



Exam Candidate Handbook



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INFORMATION FOR NESTA PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER CANDIDATES

I. Introduction

The Mission of NESTA's Personal Fitness Trainer (PFT) Program

The National Exercise & Sports Trainers Association (NESTA) provides fitness certifications and continuing education for personal trainers, athletic coaches, group exercise instructors, life coaches and many other fitness professionals. NESTA is based in Rancho Santa Margarita, CA and has been in operation since 1992 with over 40,000 worldwide members. NESTA educational programs offer innovative animations and modern presentation techniques to enhance learning of the exercise sciences for real world health, fitness and performance applications through effective individualized program design. NESTA prides itself on providing progressive learning that is easy to understand and able to be applied immediately to help professionals build successful and profitable programs in a safe and enjoyable manner.

The mission of NESTA's Certified Personal Fitness Trainer (PFT) Executive Certification Board (ECB) is to:

“Recognize individuals who are exceptionally qualified to provide individualized personal fitness training through safe, efficient and effective exercise programming for personal clientele and the public at large while striving to pave a new path of unparalleled professional excellence.”

In fulfillment of this mission the NESTA Executive Certification Board:

- Creates, develops and enforces performance standards for entry level competency of certified personal fitness trainers
- Identifies a code of ethics and scope of practice for certified personal fitness trainers
- Develops and administers examinations that assess the knowledge, skills and abilities consistent with professional data obtained from psychometrically validated survey information

NESTA's Certified Personal Fitness Trainer (PFT) Program, validates that the candidate has entry-level application skills, knowledge, and commitment vital to a successful fitness practice. The candidate may utilize multiple avenues for entry including: self-study, practical work experience including internships and apprenticeships, and two and four year collegiate-based fitness programs.

In addition to the initial PFT certification, NESTA provides a mechanism to:

“Recognize those individuals who continue to increase their professional qualifications through adherence to NESTA ECB continuing education standards, competence within

scope of practice, and ethical conduct and behavior in compliance with the continuing education requirements and code of ethics for NESTA's Certified Personal Fitness Trainer program."

NESTA awards the title "Certified Personal Fitness Trainer" to those individuals who meet the continuing education, ethical conduct, professional behavior, and examination requirements set forth by the PFT Certification Board.

About NESTA's Executive Certification Board (ECB)

The NESTA Executive Certification Board is the governing body of the NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Program, also known as the PFT. The Executive Certification Board is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the PFT exam, allocation of funds, policies and procedures, disciplinary action, selection of personnel and operational processes of the certification program. These processes shall be used to determine the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for beginning level competency in becoming a certified personal fitness trainer and continuing education requirements and standards for maintaining appropriate knowledge, skills and ability levels.

The NESTA Executive Certification Board (see Table 1A) is comprised of several committees, one of which is called the Job Task and Industry Analysis Committee. This group of individuals is responsible for the following:

- Determining what, when, and how job task and industry analyses should be conducted
- Developing a process for conducting a job task and industry analysis
- Working with NESTA staff and PFT Executive Certification Board vendors to develop a final report and distribute the results of job task and industry analysis

The NESTA Executive Certification Board's Job Task and Industry Analysis Committee, and subject matter experts (See Table 1A) gathered in March of 2005 to determine the necessary knowledge and skills associated with the duties, responsibilities, and required knowledge base for a competent entry level certified personal fitness trainer. Through these discussions it was determined that 41 specific areas of knowledge or skill were crucial for entry level competency for a professionally certified personal fitness trainer. These 41 specific areas were then formed into a job task questionnaire which was posted on the NESTA website and submitted by email to NESTA members. Each area of knowledge or skill was rated by certified and/or degreed personal trainers according to frequency and importance in professional scope of practice and job relevancy. NESTA contracted with Consulting Measurement Group (CMG) to psychometrically validate and evaluate the job task questionnaire and perform the job task analysis of the completed surveys. Only complete survey responses were utilized as quantitative data for the job task analysis. After omitting approximately 4% (23 out of 591 surveys) of the total number of surveys due to

incomplete responses, 568 completed surveys were analyzed to determine the performance domains for the NESTA Personal Fitness Trainer exam. Further detailed information regarding the exam formation process can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html. The analyzed and psychometrically validated survey response data was brought to the NESTA ECB and board approval was obtained for the following effective exam content domains and weights for the PFT exam:

1) Exercise Application	23%
2) Program Design	23%
3) Business Applications	23%
4) Assessments, Injury Prevention and Emergency Care	16%
5) Exercise Sciences	15%

The NESTA Executive Certification Board further agreed upon a 125 question multiple-choice exam with 120 minutes allowed for completion to be a sufficient objective assessment tool in determining entry level competency. A multiple choice exam format was chosen due to the need for an objective testing format.

