



WHAT IS ABO & NCLE?

The American Board of Opticianry and the National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc. (ABO-NCLE) is a national, not-for-profit organization which administers voluntary competency certification examinations for dispensing Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. ABO-NCLE is the **only** Opticianry Examination Organization in the United States that has received Accreditation as a Certifying Organization, pursuant to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/IEC 17024:2012). These independent standards provide verification of the viability and credibility of the certification programs utilized for certification, including candidates for licensure.

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook provides important information about the ABO-NCLE policies, processes, and procedures for those interested in taking an **ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification Examination** and an overview of information on renewing certification.

More detailed ABO-NCLE testing and renewal information, including information related to specific exams— such as test content outline, references, and other important information — can be obtained at ABO-NCLE's website at www.abo-ncle.org or by calling 1.703.719.5800.

NAMES OF EXAMS

The American Board of Opticianry Advanced Certification Examination is called the ABOAC and it is for Advanced Opticians. The National Contact Lens Examiners Advanced Certification Examination is called the NCLEAC, which is for Advanced Contact Lens Technicians. When registering for an Advanced Examination, candidates need to use care in making sure that they register for the correct exam.

WHAT IS ADVANCED CERTIFICATION?

Certification is the process by which a non-governmental agency or an association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications. Advanced Certification can be used for advancement into higher levels of practice, validation of advanced competence, recognition of excellence, and/or for regulation. It can be mandatory or voluntary. Advanced Certification validates an individual's advanced knowledge and skills in a defined role and clinical area of practice, based on predetermined standards.



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc., is to promote excellence in the professions of Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology through credentialing programs. ABO-NCLE's internationally renowned accredited credentialing programs certify and recognize individual Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. It also offers approval of educational courses and materials in order to assure the continuing education of Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. ABO-NCLE's Certification Program enables Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians to demonstrate their expertise and validate their knowledge to employers and patients. Through targeted exams that incorporate the latest practice standards, the ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification process identifies qualified advanced ophthalmic dispensers at advanced levels of knowledge and proficiency for the consumer and for the ophthalmic community by (1) certifying those who pass the professionally developed examination(s) as "Advanced Certified Opticians" and/or "Advanced Certified Contact Lens Technicians" and (2) requiring approved advanced levels of continuing education for Advanced Certification renewal.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

ABO-NCLE endorses and adheres to the principles of equal opportunity. ABO-NCLE does not discriminate against any individual because of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or veteran status.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to take the ABOAC and/or NCLEAC Examinations, a candidate must be Certified for one complete three-year renewal period. If a state licensing board adopts the Advanced Certification Examination as part of its licensing requirements, the state requirement supersedes those of ABO-NCLE.

Advanced Certification, through administration of the ABOAC and/or NCLEAC is an assessment of each candidate's knowledge base relative to the job functions and responsibilities of a typical Advanced-level Optician and/or Advanced Contact Lens Fitter/Technician. Please note that considerations related to each candidate's background, including but not limited to criminal history, are deferred to prospective employers and, where applicable, state licensing boards for individual determination. Candidates may request reconsideration of eligibility determinations. Candidates must request this reconsideration in writing, via e-mail to mail@abo-ncle.org, or by facsimile to 703.719.9144.

All requests for verification must be made within three (3) months of the date of denial of eligibility.



HOW ARE EXAMS DEVELOPED?

All ABO-NCLE certification examinations, including the ABOAC and NCLEAC, are developed consistent with the technical guidelines recommended by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (AERA, APA, NCME; 1999). Each examination is developed by ABO-NCLE in cooperation with a Content Expert Panel (CEP) composed of carefully selected Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the field. CEPs analyze the professional skills and abilities from job task analyses, which provide the evidence for the test content outline (also called the test blueprint). Test questions or “items” are written by Advanced Certified Opticians and Advanced Certified Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians in their discipline who have received training by ABO & NCLE staff and Prometric in writing items. The items are then reviewed by the CEP with Prometric and pilot-tested to ensure validity and psychometric quality before being used as scored items on the actual examinations. ABO-NCLE adheres to a variety of guidelines during the development of items to ensure that the items are appropriate for the Advanced Certification exams. This includes editing and coding items, referencing items to the approved test content outlines and reference books, and screening items for bias and stereotypes. Items for the Advanced Certification Examinations are selected that reflect the test content outline and item distributions. The validity and reliability of the exams are monitored by ABO-NCLE staff. Advanced Certification examinations are updated approximately every three years.



