

Introduction to the Pathway II Exam

Pathway II is NCCPA's Web-based, take-at-home recertification alternative to the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Exam (PANRE). Like PANRE, the Pathway II exam has 300 multiple-choice questions that are designed to assess your general medical and surgical knowledge.

Unlike PANRE, PAs interested in Pathway II must meet an additional eligibility requirement for this open-book exam by earning *100 elective component points*. Those points may be earned any time during your six-year certification maintenance cycle prior to the exam application deadline for the exam you choose. However, the same CME hours may *not* be used to meet both NCCPA's regular two-year certification maintenance requirement and the elective component requirement.

Please Note: *The last administration of Pathway II will take place in 2010; therefore if you will not be in the fifth or sixth year of your certification maintenance cycle by 2010, you will not be able to take Pathway II. To find out when you're due to recertify, please sign in to your personal certification record at www.nccpa.net.*

Elective Component Points Submission Options

In general, there are two options for recording and submitting your elective component points to NCCPA.

1. Log your points as you earn them online at www.nccpa.net (see *Getting Started with Online Logging* on page 3). This option has the advantage of allowing you to always know exactly how many points you have left to earn.
2. Use this workbook to track your points and then submit your completed workbook when you're ready to apply.

NCCPA Policies and Logging Tips

Before getting started, here are some NCCPA policies to keep in mind when submitting your elective component points:

- Activities must be *completed* prior to being submitted for credit.
- Elective component points are *not* the same as CME hours, and points are not *always* awarded on a one-to-one ratio. Each component has a specified point value scale and a component maximum. Please read each section carefully.
- Even though some activities may fit into more than one component, each activity may only be submitted one time. Further, the same CME hours may not be used to meet both NCCPA's regular two-year certification maintenance requirement *and* the elective component requirement. However, *extra* clinical, Category I hours that were logged during an earlier CME cycle may be applied towards the elective component requirement. (See page 4 for more details on that process.)
- If you choose to submit your points via this workbook, print legibly in blue or black ink. If you need additional room, simply copy the page and continue. (Be sure to put your name and certificate number on any copied pages!)
- If you submit activities online, you do NOT need to also submit them in this workbook.
- Once submitted, elective component submissions may take up to two weeks to process. However, as long as your 100 points, application and payment are received online, by mail or fax by the exam application deadline, you'll be able to take the exam even if your elective component points are approved after the deadline.
- You will be automatically withdrawn from the exam if you're unable to meet the 100-point requirement. You may transfer to another exam (if sufficient time remains to process the transfer) without any financial penalty.
- A nonrefundable application fee of \$125 will apply if you request to be withdrawn or transferred from an exam window after it has been determined that you are eligible to take the Pathway II and your elective component points have been approved. A withdrawal cannot be processed if received later than four weeks prior to the opening of the exam administration.
- **Don't forget to apply for the exam!** Submission of your elective component points is not the same as applying for the exam. To take the Pathway II exam, NCCPA must receive an application, your exam payment and your elective component requirement.

Getting Started with Online Logging

To expedite the process, PAs can take advantage of online logging -- very similar to CME logging -- for almost all of the activities that are eligible for elective component points. For more information, sign in to your personal certification record at www.nccpa.net, click the Log Elective Component link (1) in the left column of your My Record page and follow the on-screen instructions. The key to logging elective component points is to select the correct activity type (2).

