

Frequently Asked Questions About Certification

1. Is there a Canadian certification process?

CTRA does not offer a Canadian certification but rather recognizes the CTRS designation for practice in Canada. In May 2009, at the annual CTRA conference in Calgary it was presented to the membership that there is now a signed agreement between CTRA and the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation (NCTRC) that CTRA recognizes and endorses the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) as the certification for Canada.

2. Is certification mandatory?

Certification is a voluntary process. An individual cannot be forced into becoming certified. However, now that CTRA is endorsing the CTRS credential, facilities will start increasing their standards and may not hire unless the prospective employee is a CTRS. This is the case in some jurisdictions so please check with your employer or potential employers.

3. If certification is not mandatory, why should I become certified?

Certification is the minimum standard set for a discipline and is an important element of professional regulation. It shows that the therapist has met a minimum standard set for knowledge and competency. It is also a way to protect the public and is a natural process in the maturity of a profession.

4. How do I become certified?

There are two paths to becoming a CTRS: the academic path and the equivalency path.

The **Academic Path** is designed for the traditional academic graduate. The steps include:

- Completion of Bachelor degree or higher with concentration in Recreational Therapy (Therapeutic Recreation)
- Completion of a minimum 14 week/560 hours internship supervised by a CTRS
- Successful completion of the NCTRC certification exam

Details for this pathway can be found at <https://www.nctrc.org/new-applicants/paths-to-certification/academic-path/>

Equivalency paths are designed for applicants who have accomplished extensive work in TR in combination with designated coursework to meet the NCTRC Certification Standards:

Equivalency path A (This path will be phased out effective July 1, 2021). The steps include:

- Completion of Bachelor degree or higher
- Completion of specific coursework in Recreational Therapy (Therapeutic Recreation)
- Five (5) years full-time paid work experience in Recreational Therapy (Therapeutic Recreation)
- Successful completion of the NCTRC certification exam

Details for this pathway can be found at

<https://www.nctrc.org/new-applicants/paths-to-certification/equivalency-path/>

Equivalency Path (Effective July 1, 2019). The steps include:

- Completion of Bachelor degree or higher
- Completion of specific coursework in Recreational Therapy (Therapeutic Recreation)
- Paid work experience that uses the Therapeutic Recreation process under the supervision of a CTRS
- Successful completion of the NCTRC certification exam

Details for this pathway can be found at

<https://www.nctrc.org/new-applicants/paths-to-certification/equivalency-path-b/>

5. How do I know if I have all the coursework required for certification?

You can call NCTRC at 845-639-1439 and ask your specific questions. For a small fee, NCTRC also provides a service that allows you to send in all your transcripts and information for review. They will then tell you what, if anything, you require to apply for certification.

6. What is the cost to become a CTRS?

The application for the exam is \$125 USD and the cost of the exam is \$325 USD.

Details about the fees can be found here

<https://www.nctrc.org/exam/exam-application-deadlines/>

7. Once I become a CTRS are there any ongoing fees?

Yes, you are required to complete an annual maintenance form as well as submit an annual fee of \$80 USD. Every five (5) years you are required to recertify and the cost of this process is \$105 USD. Each CTRS is required to recertify every five years in order to demonstrate their continuing professional knowledge and competence. There are two options for recertification:

Option 1: Each CTRS must be able to demonstrate (a) 480 hours of professional work experience in therapeutic recreation; and (b) minimum of 50 hours of continuing education (CEUs) credit related to the NCTRC Job Analysis.

or

Option 2: The CTRS can apply to rewrite the NCTRC certification examination.

Details about recertification can be found here

<https://www.nctrc.org/ctrs-renewal/recertification/>

8. What are CEUs?

CEUs are Continuing Education Units. CEUs are collected during educational opportunities such as conferences and in-services and by completing coursework.

9. Why do I need to collect CEUS?

Once you have obtained your CTRS credential, you are required to recertify every five years. NCTRC does a random audit of the recertifying CTRS each year. If you are chosen for the audit you must submit your CEUs; you are required to obtain at least 50 CEUs within the five-year window. The other way you can recertify is to rewrite the exam.

10. Where can I take the exam?

The exam is now electronic and there are sites all over Canada where you can access it six times per year.

Details about deadlines when applying for and writing the exam can be found here <https://www.nctrc.org/exam/exam-application-deadlines/>

11. How long will it take to find out if I passed the exam?

The electronic exam means the individual knows immediately after completing the exam whether or not they passed.

12. How can I prepare to take the exam?

Go to NCTRC's website for exam resources and study aides and review NCTRC's standards

As stated above, this overview is meant to serve as a general information guide. We strongly suggest you contact NCTRC directly with your specific questions and concerns around certification and becoming certified.

You can contact NCTRC via:

Phone: 845-639-1439

Email: nctrc@NCTRC.org