



Frequently Asked Questions regarding the ICF Coach Knowledge Assessment (written test)

Q: Why did ICF begin requiring a Coach Knowledge Assessment (written test) for all applicants?

A: ICF believes it is vital for all ICF Credential coaches to demonstrate foundational knowledge of the ICF Core Competencies, ICF Code of Ethics, and ICF's Definition of Coaching. Having a standardized and scientifically constructed test delivered by a credentialing organization is a globally recognized way to help ensure the fairness and strength of the ICF Credential. The written test is intended as an assessment of knowledge. Actual application of this knowledge is assessed by the review of actual coaching sessions as conducted by ACTPs or via the ICF Portfolio Credential process.

Q: When / how does an applicant receive the Coach Knowledge Assessment?

A: Once an applicant's credential application is approved, ICF staff will contact the applicant via email with an invitation to take the written test. The invitation will contain log in and password information with instructions on how to access the online test portal. The invitation remains in effect for 60 days and an applicant can take the test at any time during this 60-day period.

Q: How long does an applicant have to take the Coach Knowledge Assessment?

A: Once logged in to the online test portal, after an applicant selects their preferred language for the test, they will be given three hours to complete the test. Most applicants complete the test in just over two hours.

Q: How did ICF determine three hours was sufficient to complete the test?

A: Research based on "best practices" regarding multiple-choice tests was consulted to establish a fair and reasonable amount of time for completing a test of this type and number of questions.

Q: Can you start the Coach Knowledge Assessment and save to complete at a later time?

A: No. Once an applicant starts the test, the test must be completed within the three hour time limit.

Q: What is the question format?

A: The questions are in multiple-choice format only, with each question having four possible responses.

Q: How many questions are on the Coach Knowledge Assessment?

A: The current version of the test has approximately 155 questions. This number will vary slightly over time as new questions are added and older questions are removed. Also, different language versions of the test may have slightly more or less questions.

Q: What do the test questions cover?

A: The test content covers five broad domains: setting the foundation, co-creating the relationship, communicating effectively, facilitating learning and results, and coaching foundations and knowledge base. All questions are based on the ICF Core Competencies, ICF Code of Ethics and ICF's Definition of Coaching. Questions are of varying levels of difficulty with some intended to assess awareness of a concept or skill while others may present a scenario that requires deeper understanding.

Q: Is the Coach Knowledge Assessment available in my language?

A: At present, the test is available in English, Spanish, French, and German. Other languages are currently under preparation with an estimated release in April of 2014.

Q: Who created the Coach Knowledge Assessment?

A: The test was developed by ICF using globally accepted practices for test creation, including a comprehensive role study of the knowledge required of coaches. All questions were written by experienced ICF coaches serving as subject matter experts and validated using an extensive review process.

Q: Are there sample questions available for review?

A: No. As new questions are added to the test, old questions may be released to the public.

Q: How should I prepare to take the test?

A: By completing an ICF ASCTH or ACTP, you will have received instruction that is in alignment with the ICF Core Competencies, ICF Code of Ethics and ICF's Definition of Coaching. Reviewing the training you receive from an ICF ACSTH or ACTP is the best way to prepare for the Coach Knowledge Assessment.

Q: How is an applicant notified of their results?

A: Once an applicant completes the Coach Knowledge Assessment, results are compiled and provided immediately to the applicant via email. In some instances, ICF will conduct an analysis of the test items and/or testing session and as a result there may be a delay in sending scores to applicants.

Q: What score is required in order to pass?

A: Currently the passing grade is 70 percent (70%), but may change over time as the ICF publishes new versions of the Coach Knowledge Assessment.

Q: Is feedback provided regarding the questions missed?

A: A score is provided for each of the five test domains along with an overall score. Feedback on incorrect individual test items is not provided at this time.

Q: What happens if an applicant doesn't pass the Coach Knowledge Assessment on their first attempt?

A: An applicant can elect to retake a different version of the test for a fee of \$75 USD.

Q: Once I pass the Coach Knowledge Assessment, will I have to take it again when I apply for another ICF Credential or renew my credential?

A: No. Only applicants applying for their first ICF Credential will be required to pass the written test. Tests for subsequent credentials or renewals are not required.

Q: If I encounter a problem during the Coach Knowledge Assessment whom should I contact?

A: ICF will not provide assistance regarding the content of the test, including answers to or clarification around test questions. For technical problems with the test platform, applicants should contact ICF by email. ICF business hours are 8:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. (New York). The ICF office is closed on weekends and US holidays throughout the year. If you experience any problems with the test, please notify ICF Operations Manager, Jackie Burton at jackie.burton@coachfederation.org.