

The CSCS and NSCA-CPT credentials have gained the reputation among employers and industry experts as being the most respected and preferred fitness-related credentials.

CSCS Scope of Practice



Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialists (CSCSs) are professionals who apply scientific knowledge to train athletes for the primary goal of improving athletic performance. They conduct sport-specific testing sessions, design and implement safe and effective strength training and conditioning programs and provide guidance regarding nutrition and injury prevention. Recognizing that their area of expertise is separate and distinct, CSCSs consult with and refer athletes to other professionals when appropriate.

NSCA-CPT Scope of Practice

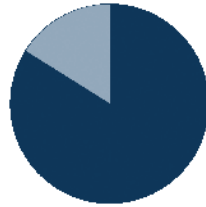


Personal trainers are health/fitness professionals who, using an individualized approach, assess, motivate, educate and train clients regarding their health and fitness needs. They design safe and effective exercise programs, provide the guidance to help clients achieve their personal health/fitness goals and respond appropriately in emergency situations. Recognizing their own area of expertise, personal trainers refer clients to other health care professionals when appropriate.

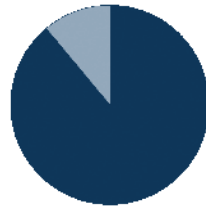
The exams are considered to be the most difficult in the industry to earn, which is one of the reasons why they are highly respected and why those who have acquired these credentials display a great deal of pride in having earned them. The pass rate for the CSCS exam is 65.5%, and the pass rate for the NSCA-CPT exam is 54.9%.

What Do Our Certificants Have to Say About the CSCS and NSCA-CPT Credentials?

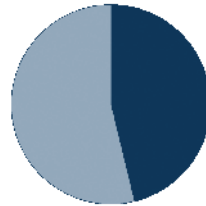
In an online survey conducted in 2002 where 2,442 individuals responded:



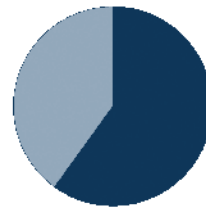
84% of CSCS certified individuals believed that the CSCS credential helps improve their chances of being hired.



89% of NSCA-CPT certified individuals believed that the NSCA-CPT credential helps improve their chances of being hired.



46% of CSCS certified individuals that responded believed that the CSCS credential provides greater job security.



60% of NSCA-CPT certified individuals that responded believed that the NSCA-CPT credential provides greater job security.

“The NSCA credentials help to set you apart from the crowd and give you an edge when competing for a new position. Nowadays, many employers at universities, high schools and fitness centers are looking for the CSCS and NSCA-CPT certifications.”

Avery D. Faigenbaum, EdD, CSCS,*D
Associate Professor, Health and Exercise Science
The College of New Jersey



Why CSCS or NSCA-CPT?

√ Scope of Practice

- The exams focus on the “real-world” responsibilities of personal trainers and strength and conditioning professionals.
- Validation of the exams signifies that individuals are tested over the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to be competent in their respective professional career areas.

√ Exam Development

- Passing a challenging exam demonstrates your level of commitment to the industry and your career, helps to substantiate your competency level to others and proves that you are indeed qualified to perform the tasks expected of you.
- By passing a difficult-to-obtain exam, you gain instant credibility and gain an edge in the industry over personal trainers and strength and conditioning professionals who have earned a less challenging and less respected certification.

√ National Accreditation

- NSCA Certification is the only fitness-related organization to have credentials nationally accredited by the NCCA since 1993.



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Accreditation Versus Certification

CSCS and NSCA-CPT Exam Development and Administration Process

NSCA Certification and its independent testing service, Applied Measurement Professionals, Inc. (AMP), analyzed the job requirements of strength and conditioning and personal training professionals. Through the efforts of NSCA Certification's Job Analysis Committees and in conjunction with national surveys of people in these professions, the framework for determining the exams' content and relative weighting of job-related content areas was established.

Respected content experts in strength and conditioning (the CSCS Exam Development Committee) and personal training (the NSCA-CPT Exam Development Committee), with psychometric assistance of AMP, prepare the exams and are responsible for the rigorous nature that serves to discriminate between qualified and unqualified professionals. All exam questions pass through multiple reviews by these individuals to check for accuracy and real-life application. Also, each exam question MUST have an academic and professional reference that identifies one certain answer as correct and defensible.

It is this approach to developing the CSCS and NSCA-CPT exams that enabled NSCA Certification to have its credentials accredited through the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) for more than 10 years.

What is the difference between accreditation and certification?

The term "accreditation" usually refers to a measurement of a *program or organization's* performance, while "certification" is usually applied to an evaluation of an *individual's* competence.

Thus, because NSCA Certification's credentials are accredited, a person holding one or both of its designations has the dual recognition of being competently certified as an individual by an organization that also has demonstrated credibility.

Does having a certification assure competence?

Even the best certification program can only demonstrate that a candidate demonstrated competence at one point and time through an exam process. Maintaining competency is a lifelong challenge, and that is one reason why NSCA Certification requires that all certified individuals recertify every three years by accumulating and reporting continuing education units.

Why should I seek a certification that is nationally accredited?

- With over 70 fitness organizations certifying professionals, it is difficult for the public and employers to recognize qualified professionals.
- National accreditation is an excellent way to determine whether a certification organization has met nationally-recognized standards of operation.
- National accreditation also lets certificants, employers and the public know "who certified you" which may be asked by courts, employers and other members of the profession.

What is the NCCA?

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) is the accreditation body of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA), a membership association of certification organizations providing technical and education information concerning certification practices. The NCCA accredits certification organizations that comply with its standards. The purpose of NCCA accreditation is to provide the public the means by which to identify certification programs that reflect competency.

Is the NCCA an expert on health and fitness?

NCCA accreditation is limited to a review of the structure of a certification program and the process used to measure competency. The NCCA has no expertise in evaluating all of the professional concepts included in a profession's examination and philosophy. NCCA relies upon a credentialing organization's job analysis or role delineation to demonstrate an appropriate relationship to a core body of knowledge in a particular discipline.

“ In these times of information and education, NSCA Certification's credentials assure both – that is their real power. To be successful in the fitness industry, the CSCS and NSCA-CPT credentials should be the credentials of choice for every fitness professional.

Juan Carlos Santana, MEd, CSCS,*D
Director, Institute for Human Performance