NESTA Boards and Committees	
Founding Executive Certification Board Members	
Frank McDermott - Chair	
Jack Bauerle	Ryan Campbell
Mike Reimann	Scott Somers
Job Task Analysis Task Force Members	
Mark Baines	Jack Bauerle
Ryan Campbell	Scott Gaines
Subject Matter Experts	
Mark Baines	Jack Bauerle
Kelli Calabrese	Ryan Campbell
Christine Collett	Tom Delong
John Spencer Ellis	Scott Gaines
Chris Mohr	Geoffrey Myers
Scott Newton	Jonathan Pauley

Table 1A

The Purpose of this Handbook

The information in this candidate handbook will provide you with the tools and information you need to take the NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainer Exam. The following information outlines the exam registration process, candidate eligibility, exam content and preparation, and certification guidelines.

II. About the PFT Exam

Candidate Eligibility and Exam Process Overview

- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age with a high school diploma or equivalent prior to enrolling or applying to take the PFT exam. CPR certification is strongly suggested for all personal fitness trainers and is required by many places of employment, but is not a prerequisite for achieving NESTA certification.
- There are no educational prerequisites or requirements for taking the exam (however, individuals who are new to the exercise sciences of kinesiology, anatomy, exercise physiology and biomechanics are strongly urged to utilize NESTA certification study materials or other suggested references found at www.nestapft.com and listed in Section III of this handbook). All age-eligible applicants with high school level or equivalent education are encouraged to register.
- Once registration has been submitted, age and education level eligibility is validated and payment is received, exam candidates will receive a confirmation notice and a candidate number by email and/or phone. This candidate number is required in order to make an appointment to take the exam at a Prometric testing center location of candidate choice.
- Prometric is our testing provider and has test facilities throughout Canada and all 50 states in the U.S. including, Washington DC, Guam, Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. See <http://www.prometric.com/NESTA> for a complete list of Certified PFT test sites.
- Confirmation by email and/or phone will include a toll free number to call for exam registration dates and times in your area. Candidates should schedule exams two or more weeks prior to intended exam date to ensure exam date and time availability at the testing center location of choice.
- Exams must be taken within 90 days of purchase. Any exam not taken within 90 days from date of exam purchase will become null and void.

Registration

Registrations/orders must be received through one of the three following methods:

- Fill out and submit your registration online at www.NESTApft.com
- Print and fax your completed registration and fee payment information to:
949-589-8216, c/o PFT Executive Certification Board, Exam Registration
- Print and mail completed application and include fee payment information to:
NESTA Executive Certification Board
30245 Tomas
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2123 USA
- If you have questions and need to contact a NESTA representative you may do so by sending an email to: cs@NESTAcertified.com or by calling the NESTA offices at 1-877-348-6692.

Fee Payment Options

NESTA does not allow payment plans. Payments must be paid in full before receiving study materials and/or taking the exam.

NESTA allows for the following payment methods:

- Credit Card/Debit/Check Card
American Express
MasterCard
Visa
- Cashier's/Company Check
- Money Order

Return Policy

Online Programs Return Policy

Please review our refund policy carefully. The following programs, services, membership subscriptions and fees are all non-refundable. No trial periods, no refunds:

- * Online delivery, digital and downloadable programs are non-refundable
- * Monthly membership fees are non-refundable
- * Exam/retest fees are non-refundable
- * Shipping fees are non-refundable
- * Clothing is non-refundable
- * Polar Watches are non-refundable whether purchased separately or in a bundled program

Program Study Options

Potential NESTA students and exam candidates may choose from any one of the following options listed with descriptions below. Each option includes the NESTA PFT Exam, although individuals may also choose the Exam Only option. Exam candidate preparedness should be based upon individual comprehension and the ability to apply information within the exam content areas listed later in this handbook.

Study Options (described below)

Complete	\$449
Master	\$949
Exam Only	\$249

Complete - \$449

Personal Fitness Trainer Certification Exam with Downloadable Interactive Manual, Video Lectures and Audios.

Manual uses interactive animations to explain scientific concepts and their applications for the personal trainer. Each chapter contains study questions which will prepare students to pass their certification exam.

