



National Knowledge Exam (NKE) November 5, 2026

NKE WRITER HANDBOOK

Alternate formats available upon request

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About the NKE

The National Knowledge Exam® (NKE) assesses your understanding of HR knowledge and skills. It serves as the national benchmark for the assessment of proficiency in the Human Resources body of knowledge. The exam assesses an individual's understanding of the CPHR competencies as they relate to academic knowledge. Academic knowledge refers to basic facts, policies, practices, methods, legislation, etc. It is information that can be written into procedures and transferred during the learning process.

The NKE is a multiple-choice assessment of knowledge in human resources. Of the 160 questions on the examination, 150 are designated as operational (intended to be scored), and 10 unscored are included for field test purposes. A writer's total score is calculated as their number of correct answers.

Writers will have 3 hours and 15 minutes to write their exam. If additional time is required, an accommodation must be requested and accompanied by medical documentation.

The NKE is developed based on the [CPHR Competency Framework](#). 90% of the NKE is based on the HR Specific Competencies and 10% is based on the General Competencies.

Preparing for the NKE

You are encouraged to use a variety of study resources, including:

- **Prep courses** – Prep courses can be helpful refreshers of information and many writers who take a prep course perform better on the NKE; however, a prep course is not a replacement for an educational program in HR. Visit your provincial member associations' website for more information.
- [NKE Practice Exam Questions](#)
- [CPHR Competency Framework](#) – As the exam is developed based on the Competency Framework, reviewing the Competency Framework will provide important information about the competencies being tested.
- [Textbooks](#) – CPHR Canada publishes a list of textbooks utilized in the development of the NKE.

Exam Testing Format

CPHR Canada's Fall 2026 National Knowledge Exam (NKE) will be administered through Meazure Learning's Test Centre Network and through Remote Proctoring.

The availability of test centres in some regions of the country are limited or not currently available.

It is also possible that while the testing locations are open and available for testing, they may be running on reduced staff or limited seat capacity and may not be available for booking on our exam day. A hybrid model will be used to ensure the exam is accessible to all who wish to complete it.

Exam registrants will be asked at the time of registration to choose a preference of how they wish to complete the exam – via Test Centre or Remote Proctoring.

Before deciding whether you would prefer a test centre or remote proctored exam, please read through the information provided in this handbook very carefully. Taking a remote proctored exam requires the writer to take on the responsibility of ensuring their internet connection and equipment meets the standards required. Failure to do so may result in the writer being unable to write the exam.

For those that choose a test centre as their preference, this is not a guarantee. Test Centres are subject to availability in your region and sitting to write at a test centre is booked at your discretion during the booking window that will occur in October following the registration deadline on September 11, 2026. More details regarding the booking window can be found in this handbook and will be communicated to you by your provincial member association. If wanting to write in-person, CPHR Canada recommends selecting a test centre within a 2-hour driving distance (one-way) from your location. If a test centre seat is not available within a 2-hour driving distance (one-way), you may prefer to book for a live, remote proctored exam. A remote proctored exam can be taken anywhere in the world provided you have a stable internet connection and appropriate equipment.

Registrants will receive information on how to book their exam in October 2026.

- During the booking window (see page 5 for more information on booking), all writers will be required to book their exam time and will be provided with instructions on how to do so.

Test takers will be subject to the cancellation/deferral deadlines outlined below should they not wish to complete their exam via the assigned format. Alternate considerations will be made for test takers who have chosen a test centre exam as their preference, are unable to be seated into a test centre based on test centre availability, and are unable to meet the remote proctoring requirements. Test takers must notify their provincial association immediately upon receiving their booking request email if they foresee any issues meeting the requirements.

* Test centre bookings may be changed following receipt of the booking confirmation email. In the event a test centre seat is no longer available, the affected writer(s) will be notified immediately and will be required to complete their exam via remote proctoring.*

Registration

Registration Deadline

The registration deadline is **September 11, 2026**.

Deferrals and Cancellations

Cancellations - Exam fees are refundable for first time registrants (exam fee has not been deferred to a future exam write) if requested by the exam registration deadline (of September 11, 2026). The exam fee is non-refundable if a writer cancels their registration after the registration deadline or wishes to cancel following a previous deferral.