OVERVIEW OF THE ABOAC AND NCLEAC

General Information	
Eligibility	Candidates must be appropriately certified by ABO and/or NCLE for one three-year period prior to registering for the ABOAC or NCLEAC
Target group	Advanced-level Opticians and Advanced-level Contact Lens Technicians who work in any type of practice site in the U.S.
Test sites	More than 300 Prometric Test Centers
Number of times per year that exam is offered	Quarterly, in February, May, August and November
Fee to change exam testing window, date, time or location.	\$75.00 – the candidate is responsible for paying the fee themselves.
Exam Format	Secure computer-based exam
Number of questions	125 multiple-choice questions. A portion of these questions may not be scored and are pretested for use on future exams.
Quality Assurance	
Length of exam	3 hours
Exam based on practice analysis	YES – conducted 2014
Advice/oversight by panel of experts	YES
Committed to following Standards of Education and Psychological Testing published by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education	YES
Exam items approved by panel with wide range of experience in the field	YES
All exam items pretested	YES
Complete item analysis conducted for all exams	YES



Exam Security	
Eligibility verified at time of exam	Pre-registration required; approved government-issued photo identification must be shown at test center.
Procedure for rotating and retiring items	YES
Procedure for equating multiple versions of the exam to assure that they present equal challenge to candidates	YES
Proctors trained to follow procedures and to handle emergency situations	YES
Stringent computer encryption programming	YES
Exams sent to site before the day of the exam	No; the exam, sent in a secure, encrypted format is downloaded at the center only after the candidate checks in and their identification is verified
Extra printed exams must be accounted for and destroyed if not used.	No, this is not necessary because the exam is computer-generated only.

Services for Candidates and Others	
Candidates with disabilities accommodated in compliance with ADA	YES
Website for exam information	www.abo-ncle.org
Exam results reported to candidates	Candidates will typically receive a preliminary indication of the results, unless the exam is not subject to instant results. On occasion, ABO-NCLE is required to undergo “health checks” and the results may not be available for between four to six weeks after the close of the testing window (typically February and May administrations). There is no guarantee of preliminary results; official results will be released after appropriate analysis and review is completed.
Exam registration/cancellation	Only the candidate can register and/or cancel exam



THE EXAMINATIONS

The three-hour multiple-choice examinations are written by groups of Advanced Certified Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians with assistance from the testing service, Alpine Testing Solutions. The purposes of the ABOAC and NCLEAC are to evaluate the knowledge and skills associated with the performance of tasks required for the professional practice of Advanced Opticianry and/or Advanced Contact Lens Technology.

The examinations are developed for Advanced Opticians and Advanced Contact Lens Technicians from all practice settings in the United States. They are based on hands-on knowledge from many different optical situations.

There is nothing tricky about the examination. Questions are created to test the ability of a candidate to recall knowledge and to apply that knowledge to specific dispensing functions. Exam questions fall into three general types: 1) those that require immediate recognition of the correct response from the four choices; 2) those that require understanding and application of the information presented to answer the question; and 3) those that require candidates to understand and reorganize material presented to make the correct choice.