The following content areas are covered within the pdf manual:

- Chapter 1 - Introduction to Personal Training
- Chapter 2 - Exercise Physiology
- Chapter 3 - Kinesiology and Functional Anatomy
- Chapter 4 - Applied Biomechanics
- Chapter 5 - Flexibility
- Chapter 6 - Nutrition
- Chapter 7 - Special Populations
- Chapter 8 - Assessments
- Chapter 9 - Program Design
- Chapter 10 - Exercise Application
- Chapter 11 - Safety, Injury Prevention and Treatment
- Chapters 12-13 - Business Applications for the Personal Trainer

Video Lectures: 10 hours of presentations which coincide with chapter topics

Audio Lessons:

- **Business Fundamentals Audio Download**
Tips on how you'll succeed in personal training with NESTA CEO John Spencer Ellis and Mark Baines
- **Program Design Fundamentals Audio Download**
An in-depth analysis for designing an effective and efficient program with fast and impressive results for your clients
- **Nutrition Fundamentals Audio Download**
Conversation with Chris Mohr, RD, PhD, on nutrition and helping your clients make the best choices for optimal results

Master - \$949

Includes all Complete Items plus the following:

Biomechanics Specialist (BMS)

Functional Training Specialist (FTS)

Core Conditioning Specialist (CCS)

Speed, Agility, & Quickness Specialist (SAQ)

Master Personal Trainer Exam

Completion of a research paper which requires a program design of a complete macrocycle. Only NESTA Certified Personal Fitness Trainers (PFTs) who are also NESTA Speed, Agility and Quickness Specialists (SAQ) may qualify to complete the Master Trainer program.

Exam Only - \$249

125 question, 120 minute proctored multiple choice exam

No study materials are included with this option

Study materials are not required and not necessary to pass the NESTA PFT Exam provided exam candidates are competent and knowledgeable in the performance areas listed in Section III of this handbook. Additional reference and resource materials for study within these performance areas are listed at the end of Section III.

Exam Fees*

Registration Fee	\$249
Extension Fee	\$95
Rescheduling Fee (<48 hour notice)	\$95
Retake Fee	\$149

*Initial registration and payment of extension, rescheduling or retake fees grants the exam

candidate an additional 90 days to take their exam. The sum total of exam extensions, reschedules and/or retakes will not be granted for greater than 12 months or one calendar year. After one year from initial registration exam candidates will be required to pay an additional registration fee to take the exam.

Scheduling

After registering for the PFT exam, exam candidates will receive an exam eligibility ID number by email. Exam candidates should then follow the process below to schedule their exam and are encouraged to make their appointment 15-30 business days or more in advance to guarantee their date, location and time of choice.

- 1) Go to <http://www.prometric.com/NESTA>
- 2) Select “Schedule, Reschedule, Cancel or Confirm an Exam”
- 3) Choose appropriate “Country” and “State”
- 4) Select “Schedule an Exam”
- 5) Read important exam information and select “Next”
- 6) Read exam policies and select “I Agree” (if you choose “I do not agree” you will not be able to schedule your exam)
- 7) Enter your “Eligibility ID” provided to you by email
- 8) Choose the time, date and site location for your exam

To make an appointment by phone:

- Call Prometric at 1-888-316-7225 (USA)
- Have your exam eligibility ID number available
- Confirm chosen date, time and location for your exam

Address Changes

- Address changes can be made by filling out the Address/Information Change Form available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html

NESTA requires exam candidates to maintain current name, mailing address, phone number and email information.

Available Exam Locations

Exam candidates in the United States and Canada:

- 1) To view exam sites go to <http://www.prometric.com/NESTA/default.htm> to find the nearest Prometric Testing Center in the United States or Canada.
- 2) Select desired “**Country**” and “**State**”
- 3) Select “**Locate a Test Site**”
- 4) Find an “**Available Test Site**” near you

International Candidates and Scheduling Hardship

International exam candidates will need to fill out and submit a Petition Request Form for “Private Proctoring” which can be found at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html. Once the petition is accepted, the exam candidate must fill out and submit a Proctor Agreement Form for approval by the NESTA ECB for taking the exam. View the proctor agreement form at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.

Only international exam candidates (outside the United States and Canada) or exam candidates within North America who can effectively show hardship in taking the NESTA PFT Exam at a Prometric testing center within the required 90 day exam preparation period will be allowed the opportunity for a privately proctored exam. Exam candidates should view the Proctor Agreement form at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html for more information and guidelines about private proctoring of the NESTA PFT Exam.

Additional policy and procedural information regarding “Private Proctoring” of exams can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.

In the event an exam candidate is unable to take their exam at a Prometric testing center (within the United States or Canada) due to travel distances greater than 2 ½ hours driving time or 100+ miles the candidate may apply to have their exam privately proctored by a NESTA approved proctor. Such proctors include teachers, professors, librarians, fitness managers or other acceptable professionals who have neither a business nor personal relationship with the exam candidate. It is the responsibility of the exam candidate to find a proctor that is acceptable to NESTA by filling out and submitting the Proctor Agreement Form at least 30 days prior to preferred exam date or exam deadline. Failure to submit a completed proctor agreement 30 days prior to exam schedule date or exam deadline may result in a loss of examination opportunity and forfeiture of exam fees. The Proctor Agreement Form is available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.

