



SPC CREDENTIAL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

LAST UPDATE: APRIL 2023



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY CANADA (SPC)	4
SPC CREDENTIAL PROGRAM	4
CERTIFICATE IN SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY	5
CERTIFICATE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	5
DIPLOMA IN SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY	6
DIPLOMA PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	6
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	8
SPC EDUCATION SYSTEM.....	9
CORE COMPETENCY COURSES (REQUIRED)	9
FIELD EXPERIENCES (REQUIRED)	10
REQUISITE FIELD EXPERIENCE- <i>CERTIFICATE</i>	10
REQUISITE FIELD EXPERIENCE- <i>DIPLOMA</i>	11
*SPORT STRATIFICATION RESOURCE	11
SKI PATROL POLICY	12
LOG BOOKS (REQUIRED)	12
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	12
SPC CREDENTIAL EXAMINATION GUIDELINES	13
PROCESS	13
WRITTEN EXAMINATION	13
PREREQUISITES OF THE WRITTEN EXAM APPLICANT	13
ORAL PRACTICAL EXAMINATION	13
PREREQUISITES OF THE ORAL PRACTICAL EXAM APPLICANT	14
EXAMINATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES	15
Objectives of the Examination	15
Application and Examination Schedule	15
Application for the Written Examination	15
Written Examination Procedure	16
Application for the Oral Practical Examination	17
Examination Results and Records	17
CREDENTIAL PROGRAM EQUIVALENCY	18
CERTIFICATE EQUIVALENCY REQUIREMENTS	19



DIPLOMA EQUIVALENCY REQUIREMENTS	19
MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES	20
BECOMING AN SPC MENTOR	20
MENTOR REQUIREMENTS	20
MENTOR APPLICATION PROCESS	20
MAINTENANCE OF SPC MENTOR STATUS	20
MENTOR SELECTION BY A CANDIDATE	21
CANDIDATE REQUEST PROCESS	21
MENTOR/CANDIDATE RELATIONSHIP	21
MENTOR COMPENSATION	21
DIRECT AND INDIRECT MENTORSHIP	22
MOCK EXAMS (REQUIRED)	23
<i>HELP, SUPPORT AND FEEDBACK</i>	23



INTRODUCTION

SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY CANADA (SPC)

Sport Physiotherapy Canada (SPC) is a division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) which is national in scope and aims to effectively facilitate research, communication, education and service delivery while providing leadership and recognition in Sport Physiotherapy. SPC and its members also coordinate, promote and provide programs and services for the health, safety and optimal performance of all athletes and active Canadians involved in sport and Sport Physiotherapy throughout their lifespan.

SPC CREDENTIAL PROGRAM

SPC has been implementing, and subsequently modifying, a post-graduate credential program in Sport Physiotherapy since 1978. The Credential Program is consistent with SPC's mission and vision by fostering education, research and excellence in practice to enable members to advance their skills and meet the "Standards for the Sport Physiotherapist" originally established by the "Sport Physiotherapy Division" of the CPA (Sport Physiotherapy Canada's former title) in 1977. The Canadian Physiotherapy Association recognizes the SPC Credential Program as the best and most effective means of progressing towards the Clinical Specialist in Sport designation. Furthermore, SPC's Credential Program is the only professional development pathway in Canada whose requirements and standards have been approved by the International Federation of Sports Physical Therapy (IFSPT) for Diploma holders to gain recognition as a Registered International Sports Physical Therapist (RISPT).

The SPC Credential Program was developed with two basic goals in mind:

Goal 1: Offer an avenue whereby SPC members could upgrade their knowledge and practical skills in the field of Sport Physiotherapy, Sport Science, and Sport Medicine.

Goal 2: Ensure that Canada's competitive and recreational athletes receive a uniform quality of care from physiotherapists working in sport.

To meet these goals, program objectives, continuing education opportunities, robust mentorship guidelines as well as minimum requirements for practical field experience were developed to act as a framework for prospective candidates to ensure competency in key areas. Competency in these areas is determined through the acquisition of two credentials: the **Certificate** and **Diploma in Sport Physiotherapy**. SPC establishes specific guidelines and is responsible for developing and revising curriculum content for each designation which is outlined in the corresponding Certificate and Diploma Objectives and References resources, respectively.

SPC has also developed a two-tiered education pathway, titled Fundamentals and Advanced Core Competency Courses (the "Courses"), which further supports members progressing through the Credential Program as well as physiotherapists and colleagues in the sport science community who wish to work effectively in sport. Successful completion of the Courses, direct and indirect mentorship hours as well as a standardized set of examinations (written and oral) are mandatory to ensure sufficient knowledge and practical skills have been attained for both the Certificate or Diploma designations. SPC mentors guide Credential Program candidates through the experiences and exposures necessary to then successfully challenge the credentialing



exams. This process allows physiotherapists to fulfill the requirements for credentials without having to re-enroll in an institute of higher education.