The screenshot shows the NCCPA website interface. At the top, there is a header with the NCCPA logo and navigation links: ABOUT US | CONTACT US | NCCPA FOUNDATION. Below the header is a search bar and a navigation menu with tabs: For Students, For PAs, For PA Programs, For Licensing Boards, For Employers, For Public. The main content area is titled 'Logging Elective Component Points for Pathway II'. It contains the following text: 'Please remember that these screens allow you to bank CME activities to use toward your Pathway II elective component requirement. You've already met the 100-hour CME logging requirement for your 2007-2009 cycle.' and 'Please select the CME type that you wish to log. Keep in mind that, if requested, you must be able to provide a certificate or other acceptable documentation to support any Category I activity that you log.' Below this is a link: 'Click here for a description of CME requirements. Click here to view [step-by-step instructions](#) on how to log CME.' There are three radio button options: 'Certification Programs (Category I) i.e. ACLS, CPR, PALS, etc. [View complete list.](#) Proof of certification or recertification available.', 'Category I (Preapproved and sponsored by AAPA, AMA, AOA, ACCME or AAFP) A certificate or other supporting documentation available.', and 'Category II (other practice-related, voluntary educational activities for which Category I credit was not awarded). No documentation required or available.' At the bottom of the main content area are two buttons: 'Continue Logging' and 'Review CME'. On the left side, there is a 'My Record' menu with items: My Record, CME, CME Summary, Log New CME, Edit/Delete CME, Log Elective Component (1), CME History (3), CME Audit, Recertification, Correspondence, Exam Results, Payments, Personal Info, Credentialing Info Release, Wallet Card, Practice Exam, Sign Out. At the bottom left, there is a green box with the text: 'LOST YOUR CERTIFICATION? You can also regain certification by taking any of our exams if you meet the specific requirements. [Learn more about regaining your NCCPA certification...](#)'

To assist you, we've provided online logging tips for each of the components in this workbook.

After you've logged activities online, select CME History (3). On the CME History page, be sure to select Elective Component from the second drop-down menu. If you have questions, please contact us at electivecomponent@nccpa.net or 678.417.8100.

Elective Component 2: Clinical Skills Training

Activities that led to the development of a new skill (or recertification via formal skills training) that is relevant to the practice of medicine or surgery are eligible for credit in this component. Clinical skills training includes three areas:

Certificate Programs: Point Value: 25 points per training course

Certification or recertification through certificate programs for which at least 8 clinical, Category I hours are awarded (i.e., ACLS, PALS, etc.). If these certificate programs were logged to meet your regular certification maintenance requirements, they cannot be used towards this component. If they were logged in excess of your regular certification maintenance requirements, submit them below.

Online Logging Tip: Be sure to select Certificate Programs on the Logging Elective Component Points for Pathway II screen and the computer will automatically convert this activity's hours to the 25 point in your CME Summary under the Elective Component Cycle in the drop down menu.

Other Formal Training: Point Value: One point per CME hour

Activities that are hands-on or experimental in nature and for which clinical, Category I CME hours are granted (other than those certificate programs listed above). If these activities were logged to meet your regular certification maintenance requirements but you have other *extra* hours to meet those requirements, these activities may be transferred to meet the elective component requirement. In those cases, note the cycle in which those hours were logged in the "Cycle Logged" column below. **Documentation is required for activities submitted that are not *extra* Category I hours.**

Online Logging Tip: Be sure to select Category I on the Logging Elective Component Points for Pathway II screen.

Informal Training: Point Value: Five points per new skill

Hands-on diagnostic skills learned through on-the-job or other informal training. Such skills may be taught by any healthcare professional. Standard skills included as part of the PA program curriculum are not acceptable.

Online Logging Tip: Be sure to select Category II on the Logging Elective Component Points for Pathway II screen.

Date Earned	Activity (Certificate Program, Formal Training, or New Skills)	Sponsor & Provider (for Category I hours) <i>or</i> Instructor (for Informal Training)	Points Earned	Cycle Logged?
5/05	Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)	AMA/AHA	25	'05-'07

TOTAL: _____

Component 2 Maximum: 50 points

Elective Component 3: Medical Teaching

Teaching Healthcare Professionals: Teaching PA students, PAs, MDs, nurses and others via formal lectures, professional society presentations, grand rounds or precepting. Only the first lecture presentation each year on a particular topic is eligible for elective component points. In other words, if you give the same presentation 12 times a year, you may only submit it for elective component points once for each year you have conducted the presentation.

Point Value: Two points per teaching hour

Teaching Laypersons: Teaching patients and other members of the community. Elective component points will be awarded for only the first presentation given on a specific topic during the current six-year certification maintenance cycle preceding the exam application deadline regardless of the number of times the presentation is given.