Individuals with Disabilities and Special Accommodation Needs

Individuals having a disability requiring special accommodations must fill out the “Request for Special Accommodations” form. Requests are decided upon an individual basis. Accommodations usually include an allowance for increased examination time. Accommodation requests will be acknowledged through email and/or phone notification within 7-10 business days of initial request.

For individuals who require a reader, separate accommodations or other requirements please state your needs and requirements in detail on the Request for Special Accommodations Form available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html. Requests will be considered and a response will be delivered within 10 business days.

Additional policy and procedural information regarding individuals with disabilities or in need of special accommodations for exams can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.

Rescheduling and Cancellations

Exam candidates must cancel or reschedule their exam at least 48 hours prior to a scheduled exam. If cancellation is made in less than 48 hours from the scheduled exam the exam opportunity will be forfeited and retake/rescheduling fees will apply.

Call Prometric at 1-888-316-7225 (USA) to cancel or reschedule exam.

Refunds and Transfers

Online education is non-refundable. Exam candidates who have either taken their exam, cancelled within 48 hours of exam appointment or who did not show up for their scheduled exam appointment will forfeit their exam fees and will not be eligible for a refund. Transfers of examination opportunities will not be allowed. Only the individual whose name is listed as the original exam candidate will be eligible to utilize the purchased exam opportunity.

Refund requests due to emergency situations or extenuating circumstances will require a petition to the NESTA ECB explaining the circumstances involved and their nature in keeping the exam candidate from making the scheduled appointment. The Petition Request Form can be found at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html. Petition requests will be considered by the NESTA ECB and a response will be delivered to the exam candidate within 10 business days.

Prometric hours of phone service operation:

Monday-Friday: 8:00am-8:00pm (Eastern Standard Time)

Closed Saturday, Sunday and Holidays

Additional policy and procedural information regarding refunds and transfers can be found in the Policies and Procedures Manual available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.

Extensions and Retakes

Exams must be completed within 90 days of exam purchase. Paid extensions, retakes or rescheduled exams allow for an additional period of 90 days. Credit card payments can be made at <http://www.NESTAcertified.com/fees.html> or by calling 1-877-348-6692. Extensions or retakes will not be permitted beyond 12 months from exam purchase date. After 12 months exam candidates will be required to repay initial registration costs in order to register for and take the exam.

Exam extension need due to emergency or extenuating situations is evaluated on an individual basis. Individuals requesting such extensions should fill out the petition form available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html. Petitions for nonpaid extensions or retakes must be written and submitted using this form prior to receiving approval. When granted, petitions for extension are typically granted for 30 additional days without charge. All requests for nonpaid extensions or retakes due to extenuating circumstances require exam candidates to petition within 30 days following exam appointment or exam expiration date.

If a candidate does not pass the NESTA PFT exam, they must wait a minimum 30 days before the candidate is allowed to retake the exam. In order to preserve item security and motivate candidates to pass, a candidate will be allowed five consecutive attempts to pass the exam, after which they are permanently excluded from taking the exam again.

Confirmation and ID numbers

Exam confirmations with testing ID numbers will be submitted by email within 5-7 business days following exam registration or extensions. Once the exam has been scheduled, NESTA will have no other correspondence until the exam has been completed and scores have been received.

Exam Day

- 1) Plan on arriving at least 30 minutes prior to actual appointment time to allow for processing and entry into examination room.
- 2) Exam candidates must provide one valid government-issued ID bearing photo & signature. If the ID does not have either the photo or signature, a secondary ID must be presented.

Acceptable forms of photo identification include:

- Driver's license
- Passport
- Military identification
- Employee identification card

Acceptable forms of non-photo identification include a credit card or check card.

Personal items other than those provided by Prometric will not be allowed into the computer based exam room. No food or drink is allowed into exam room.

- 3) Exam candidates who miss their scheduled appointment will lose their exam opportunity and forfeit their examination fees. Exam candidates arriving late will not be admitted to take their exam and will forfeit their examination fees. At least 48 hour prior notice to Prometric at 1-888-316-7225 is required for rescheduling or canceling an exam in order to avoid loss of examination fees and purchased exam opportunity. All rescheduled exams will be scheduled through Prometric. Missed exams and retakes must be purchased through NESTA and an ID must be provided from NESTA prior to exam scheduling with Prometric.
- 4) In the event of Prometric site closure the day of the exam or weather emergency preventing an exam candidate from making their exam appointment, an extension opportunity will be provided by NESTA following the required filing of a request for an extension by the exam candidate. This request must be submitted and received by NESTA within 5 business days following scheduled exam appointment.