Note: *Although the term athlete is frequently used in this document, a Sport Physiotherapist should have experience with a range of individuals involved in recreational activities, athletes with diverse abilities and performing arts.*

CERTIFICATE IN SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY

At the Certificate level, physiotherapists must demonstrate knowledge and skill in sport physiotherapy that contribute to the assessment and management of athletic injuries in the clinical and acute care setting (i.e. “field”), with an emphasis on emergency management. A Certificate-level physiotherapist will demonstrate competency working independently at an athletic event and will have sufficient knowledge and experience to attend to the injuries and needs of athletes and/or athletic teams should they occur. Certificate holders may apply for therapy positions (Chief or Core therapist) on Canadian Health Services Teams (HST) for National level sporting events through Major Games Canada.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the Certificate in Sport Physiotherapy, the physiotherapist will be able to:

- a. Understand the organizational hierarchies, credentialing processes and legal implications of working in sport in Canada.
- b. Demonstrate knowledge and proficiency in managing the therapy needs of an athlete or athletic team, during training and/or competition.
- c. Demonstrate and describe appropriate first response procedures for common athletic injuries and medical emergencies including transportation procedures for the conscious and unconscious athlete.
- d. Work independently at athletic events providing first aid, wound care and splinting of acute athletic injuries with appropriate materials, as required.
- e. Prevent, detect and evaluate concussion using current, evidence based assessment tools to determine management, including the need for emergency transport, referral and education regarding follow up care and return to sport protocols, as appropriate.
- f. Work independently at athletic events providing taping, wrapping, and strapping of acute and/or chronic athletic injuries, as appropriate.
- g. Advise athletes, coaches and guardians regarding proper fitting and maintenance of equipment and protective devices.
- h. Be proficient in the basic assessment and management of athletic injuries commonly encountered in sport.
- i. Understand the biomechanics of fundamental movement patterns, including running, and effectively evaluate and modify biomechanical aspects, along with associated risk factors, which may contribute to injury.
- j. Understand guiding principles of return to sport (RTS) processes/progressions and be able to use these principles to make RTS decisions in both sideline and clinical settings.



- k. Understand theoretical and technical aspects of sport massage and be able to select and apply appropriate techniques both in clinic and with athletes in various sporting environments for pre, post and inter-event timings, as appropriate.
- l. Be knowledgeable regarding the physiological, medical and practical considerations relevant to Paraspport, and have a general understanding of the classification systems used in Paraspport.

Please refer to the SPC Certificate - Objectives and References document on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>) for curriculum objectives and corresponding references for each area of study.

DIPLOMA IN SPORT PHYSIOTHERAPY

At the Diploma level, physiotherapists must demonstrate the ability to care for the total needs of an athletic team, both at home and away. These needs include, but are not limited to: pre-season screening and conditioning, acute and chronic injury care during in-season training camps and competition, as well as developing programming and rehabilitating the athlete back to the competitive level postseason. Proficiency in these areas would be further supplemented by the physiotherapist's breadth of experience contributing to advanced clinical reasoning, exercise prescription and effective and efficient taping skills. Diploma holders may apply for therapy positions (Chief or Core therapist) on Canadian Health Services Teams (HST) for both National and International level sporting events through Major Games Canada.

DIPLOMA PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the Diploma in Sport Physiotherapy, the physiotherapist will be able to:

- a. Understand the role, responsibilities and accountabilities required to work in key leadership positions in sport in Canada.
- b. Manage the complete therapy needs of an athlete or athletic team in their daily training environment, at home and away, over the course of an entire season (training and competition cycle).
- c. Assess, determine a differential diagnosis and provide immediate care for acute athletic injuries to guide return to play decision making in a time limited capacity.
- d. Demonstrate the ability to tape, wrap, brace and/or pad injuries for all body parts in a proficient and timely manner, as well as alter basic taping and wrapping techniques to support athlete needs, as appropriate.
- e. Demonstrate advanced clinical reasoning skills in the comprehensive management of injuries within a sport framework.
- f. Be able to understand, select and apply appropriate conditioning and exercise physiology principles to meet training goals and adapt rehabilitation plans while overcoming injury to ensure safe return to training and competition.
- g. Be familiar with basic sport nutrition concepts and principles to facilitate optimal athlete health, performance and recovery while recognizing the need for referral and collaboration, as appropriate.



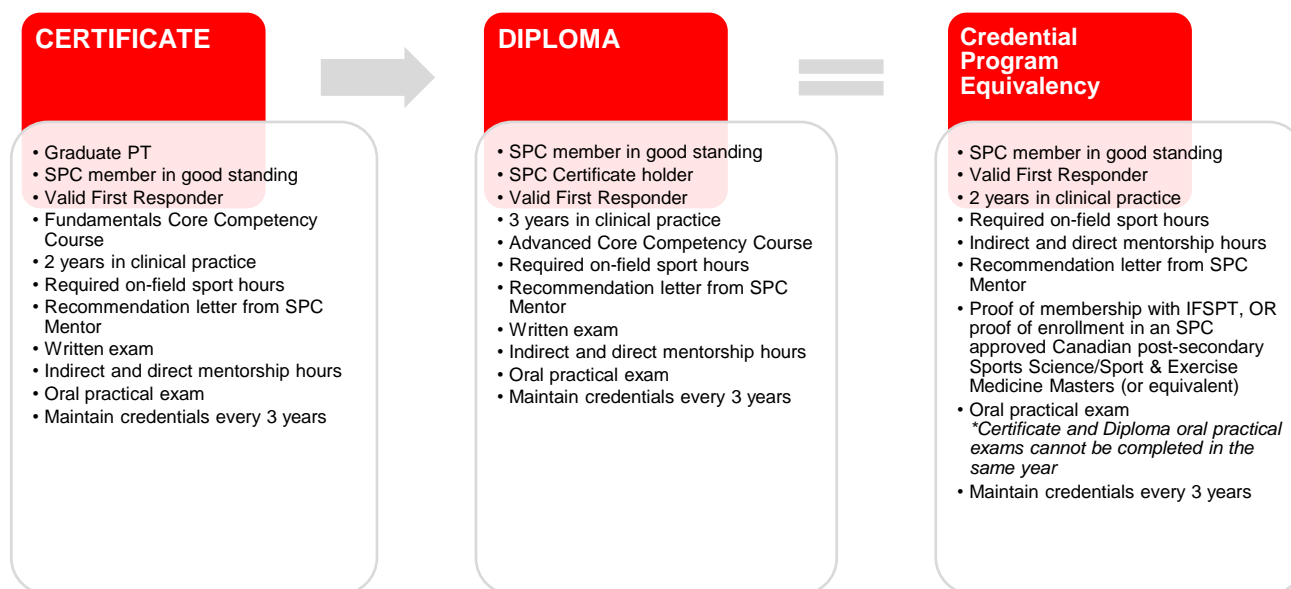
- h. Be familiar with key components of the Canadian Anti Doping Program, including the True Sport Clean module and Global Drug Reference Online (DRO) resources, to foster the integrity of clean sport.
- i. Understand the difference between sport psychology and mental performance training and the relationship between psychological factors, athletic performance and recovery from injury, recognizing the need for referral, when appropriate.
- j. Identify strengths and weaknesses of the Long-Term Athlete Development Model, and be able to recognize key components of each stage and their implications on athletes in that stage.
- k. Understand the biomechanics of a variety of sports and fundamental movement patterns, while effectively evaluating and modifying biomechanical aspects, along with associated risk factors, which may contribute to injury.
- l. Consider physiological, psychological and environmental factors when managing athletes from across the lifespan and from diverse backgrounds.
- m. Understand the impact systemic illness and environmental factors have on athlete wellbeing, coordinate care with the Integrated Support Team, and recognize the need for referral, when appropriate.