Deferrals – for a fee, an exam registrant may defer their exam to the next sitting up to a maximum of two times. The exam must be written on the third sitting or the exam fee will be forfeited.

The deferral schedule is as follows:

Up to and including October 21 – deferral of exam fee and seat fee to the next sitting (provided the maximum number of deferrals has not been reached)

From October 22 to October 28 – deferral of exam fee only. A new seat fee will be required for the next exam sitting.

Email Address & Contact Information

If your email address changes following registration you must notify your provincial association immediately. Your log-in credentials for the exam will be created using the email address you provided upon registering and all future communications sent from the exam provider will go to the same email address. CPHR Canada is not responsible for missed communication should you fail to update your contact information with your provincial association.

Accessibility and Accommodations Requests

Accommodation request deadline is **September 11, 2026**.

CPHR Canada will consider any testing accommodation requests while ensuring the integrity of the National Knowledge Exam (NKE) and ensuring that the NKE tests the required competencies. CPHR Canada supports reasonable and appropriate modifications to the NKE to accommodate writers under the applicable human rights legislation.

See **Accommodation Handbook for Writers** for more information.

Exam Booking and Rescheduling

Once your registration has been finalized by your provincial member association, booking your session will be done electronically via ProctorU's website.

All writers will receive a welcome email from Meazure Learning that will include your login credentials and instructions on how to book your exam time. The email will be sent to the email address used when you registered for the exam. Be sure to check your junk folder and spam filters if you have not received the email to your inbox. Please ensure the @getyardstick.com and @meazurelearning.com domains are whitelisted by your email provider.

Booking for the 2026 NKE taking place on November 5, 2026 must be completed between October 13 and October 26, 2026 and is only available to individuals who registered for the NKE with their province by the registration deadline of September 11, 2026.

Exam slots will be available during the hours of 8:00AM – 7:00PM EDT on November 5, 2026. Exam times are listed on a 24-hour clock. Time zones are automatically selected by the booking system based on your location. It is the responsibility of the writer to ensure the selected time zone is correct prior to booking. Booking in the incorrect time zone or at the incorrect time on the 24-hour clock may result in your exam being automatically rescheduled or you missing your exam time. During the booking window, writers are responsible for booking their exam modality (remote proctored or in-person), time and if applicable test centre location.

A tutorial of how the booking process works can be found here:

<https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/25911576412685-Scheduling-an-Exam-Using-Your-Test-Owner-s-Platform>

Failure to book your exam time by October 26, 2026 will result in an automatic deferral of your exam to the Fall 2027 administration. This will result in forfeiture of your seat fee as well as a deferral fee charge. Registrants who are ineligible for a deferral will forfeit their exam fees and seat fees.

Rescheduling your Exam

All exams will take place November 5, 2026. If you need to change the exam time you booked for during the booking window, you can do so online in the portal prior to October 26, 2026. If for any reason you need to reschedule your exam location or format (test centre or remote proctoring) once you have booked, you must contact your provincial member association and Meazure Learning for assistance.

Please note policies and procedures pertaining to exams written in **Test Centres** and **Remote Proctoring** to make an informed decision on your exam location preference prior to booking your exam.

Test Centre Exams

About Test Centre Exams

Test Centre exams are computer-based exams completed in-person at a location in Meazure Learning's Test Centre Network. Locations are available across Canada. Your exam is completed on a computer with a proctor monitoring you throughout the session.

Required Items to Bring on Exam Day

You must bring the following items or you will not be granted access to your exam:

- Current valid government issued photo identification with signature (e.g., Driver's license, passport or permanent resident card). **The name on your identification must match the name you registered with.** If you plan to change your name on your government ID prior to writing the exam, ensure your provincial association is made aware of the update prior to exam day.

