

## **NCMA Certification Requirements Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What does it cost to apply for an individual certification program?**

CFCM Member \$150/Non-member \$275  
CCCM Member \$150/Non-member \$275  
CPCM Member \$175/Non-member \$300

Important notice to ALL CFCM and CCCM candidates! NCMA will expand the CFCM and CCCM exams to 150 questions each as of January 2011. The 110 question versions will no longer be available after December 2010.

### **What type of questions can I expect on each of the exams?**

All exams are competency-based and objective-type (multiple choice). The 110 question CFCM exam (see important notice above) is based on the Federal Acquisition Regulation. Special emphasis is placed on FAR Parts 12 and 15. The following FAR Parts are NOT included on the exam: 3, 5, 18, 24, 26, 27, 28, 34, 35, 38, 39, 41, and 51. The CFCM certification is most appropriate for contracting professionals in both the public and private sectors who deal extensively with federal contracts and have a minimum of one year of experience. The 110 question CCCM exam (see important notice above) is based on the Uniform Commercial Code Articles 1, 2 and 2a . The CCCM certification is most appropriate for contracting professionals who deal with commercial contracts and have a minimum of one year of experience. The 180 question CPCM exam covers the following contract management competencies: Contract Principles (25%), Contract Planning/Strategy (20%), Specialized Knowledge (15%), Contract Administration (15%), and General Business (25%). The CPCM certification is most appropriate for contracting professionals who have mastered all the majority of the contract management competencies in the Contract Management Body of Knowledge (CMBOK), have extensive business education and training, and have a minimum of 5 years of experience. Passing score for each exam is a minimum of 70% correct answers.

### **How are exams administered?**

Exams are administered on demand at Kryterion Learning Centers. You must have an NCMA-approved application before being allowed to schedule and sit for your exam.

### **What is the cost to take an exam at Kryterion?**

Each examination costs \$95 (in addition to the application fees above). Exam results are available immediately after you test.

### **Are there alternatives to taking the exam at Kryterion?**

Yes. NCMA offers paper exams on-site at its annual World Congress, at the Aerospace and Defense Conference in the spring, at the Government Contract Management Conference in the fall and at other selected locations. Also, your local NCMA chapter may request authorization to host paper exams on-site. The chapter must provide a suitable exam site and an appropriate number of proctors. Candidates who opt for the paper exam pay an exam fee (in addition to the application fees above) of \$50 for members and \$90 for non-members. Exam results are generally available within 15 working days.

**What is the level of education required to become certified?**

An undergraduate degree of any type from a regionally accredited college or university or from a distance-learning institution accredited by the Distance Education Training Council is required. Degrees from institutions outside the United States will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the NCMA Certification Department. Non-degreed candidates for the CFCM and CCCM who have ten years of verifiable contract management experience may request a waiver. There is no degree waiver for CPCM candidates.

**What is the work experience required to become certified?**

For the CFCM and CCCM, you will need one year of contract management (or related career field) experience. For the CPCM, you will need five years of contract management (or related career field) experience. Work experience outside the contract management field will be evaluated for relevancy by NCMA for purposes of certification.

**What is the training required to become certified?**

For the CFCM and CCCM, you will need 80 CPE of contract management related training. For the CPCM, you will need 120 CPE of contract management related training.

**What qualifies as CPE?**

Candidates may submit records of training received for evaluation by NCMA. CPE credit will be awarded based on NCMA's "[Continuing Professional Education \(CPE\) Guide](#)." Successfully completed college courses beyond undergraduate degree requirements may be eligible. The conversion formula is 15 CPE for each semester hour, or 10 CPE for each quarter hour. As an example, if you completed a 3-hour graduate business course, this would qualify for 45 CPE if it was completed in a semester (3 x 15), or 30 CPE if it was completed in a quarter (3 x 10).

**May I take a certification exam if I don't meet all the prerequisites?**

Students graduating from a program which is based upon contract management may sit for the CFCM or CCCM exam, and receive a provisional certificate of completion, but will not become certified until the work experience requirement is achieved. Other candidates who do not meet the experience or CPE requirements may apply for and take the CFCM or CCCM exam, but will not be certified until all requirements are met. This option is not available for the CPCM.

**What are the recommended study materials for the CPCM? (All materials available from the NCMA Bookstore unless otherwise noted)**

• NCMA highly recommends, that as a minimum, CPCM candidates use the following when preparing for the CPCM exam:

- The Certified Professional Contracts Manager Study Guide
- The Guide to the Contract Management Body of Knowledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, April 2004
- The Desktop Guide to Basic Contracting Terms

• Optional CPCM Study Materials

- Contract Negotiations: Skills, Tools, and Best Practices
- Leadership: Building High-Performance Buying and Selling Teams
- Performance-Based Acquisition: Pathways to Excellence
- Solicitations, Bids, Proposals, and Source Selection
- Contract Management Organizational Assessment Tools
- General Business Knowledge Modules: Preparatory Study Guides (5 Volumes)

**What are the recommended study materials for the CFCM?**

- The Certified Federal Contracts Manager (CFCM) Study Guide
- The Desktop Guide to Basic Contracting Terms
- The Guide to the Contract Management Body of Knowledge 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, April 2004

**What are the recommended study materials for the CCCM?**

- The Commercial Knowledge Module: Preparatory Study Manual
- The Uniform Commercial Code in a Nutshell (Available at Amazon.com)
- The Annotated Guide to the Contract Management Body of Knowledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2006

**What assistance does NCMA give to help candidates prepare for exams?**

We have online practice exams available for the CPCM and the CCCM. Research has demonstrated that passing any online exam can be attributed to 1) the familiarity of the subject matter, and 2) the familiarity of the test-taking process. One advantage of NCMA's new partnership with Kryterion is the ability to take practice exams. To purchase these exams, you must establish a Kryterion account which will be used later when you are ready for the actual certification exams. There are five separate practice exams available for the CPCM, one for each of the following competencies: Contract Principles, Acquisition Strategy/Planning, Contract Administration, Specialized Knowledge, and General Business and two for the CCCM. Cost for each exam is \$35. For more information and to establish your account, please contact us at [certification@ncmahq.org](mailto:certification@ncmahq.org).

We also offer selected Certification Exam Review Classes at reasonable cost at most national NCMA events where the exams are given on site.

Many NCMA chapters sponsor local study groups. Contact your local Chapter President or Certification Chair.