



## 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](http://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. Or, if the candidate has a degree in Opticianry, they can test any time after passing the Basic exam by submitting proof/copy of their degree. 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 [exams@abo-ncle.org](mailto:exams@abo-ncle.org).

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

Candidate's whose advanced certification is still active are not eligible to register for/or take the advanced exam. Your certification must have expired beyond the grace period to be eligible to retake the advanced exam. Unless it's required by the state licensing board for licensing purposes, prior approval may be required.



## 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 Delivery	More than 300 Prometric Test Centers and ProProctor remote testing (more information below)
Number of times per year that exam is offered	Monthly, January-March, April-June, July-September, October-December
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, here is the <a href="#">form</a> to submit your accommodation request. More information on submitting the form can be found on page 7.
Website for exam information	<a href="http://www.abo-ncle.org">www.abo-ncle.org</a>
Exam results reported to candidates	Exam results are reported instantly as soon as the candidate has completed their exam. Candidates also receive an email within a couple of hours, after they have completed their exam, with their exam report. On occasion, ABO-NCLE is required to undergo “health checks” for the exams. Candidates will receive a preliminary indication of their exam results after submission. Official results will be released after appropriate analysis and review is completed by the exam company.
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, Prometric. 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 and ProProctor remote testing monthly – in January-March, April-June, July-September, October-December. Candidates must register on the ABO-NCLE website ([www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org)). The locations of the centers can be found on the Prometric website and information about ProProctor remote testing. 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 that confirmation. 24-48 hours after registering, you will be able to schedule your exam at one of over 300 Prometric testing centers or ProProctor remote testing 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 submit electronically and request the available accommodations. **Giving an accurate e-mail address and telephone number are mandatory.**
- C. **Payment.** The ABOAC and NCLAC exams cost \$225 each and are payable by credit card at the time the candidate registers online. It is an ABO-NCLE Board policy that the exam fees are **non-refundable**.
- D. **Transferring/Rescheduling 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. After scheduling an exam, if a candidate needs to reschedule that exam, the candidate must contact the ABO-NCLE office and pay a fee of \$75.00. Only the candidate can make scheduled 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 through this [link](#), or located on the ABO-NCLE website, regarding your request signed by your physician or a qualified healthcare professional. Special Accommodations Form must be submitted at the same time of the exam registration to allow appropriate time to review and add the required accommodations to the registration. A follow up email will be sent to the candidate, once it has been approved and different instructions on scheduling the exam with the accommodations.

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
<b>1. Optics</b>	<b>30%</b>
A. Optical Terminology	
B. Prescriptions	
C. Lens measurements, changes and their effects, and characteristics	
D. Optical properties of lens materials	
E. Lens designs	
F. Effects of lens materials and design on thickness, weight, and dispersion	
G. Components of lens powers	
H. Prismatic effects related to the design of a lens	
I. Ophthalmic Formulas and Concepts	
<b>2. Ocular Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, and Refraction</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>A. Structure of the Eye and Function</b>	
1. Anterior Adnexa	
2. Anterior Segment	
3. Posterior Segment	
<b>B. Pathology</b>	
1. Facial asymmetries	
2. Ocular pathologies	
3. Systemic pathologies with ocular complications	
<b>C. Assessment of visual function</b>	
1. Refractive status of the eye	
2. Visual acuity, contrast sensitivity, and color discrimination assessment	
3. Binocular function	
4. Accommodative function	



<b>3. Ophthalmic Products</b>	<b>10%</b>
A. Lenses and lens treatments	
B. Low Vision Aids	
C. Preassembled eyewear	
D. Lens options for various occupations and specific lifestyle activities	
<b>4. Instrumentation</b>	<b>9%</b>
A. Use of lens power measuring devices (e.g., focimeter, lensmeter)	
B. Use of Lens Measurement Devices	
C. Optical Instrumentation	
D. Lens measurement systems and conversions	
<b>5. Dispensary Protocols and Procedures</b>	<b>10%</b>
A. Optical History	
B. Fitting, Adjusting, Measuring, and Troubleshooting	
<b>6. Laws, Regulations, and Standards</b>	<b>8%</b>
A. Ophthalmic product performance and limitations	
B. Applicable national guidelines, laws, regulations, and standards	
C. Universal precautions (e.g., health and safety issues)	
D. Record keeping	
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>



## 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%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>



## EXAMINATION DETAILS

### How to Become Eligible

You must have registered and paid for your examination(s) with American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners prior to scheduling your testing appointment at a Prometric Testing Center. Please carefully review the information contained in your Confirmation Notice. If any of the information is incorrect or if the information has changed, please contact American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners at 1.800.296.1379, e-mail: [exams@abo-ncle.org](mailto:exams@abo-ncle.org)

There are now two ways to take your exam. Depending on the exam you are eligible to take, you have the option to take your exam either in a Prometric Testing Center or through a remotely proctored internet enabled location of your choice where you must provide a computer with a camera, microphone and an internet connection.

Your Eligibility ID is still required to schedule your exam.

### Schedule Your Exam

1. To schedule your exam at a Prometric Testing Center

You can schedule an examination appointment at any time online or by calling 1-800-977-3926 between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. (ET), Monday through Friday.

**Notice: The following exams must be taken in a Prometric Testing Center. These exams cannot currently be taken by remote proctor:**

- American Board of Opticianry Practical Exam ABOP
- National Contact Lens Examiners Practical Exam NCLEP

To schedule online:

2. Select **“Schedule my test”** from the options on the left-hand side under **“Actions”**.
3. Enter your eligibility number and the first 4 characters of your last name.
4. Select Test Center, Date & Time for your exam – This completes the scheduling process.
5. Select complete appointment.