You may also bring the following items with you to your exam:

- Water in clear, spill-proof container with no label (only if approved by Test Centre)
 - Please note, your water will not be allowed at your computer station as set out by the Test Centre locations. To access your water, you must utilize an exam break as outlined on Page 7.
- Disposable ear plugs
- Tissues

Writers with medical conditions that require prohibited items must contact their provincial exam administrator to arrange approval prior to exam day. See CPHR Canada's **NKE Accommodations Handbook for Writers**.

Non-Permissible Items

- Electronic devices (watches – any kind, cell phones, cameras, calculators, pagers, personal digital assistants, etc.)
- Headphones
- Note paper
- Writing utensils
- Notebooks, textbooks or other reference materials
- Food

- Hats, hoods or other non-religious headwear
- Coats, jackets

The testing venue will have a set area for your personal belongings during the exam.

Arrival/Late Admittance Policy

- **Writers will be asked to arrive at their assigned test centre 30 minutes prior to their exam start time.**
- Any writer who arrives between **1 to 14 minutes** after the scheduled start time will be permitted to write their examination, however, they will lose any late time as this will not be added to their examination. They must complete their examination on or prior to the scheduled session completion time.
- Any writer who arrives **15+ minutes** after the scheduled start time will not be able to test and will be considered a 'no-show'.

Writers will not be allowed to leave the exam room before one hour has expired.

Should you become ill during the exam, you may leave but will not receive a refund and your exam will be scored based on the questions you have completed.

Exam Breaks

During exams in test centres, writers are permitted to take up to two (2) total breaks to use the washroom and/or have some water during the duration of their examination. The timer will continue to run during these breaks. Only one writer will be permitted to leave the testing room at a time. Washrooms are monitored to ensure no un-permitted items are present.

Remote Proctored Exams

About Remote Proctored Exams

You will be assigned to a proctor through *ProctorU*, an online proctoring service. Their proctors will ensure every exam writer has a consistent, secure testing experience with no unfair advantages. The proctors will guide you through the exam launch, identity verification and environment security scans. They will then monitor you throughout the full exam. Your computer will be electronically locked down to prevent cheating and the room you are testing in will be examined for unpermitted materials. If required, the proctor will have the ability to freeze the exam and investigate any suspicious activity immediately.

Testing Location

While the remote proctored exam allows for a great deal of flexibility in terms of where you can write the exam, you will want to review the “Unpermitted Testing Locations” list to ensure you are in compliance: <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/24721945091725-Frequently-Asked-Questions-About-Exam-Day>

You must test on a hard surface (not a bed or couch). The room must be well lit. Paper, etc. must be removed from the surface and walls. No one else is permitted to be in the room.

Required Equipment & Testing for Remote Proctored Exams

Detailed requirements for your camera, operating system, upload/download speeds, RAM, ports, microphones and browsers can be found at the website below. **It is the writer's**

responsibility to ensure you meet the equipment criteria in full:

<https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/24692181239309-Equipment-Requirements>

The following ARE NOT currently supported by ProctorU:

- No running inside a virtual machine. You will be asked to reconnect using your host operating system to take your exam. It is the writer's responsibility to know if they have a virtual machine running on their computer. Note: this is a common issue for individuals who are into gaming.
- Apple Boot Camp
- Remote Access Software
- Inactive version of Windows and Test Builds/Test Mode
- Microsoft Edge browser
- Windows 10 and 11 in S mode or Surface RT
- Linux operating systems
- Google Chromebooks (with Guardian Browser)
- Google Chromebooks for Live+ and Review+
- Tablets (Nexus, iPad, Tab, Note, etc.)
- Smartphones
- Any external monitor connected to a laptop, regardless of whether the lid is closed or open, is not permitted

Note: MAC Setting Adjustments

Some Mac settings may need to be adjusted: <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/360057612591-MAC-Setting-Adjustments>

Preparing/testing your equipment for exam day:

In addition to ensure your equipment meets the criteria noted above (and at the relevant links), there are a couple things you will need to complete to ensure your device is ready for exam day:

1. Once you receive your ProctorU log-in information in your booking email, you will be required to test your equipment using the 'Test it Out' feature once you are logged in to your account. Your attempts and results for this equipment test are logged and will be referenced by YAS and CPHR Canada. **Should you fail to pass the equipment test ahead of exam day, you will not be provided with an opportunity to reschedule should you experience any technical difficulties on the day of your exam.**
2. You will need to ensure you are able to grant remote access to the computer and have any firewalls disabled to download the file. This cannot be tested as part of the equipment test. You may receive a 'PASS' on the test prior to exam day but be unable to complete your exam due to your security settings.