Point Value: One point per teaching hour (15 point maximum)

Date Earned	Activity/Topic	Audience	Hours Spent	Points Earned (2/hr = Professionals) (1/hr = Laypersons)
9/05	Precepting PA Student	Healthcare Professional	10	20

TOTAL: _____

Component 3 Maximum: 50 points

Online Logging Tip: Choose Category II and enter the number of hours spent teaching in the “Hours Earned” box. The system will automatically convert the hours you enter to points, but be sure to select the correct descriptor from the Component Type drop-down menu. You can view the actual number of points earned at your online CME Summary on the left side of the screen and select Elective Component Cycle from the drop down menu.

Elective Component 4: Publications

Preparation of published *clinically-relevant* articles, case reports or textbook chapters may be submitted for credit on this page. If you are not identified in the publication as the author or co-author, the primary author must provide a written statement verifying that you were significantly responsible for researching, writing and editing the article. Articles or editorials published in institutional or professional newsletters or articles published *about* you or your work are *not* eligible for elective component points. **Journal reading is not acceptable for this component.**

Point Value: **20 points for each article in a peer-reviewed journal**
 10 points for each article in a non-peer-reviewed journal or published textbook chapter

Date Earned	Article/Chapter Title	Publication Name	Peer Reviewed?	Points Earned
5/05	Danger of Bacterial Meningitis in an Adult	JAAPA	Yes	20

TOTAL: _____

Component 4 Maximum: 40

Online Logging Tip: Choose Category II and enter the number of points earned (per the scale above) in the “Hours Earned” box. On the CME hours distribution page select apply all hours and choose Pathway II EC4: Peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed journal. You can view the actual number of points by clicking CME Summary on the left side of the screen and select Elective Component from the drop down menu. .

Elective Component 5: Postgraduate Courses

Postgraduate courses offered by an accredited U.S. academic institution can be submitted here. The course must be professionally relevant and build or reinforce existing medical knowledge. Self-study courses, courses taken on a not-for-credit basis, contact hours (CEUs) and courses taken to complete a degree that will be submitted in Component 6 are *not* eligible for points in Component 5.

Point Value: 5 points per institutionally set credit hour

Date Earned	Course Title	College/University	# of Hours	Points Earned
5/05	Introduction to Pharmacology	Alderson-Broadus College	3	15

TOTAL: _____

Component Maximum: 50 points

Online Logging Tip: Choose Category II and enter the number of institutionally set credit hours in the “Hours Earned” box. The system will automatically convert the hours you enter to points according to the scale above. You can view the actual number of points by clicking CME Summary on the left side of the screen and select Elective Component from the drop down menu.

Elective Component 6: Professionally Relevant Postgraduate Degree

The completion and receipt of a professionally relevant master’s or doctoral degree from an accredited U.S. academic institution *or* the successful completion of a residency program recognized by the Association of Postgraduate Physician Assistant Programs (APPAP) may be submitted for credit on this page. To be eligible for credit, the degree must have been *awarded* during your current six-year certification maintenance cycle and prior to the exam application deadline. The degree received at the end of your initial PA program is not eligible for points.

If your advanced degree is not in a medical field, you must submit a written statement with this form indicating how the degree is relevant to your practice as a physician assistant. Advanced degrees that do not assist you in your practice are not eligible for elective component points.

***Documentation is required!** Submit a copy of your diploma or degree certificate with this form. If you do not include the copy, the processing of your elective component points will be delayed.

Point Value: 50 points per degree or residency program

Date Received	Degree/ Residency Program	College/University
5/05	Masters of Physician Assistant Studies	University of Nebraska

TOTAL: _____
Component 6 Maximum: 50 points

Online Logging Tip: Select Category II and enter 50 in the “Hours Earned” box. On the CME Hour Distribution page select apply all hours and choose Pathway II EC 6: Professionally Relevant Postgraduate Degree. Then, fax (678.417.8135) or mail (12000 Findley Road, Suite 200, Duluth, GA 30097) a copy of your degree or transcript to NCCPA, RE: Elective Component 6 - Degree Documentation.

Elective Component 7: NCCPA’s Surgery Examination

Elective component points will be awarded to PAs who achieved special recognition on NCCPA’s Surgery Exam. The Surgery Exam must have been taken during your six-year certification maintenance cycle and prior to the exam application deadline. Successful completion of the Surgery Exam may only be submitted for elective component points one time.