Please refer to the SPC Diploma - Objectives and References document on the Resources page for curriculum objectives and corresponding references for each area of study. (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>).



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Start your Sport Physiotherapy Canada Credentials journey today!



This is a summarized map to outline the path to becoming an SPC Diploma holder. Please thoroughly review the SPC Credential Program Handbook and website for course and exam Prerequisites, and to not miss any program criteria.



SPC EDUCATION SYSTEM

SPC maintains that proficiency in Sport Physiotherapy core competencies is achieved through a combination of methods, including but not limited to: continuing education (e.g. courses, symposia, conferences, etc.), field experience, as well as mentorship. The following sections define each of these Credential Program elements in more detail.

CORE COMPETENCY COURSES (REQUIRED)

SPC developed a two-tiered education pathway titled Fundamentals and Advanced Core Competency Courses (the “Courses”). The goal of these Courses is to provide both SPC members and colleagues in the sports medicine and sports science community the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skill and confidence necessary to work clinically and on field with athletes and teams independently, as part of an Integrated Support Team (IST) and/or as part of a Core Health Services Team (HST) in sporting environments at regional, national and international levels in either amateur or professional sport. The Courses offer standardized, evidence informed and accessible education opportunities, composed of both didactic and interactive online sessions, which aim to meet SPC’s program objectives while also supporting credential program candidates to successfully navigate either the Certificate or Diploma examinations. The Courses are designed to be completed sequentially and **are mandatory** for Certificate or Diploma candidates, respectively. Courses will be delivered virtually, making them accessible to interested participants regardless of geographical location.

The **Fundamentals Core Competency Course** delivers curriculum content in the topic streams of Emergency Care, Concussion, Taping, Wrapping & Strapping, Equipment and Protective Gear, Functional Return to Sport, Sport Event Massage and Parasport. The **Advanced Core Competency Course** delivers curriculum content in the areas of Sport Orthopedics & Clinical Reasoning, Applied Exercise Science, Performance Nutrition & Rehabilitation, Athlete Mental Wellness & Performance and Clean Sport in addition to elaborating on topic areas previously covered in the Fundamentals Course such as Emergency Care & Taping. SPC is responsible for the development and delivery of these Courses and aims to continually update and improve content to remain evidence informed and to reflect best practice guidelines.

Courses are currently offered once annually and candidates may enroll in between from June until February the following year, with a pause in registration between March and May. Course completion is not required ahead of the written exam, however **certificates of completion will be verified at or before the oral practical exam before designations will be granted for a given level.**

Course completion will also be mandatory (once in their entirety) for both mentors and examiners in order to ensure continuity in the mentorship and credentialing process. Updates to course content will be communicated at the annual mentor meeting so that individuals may specifically review any new or revised material. Access to one or both Courses will depend on the level of credentials held (i.e. Fundamentals Course for Certificate holders; both Fundamentals and Advanced Courses for Diploma holders) and will remain open year round so long as members remain up-to-date with their maintenance of credentials (MoC) every three



years, in accordance with SPC policies. Administrative costs to access the Courses will be covered in the MoC fee.

Full Course details may be found under Core Competency Course Syllabus on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>).

FIELD EXPERIENCES (REQUIRED)

Field experience helps the physiotherapist to appreciate the demands and urgency involved in dealing with athletes and/or teams while also exposing them to the physiological and psychological aspects of working with an athletic population. Physiotherapists gain knowledge and skill through direct observation and hands-on experience working with athletes, coaches and other individuals participating in sport, on and off the field of play. These experiences can then be used in the clinical setting to tailor rehabilitation programs while optimizing training and return to sport progressions for the athlete.

SPC requires candidates to accumulate on-field experience in a variety of sports to expose them to the nuisances of working with different athletes in different settings with different injuries, which encourages the therapist to problem solve and adapt to a given scenario. SPC also emphasizes the importance of gaining field experience not only in a variety of sports but also in contact, combative and/or collision sports*. Since these sports typically provide exposure to a higher incidence of acute injury, candidates are afforded greater opportunity to develop proficiency in core competencies expected of a Sport Physiotherapist such as emergency care, taping, fitting and maintenance of protective equipment, etc. The therapist then also has the opportunity to follow the athlete along through the continuum of care, directing clinical assessment and treatment alongside other members of an integrated support team, to optimize return to sport. It is for the reasons outlined above that SPC has set a minimum requirement of field experience for credential program candidates to achieve both the Certificate and Diploma designations.