This step is crucial: You will be required to download a file in order to launch the exam on exam day. If your firewall is not disabled or you are unable to grant remote access to the computer, you will not be able to download the file required to write the exam.

For example, work devices often have very high security settings and will not allow you to download the required application. We recommend using a non-work-related device if possible. If you do not have access to a non-work-related device, consider requesting to write the exam at a test centre to avoid potential technical difficulties that may prevent you from writing the exam.

Required, Permissible and Non-Permissible Items

A scan of each writers' workspace and surrounding area will be conducted by the proctor prior to the start of your exam to ensure none of the following non-permitted items are present.

Required items

- *Valid Government issued photo identification - **must match the name you registered with.**
- *Computer or laptop.
- *Mirror or reflective surface to show the proctor your monitor to ensure there are no notes or writing attached to the monitor.

This may be a cell phone with a front facing camera. The cell phone will be required to be removed from the testing area once the scan is complete.

Permitted items

- Water in a clear, unmarked container

Non-permitted items

- Electronic devices (watches - any kind, cell phones, cameras, calculators, pagers, personal digital assistants, etc.)
- Headphones
- Note paper
- Writing utensils
- Notebooks, textbooks or other reference materials
- Food
- Hats, hoods or other non-religious headwear
- Coats, jackets
- Bags, purses
- Visitors

Other Important Information – All Writers

Non-Permissible Actions During Exam

The following actions and behaviors that will be flagged during an exam:

- **Talking aloud:** Unless you have an accommodation. Talking or whispering aloud during the exam is not permitted.
- **Being out of camera view:** Your face, chin to forehead, needs to be in the camera view at all times.
- **Anyone entering your testing area:** You may not have anyone else in your testing location with you.
- **Anyone talking to you while you're in your testing area:** Additional noises, including other people talking to you, while you're in your exam are not allowed.
- **Looking off-screen:** If you aren't allowed any materials, your eyes should stay on the screen at all times while testing.
- **Utilizing materials that are not allowed:** You're only allowed the permitted materials allowed by CPHR Canada.
- **Taking pictures or screenshots of the exam:** Taking pictures while in your exam, including screenshots, is not permitted. If you're on a Mac and have a live human proctored launch, your proctor can turn off the ability to use your keyboard screenshot hotkeys.
- **Copying and pasting any elements of the exam:** In most cases, the system will not allow you to copy and paste any content from your exam. Regardless of whether you can or cannot perform this function, our system will capture all events of copy and paste that occur.
- **Utilizing a virtual machine:** Virtual machines can be detected through the pre-exam system check and are not permitted.
- **Utilizing a secondary monitor:** You are only allowed to use one monitor attached to one computer during your exam.

Exam Breaks

During remote proctored exams, writers are permitted to take up to two (2) washroom breaks during the examination. The timer will continue to run during these breaks. Upon returning from a break, the virtual proctor will complete a full scan of the writers' desk and surrounding area. The results of writers who take break(s) during the exam will be more closely scrutinized using psychometric analysis to ensure the integrity of the exam.

Comparison – Test Centre vs Remote Proctored Exam

The following is intended to give you a side-by-side comparison of some of the key features/expectations of the test centre and remote proctored exam experience. It should not be considered to be comprehensive.