Point Value: 25 points
Component 7 Maximum: 25 points

Check here if you received Special Recognition in Surgery by successfully passing NCCPA’s Surgery Examination.

TOTAL: _____

Online Logging Tip: Choose Category II and enter 25 in the “Hours Earned” box. On the CME hours Distribution page select apply all hours and choose Pathway II EC 7: NCCPA’s Surgery Examination.

Elective Component 8: Self-Assessments & Specialty Review

Elective component points will be awarded for formal, specialty home-study programs that include a self-assessment exam. To be eligible, these assessments and reviews must be *developed and accredited by the appropriate medical specialty society and approved for Category I CME credit*. **Please send a copy of documentation verifying Category I approval.**

Review materials, such as Audio Digest, recertification review courses and Medical Challenger, which are not specifically developed by a medical specialty society, are not eligible for elective component points in this area.

If you logged a self-assessment or specialty review for Category I credit for certification maintenance and you have logged *extra* Category I hours above those required for certification maintenance, you can request the assessment be transferred to Component 8 by writing the cycle those hours were logged in the “Cycle Logged” column.

Point Value: One point per CME hour

Date Completed	Program Title	Accrediting Specialty Society	Hours/ Points Earned	Cycle Logged?
5/05	Home Study Self Assessment	American Academy of Family Physicians	25	

TOTAL: _____

Component 8 Maximum: 40 points

Online Logging Tip: The Component 1 tips apply here (see page 4).

Elective Component 9: Other Preapproved Activities

Points are sometimes awarded for clinical or clinically-relevant activities that (1) are not eligible for credit in any of the previous eight components and (2) are performed *outside the scope* of your primary job responsibilities.

Points earned in excess of any of the component maximums *cannot* be submitted here.

*** Documentation is required!** Component 9 activities must be preapproved by NCCPA and must be *completed* before being submitted for elective component points. For fastest processing, submit your preapproval request(s) by fax (678.417.8135) or mail (12000 Findley Road, Suite 200, Duluth, GA 30097) at least two weeks prior to submitting your Elective Component Workbook. Your preapproval request MUST include the following information:

1. Your name, certification number and e-mail address.
2. The month and year in which the activity was completed.
3. A complete description of the activity.
4. The benefit received by participating in this activity.
5. Time spent in the activity.

After your request is reviewed, you'll receive notification of the approval or denial of your request by e-mail. If approved, the notification will include the number of points awarded.

Point Value: **Determined on a case-by-case basis**

Component 9 Maximum: 25 points

Online Logging Tip: Due to the nature of this component's preapproval requirement, this component CANNOT be submitted online.

Sign and Submit Your Elective Component Workbook

Name: _____ NCCPA Certification No.: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Exam for Which I am Applying (Season & Year): _____

I affirm that I have completed all of the activities reported in this workbook and that none of those activities have been or will be used to satisfy the separate NCCPA minimum requirement of 100 CME hours every two years. I understand that NCCPA may audit this submission for two years after this date and that I am responsible for maintaining documentation supporting the activities listed and providing that documentation to NCCPA in the event of an audit. **I understand that if I do not meet the 100 elective component requirements by the application deadline for the Pathway II exam administration that I registered for I will not be eligible to take that exam and will be withdrawn.**

(Signature)

(Date)

Submit you're completed and *signed* Elective Component Workbook to NCCPA with all requested documentation on or before the application deadline for the Pathway II exam you have chosen. A workbook will be considered submitted if it is postmarked by the application deadline. **When submitting your workbook by fax or mail, be sure to submit all pages where you have logged elective component points and this signature page.** Failure to submit all pages will delay the processing of your elective component requirement.

Make a copy for yourself, and then mail your completed workbook to the address below or fax it to 678.417.8135.

NCCPA
12000 Findley Road
Suite 200
Duluth, GA 30097

RE: Pathway II Elective Component Workbook

Don't Forget to Apply for the Exam!

Remember, submission of your elective component points is NOT the same as applying for the exam. To take the Pathway II exam, NCCPA must receive the following three items by the exam application deadline:

1. Pathway II Recertification Examination Application
2. Exam fee payment
3. 100 elective component points

All three of these items are most easily submitted online. Sign in to your personal certification record at www.nccpa.net and follow the on screen instructions.