REQUISITE FIELD EXPERIENCE- **CERTIFICATE**

Candidates must satisfy the following field experience criteria ***prior to*** applying for the written examination portion of the Certificate credential:

Graduate PT with 2+ years experience
Minimum of 200 hours over 4 sports
Minimum of 75 hours must be collected in 2 out of the 4 sports. 1 MUST be in a contact, combative or collision sport*



REQUISITE FIELD EXPERIENCE- **DIPLOMA**

Candidates must satisfy the following field experience criteria **prior to** applying for the written examination portion of the Diploma credential:

Graduate PT with 3+ years experience
Minimum of 200 hours over 6 sports. 75 hours MUST be collected in a contact, combative or collision sport*
1 sport extending over 1 full season for a minimum of 75 hours , preferably in a contact, combative or collision sport* Full season includes: pre-season screening and training camps, in-season training and competition and postseason evaluation and programming

**Please refer to Sport Stratification Resource information below*

While candidates must have a minimum 200 hours of documented practical experience as a graduate physiotherapist (i.e. accumulated after graduation) to apply to challenge a given credential, it has been shown that candidates with a greater number of practical experience hours (i.e. up to 800 hours) have less difficulty meeting curriculum objectives and statistically show higher exam success rates. Traveling time is not to be included as part of the hours recorded towards the practical experience requirement. Accumulation of hours for the diploma may begin once the certificate has been fully obtained.

It should be noted that field experience may be supervised or unsupervised by the mentor. The candidate's mentor must be selected from the approved SPC Mentor List on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>). Supervised field experiences act as a form of direct mentorship (outlined in greater detail below) and provide the candidate with an opportunity to receive immediate feedback and identify areas of weakness which require further study or practice. Unsupervised experience can be made more valuable by reviewing the candidate's experiences recorded in the field experience logs (outlined more below), jointly reflecting on cases, and providing feedback prior to a future field experience. Candidates may require substantially more than the minimum 200 hours to achieve the competencies outlined in the objectives for the given credential. Ultimately field experiences should include a variety of sports, sporting situations, age groups, competition levels, genders, and ability levels and cannot be compromised since the acquisition of many sport therapy skills is not part of many academic programs and cannot be fully developed in a classroom or clinical setting. The SPC Mentor should be consulted if there is some question as to the appropriateness of the sports covered.

***SPORT STRATIFICATION RESOURCE**

A Sport Stratification Resource has been designed to lessen confusion around what constitutes appropriate field experience to develop proficiency in SPC Core Competencies, and can be found on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>). This resource provides a list of eligible contact, combative or collision sports to meet the requisite minimum field experience for either the Certificate or Diploma. If a particular sport is not listed within the Sport Stratification



resource, it is up to the discretion of the mentor to determine whether a candidate has sufficient on-field experience to apply to challenge the credential program examinations for a given level. Please email education@sportphysio.ca to add a particular sport you feel may be missing.

SKI PATROL POLICY

A maximum of 40 hours worked as ski patrol are eligible towards the Certificate or Diploma examinations. While ski patrol offers the candidate first aid experience, it does not provide the opportunity to gain experience in the context of the whole team or athlete on a continuous basis providing education, prevention, and follow-up to the athlete or team. As such, a limited number of hours will be accepted toward the requisite field experience.

LOG BOOKS (REQUIRED)

Log templates are provided to record field experience as well as continuing education accumulated over time - these can be found on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>). The Field Experience Hours Log include a list of sports or events covered, conditions presented and provide an opportunity for the candidate to reflect and describe important learning points, or key takeaways, from engagement in the experience. Please refer to the Definition of Terms for description of key terms referenced within the logs. Mentors may use the log books to review the candidate experiences and suggest future experiences to achieve the competencies required, if indicated. Logs may also act as a starting point for discussion regarding unsupervised field experiences between the mentor and the candidate. Logs are also useful to track hours for MoC purposes.

Field Experience as well as Continuing Education Hours Logs are ***not submitted*** to SPC as a part of the application process for the Certificate or Diploma examinations. ***Both a Mentor Recommendation Letter and Preparation Summary are due at the time of the written exam application and act not only to endorse the candidate but also to ensure that the requisite field experience has been met. Direct and Indirect Mentorship Hour Logs are due at the time of the oral practical exam application.*** Mentorship logs are reviewed in more detail in the Mentorship section of this handbook.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the completion of mandatory Credential Program elements, namely the Core Competency Courses and mentorship hours, additional resources designed to support individuals working within or progressing through the SPC Credential Program should be reviewed and referenced regularly. Changes to these resources will be communicated via SPC newsletters, Annual Member and Mentor Meetings, and will be updated in relevant materials thereafter. Mentors and candidates are expected to check both the SPC website and handbook for updates, as needed. These resources may be found on <https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/> and include:

- Education Listings (Conferences, Courses and Webinars)
- Mentor Listings
- Objectives and References (Certificate and Diploma)
- Exam Marking Guides
- Supporting documents for exam applications



In addition to the aforementioned resources, candidates preparing for the Credential Program examinations are expected to attend small group seminars, weekend symposia or other continuing education opportunities, along with completing self-study. Updated Objectives and References documents will be provided by SPC to direct the candidate in self-study. Webinars with Chief Examiner(s) will be provided in advance of each exam for candidates and mentors to provide the opportunity to ask questions and be informed of what to expect from the examination process. A credential program overview as well as information pertaining to the SPC education system, field experience, examination and mentorship guidelines are outlined in more detail below.

SPC CREDENTIAL EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

PROCESS

Candidates wishing to pursue their credentials in Sport Physiotherapy must follow a multi step process to ensure they meet the necessary criteria to challenge at each level. Prospective candidates should register as SPC members, hold valid First Responder certifications and secure an approved SPC mentor to help guide them through the pathway.