	Test Centre Exam	Remote Proctored Exam
Exam date/time	November 5, 2026 8:00AM – 7:00PM EDT (booked by writer, based on test centre availability)	November 5, 2026 8:00AM – 7:00PM EDT (booked by writer)
Exam location	Various test centres – writer’s choice of location and time. Recommend within a 2-hour driving distance (one-way) from test taker’s location.	Writer’s choice of location; well lit, private space.
Exam booking	All writers book their own timeslot with ProctorU. Timeslots are available throughout the day from 8:00AM – 7:00PM EDT and are available on a first come, first served basis.	
Exam interface	Both exams are identical.	
Required items	Valid government issued photo Identification.	Valid government issued photo identification. Mirror or reflective surface.
Required computer equipment	Provided by Test Centre.	Writer must provide equipment that meets criteria and consistently passes pre-exam ‘Test it Out’ (see ‘Remote Proctored Exams’ section).
Permitted items	Water in clear, spill-proof container with no label (<i>in a separate area taking a designated break to access – See page 7</i>). Disposable ear plugs. Tissues.	Water in a clear, unmarked container.
Technical assistance	Test Centre is responsible for providing suitable equipment and proctor. Should you experience any technical difficulties, the proctor will assist connecting to ProctorU for guidance.	Remote proctor will attempt to assist and will escalate to technical support if required. Troubleshooting may take some time.

Considerations for writers	Test-Centre Exams: If you do not have access to suitable equipment, have an unstable internet connection, and/or are not comfortable with technology, this may be the better choice for you.	Remote Proctored Exams: We recommend using a non-work-related device if possible. If you do not have access to a non-work-related device, consider requesting to write the exam at a test centre to avoid potential technical difficulties that may prevent you from writing the exam. If you can provide suitable equipment, a stable internet connection that meets the minimum suggested speed, do not have firewall/security restrictions on your device, are comfortable troubleshooting with suggestions provided by technical experts, and would prefer to not have to travel to a test centre, this may be the better choice for you.
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Exam Support – Meazure Learning

Should you require assistance with booking your exam or on exam day, please contact Meazure Learning through one of the following options:

Real Time Chat: Click [HERE](#).

Ticket support (for non-urgent matters): Click [HERE](#).

Phone: 1-855-772-8678, Option 1.

All inquiries regarding your registration, accommodations, or exam results must be sent to your provincial member association.

If you encounter technical errors on exam day, you must contact Meazure Learning within 60 minutes of your booking time to request assistance to ensure you can access the Fall 2027 NKE and notify your provincial contact. Failure to do so will result in a no show and you will not be able to write the exam.

Post Exam

Exam Scoring & Results

Each exam administration uses multiple examination forms and each administration of the exam uses a new set of forms from the previous administration(s). This ensures all questions remain current, valid and accurately test the knowledge of the test takers as intended.

Following the exam, a preliminary item analysis study is conducted on the 150 scored items on each exam form, where the statistics that describe the quality of each question are used to identify if any questions demonstrate unsatisfactory measurement properties. Such questions are then reviewed one-by-one by experts in human resources, and these experts decide whether or not the questions should be scored. Thus, the number of questions that ultimately are scored may be less than 150.

A standard of practice with high-stakes exams such as the NKE, is to use Statistical Equating to evaluate the results. Following the item analysis study, psychometricians statistically equate scores across the different exam forms. This ensures that – even if writers receive different questions – their overall scores are comparable to each other, and comparable to previous exam administrations, improving the fairness of the assessment process. This process ultimately determines the passmark for each exam administration.

The difficulty of the version of the NKE is also determined by comparing results from past administrations. A unique passmark is determined for each exam administration based on a comparison of current writers to previous cohorts.

CPHR Canada's Board of Directors reviews the data and recommended passmark provided by the psychometrics team and panel of human resources experts to ultimately approve the passmark for each exam administration.

The raw scores are then scaled to a distribution that ranges from 200 to 800, with the passmark anchored at 500. Your final score will be confirmed as a scaled score, with scores 500 and above passing and scores below 500 being unsuccessful. Raw scores are not used to communicate exam results, as this may be misleading for test takers due to fluctuation in the score required to pass each administration of the exam.

Exam results will be communicated to you by your provincial association 4-5 weeks following the completion of the exam. CPHR Canada works with Meazure Learning's Psychometrics Team to complete the Equating Process outlined above following each administration. This rigorous process takes time to ensure accuracy and fairness.

Number of Attempts

Writers who are unsuccessful passing the NKE three times will be required to wait one full year prior to attempting the NKE for a fourth time. A fifth attempt may be permitted following a review process by the appropriate provincial HR association. During the break period between the third and fourth attempts, writers are encouraged to take a NKE preparation course and/or review the material which their NKE results indicate require more study.

