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).

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 1: Extra Clinical Category I (Preapproved) CME Hours

Clinical, Category I CME hours earned during your six-year certification maintenance cycle prior to the exam application deadline may be submitted. Hours used to meet NCCPA’s two-year certification maintenance requirements cannot be submitted again; however, if you would like to use extra clinical, Category I hours that you’ve already logged -- hours above and beyond the minimum required for certification maintenance -- please write the cycle those hours were logged under the “Cycle Logged” column. (If you’re logging a new activity, leave the Cycle Logged column blank and send a copy of documentation verifying Category I approval.) You can access a list of the CME hours that we have on file for you by signing in to your personal certification record at www.nccpa.net and clicking on CME History. If “Combined hours” appears in the Program Title space, just note the number of “Combined hours” you would like moved for each cycle.

Point Value: One point per clinical, Category I CME hour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Earned</th>
<th>Program Title</th>
<th>Sponsor (AAPA, AOA, AAFP, AMA, ACCME)</th>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Hours/Points Earned</th>
<th>Cycle Logged?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/06</td>
<td>Audio Digest post test</td>
<td>AAPA</td>
<td>Audio Digest</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>'05-'07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Component 1 Maximum: 50 points

TOTAL: 

Online Logging Tips for Activities that Qualify as Category I CME:

1. If you’re logging an activity that has never been logged before simply select Category I from the Logging Elective Component Points for Pathway II screen and enter the information requested.
2. If you’d like to transfer “extra” CME from your current CME cycle to the elective component requirement, click CME Summary from the left menu. Find the CME activity that you’d like to transfer and click the “Edit” button to the right of the activity. Then, review the information you’d previously entered for this activity and when prompted at the Component Type drop down menu, select Elective Component 1: Extra Clinical Category I CME.
3. If you’d like to transfer “extra” CME from a previous CME cycle to the elective component requirement, those activities must be transferred in this workbook according to the procedure described above.
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 Certification 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.

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

TOTAL: __________
Component 2 Maximum: 50 points

Elective Component | 5
**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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Earned</th>
<th>Activity/Topic</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Hours Spent</th>
<th>Points Earned (2/hr = Professionals)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/05</td>
<td>Precepting PA Student</td>
<td>Healthcare Profess</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Earned</th>
<th>Article/Chapter Title</th>
<th>Publication Name</th>
<th>Peer Reviewed?</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/05</td>
<td>Danger of Bacterial Meningitis in an Adult</td>
<td>JAAPA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Component 4 Maximum:** 40 points

*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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Earned</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>College/University</th>
<th># of Hours</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/05</td>
<td>Introduction to Pharmacology</td>
<td>Alderson-Broaddus College</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Received</th>
<th>Degree/Residency Program</th>
<th>College/University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/05</td>
<td>Masters of Physician Assistant Studies</td>
<td>University of Nebraska</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 100, Johns Creek, 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Program Title</th>
<th>Accrediting Specialty Society</th>
<th>Hours/Points Earned</th>
<th>Cycle Logged?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/05</td>
<td>Home Study Self Assessment</td>
<td>American Academy of Family Physicians</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 by 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 100, Johns Creek, 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 your 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 100
Johns Creek, GA 30097

RE: Pathway II Elective Component Workbook

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**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.