III. Exam Preparation

PFT exam students are allowed 90 days (the equivalency of one college level quarter of class study) to prepare for and take their exam following purchase/registration. A college course may require as much as five hours of class and an additional 5-10 hours per week of study. In this manner, exam candidates may require as much as 60-180 hours of study in preparation for the exam over a 90 day period (1-3 hours of study per day in a 5 day week). Study preparation time will vary depending upon individual comfort with exam content domains and performance areas and ability to apply current knowledge.

Within each chapter of the PFT manual the student will find “Exam Alerts” to identify potential exam questions. Sufficient ability to answer these questions will greatly enhance learning in preparation for the knowledge and skill level necessary to perform the duties and responsibilities of a professional personal fitness trainer.

Additional reference and resource materials are listed later in this section.

Sufficient knowledge and understanding of the content areas and detailed objectives listed below will greatly increase the likelihood of passing the NESTA PFT exam.

Exam Content Areas

The PFT exam is defined by five content areas determined to be of primary importance based upon data gathered from an extensive job task questionnaire and analysis of currently certified personal trainers and fitness professionals in 2005. Each exam content

area is broken down by number of exam questions and percentage of questions in the table below.

NESTA Personal Fitness Trainer Exam breakdown

Content Area	Questions	Percent
1) Exercise Application	23	23%
2) Program Design	23	23%
3) Business Applications	23	23%
4) Assessments and Injury Prevention	16	16%
5) Exercise Sciences	15	15%
Pilot Items	25	0%
Totals	125	100%

There are a total of 125 exam items on the NESTA PFT exam. The exam includes 100 items that are scored and used to determine whether a candidate passes or fails the PFT exam. In addition, the exam includes a total of 25 pilot test questions have been added to the NESTA certification exam to help ensure that the administration and scoring of the PFT exam is conducted in a fair and valid manner. The pilot test questions are not scored, have no impact on a candidate’s outcome, and are used solely for research and development purposes.

The pilot test questions are primarily used to aid in the development of future exams. Specifically, pilot test questions provide an opportunity to determine the psychometric quality of the test questions before they are included on future exams. Pilot test questions can also help ensure that future exams are psychometrically equivalent to previous exams. Lastly, pilot questions can be used to identify group differences on the test items.

Exam candidate will be allowed 120 minutes to complete the 125 question multiple choice exam. A scaled score of 70 is required for passing in order to achieve PFT certification.

Detailed objectives for exam content

Recognition and understanding of the following concepts and their application is indicative of basic level competency to provide safe, efficient and effective exercise programming for individualized personal fitness training.

1) Exercise Application (23% of exam)

A professional personal fitness trainer must be able to apply appropriate exercises to meet the needs and wants of each individual client. Therefore, a professional personal fitness trainer must be able to:

- Identify individual anatomical limitations and current abilities based upon initial and ongoing assessments
 - Establish the appropriate exercise motion to meet individual goals and needs providing the greatest benefit and least risk to each individual
 - Determine the direction of resistance opposing the desired exercise motion
 - Select the appropriate exercise tool (bodyweight, machines, free weights, etc.) for each individual client
 - Position clients in a biomechanically efficient position that is consistent with individual ability, anatomical capabilities, individual goals, and direction of resistance
 - Progress clients appropriately with the following movement concepts in mind:
 - Stable before Unstable
 - Static before Dynamic
 - Slow before Fast
 - Simple before Complex
 - Bilateral before Unilateral
 - Effectively monitor joint positioning and stabilization of every repetition from head to toe
 - Facilitate the proper path of motion in opposition of the resistance forces
 - Determine and guide range of motion (ROM) variables:
 - Active Range of Motion (AROM)
 - Passive Range of Motion (PROM)
 - Resisted Range of Motion (RROM)
 - Guide and teach efficient biomechanical applications of exercises involving the following forms of resistance:
 - Bodyweight
 - Water/Air
 - Machines
 - Free weights
 - Cables
 - Resistance tubing/bands
 - Cardiovascular machines (treadmill, upright bike, recumbent bike, elliptical, upper body exerciser, etc.)
- For the major muscle groups in each of the following parts of the body:
- Lower Body
 - Core Musculature
 - Upper Body

2) Program Design (23% of exam)

A professional personal fitness trainer must be able to effectively design client programs that ensure consistent, effective and safe client progress. Therefore, a professional personal fitness trainer must be able to:

- Understand the purpose of and be able to design a training program that includes appropriate stimuli for each of the following components of fitness:
 - Balance
 - Flexibility
 - Body Composition
 - Muscular Endurance
 - Muscular Strength
 - Aerobic Capacity
- Involve programming which targets individual progress for each of the components of fitness
- Plan an appropriately periodized client program for each cycle of a training year:
 - Microcycle
 - Mesocycle
 - Macrocycle
- Vary programming based upon individual client response and progress on a daily basis
- Recognize when to involve programming that focuses on each of the following goals:
 - Stability
 - Flexibility
 - Mobility
 - Coordination
 - Endurance
 - Strength
 - Power
- Identify the need for and parameters of each of the five levels of fitness within a training year:
 - Neuromuscular Facilitation
 - Muscular Endurance
 - Hypertrophy
 - Strength
 - Power
- Understand and apply the following principles of resistance training:
 - Frequency
 - Intensity
 - Time (Time under tension)
 - Type of activity
 - Rate of progression
 - Training specificity

Specific Adaptation to Imposed Demands (SAID)

Traditional sets

Supersets

Compound sets

- Design appropriate programming at each level of fitness training on an individual basis with attention to the following parameters:
 - Muscle group(s) involved
 - Appropriate exercise(s) involving desired muscle group(s)
 - Percentage of maximum effort
 - Number of repetitions
 - Number of sets
 - Movement tempo
 - Time under tension
 - Rest between sets
 - Total workout time
 - Time between workouts
- Apply appropriate warm-up and cool-down periods with appropriate functional exercise programming to activate weak musculature and loosen tight musculature
- Recognize and apply appropriate programming and training stimuli for each of the four levels of cardiovascular training:
 - Aerobic Base
 - Aerobic Capacity
 - Anaerobic Threshold
 - Anaerobic Power

3) Business Applications (23% of exam)

A professional personal fitness trainer recognizes that interpersonal and business skills are crucial for both client and trainer success and understands how to run a fitness practice as an employee or as an independent contractor or entrepreneur. Therefore, a professional personal fitness trainer must be able to:

- Identify benefits and drawbacks to working as an employee, independent contractor, or entrepreneur
- Focus on a target market of potential clients that is consistent with personal methodologies, attributes, education and training skill level
- Select appropriate physical areas to network and build name and service recognition with current and potential clients
- Utilize internal and external sources (to the training environment) of marketing such as flyer, brochures, business cards, and appropriate licenses or

certifications

- Perform as a professional in every way when “on the job” as a personal trainer within the training environment and outside the training environment
- Sell their services in a professional and responsible manner with the needs and wants of the target market and individual clientele in mind
- Approach potential clients on an individual basis within and outside the training environment utilizing non-threatening and helpful methods that are client centered
- Contact current and potential clients by phone, email, internet, mail and in person with confidence in a professional, ethical and legal manner for appropriate follow-up before and after training sessions
- Apply management rules, guidelines and expectations within the training environment when working as an employee and establish ethical and professional rules, guidelines and expectations for both client and trainer when working as an independent contractor or entrepreneur
- Communicate effectively with current clients regarding client and facility rules, guidelines and expectations to ensure a safe, efficient and effective training session regimen
- Set SMART personal goals in order to ensure personal satisfaction with job performance and provide individual focus, desire for improvement, and a sense of ownership for the personal trainer’s own fitness practice. Such goals are:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Action oriented
 - Realistic and achievable
 - Timed
- Set SMART goals with clients to ensure motivation, a means of performance measurement, and to instill a sense of ownership in their own success
- Create a business plan for ensuring long term success for the client and the personal trainer

4) Assessments and Injury Prevention (16% of exam)

A professional personal fitness trainer must establish a baseline of ability and anatomical capabilities for each individual before designing an efficient program or undergoing any exercise regimen. Therefore, a professional personal fitness trainer must be able to:

- Recognize and utilize reliable testing and evaluative methods to provide meaningful information to the client and the personal fitness trainer
- Understands that assessments are meant as a starting point of comparison for each new client to identify current abilities and assess progress over time
- Perform meaningful physical and evaluative assessments during the initial

training session and every few weeks thereafter to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the training program

- Master usage of the following basic information gathering assessments through implementation and a thorough understanding of important questions to be asked and answered:

Health History Questionnaire

PAR-Q Form

- Provide accurate health history information to identify and understand the implications of specific medical concerns or risk factors such as:

Heart disease

Hereditary diseases

Cardiovascular disease

Metabolic syndromes

Cigarette smoking

Hypertension/Hypotension

High cholesterol

Obesity

Sedentary lifestyle

- Identify risk factors which demand the need for medical clearance through a doctor of medicine or therapy specialist before beginning an exercise program
- Ask appropriate questions where necessary to elicit important medical, health and fitness information in order to preserve client safety and build an ideal individualized training program during the initial assessment and each training session thereafter as necessary
- Understand and assess the various fitness component areas for each individual prior to designing an exercise program which includes the following physical assessments:

Body composition and metabolism (body composition and metabolic rate)

Cardiovascular (blood pressure, resting heart rate and sub-max VO₂)

Balance (static and dynamic posture)

Flexibility

Muscular strength and endurance (lower body, core and upper body)

- Understand the various assess methods available for each area of physical assessment and utilize safe practices to obtain baseline performance and health measurements
- Have a logical goal setting progression or protocol to establish SMART goals that are Specific, Measurable, Action plan oriented, Realistic and Timed

5) Exercise Sciences (15% of exam)

A professional personal fitness trainer have an adequate base of knowledge in the exercise science areas of exercise physiology, functional anatomy, biomechanics, flexibility and nutrition in order to understand the physiological effects of exercise and movement. Therefore, a professional personal trainer must be able to:

- Identify the components of the kinetic chain and their relationship in bodily structure, communication between the brain and body, and in movement
- Recall the importance of each component of the kinetic chain:
 - Nervous System
 - Muscular System
 - Skeletal System
- Identify important receptors involved in sensory and motor actions of the nervous system and their basic function(s)
- Understand how the body adapts to a new stimulus with more efficient movement due to improved neuromuscular communication
- Recognize the phases of individual learning and their importance in training the body:
 - Cognitive
 - Associative
 - Autonomic
- Identify the differing roles of skeletal muscle including:
 - Prime Movers
 - Assistant Movers
 - Agonists
 - Antagonists
 - Stabilizers
 - Neutralizers
- Recall the importance of the various muscle fiber types and their role in exercise and intensity:
 - Type I
 - Type IIA
 - Type IIB
- Identify, understand and apply the three phases of muscular action to an exercise or movement:
 - Eccentric
 - Isometric
 - Concentric
- Understand the various training adaptations regarding muscular strength and muscular endurance to the muscular system and the role each plays in training

including:

Absolute Strength
Relative Strength
Strength Endurance
Power

- Recognize the significance of muscle soreness and how to avoid or minimize it
- Recall the basic roles of the skeletal system and be able to identify the differing bone structures within the body for purposes of movement and/or support
- Comprehend the basic structures and functions of joints
- Identify and understand the roles of the three energy systems in muscular contraction and energy production:
 - Adenosine Triphosphate/Creatine Phosphate
 - Glycolysis
 - Aerobic Oxidation
- Identify the major roles and functions of the cardiovascular system and their importance to blood pressure, heart rate, heart stimulation, blood flow, cardiac output and aerobic capacity (VO₂ max) for health and fitness
- Recognize the purpose of determining resting heart rate (RHR) and rate of perceived exertion (RPE) and the importance of both subjective and objective information during and after exercise
- Identify the signs of overreaching and overtraining and understand how to avoid these situations or how to alter training to aid return to homeostasis
- Recall the three planes of human movement and their importance to exercise and movement:
 - Sagittal
 - Frontal/Coronal
 - Transverse/Horizontal
- Identify the various anatomical movement descriptors involved in joint actions of the body and points of reference in relation to anatomical neutral or anatomical position
- Locate the position of major muscle groups within the body and understand each's basic structure and function in movement or stability for the lower body, core musculature, and upper body
- Understand the basic importance of biomechanical terminology as it relates to human movement and the forces acting on the body including:
 - Velocity, Acceleration and Momentum
 - Force
 - Lever

Axis
Moment Arm
Force Angle
Weight
Impulse
Compression/Distracton
Torque
Shear
Length-Tension Relationship
Passive and Active Insufficiency

- Recognize the importance of an appropriate warm-up and cool-down and be able to apply appropriate activities and programming
- Identify the various forms of stretching and means of achieving flexibility and mobility and the appropriate timing and application of each method including:
 - Static
 - Dynamic
 - Ballistic
 - PNF (Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation)
 - SMFR (Self-Myofascial Release)
- Identify the foundational components of a healthful diet including the basic functions and bodily requirements for the various nutrients including:
 - Carbohydrates
 - Protein
 - Fats
 - Water
 - Vitamins
 - Minerals

Reference and Resource Materials for Exam Prep

Reference and resource materials are listed according to specific area of performance in preparation for the NESTA PFT Exam. No reference or study material coverage will guarantee passing of the PFT Exam. However, becoming familiar with these references and study materials and knowledgeable of their content will greatly enhance the knowledge and abilities of a professional Personal Fitness Trainer.