Passing the NKE

After you have passed the exam, you are considered a candidate for certification (a 'CPHR Candidate'). Be sure to refer to your provincial association for more information about maintaining your status as a CPHR Candidate.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the exam?

Writers will have 3 hours and 15 minutes to write their exam (not including connection time and equipment verification). If additional time is required, an accommodation must be requested and accompanied by medical documentation.

Is there a tutorial exam writers can take to familiarize themselves with the exam interface?

Yes. It is highly recommended that all writers take the exam tutorial before the exam, so they can become familiar with the exam interface. Writers cannot access the tutorial until after they have received their welcome email with their log-in credentials.

Writers can visit the **CPHR site** (<https://cphr.ysasecure.com>) and enter the same access credentials that were provided to them in their booking information email to access the tutorial.

What is a remote proctored exam?

A remote proctored exam can be taken anywhere in the world. The exam can be taken by the writer at their home, office, etc. Their computer will be electronically locked down to prevent cheating and the room they are testing in will be examined for unpermitted materials. If required, the proctor will have the ability to freeze the exam and investigate any suspicious activity immediately.

What is ProctorU?

ProctorU is Yardstick's online proctoring service. Their proctors will ensure every exam writer has a consistent, secure testing experience with no unfair advantages, ensuring the guidelines we have set out are abided by. The proctors will guide writers through the exam launch, identity verification and environment security scans. They will then monitor writers throughout the full exam, flag suspicious events and intervene if necessary. ProctorU will also be utilized to book your exam time and test centre location.

How will registrants get scheduled to write their exam?

Writers will receive a welcome email from Meazure Learning that will include instructions on how to book their exam. Booking will be done electronically via ProctorU's website. Booking must take place during the specific booking window. If for any reason a writer needs to reschedule their exam once they have booked, they must contact Meazure Learning. A tutorial of how the booking process works can be found [here](#).

What time slots will be offered?

Exam slots will be available throughout both days from 8:00AM – 7:00PM EDT. Exam times are based on a 24-hour clock. Time zones are automatically selected by the booking system based on a writer's location. It is the responsibility of the writer to ensure the selected time zone (and if applicable test centre location) is correct prior to booking.

Can a writer complete the exam in a public space?

For remote proctored exams

No. Writers must complete the exam alone, in a well-lit space, on a hard surface. If the exam is being taken in an office environment, an isolated room is required (i.e. a cubicle is not an acceptable space).

What are the requirements for each writers' computer that will be used to write their exam?

For remote proctored exams

See the remote proctored exam section of this handbook and/or visit the site below for more information:

<https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/articles/24692181239309-Equipment-Requirements>

Writers are also required to download a file in order to launch the exam. They will need to ensure they are able to grant remote access to the computer and have any firewalls disabled. This cannot be tested as part of the equipment test.

For test centre exams

The computers at the test centres that are available for you to book your exam at will meet the required specifications to launch the exam.

Will I be able to begin my exam immediately at my scheduled exam time?

For remote proctored exams

Up until the scheduled start time, your examination will not allow you to connect to a proctor, but a countdown timer will be shown. At the scheduled connection time you will be able to connect to the proctoring interface, where you will be connected to a proctor who will walk you through the registration process. You will be asked to show your identification, pan the examination room (ensure your camera is small and lightweight so you can move this around your working station). Once the registration process is complete, you will be able to begin your exam. **Your examination timer does not start until you have started the exam. Registration time does not count towards your assessment time.** When you are waiting to connect to a proctor, please **do not** attempt to refresh your browser or to close the window and try to reconnect again. There may be periods where wait times are longer than normal - please remain patient.

What if a writer experiences technical difficulties while they are part way through their exam?

Writers will have access to live tech support during the exam to assist them with any issues they may encounter. Each exam session is recorded in full for investigative purposes and will be used to determine the course of action for anyone who experiences issues. Measure Learning, ProctorU and CPHR Canada will work together to determine a suitable course of action if required.