EXAM REGISTRATION

- A. **Completion of the registration form.** The ABOAC and NCLEAC are offered at over 300 testing centers quarterly – in February, May, August, and November. Candidates must register on the ABO-NCLE website (www.abo-ncle.org). The locations of the centers can be found on the Prometric website. To schedule your exam, you must first register and pay for the exam on the ABO-NCLE website. You will receive a confirmation email for the exam for which you registered. You need to save this document. 48 hours after registering, you will be able to schedule your exam at one of over 300 Prometric testing centers by using the scheduling link found on the email confirmation. Only the candidate can register for an exam and the candidate is the only one that can schedule an exam.
- B. **Information Required.** Candidates must provide their full legal name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail address and demographic information. Candidates should also indicate whether they qualify for special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. There is a special accommodation form on the ABO-NCLE to download and request the available accommodations. **Giving an accurate e-mail address and telephone number are mandatory.**
- C. **Payment.** The exams cost \$225 each and are payable by credit card at the time the candidate registers online. There is also a late fee of \$75 per exam that must be paid if the registration is not completed by the registration deadline, but is completed by the late registration deadline date.
- D. **Transferring of Exam.** Candidates who are unable to take the exam(s) after paying and registering, can transfer to the next available testing window. Candidates are required to call the ABO-NCLE office and pay a \$75 transfer fee before the last day of the current testing window they are originally registered for. Candidates who are unable to take the exam(s) after Scheduling an exam, and needs to re-schedule their scheduled exam within the same testing window, may go the Prometric scheduling page, make changes to their scheduled exam and pay a fee of \$75.00. Only the candidate can make schedule changes. There are NO refunds or exceptions.



E. **Cancellation by Prometric.** Testing centers may close without notice in the case of inclement weather, a state of emergency or other unforeseen events. In this case, the candidate will be allowed to reschedule at a convenient time and location with the exam fee credited to the future exam appointment. Candidates should verify that the center is open by calling directly before the appointment day and time.

F. **Special Testing Accommodations.** ABO-NCLE and its testing vendor make every effort to reasonably accommodate candidates with documented disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability as defined under the ADA, you must notify ABO-NCLE by submitting the special accommodations form location on the ABO-NCLE website regarding your request signed by your physician or a qualified healthcare professional.

The letter must list the following information in order to be considered:

- A specific diagnosis and date of your diagnosis
- Specific and current findings that support your diagnosis
- A description of your substantial day-to-day functional limitations resulting from your stated disabilities
- Specific recommendations for your testing accommodation(s) including a detailed explanation of why the accommodation is needed. If the accommodation includes extra time, please indicate the amount of additional time requested.

Important Note: Additional information may be requested after a review of your information.



ABOAC CONTENT OUTLINE AND TEST SPECIFICATIONS

Domains and Tasks	Weights
1. Analyze and Interpret Visual Assessment	38%
1.1 Analyze customer's/patient's prescription	14%
1.2 Recognize limitations of the prescription	13%
1.3 Assess medical abnormalities of customer's/patient's vision	11%
2. Design, Fit, and Dispense Eyewear and Other Ophthalmic Devices	39%
2.1 Evaluate the customer's/patient's needs and wants	5%
2.2 Evaluate the parameters of new and old eyewear	5%
2.3 Design and market ophthalmic instrumentation and eyewear	3%
2.4 Evaluate the results of facial, ocular, and frame measurements	5%
2.5 Verify the ordered eyewear in accordance with specifications on the order form	6%
2.6 Evaluate the eyewear in relation to the customer's/patient's head and face	5%
2.7 Educate customers/patients on products and performance	4%
2.8 Apply ophthalmic professional and legal guidelines	6%
3. Use of Ophthalmic Instrumentation	23%
3.1 Explain the use of ophthalmic instrumentation	4%
3.2 Analyze the utilization of dispensing instrumentation	6%
3.3 Determine method of fabrication and ordering	7%
3.4 Distinguish the uses of visual assessment instrumentation	4%
3.5 Apply knowledge of legal and professional requirements for equipment maintenance	2%
TOTAL	100%