**After scheduling your exam, please review and save your appointment confirmation email to ensure that you have the correct exam, date, time, and testing location.**



## To schedule a Remotely Proctored Exam

**Notice: The following exams can be taken in Prometric Testing Centers or by remote proctor:**

- National Opticianry Competency Exam Basic - NOCE Basic
- National Opticianry Competency Exam Basic - NOCE Basic (Spanish)
- National Opticianry Competency Exam Advanced - ABOAC
- Contact Lens Registry Exam Basic –CLRE Basic
- Contact Lens Registry Exam Basic – CLRE Basic (Spanish)
- Contact Lens Registry Exam Advanced -NCLAC

Confirm your computer’s compatibility to allow remote proctoring first. Remote exams are offered using Prometric’s ProProctor™ application online. For a remotely proctored exam, you must supply a computer which must have a camera, microphone and an internet connection and be able to install a lightweight app prior to the test event. You will be able to take the exam online while a Prometric proctor is overseeing the examination process remotely.

To confirm that your computer and network will allow testing through ProProctor™, [click here](#).

It is highly recommended that you view the ProProctor™ User Guide, [click here](#).

If at any time you attempt to launch your remotely proctored exam and run into any technical issues, please review this [FAQ form](#), to help resolve some of those issues. You can also chat with a technical support, that will be available when launching your remote exam.

### **If you select to take a remotely proctored exam:**

- If a bathroom break is taken, the timer continues to run, and your exam will be reviewed by ABO-NCLE and any suspicious activity may reverse your exam results.
- You may use a white board during a remotely proctored exam. You must supply your own white board, up to 3 dry erase marker(s) and eraser. The white board must be white in color and no larger than 8 ½ x 11 inches. You must erase all notes at the end of the exam. The Proctor will check to ensure all notes are erased.

***Notice: Before you schedule your exam by remote proctor, you must verify with your state licensing board that taking a remotely proctored exam has been approved for licensing purposes.***



### **What to Bring to the Testing Center**

You will be required to present one valid, government-issued photo ID with a signature (e.g., driver's license or passport). If you are testing outside of your country of citizenship, you must present a valid passport. If you are testing within your country of citizenship, you must present either a valid passport, driver's license, national ID or military ID. The identification document must be in Latin characters and contain your photograph and signature. All other personal items must be locked in a locker for test security purposes, so please limit what you bring to the testing center.

### **What to Expect on Exam Day**

We have enhanced the exam layout to improve navigation through the exam. We recommend you become familiar with the new layout prior to your exam date. A tutorial is now available to preview the navigation functions including the highlight feature, the strikeout feature, the calculator and marking questions for review. To access this tutorial, please visit [www.prometric.com/TakeSurpassTutorial](http://www.prometric.com/TakeSurpassTutorial)

### **Important Test Day Reminders**

Review your appointment confirmation email to confirm your appointment time.

Arrive at the testing center at least 30 minutes prior to your appointment time to allow time for check-in procedures. If you are late in arriving, you will not be allowed to test and will forfeit your exam fee.

Review driving directions. Allow sufficient travel time including traffic, parking, locating the test center, and checking in. Depending on the location of the testing facility, additional parking fees may apply. Prometric does not have the ability to validate parking.

Bring a valid, non-expired government-issued ID in Latin characters with a current photo and signature. The name on the identification must be the same as the name that appears on your exam application.

Consider bringing your own soft earplugs or use the test center-provided headphones.

No breaks are scheduled during the exam. Candidates may take a break as needed but may not leave the testing facility and will not be given extra time on the exam.

### **Reschedule/Cancel Policy**

If you wish to change your exam date or time, you will be charged a \$75 fee each time you change the date and time of your exam prior to your appointment. You must contact the ABO-NCLE office to pay the rescheduling fee over the phone.



## Scheduling Online

In order to schedule online, you must provide an e-mail address. Prometric will send you an e-mail confirming your appointment. If you do not have an e-mail address, please call the appropriate Regional Registration Center.

## THE DAY OF THE EXAM

### What to Bring or to use ProProctor

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

Exam results are reported instantly as soon as the candidate has completed their exam. Candidates also receive an email within a couple of hours, after they have completed their exam, with their exam report. On occasion, ABO-NCLE is required to undergo "health checks" for the exams. Candidates will receive a preliminary indication of their exam results after submission. Official results will be released after appropriate analysis and review is completed by the exam company. State licensing boards will receive rosters of Candidates from their state that have passed and not passed the exams 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.

To those candidates who pass the ABOAC (ABO) or NCLAC (NCLE) exam a certificate suitable for framing will be mailed, approximately 6-8 weeks from the close of the window the candidate tested in. The certificate will be printed with the name used at the time of registration.



## 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](http://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  
217 North Upper Street Suite 201  
Lexington, KY 40507

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, you can order replacement certificates online through the ABO-NCLE website and pay the appropriate fees.



## RETESTING

The ABOAC and NCLAC Advanced examinations are regularly administered during the windows of January-March, April-June, July-September, October-December. You may re-take the exam after waiting 14 days from the date you tested. You have three attempts to retake the exam. After your third unsuccessful attempt you must wait 90 days to be eligible to retake this exam.

## 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](http://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](http://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 with a \$75 fee. Candidates must request this result verification by logging into the ABO-NCLE website and submitting the appropriate form online, along with the fee. 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.***