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

The written examinations for both the Certificate and Diploma are completed online. Candidates must secure a location with reliable internet access, a computer and an invigilator to complete 100 multiple choice questions over 2 hours. If an accommodation is required, a written request must be submitted with the exam application with appropriate documentation.

Written exams are offered annually at **2pm Eastern Standard Time** on the **4th Friday in November**, and may be completed in the Candidate's preferred language (English or French). The exams test knowledge on topic areas as outlined in the corresponding curriculum objectives for both the Certificate and Diploma in Sport Physiotherapy and are graded on a pass/fail basis.

PREREQUISITES OF THE WRITTEN EXAM APPLICANT

The following is required to apply, and be approved for, the written exam:

- ✓ Candidates must be a current SPC member;
- ✓ Candidates must hold a current First Responder certification;
- ✓ Candidates must have a minimum of 2+ years (Certificate) and 3+ years (Diploma) in clinical practice post-graduation from a recognized Physiotherapy program;
- ✓ Candidates must complete the requisite Field Experience hours (outlined previously) and submit the corresponding Preparation Summary to SPC;
- ✓ Candidates must obtain and submit a Letter of Recommendation to SPC, completed by an approved Mentor;
- ✓ Candidates must submit their completed application and fees to SPC by the predetermined deadline.

ORAL PRACTICAL EXAMINATION

The oral practical exam is hosted annually in the spring. Each exam is completed with three examiners (and possibly additional observers who are training to become examiners). Candidates remain in the same room for the duration of the exam for a maximum allowable time



of 1 hour and 45 minutes. Please refer to the Marking Guides for specific times allotted for each scenario - these can be found on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>). Exams may be completed in either English or French, however, language preference must be declared during the application process, in advance of the oral practical exam. In order to successfully PASS the exam, 2 out of 3 examiners must PASS the candidate for a given scenario and candidates **must PASS ALL scenarios** in order to obtain the Certificate or Diploma credential. The oral practical examination can only be attempted after successful completion of the previous components (i.e. written exam etc). The candidate must pass both the written examination and oral practical examinations to earn either the SPC Certificate or Diploma in Sport Physiotherapy.

PREREQUISITES OF THE ORAL PRACTICAL EXAM APPLICANT

The following is required to apply, and be approved for, the oral practical exam:

- ✓ Candidates must be a current SPC member;
- ✓ Candidates must hold a current First Responder certification;
- ✓ Candidates must have successfully completed the written portion of the SPC Credential exam, for the credential being challenged (i.e. Certificate or Diploma), within the previous three years;
- ✓ Candidates must complete the requisite Direct and Indirect Mentorship hours, and submit the corresponding Mentorship Hour Logs to SPC by the predetermined deadline;
- ✓ Candidates must submit their completed application and fees to SPC by the predetermined deadline;
- ✓ Candidates must be registered for, or have completed, the SPC Core Competency Course for the respective credential being challenged*.

***Note: All credential program candidates must register for and complete the SPC Core Competency Course for the respective designation (Fundamentals for the Certificate and Advanced for the Diploma) prior to challenging their oral practical credential exams. While course completion is NOT required ahead of the written exam, certificates of completion will be verified at or before the oral practical exam to receive the credential for the given level.**

The Certificate Exam tests six areas in the following order:

1. Emergency Care
2. Slings and Splinting Techniques
3. Taping, Strapping and Wrapping Techniques
4. Equipment and Protective Gear
5. Functional Return to Sport
6. Sport Event Massage

The Diploma Exam tests five areas in the following order:

1. Acute Sideline Assessment
2. Advanced Taping & Wrapping Techniques
3. Basic Taping & Wrapping Techniques (3 in 15 minutes)
4. Sport Orthopedics & Clinical Reasoning (Clinical Assessment & Treatment)
5. Applied Exercise Science



Applications for the written and oral practical exam, as well registration for First Responder and Core Competency Courses, may be completed through the corresponding links on the SPC website. Please confirm the registration deadlines as well as exam dates and times on the website <https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>.

EXAMINATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Objectives of the Examination

The objectives of the Credential Program examinations are:

- To determine the level of competence of physiotherapists in the theory and practice of sport physiotherapy.
- To implement a standard whereby physiotherapists may obtain recognition for their specialized knowledge and skills.
- To provide a method of qualifying those physiotherapists who may:
 - a. apply to travel internationally with teams.
 - b. teach courses within the SPC Education System.

Authority

The examinations are set by SPC and conducted by the Chief Examiner(s) and a select team of examiners from across Canada.

Eligibility

Only current members of SPC shall be eligible for examinations. The applicant must meet all the prerequisites for that level before sitting any examination component.

Application and Examination Schedule

Number of Examinations

SPC will hold one written examination and one practical examination per year.

ALL exam registrations will open on the third Friday of July each year.

- *Written Exam*
 - Deadline - Written exam registration closes the third Monday of October
 - Exam Date - Written exam takes place on the fourth Friday of November
- *Oral Practical*
 - Deadline 1 - Oral practical registration closes the third Monday of February
 - Deadline 2 - Direct and indirect mentorship hours are due the first Monday of April
**If the requisite documentation is not submitted by the deadline, candidates will not be permitted to challenge the oral practical exam and they will forgo their exam registration fees*
 - Exam Date - Oral practical will be hosted either at the end of April or beginning of May - location to be determined each year

Application for the Written Examination

- Notice of the fee schedule, application deadlines and examination dates are announced via SPC newsletters and will be posted on the SPC website.



- Applications must be submitted to SPC on or before the written examination application deadline (**third Monday in October**). The application must be accompanied by ALL the necessary supporting documentation and the processing/administrative fee. Applications postmarked after the application deadline WILL NOT be processed for that year's examination.
- Applications received on or postmarked by the deadline date will be processed and the candidate will be notified of their status within two weeks of the application deadline.
- Candidates who submit an incomplete application will be assessed a processing/administrative fee regardless of whether their application is accepted for that examination.
- Candidates will be required to complete and sign the Sport Physiotherapy Canada examination contract that outlines the candidate's responsibilities and Sport Physiotherapy Canada's responsibilities with regards to SPC examinations.
- If any accommodations are required, they must be submitted at the time of written exam application and be supported by appropriate documentation.