NCLEAC CONTENT OUTLINE AND TEST SPECIFICATIONS

Domains and Tasks	Weights
1. Prefit, Preparation, and Evaluation (Including patients with complex conditions)	25%
1.1 Obtain and document the history of patients who have complex ocular conditions that require specialty lenses	6%
1.2 Assess the technical aspects of the patient's complex ocular status to determine contact lens options	7%
1.3 Discuss with the patient his or her needs, expectations, and limitations	6%
1.4 Analyze information and explain lens options to meet patient needs	6%
2. Design, Fit and Dispense Standard and Specialty Lenses	30%
2.1 Select lens material and design (e.g., piggyback, custom soft, hybrid, scleral, lenses for irregular cornea) to conduct a diagnostic lens evaluation	12%
2.2 Evaluate diagnostic lenses to determine initial fit	13%
2.3 Order lenses, including specialty and customized lenses, by specifying lens parameters	5%
3. Patient Instruction and Delivery Procedures (Including those with specialty lenses)	15%
3.1 Verify lens parameters	4%
3.2 Educate the patient on lens wear and care (e.g., piggyback, hybrid, scleral) by providing verbal and written instructions	4%
3.3 Provide hands-on practice on lens application and removal, including scleral and hybrid lenses	4%
3.4 Schedule appointments for follow-up assessment of lens wear	3%
4. Routine and Emergency Follow-up Visits	25%
4.1 Discuss with the patient his or her subjective response to lens wear	3%
4.2 Evaluate lens fit and performance, including complex designs	4%
4.3 Implement and evaluate modifications to lens design	4%
4.4 Review patient compliance	3%



NCLEAC CONTENT OUTLINE AND TEST SPECIFICATIONS (continued)

4.5 Determine follow-up appointments to monitor lens fit and ocular integrity	4%
4.6 Educate patients on new developments in contact lens technology	1%
4.7 Recognize and triage patients with acute contact lens complications	6%
5. Administrative Procedures	5%
5.1 Maintain a safe contact lens environment	2%
5.2 Comply with professional, ethical, and legal guidelines	2%
5.3 Maintain patient records	1%
TOTAL	100%



COMPUTER-BASED EXAMINATION DETAILS

The exams are offered in computer-based format. There is a tutorial that explains the Prometric test site features. It is highly recommended that you take the time to review the tutorial. There is time built in to the exam, so that exam time is not used while viewing the tutorial. Key points concerning computer-based examinations are as follows:

Extensive familiarity with computers is not required, but use of a computer keyboard and mouse should be within the experience of all candidates.

On the exam day, there will be a brief orientation/tutorial prior to starting the exam, allowing candidates to familiarize themselves with the exam process.

The proctors at the exam sites are not expected to provide detailed assistance to candidates. It is not their responsibility to help on things such as navigating through the exam or resolving any misjudgments made by the candidate.

Candidates need to carefully read the on-screen messages to respond correctly.

Computer-based testing options include the ability to navigate forward and backward through the exam, mark items for further review and then review answered, unanswered and marked items.

Items must be reviewed or changed prior to the expiration time. Once an exam has ended, candidates cannot return to the questions. The examination screen contains a timer showing the time remaining for the current exam.

A listing of completed questions, incomplete questions, and marked items can be accessed by clicking the “Flag” button.

Candidates end the exam by clicking “Finish.” Once “Finish” is clicked, the candidate will not be able to return to any part of the exam. Note: there is a pop-up box to confirm that the candidate truly wishes to end the exam. Clicking “No” will return the candidate to the review screen for further review.

Questions left unanswered will be considered incorrect. When there are unanswered items additional time will not be allowed for completion, nor will there be any refund of fees or credit toward future fees.



THE DAY OF THE EXAM

What to Bring

When you arrive at the test center, you must present one form of acceptable identification from the list below:

- Driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles in one of the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the U.S. territories
- State identification (non-driver) issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles in one of the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the U.S. territories
- Passport
- U.S. military identification

Your identification must be valid (unexpired) and contain both your signature and a recent (no more than 10 years old) photograph. The name appearing on the valid identification must appear exactly as you registered for the exam. All identification must be in English and signed in English. If you are currently serving in the U.S. military and are testing outside the United States, the District of Columbia, and/or the U.S. territories, then you are required to provide valid U.S. military identification. If your valid military identification does not have both your signature and a recent photograph, you will need to provide additional identification that meets the aforementioned requirements. The only identification acceptable in test centers outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, and/or the U.S. territories is a valid passport for candidates who cannot provide valid U.S. military identification.

If you do not bring acceptable ID, you will not be admitted to the test and your eligibility window will end. You will be required to submit additional documentation and fees to schedule a new testing date. Please contact ABO- NCLE for details.

