



## Candidate FAQs



## FAQs for Candidates

**\*COVID-19 Update\*** To protect the health of PA school candidates, and to assist candidates and PA programs with meeting their admission timelines, we have added the option to take the PA-CAT exam through Prometric's secure live remote proctor, at no additional cost. Scheduling is open at [prometric.com/emc](https://prometric.com/emc), and remote testing is available.

This document has been updated to include information regarding procedures during the outbreak. For additional questions, contact [support@pa-cat.com](mailto:support@pa-cat.com).

### General

1. When should I take the PA-CAT Exam?

PA programs have two types of admissions processes, rolling and fixed. If you are applying to any program using rolling admissions, we recommend you take the PA-CAT as early in the cycle as you can. It can take up to 8 weeks for you and the programs to receive PA-CAT scores. Check with the PA programs you are applying to for their program-specific requirements and allow enough time for them to receive your official scores.

2. What is the cost of the exam?

The cost of the PA-CAT exam is \$228 for the 2020 application cycle. This fee includes both the exam fee and the test center or remote proctor fee. The cost to take the PA-CAT via Prometric's live proctor is also \$228.

3. How do I apply for special accommodations?

Please see the detailed special accommodations procedures in our [Resource](#) section.

4. Is financial assistance available?

Exam Master is developing a program to support economically disadvantaged candidates. No aspiring physician assistant candidate should be denied the opportunity to apply to PA school.

5. How often can I take the PA-CAT exam?

The PA-CAT can be taken every 6 weeks with a max of 3 times over the course of 12 months. Any candidates that do not adhere to this policy will have all scores invalidated and will be barred from taking the PA-CAT exam again in the future.

### Registration

6. How do I register for and schedule my exam?

To begin the registration process, visit [pa-cat.com](https://pa-cat.com) to submit your application for the PA-CAT exam. To schedule your test day and time with Prometric, (1) your registration must be complete, (2) you must be approved for the exam by Exam Master, and (3) you must have received the confirmation email with

your eligibility number. You will receive your eligibility confirmation email after your registration has been completed and payment has been received.

After you received your Eligibility Confirmation Number, visit [prometric.com/emc](https://prometric.com/emc) to schedule your exam date and time.

#### 7. Where and when is the PA-CAT Exam offered?

The PA-CAT exam is administered at Prometric testing centers across the US. To find testing centers near you, visit the Prometric website ([prometric.com/test-takers/search](https://prometric.com/test-takers/search)) and select the PA-CAT exam. Click the action buttons on the left and follow the instructions for finding a center and scheduling your exam. This information is available even if you are not ready to schedule the exam.

**\*\*COVID-19 Update\*\*** Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we have added the option to take the PA-CAT exam through Prometric's remote live proctor while closures and restrictions are in place. To confirm that your computer meets the minimum technical requirements, visit [prometric.com/emc](https://prometric.com/emc).

#### 8. Can I change or reschedule my exam date and/or center?

Yes, you can still make changes to your scheduled date and center directly with Prometric. All changes must be made at least 5 days before your examination appointment. There is a \$50 fee for changing an appointment 5 to 29 days before your examination appointment. There is no charge for changing more than 29 days before your examination appointment.

**\*\*COVID-19 Update\*\*** Please reach out to Prometric, if you need to cancel your appointment for details on their procedures. Cancellation fees may apply. Prometric can be reached at 1-800-688-5805.

#### How can I change my test center appointment to a remote proctored exam?

If you already scheduled your exam at a Prometric testing center you will be able to reschedule your test date to test remotely. To reschedule your exam, visit [prometric.com/emc](https://prometric.com/emc) to *cancel* your current test center appointment. This will reset your eligibility. After cancelling your original appointment, schedule your remote proctored appointment using your original Eligibility Number.

## Test Content & Preparation

#### 9. What does the PA-CAT exam cover?

The PA-CAT is designed to be a more focused examination of the prerequisite subjects consistent with the admission requirements of many PA programs. The five subjects required by most PA programs are Anatomy, Biology, General Chemistry, Physiology, and Statistics. Test items were developed and reviewed by subject matter experts and PA educators.

For more detail on what is covered on the PA-CAT, visit the official PA-CAT website: [pa-cat.com/about-the-pa-cat/](https://pa-cat.com/about-the-pa-cat/)

#### 10. How can I prep for the PA-CAT Exam?

Click [here](#) to access the study guide. We developed this guide to help you prepare for the PA-CAT exam and to help you establish regular study habits in the months leading up to your exam.

11. What resources do you offer to prepare for the PA-CAT Exam?

Exam Master offers free sample questions (included in the Study Guide), a free Practice Exam and eight Subject Exams, and a Review Course covering pre-requisite subject material. Visit our [Resource](#) page to access the Study Guide. Instructions on how to access the exams and Review Course are included in your registration confirmation email.

## Test Day

12. How long is the PA-CAT exam?

The PA-CAT consists of 240 multiple-choice questions. The allotted time for the exam is 4.5 hours, which includes mandatory pre-exam questions, a break between exam sections, and a post-exam survey.

13. What are the test center instructions?

After you scheduled your test date and time with Prometric, detailed test center instructions will be included in the confirmation email from Prometric.

14. What are permissible items that I can bring?

View [Prometric's list of permissible items](#).

## Test Score

15. How will the exam be scored?

PA-CAT scores are scaled, which involves statistical analysis and modeling. Scaled scores allow for accurate reporting of results across different versions of the exam and over time. Scaled scores account for variability of question difficulty and more accurately measure candidate performance compared to raw scores. The scoring range is between 200 and 800, similar to the PANCE. Scores are valid for 2 years.

16. When do I select the schools to receive my scores?

To select your schools, log into your PA-CAT portal at [pa-cat.com](#). Any schools selected will receive your PA-CAT score and your complete PA-CAT score history up to 2 years.

17. When and how will I receive my scores?

Your scores will be available within 8 weeks after you sit for your exam. You will receive an email notification when they are available in your score portal.

18. What is the passing score?

The PA-CAT does not have a passing score. Candidate scores are ranked and compared based on the results of all other exam takers. Quintiles are used to group candidates into five equal scoring ranges based on how they performed on the PA-CAT exam.

The PA-CAT reports two types of scores: a composite score, which is the score for the entire exam, and sub-scores for the three largest components of the exam (Anatomy and Physiology, Biology, and Chemistry).

19. What are quintile rankings?

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on test centers, initial candidate rankings are presented as quintiles rather than individual percentile rankings for better statistical validity.

Quintiles are used to group candidates into five equal scoring ranges based on how they performed on the exam. A candidate whose score is equal to or better than 80% of all the candidates who took the exam would be in the top quintile on the PA-CAT.

*For more detailed information on PA-CAT scoring, visit our [Resources](#) page to access the PA-CAT Score FAQ document.*