Written Examination Procedure

- The candidate initially applies to sit the written component of the examination by submitting their application online.
- SPC Credentials Officer reviews the application along with supporting documentation.
- SPC Credentials Officer informs the candidate if documentation is complete.
 - a. If documentation is not complete, the candidate must complete it before being allowed to continue in the process.
 - b. If the documentation is complete, the Credentials Officer notifies the SPC National office and informs the Chief Examiner of the candidate's eligibility.
 - c. Written examination component fee is due within two weeks of notification of acceptance.
- **The exam will take place on the fourth Friday in November at 2pm EST.**
- The candidate locates a suitable invigilator* and informs SPC of the individual and their contact information. The candidate is responsible for any invigilation costs incurred.
- The invigilator will be emailed the login information from SPC prior to the written component date and supervises the candidate while writing the exam.
- The invigilator is required to keep all examination information confidential and must remain in the exam room for the entire duration of the written examination.
- The invigilator is required to activate the online exam and will be the only individual permitted to contact the Chief Examiner.
- The candidate is responsible for ensuring all requirements to complete the exam are met, including secure internet access.
- The candidate is informed whether they passed or failed the written examination by email.
- Upon successful completion of the written component, the candidate will be eligible to challenge the oral practical exam component.
- If the candidate intends to participate in the next oral practical examination, the application and component fee is due by registration deadline which closes on the **third Monday of February**.



- After completing the written exam component, the candidate must attempt the oral practical component at one of the next three oral practical examinations. Failure to do so will result in the candidate having to repeat all the requirements for that level.
- A candidate is not eligible to challenge the oral practical until they have successfully completed the written exam requirements.
- The candidate is informed of the date and place of the oral practical examination. The candidates are also provided with a guideline for the examinations and the practical examination marking guide.

**Invigilator requirements: The Invigilator must be a SPC Diploma Physiotherapist, a MD, a DC, a head of department or clinic, or an educator in a postsecondary institution.*

Application for the Oral Practical Examination

- Notice of the fee schedule, application deadlines and examination dates are announced via SPC newsletters and are posted on the SPC website. The application process may be accessed through the SPC website.
- Candidates who have successfully completed the written examination for a given credential immediately preceding the oral practical exam will be directly invited to confirm their intention to participate in the oral practical examination no later than the registration deadline of each year.
- As per SPC policy, a member who successfully completes the written examination portion MUST complete the oral practical component of the examinations within three years of their written examination.
- No candidate is permitted to contact an SPC Examiner who is part of that session's Committee of Examiners 1 month prior to the date of the oral practical exam.

Examination Results and Records

Marking - For Oral Practical Exam

- Three examiners are present for the entire oral practical examination.
- Each examiner grades the candidate's performance independently. Two of three examiners must mark a fail in order for a mark of fail to be recorded by the Chief Examiner.
- Final marking and grading will be completed by the Chief Examiner.
- The Chief Examiner summarizes the comments from the examiners' marking guides and informs the candidate whether the candidate passed or failed the oral practical component for that level of the SPC examination process. A summary of the examiners' comments is sent to the candidate and to SPC.
- SPC then distributes certificates to successful candidates.
- A candidate must meet all the requirements before receiving recognition for that level (including completion of the Core Competency Courses for the respective designation)

Records

SPC National Office will be responsible for recording and storing the results.

Certification



Successful candidates at each level will receive a letter of congratulations and a certificate awarded by Sport Physiotherapy Canada. All successful candidates' names will be announced on the E-Blast and member accounts will be updated accordingly.

Regulations Regarding Failure

- A candidate must successfully complete all components of the examination for a particular level to obtain recognition for that level.
- A candidate may re-attempt the failed component at one of the next three available sittings. Failure to do so will necessitate the candidate meeting all the requirements for that level again.

Financial Matters Relating to Examinations

- The examinations are intended to be self-supporting. Examination fees must be paid through the website and exam policies can be on website registrations <https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>.
- The candidate will be responsible for covering the invigilation fee for the written exam, if a fee is charged (i.e. examination department of a university).

CREDENTIAL PROGRAM EQUIVALENCY

Physiotherapists who have successfully completed the requirements for the Registered International Sports Physical Therapist (RISPT) designation in one of our International Federation of Sport Physical Therapy (IFSPT) partner countries who wish to pursue the Certificate and Diploma designations in Canada will be exempt from certain SPC Credential Program requirements. Proof of membership with IFSPT rendering RISPT status will be required and will subsequently allow for an exemption from both the Certificate and Diploma written examinations.

Physiotherapists who have successfully completed an SPC approved Sports Science or Sport and Exercise Medicine Masters (or equivalent) at a post-secondary institution *in Canada* will also be exempt from certain SPC Credential Program requirements. Proof of successful program completion will be required and will subsequently allow for an exemption from both the Certificate and Diploma written examinations.

In both cases, while it is not mandatory to register for SPC Core Competency Courses, it is recommended. SPC membership, valid first responder certification as well as completion of direct and indirect mentorship hours with an approved SPC mentor will still be necessary to challenge the oral practical exam for the given credential. Requisite field experience, as outlined below, along with supporting documentation* will also need to be completed and submitted with the oral practical exam application for each level. Candidates may only challenge one level (i.e. the Certificate or Diploma) of the oral practical exam each calendar year.