It is not necessary for you to bring the ABO-NCLE Authorization to Test Notice to the test center, and it will not be counted as an acceptable form of identification.

Candidates should report promptly to the assigned center at least 30 minutes prior to their appointed time. This allows time for completing the registration process which includes verifying ID. Candidates who arrive 15 minutes or more after their appointment time will be considered tardy and will not be permitted to test and there will be no refund or credit toward future fees.

In the online examination process, the candidate will be asked to attest to having read the Candidate Handbook, including the full Agreement at the end of this booklet, and to agree to be bound by the conditions listed.



During the exam, candidates must comply with directions/instructions of the test proctors. Those who do not follow the instructions may be subjected to dismissal from the center and/or having his/her examination invalidated.

Personal items, such as cell phones, any PDAs, or any other electronic devices, pagers, writing instruments or paper, purses, hats, bags, books are not allowed in the testing room. Sweaters and jackets must be worn if taken into the exam room. Prometric testing center locations provide a secure locker for the Candidate's belongings. However, the Candidate is responsible for the security of his or her belongings.

Candidates are prohibited from communicating with other candidates by any means, verbal or written, for any purpose.

Candidates must conduct themselves in a civil manner at all times when on the premises of the testing center. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards other candidates or staff members may result in criminal prosecution.

Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the test center.

Candidates will not be permitted to continue testing if they violate any of the provisions or rules established by ABO-NCLE or the test centers.

Occasionally, problems occur during the administration that may impede the examination process. Weather problems, mechanical failures, hardware and software problems, and human errors have the potential of interfering with all or part of the exam process. When such problems occur, ABO-NCLE will review all information at its disposal. An opportunity for re-examination may be offered at the discretion of ABO-NCLE. A re-examination shall be the candidate's sole remedy.

ABO-NCLE shall not be liable for inconvenience, expense or other damage caused by any problems in the administration or scoring of an examination, including the need for retesting or delays in score reporting. Under no circumstances will ABO-NCLE reduce its standards as a means of correcting a problem in the examination administration.

Candidates who experience incidents or irregularities during the testing must immediately inform the Prometric on-site proctors. If it is determined that an incident or irregularity had the potential of influencing a candidate's performance, the candidate will have two options: (1) to be retested during the next exam administration; or, (2) to have the examination scored.



RULES FOR TAKING THE ABO and/or NCLE ADVANCED CERTIFICATION EXAMS

- Sufficient time has been provided for you to respond to all questions. You are advised not to spend an inordinate amount of time on individual questions until you have had an opportunity to respond to every question. Time is not intended to be a factor in the examination.
- There is no penalty for guessing; you are encouraged to respond to every examination question.
- Computer-based examinations DO allow you to mark questions you are unsure about and go back to them later.
- All instructions given by the proctor must be followed in order to ensure proper processing of your examination results.
- All candidates will be checked-in at the test site prior to being admitted to the examination room. You are required to place all personal possessions in a designated area.
- All ABO-NCLE exams are “closed book.” Books, paper, PDAs, cell phones, or electronic (or other) devices or resources are not allowed. Failure to follow these instructions can result in your scores being revoked and may prohibit you from retesting or taking any other ABO-NCLE certification examinations.
- There is an “on-screen” scientific calculator that can be utilized during the exam.
- No test materials, documents, or memoranda of any sort may be removed from the examination room or retained. You may not copy any test questions or make any notes regarding the content of the examination. If you attempt to do so, your results will be invalidated, and you may be prohibited from retesting or taking any other ABO-NCLE certification examinations.
- No food or drink, including water, may be taken into the testing room. You may leave the testing room to use the restroom or get a drink of water, but you will need to sign out according to the instructions that will be explained at the test site. Your testing time will not be increased to accommodate a break. If you have a medical condition and cannot comply with this rule, you must apply for special testing accommodations.
- Please verify that you have been given the correct examination that you are eligible to take.
- You may not ask questions concerning content of the examination during the examination period.
- During the examination, you must not give help to or receive help from others. Proctors are required to report any incident in which there is evidence of irregular behavior. Any such reports could result in the invalidation of your test scores and/or other sanctions.