Exercise Sciences

(Exercise Physiology, Kinesiology, Anatomy, and Biomechanics)

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapters 1-4
- Kinesiology of the Musculoskeletal System, Neumann, D. 2002
- Diagnosing and Treatment of Movement Impairment Syndromes, Sahrmann, S. 2001

Assessments and Injury Prevention

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapters 7, 8 and 11
- American College of Sports Medicine's Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription, American College of Sports Medicine. 2005
- NESTA Sports Injury Specialist Program

Business Applications

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapters 12-14
- NESTA Business Applications Audio mp3
- The Business of Fitness: Understanding the Financial Side of Owning a Fitness Business, Plummer, T. 2003
- The Psychology of Selling, Tracy, B. 2002

Program Design

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapter 9
- NESTA Program Design Audio mp3
- Periodization: Theory and Methodology of Training, Bompa, T. 1999

Exercise Application

- NESTA PFT Manual Chapter 10
- NESTA Warm-Ups and Stretching Video
- NESTA Exercise Application Video
- The Essentials of Resistance Training: The Basic Training Video Series, Purvis, T. 1999

IV. Exam Scoring and Certification

History of the Exam

Pass rates were calculated for all the exams administered in 2006 and 2007. Of the 285 candidates who took the exam in 2006, 62.1% (n = 177) passed and 37.9% (n = 108) failed. Of the 1200 individuals who took the exam in 2007, 65.1% (n = 781) passed and 34.9% (n = 419) failed. Cumulatively across the two years, 64.5% (n = 958) passed the exam and 35.5% (n = 527) failed.

Exam Scoring and Score Notification

Exam candidates will be notified of unofficial exam scores immediately following the computer based exam. Candidates will receive a score report immediately following completion of their exam. This exam score report will include a breakdown of performance

for each of the five content areas covered in the exam with the total number of items answered for each content area and the number of items answered correctly. Score status is pass/fail only with exam candidates needing total scores of 70 percent (percentage of items correct) or 70 raw (actual number of items correct) to pass the exam. A sample score report is available online at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html. These scores are unofficial until verified. Official notification of pass or failure will be delivered by email from NESTA within four weeks or 20 business days from the date of actual exam. In the event email is not provided, accurate or available, official notification will be delivered by phone and/or mail within four weeks or 20 business days from the date of actual exam. A four week time frame is necessary to verify exam scores and validate candidate eligibility.

Raw score (the number of questions correct out of 100 graded questions) and percentage (based upon 100% scale) score will be provided. Exam candidates must achieve a raw score of 70 or higher and/or a scaled score of 70% or greater to achieve PFT certification.

Requests for correct and incorrect answers

In order to preserve the integrity and validity of the PFT exam, exam candidates will not be informed of questions answered correctly or incorrectly. Only overall scores will be made known. Exam candidates can request a hand-scored answer sheet for \$25 (specific exam questions and correct answers will not be given) to view correctness of exam scoring. Such requests can be made by filling out the Request for Hand Scoring Form available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.html.

Cause for Disciplinary Action

Certification will be denied, suspended or revoked should any of the following situations occur:

- 1) Falsification of personal information or NESTA documentation
- 2) Assistance of another exam candidate during an exam
- 3) Duplication or unauthorized possession of exam questions or answers
- 4) Unauthorized usage of NESTA logos, trademarks, or certification titles
- 5) Inability to fulfill recertification requirements and apply for recertification within the required time frame (four years from certification date)

Exam score and disciplinary action appeals

All appeals or concerns regarding the accuracy or validity of specific exam questions or in response to disciplinary actions from the NESTA Executive Certification Board should be directed in writing to:

NESTA Executive Certification Board
30245 Tomas
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2123 USA

Appeals will not be considered beyond 90 days from an Executive Board Decision to revoke or deny certification or beyond 90 days from exam date for exam score appeals.

NESTA will not discuss or respond to questions or concerns regarding the exam without written appeal. Appeals will not be considered for rescoring or for adjustments to completed exams. Appeals and concerns will be considered for future examination content only. For more information, please refer to the NESTA ECB Policies and Procedures Manual.

Reception of Certification

Certificates will be awarded to all exam candidates receiving a 70% or higher passing score on the PFT exam. Upon passing the NESTA Executive Certification Board (ECB) will authenticate scores and examinee eligibility. PFT Certificates can be expected within four weeks or 20 business days of passing the PFT examination.

Recertification and Continuing Education Requirements

NESTA PFT certified members will be required to complete 4.0 CEUs of continuing education over four years in order to maintain certification. A CEU is a Continuing Education Unit quantified in increments of 0.1 and is roughly equivalent to one hour of live workshop or distance learning study (programs will vary in CEU credit recognition). Updated information on acceptable coursework and live study for NESTA CEU recognition with CEU credit hours is available at <http://www.NESTApft.com/continuing-education-recertification.html>.

Additional policy and procedural information regarding appeals, disciplinary, certification and recertification policies can be found in the Policies and Procedures and Recertification Manuals available at www.NESTApft.com/forms.html.