**Preparation Summary and proof of IFSPT membership OR proof of enrollment in/completion of an SPC approved Canadian post-secondary sport and exercise medicine program or equivalent will need to be submitted at the time of the oral practical exam application.*



Direct and Indirect Mentorship hours are due the first Monday of April. If the requisite documentation is not submitted by the deadline, candidates will not be permitted to challenge the oral practical exam and they will forgo their exam registration fees.

CERTIFICATE EQUIVALENCY REQUIREMENTS

The following is required to apply, and be approved for, the certificate oral practical exam:

- ✓ Be a graduated physiotherapist
- ✓ Be a member in good standing of Sport Physiotherapy Canada
- ✓ Current First Responder Certification from a recognized National body such as SPC, Canadian Red Cross or St. John's Ambulance
- ✓ 2 years in clinical practice
- ✓ Have sufficient practical experience working with a team or organization and at athletic events:
 - A minimum of 200 hours of documented practical experience as a graduate Physiotherapist, over 4 sports
 - A minimum of 75 hours in 2 sports, 1 being in a contact, combative, or collision sport, and proof of reports submitted through the application
- ✓ Indirect and direct mentorship hours
- ✓ Submit a letter of recommendation from a recognized SPC Mentor
- ✓ Proof of membership with IFSPT (eg. RISPT), OR provide proof of enrollment in an SPC approved Canadian post-secondary Sports Science/Sport and Exercise Medicine Masters (or equivalent)

DIPLOMA EQUIVALENCY REQUIREMENTS

The following is required to apply, and be approved for, the certificate oral practical exam:

- ✓ Be a member in good standing of Sport Physiotherapy Canada
- ✓ Be a SPC Certificate Level Credential Holder
- ✓ Current First Responder Certification
- ✓ 3 years in clinical practice
- ✓ Achieved the additional minimum of 200 hours (75 hours must be in contact, collision, or combative sport) of document practical experience (see note on hours below)
 - Experience gained in at least 6 different sports, in 1 of these six 6 sports – involvement must extend over 1 full season with a team or club
 - Full Season includes pre-season screening, in-season and postseason
 - 1 of the sports must be in a contact, collision, or combative sport (i.e. hockey, lacrosse, soccer, judo, etc.)
 - 1 sport covered over 1 season must include a minimum of 75 hours* of practical experience in that sport
 - Submit a "Preparation Summary" found in the Log Book template
- ✓ Submit a letter of recommendation from a recognized SPC Mentor
- ✓ Indirect and direct mentorship hours
- ✓ Proof of membership with IFSPT (eg. RISPT), OR provide proof of completion of an SPC approved Canadian post-secondary Sports Science/Sport and Exercise Medicine Masters (or equivalent)



MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES

BECOMING AN SPC MENTOR

MENTOR REQUIREMENTS

Mentors in the SPC Credential System must meet the following requirements:

- ✓ Be a current SPC member;
- ✓ Have up-to-date Maintenance of Credentials (MoC) for either the Certificate or Diploma designation.

Mentors in the SPC Credential System must also:

- ✓ Be willing to accept mentees from various geographical locations;
- ✓ Be willing to remain up-to-date with current Credential Program Resources and policies, including but not limited to: Program Handbook, Objectives and References, Marking Rubrics, Core Competency Courses etc;
- ✓ Be willing to provide mentees a **minimum of 10 Direct Mentorship hours** (virtual, in-person, or phone are all acceptable options) ahead of the oral/practical exam application, which must include a mock examination component;
- ✓ Be willing to review and authenticate a Candidate's Preparation Summary as well as Direct and Indirect Mentorship Hour Logs;
- ✓ Be willing to provide a Letter of Recommendation for Candidates planning to challenge examinations for a given Credential* on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>)

***Note:** Mentors must hold current credentialing in the level of the program they are mentoring (i.e. to mentor a Diploma Candidate, the mentor must have successfully completed the Diploma Exam; however, mentors for Certificate Candidates are only required to hold the Certificate Credential).

MENTOR APPLICATION PROCESS

Credentialed SPC members may apply to be a mentor by completing a form on the Mentor page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>). This will allow SPC to maintain a database of current mentors, their location, preferred contact information, as well as any additional information that will help pair them with appropriate candidates. By completing and submitting both the initial mentor application and MoC forms, mentors accept the terms and requirements outlined within this document to provide quality mentorship to future credential holders.

MAINTENANCE OF SPC MENTOR STATUS

To maintain mentor status, members will be required to:

1. Attend a mandatory Mentor Meeting*, virtually or in-person, once every 3 years;
2. Complete the Core Competency Course(s), once in their entirety ahead of the next MoC cycle deadline, for the level of credential they are mentoring.



**Mentor meetings are annual sessions, lasting approximately 2 hours, which provide training for new mentors while also providing new and existing mentors an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback regarding the mentorship and credentialing experience. These meetings identify new and updated resources, provide updates regarding mentor guidelines and review exam candidates strengths and weaknesses, changes to the examination process, and review oral practical examination automatic fails, among other things.*

MENTOR SELECTION BY A CANDIDATE

CANDIDATE REQUEST PROCESS

Candidates should review the Mentor List to determine which SPC mentor may be a good fit based on location, experience etc. Candidates must then complete and forward a Request Form to their preferred mentor. These can be found on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>).

