people that took the test in the past need to retake the tests?**

**Answer:** Once NCCAOM Certification is achieved and kept active by re-certifying every 4 years, the NCCAOM exams never expire.

**Q 25: Can we take the exams online?**

**Answer:** The NCCAOM Board Exams are considered ‘high stakes’ exams as they are required for certification and are also used by 98% of the states that regulate acupuncture to determine competency for a license to practice. The NCCAOM will not be using online proctoring (online administration). NCCAOM Exams are administered year-round at over 200 PearsonVUE testing centers in United States. All testing center locations are opened at 100% capacity and abide by state mandated social distancing and mask requirements. Candidates can schedule their exams at any time.

**Q 26: How many times can I take each exam?**

**Answer:** Candidates have five (5) opportunities to successfully pass an examination once their graduate transcript and CNT Certificate are received at NCCAOM. After the fifth unsuccessful attempt to pass an NCCAOM examination, the candidate may receive additional exam attempts, however they must satisfy [additional requirements](#) based on multiple factors like certification application validity, exams passed. etc.

**Q 27: Can we go online to start a student portal? Or I need invitation to do so?**

**Answer:** Any graduating student can create a profile in the NCCAOM Certification system. However, an application for NCCAOM Certification can be submitted no earlier than 60 days before student's graduation date.

**Q 28: I am a graduating student; do I need to pay more money?**

**Answer:** All students apply for NCCAOM Certification via an application including the fee. NCCAOM offers three certification programs:

- Acupuncture Certification. Application fee - \$500



- Oriental Medicine Certification. Application fee - \$595
- Chinese Herbology Certification. Application fee - \$500

Once approved to test, candidates schedule their required exams with a PearsonVUE testing center. Testing fees are \$310 per exam attempt and are paid by CC directly to PearsonVUE at the time the exam scheduling.

### Q 29: Are the exam centers usually local?

**Answer:** There are over 200 testing centers in United States. A candidate may test at any test center of their choosing.

### Q 30: Is there any help from NCCAOM to minimize the fee for the exam?

**Answer: Not at this time.** The NCCAOM is a non-profit 501(c)(6) certification organization. Good study habits will avoid having to repeat an exam.

### Q 31: Pearson's Testing Center was not open during COVID Should we have our application extended due to COVID?

**Answer:** During the pandemic, PearsonVUE testing centers were open for all programs qualified as “essential” services. The NCCAOM exams were approved as “essential” in May of 2020 and were administered at all testing center locations without interruption. Due to accreditation requirements, NCCAOM does not extend applications beyond their 4-year limit.

### Q 32: Why do we get tested on TCM acupuncture when people find that Tung's protocols are generally more effective in clinical practice?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM exams are created and updated based on the occupational Job Analysis conducted every 5 - 7 years. For more details on NCCAOM exam content creation, please read an article posted in Acupuncture Today “[Creating National Exam Content: The Importance of a Job Analysis Study](#)”.



### Q 33: Do you have recommendations for online teaching companies that help prepare students for the test?

**Answer:** NCCAOM is non-partisan and does not endorse one company over another. We do offer the Official NCCAOM Exam Preparation Center. Candidates can also access several other review courses to help prepare for the board exams.

1. Acupuncture Review Classes: <https://acupuncturereviewclasses.com/> 877-798-8399
2. Acupuncture Media: <https://www.acupuncturemedia.com/> Text message: 331-551-9123
3. Global TCM <http://www.globaltcm.com/> 954-616-827
4. TCM Review Seminars, Inc. <https://tcmreview.com/> 510-393-7565

### Q 34: Application fee for the OM certification is \$595. Are there any other costs involved?

**Answer:** The \$595 application fee for OM Certification is paid for the following services:

1. application processing,
2. eligibility review and approval,
3. test authorization transfer to PearsonVUE
4. exam score recording on candidate profile, and
5. issuing NCCAOM credentials to the Diplomate

Once the applicant is approved to test, he/she will then contact PearsonVUE testing center to schedule their exams. Testing fees are \$310 per exam attempt and are paid by CC directly to PearsonVUE at the time the exam scheduling.

### Q 35: Do you have to have your CPR certificate in order to sit for the exam?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM does not have a CPR requirement for exam approval. The CNT Certificate and school graduation transcript are the only mandatory requirements for test authorization.



**Q 36: Can I submit an application after my graduation date, or does it have to be during those 60 days before my graduation date?**

**Answer:** Students can apply for NCCAOM Certification after graduation, however no earlier than 60 days before they graduate.

**Q 37: Why the CNT certificate expired in 6 years?**

**Answer:** If the NCCAOM Certification is achieved and kept active, the CNT Certificate and NCCAOM exams never expire. If NCCAOM certification is not completed, board exams passed will expire 12 years from the date they were taken. The CNT Certificate expires 6 years from the date it was completed. Expired exams and the CNT Certificate are no longer valid for NCCAOM certification.

**Q 38: Because of the pandemic, students due to graduate before Dec. 31, 2021 have been allowed to start testing before they graduate. Will this exception be extended to 2022?**

**Answer:** The exception for graduating students was offered as a temporary option since the majority of schools and CCAHM were closed due to COVID. This exception will not be offered in 2022 onward.

**Q 39: After all this studying and financial money to study for these VERY Difficult and Tricky exams. Why do you set us up to fail?**

**Answer:** The NCCAOM exams are developed based on the Job Analysis conducted every 5 - 7 years. The NCCAOM has an [Exam Preparation Center](#) that includes Exam Preparation Handbooks, Exam Content Outlines that include areas that will be tested on the exam along with the bibliography (list of books) as well as the Official NCCAOM Practice Tests™. All these resources assist candidates in preparing for the NCCAOM Certification Examinations. The questions on the NCCAOM Practice Tests™ are designed to familiarize candidates with information and concepts that are likely to be tested on NCCAOM Certification Examinations.



**Q 40:** I passed the CALE, would that count towards my recertification? and how many PDAs?

**Answer:** The NCCAOM has a recertification category: "Passage of the NCCAOM Certification Exam" for state licensing purposes that equals 20 PDA points. The CALE exam is not an NCCAOM Certification exam, therefore it does not meet the requirement for that category and cannot be used for NCCAOM recertification.

**Q 41:** My degree is a M.S in Health Sciences/Acupuncture. How do I shorten that?

**Answer:** Your school should be able to provide with the information regarding your degree abbreviation.