HOW ARE EXAMS SCORED?

ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification Examinations are criterion-referenced tests, which means that a Candidate's performance on the examination is not compared to that of other Candidates in determining the Candidate's pass/fail status. In a criterion referenced test, a Candidate must achieve a score equal to or greater than the minimum passing score for the examination. The minimum passing score represents the absolute minimum standards that the Candidate must achieve to demonstrate the ability to practice the profession safely and competently. With the guidance of a measurement expert (e.g., a psychometrician), a panel of Subject Matter Experts in the field of Advanced Opticianry and Advanced Contact Lens Technology set the minimum passing score for each ABO-NCLE advanced examination. In setting the minimum passing score, ABO-NCLE uses the Modified Angoff Method, which is well-recognized within the measurement field.

Each exam contains at least 85-110 scored test items plus a number of pilot test items that do not count towards the final score. For specific information on the number of items each exam contains, please refer to the test content outline associated with that exam.

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Candidates will typically receive a preliminary indication of the results, unless the exam is not subject to instant results. On occasion, ABO-NCLE is required to undergo "health checks" and the results may not be available for between four to six weeks after the close of the testing window (typically February and May administrations). There is no guarantee of preliminary results; official results will be released as soon as possible after appropriate analysis and review is completed. State licensing boards will receive rosters of Candidates from their states that have passed and not passed the on-line practical exam in their state. If candidates want their results sent to another state's licensing board, they need to contact ABO-NCLE to make this request.

If you do not meet the passing standard, your score report will include diagnostic information for each content area of the exam. State licensing boards will receive rosters of Candidates from their states that have passed and not passed the exam in their state. If candidates want their results sent to another state's licensing board, they need to contact ABO-NCLE to make this request.

An Advanced Certificate suitable for framing will be mailed to those candidates who pass the exam using the name given when they registered.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION

ABO-NCLE Record Retention Policy is to collect and maintain all records necessary to fulfill the legal requirements for record retention and disposition. This includes all information submitted in support of initial advanced certification and advanced certification renewal. The names of candidates for an exam, or names of individuals not passing an exam, or individual test scores are not released.



Certificant and Candidate information and Advanced Certification Examination results are maintained indefinitely in the ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification database. The records are password protected and accessible only to staff involved with the Advanced Certification process. Applications for the Advanced Certification Examination are all completed electronically, and securely stored in an electronic format. In the unlikely event that any hard copy applications or supporting documents are received, information is manually entered into the ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification database and the hard copies are maintained for a minimum of five years and are subsequently destroyed in a secure fashion. In addition, ABO-NCLE maintains electronic records of all customer activity and online applications within its database system.

MAINTAINING YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Change of Address

It is critical that you inform ABO-NCLE of any modification to your e-mail address, since that is the official method of communication with Certificants.

If you have attained Advanced Certification with ABO-NCLE, and need to change any of your contact information, please log into your account at www.abo-ncle.org. If you are an exam candidate, please log into your exam log-in, through the appropriate link, and make any necessary modifications in that database.

Change of Legal Name

Requests for legal name change due to marriage, divorce, or a court-approved legal name change must be sent in writing with a copy of the marriage certificate, divorce decree, or court-approved legal name change document. For Opticians or Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians who have applied in the past under one name and are currently applying under a different name, please note that ABO-NCLE requires copies of legal name change documents before proceeding with the application process. Send a request for legal name change, by mail, with accompanying documentation to:

ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification
ATTN: Name Change
6506 Loisdale Road, Suite 330
Springfield, VA 22150

If you are currently Advanced Certified and have already been issued a wall certificate but wish to order a duplicate wall certificate with your new legal name, please contact ABO-NCLE at 703.719.5800 .

RETESTING

The examination's regularly-administered examination periods are February, May, August, and November. ABO-NCLE believes that it is important for candidates who fail an examination to have adequate time to properly review the study materials and prepare themselves for the examination. In order to assure both the security of the examination itself, and to assure adequate preparation time for the candidates, if a candidate fails an examination during one of the regular examination periods, or at a special event occurring between one of those periods, he or she may retest at the next regularly-administered examination period.