MENTOR/CANDIDATE RELATIONSHIP

Upon receipt of a candidate's Request Form, mentors must determine whether they are comfortable accepting, supporting and endorsing the candidate to continue through the credential exam process. **Mentors may NOT deny candidates based on geographical location alone.** If accepted, it is recommended that the mentor and mentee then establish a plan to ensure that adequate on-field experience as well as Direct and Indirect Mentorship hours* can be attained in a timely manner to meet minimum requirements to apply to either the written or oral practical component of the SPC Exams. **Mentor reports, agreements and learning contracts are no longer required,** however, mentors must provide prospective candidates with a Mentor Recommendation Letter as well as review and authenticate a candidate's Preparation Summary ahead of the written exam application. Mentors will also be expected to review and authenticate Direct and Indirect Mentorship Hours Logs ahead of the oral practical exam application. More information about these areas are outlined in subsequent sections of this document. These can be found on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>)

MENTOR COMPENSATION

SPC encourages mentors, not directly benefiting from a candidate's credentialing process (i.e: clinic owner or boss), to review and outline a fee structure with mentees in exchange for Direct Mentorship and guidance. SPC recommends using either of the fee structures outlined below. The tiered fee structure incrementally increases based on the number of candidates that may participate in any given Direct Mentorship session. Mentors may consider capping the number of mentees per session to ensure adequate supervision and feedback.

Proposed Fee Structures:

\$60 hourly flat rate

OR

Tiered fee structure reflecting the number of mentees per Direct Mentorship session (e.g. \$60, \$70, \$80, \$90 for 1, 2, 3, 4 mentees, respectively)



It is recommended that the mentor provide a receipt to the mentee upon payment and that the fee charged is reflective and equivalent of time lost, rather than for-profit.

Please note: While SPC recommends the above outlined fee structure, it is **NOT mandatory** and implementation or rate is ultimately up to the discretion of each individual mentor. Recommendations were based on original rates set following a survey to mentors and exam candidates in 2015, were adjusted in 2022, and will be re-evaluated a minimum of every 5 years to reflect changing guidelines, inflation etc.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT MENTORSHIP

Candidates wishing to challenge the oral practical exam for either the Certificate or Diploma, must complete a minimum of **10 Direct and 20 Indirect Mentorship hours for each credential**. *10 Direct mentorship hours, including a mandatory mock exam, must be completed with each mentee ahead of the oral practical exam application.* Supervision through Direct Mentorship provides further insight into whether candidates have met objectives and are proficient in SPC core competencies to be successful ahead of the oral practical component of the Credential Program examination process. Direct mentorship hours may be completed remotely (phone or virtual), however it is recommended that candidates attempt to receive some in-person mentorship, whenever possible, and that not all hours be completed remotely. Mentors must review and sign off on both Direct and Indirect mentorship Hour Logs which act as a second endorsement by the mentor. These can be found on the Resources page (<https://physiotherapy.ca/divisions/sport/>). *Candidates may involve several mentors in their preparations to achieve the requisite hours, however it is recommended that the mentor who provides the most direct mentorship be the one to sign off on the Mentorship Hour Log.* These forms must be submitted at the time of the oral practical examination application.

Direct Mentorship includes any combination of the following activities **WITH A MENTOR**:

- In-person or virtual observation of candidates during a live clinical or "field" session with an athlete or team;
- Observation of pre recorded videos of candidates during a clinical or "field" session with an athlete or team;
- In-person or virtual observation of candidates practicing specific techniques, skills and/or performing mock scenarios provided by their Mentor;
- In-person or virtual observation of candidates completing mandatory mock exam(s) with scenarios provided by their Mentor and feedback using SPC Marking Guides.

Indirect Mentorship includes any combination of the following activities, **NOT DIRECTLY SUPERVISED by a Mentor**:

- In-person, telephone or virtual discussions with peers 1:1 or in small group study regarding management of athletes in a clinical or "field" session (i.e. case studies);
- In-person or virtual observation of peers practicing specific techniques, skills and/or performing mock scenarios provided by their mentor;



- In-person practice of specific techniques, skills and/or mock scenarios with friends, family or partners.

MOCK EXAMS (REQUIRED)

In order to ensure candidates are adequately prepared to challenge the oral practical exams, Mentors **MUST** provide candidates a mock examination experience as part of their **Direct Mentorship hours**. Mock exams may be completed in-person or virtually, acknowledging there may be some geographical limitations between candidates and their mentors. To be effective, it is recommended that the mock exam simulate the exam experience closely by following the times allotted for each station and utilizing rubrics outlined in the marking guides. Candidates should complete all stations, in order, without breaks or feedback until the exam has been completed in its entirety. If possible, candidates should use a non-physiotherapist to be the “patient” for mock scenarios to limit any accidental assistance.

***Note:** it is recommended that both Direct and Indirect hours are accumulated through a combination of the activities outlined above, to best prepare the candidate for the Credential Exams, however, mock exams are a **MANDATORY** component of the Direct Mentorship experience. Additional hours, above the minimum requirement described herein, may be necessary to be successful, however this will vary based upon the candidate’s experience and proficiency. Once again, it is recommended that for best results, **NOT ALL** Direct and Indirect Mentorship hours be acquired through remote or distance conferencing (e.g. telephone or virtual).*

HELP, SUPPORT AND FEEDBACK

If you require further support or have feedback regarding the Credential Program Handbook and Resources, please contact the appropriate Committee using the information provided below.

Contact Us:

Subject	Title	Email
Education and Courses & Education Committee	<i>Education Lead</i>	education@sportphysio.ca
Division Operations	<i>Senior Operations Manager</i>	support@sportphysio.ca
Division Strategy and Lead	<i>Executive Chair</i>	chair@sportphysio.ca
Administrative Support	<i>Executive Secretary</i>	secretary@sportphysio.ca
Finance and Registration	<i>Executive Treasurer</i>	treasurer@sportphysio.ca
Provincial Sections	<i>Provincial Sections Lead</i>	sections@sportphysio.ca
Credentials	<i>Credentials Officer</i>	credentials@sportphysio.ca
Exams	<i>Chief Examiners</i>	exams@sportphysio.ca
E-Blast, Social Media & Advertising	<i>Media Coordinator</i>	media@sportphysio.ca
Major Games	<i>Games Lead</i>	games@sportphysio.ca