RENEWING YOUR ADVANCED CERTIFICATION

As an ABO and/or NCLE Board Advanced Certified Optician and/or Contact Lens Technician, you must meet specified requirements to maintain and renew your certification every 3 years. The purpose of certification renewal is to provide evidence that you have continued to expand your professional knowledge to demonstrate evidence of continual competence in your certification specialty. It also allows you to continue to use your ABO-NCLE credentials.

The current renewal requirements are available at www.abo-ncle.org.

Helpful Hints:

- Visit the ABO-NCLE website on a regular basis to download the most current renewal requirements. Certification renewal criteria can change to reflect changes in practice or regulatory requirements.
- Develop a plan to show evidence of continual competence requirements for certification renewal.
- Provide ABO-NCLE with any changes to your contact information including a preferred email address.

Warning:

There is a 90 day grace period after you have expired. Please submit the complete application in a timely manner. When you renew—submitting a partial or incomplete renewal package will only delay approval of your certification renewal.

ADVANCED CERTIFICATION REINSTATEMENT

A lapsed or expired ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification may be reactivated. The procedure to reactivate your ABO-NCLE Advanced Certification depends upon the state in which you reside, the status of any state board licensing criteria, whether the state licensing board requires continuing education, and whether you have maintained the requisite continuing education throughout the time period of your expiration. Information explaining the reinstatement policies and procedures can be found on the ABO-NCLE website at www.abo-ncle.org, under the “reinstatement” tab. If you are eligible for reinstatement, you will need to pay the appropriate fees set forth in the policies and procedures. Applications received without the correct fees and supporting documentation are considered incomplete and will delay the reactivation process.

APPEALS

Candidates receiving a non-passing result may request that the examination results be verified. Candidates must request this result verification in writing, via e-mail to exams@abo-ncle.org. All requests for verification must be made within three (3) months of publication of the examination score.



DENIAL, SUSPENSION, AND REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION

Certification can be denied, suspended, or revoked for cause, including but not limited to the following:

- Failing to complete or provide evidence of completion of the requirements for initial certification, certification renewal, or reactivation of certification
- Failure to maintain the required continuing education
- Determination that initial certification or certification renewal was improperly granted or that certification was improperly reactivated
- Falsification or misstatement of information on any Certification-related document
- Providing false or misleading information
- Misrepresentation
- Cheating or assisting others to cheat
- Causing, creating, or participating in an examination irregularity
- Assisting others to wrongfully obtain initial Certification or to renew or reactivate Certification
- Failure to comply with the scope and standards of practice in an area in which ABO-NCLE Certification is held
- Conduct unbecoming of the Opticianry and Contact Lens Technology professions

REPORTING REVOCATION

- To Licensing Authorities: Suspension and revocation of certification is reported to licensing authorities.
- To Others: ABO-NCLE may report suspension or revocation of certification to employers, legal authorities, and other third parties, including but not limited to, law enforcement officers or agencies.



MISREPRESENTATION OF THE ABO-NCLE CREDENTIAL

If an individual is identified or recognized as misrepresenting themselves as Advanced Certified when in fact they are not, the Board of Directors of the ABO & NCLE has an obligation to take appropriate steps to protect the credential and will undertake all appropriate measures to assure such misrepresentation is dealt with promptly.

CANDIDATE AGREEMENT

By taking this examination, I hereby acknowledge that I understand the following:

1. That these examinations are the exclusive property of the American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc.
2. That these examinations and items contained therein are protected by federal copyright law. No part of these examinations may be copied, reproduced in part or whole by any means whatsoever, including memorization.
3. That the theft or attempted theft of any examination material is punishable as a felony.
4. That my participation in any irregularity occurring during this examination, such as giving or obtaining authorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or subsequent statistical analysis, may be sufficient cause to terminate my participation, invalidate the results of my examination or take other appropriate action.

Candidate agrees that by registering for any of the ABO and/or NCLE Examinations, the Candidate acknowledges receipt and review of this Advanced Certification Examination Handbook and agrees to be bound by its terms as of the date of registration and as of the date of examination.