

**FAQs:  
SHRM-CP/SHRM SCP Certification Exams  
SHRM Learning System  
Instructor-Led Courses**



**[SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP Certification Exams](#)**

**How do I obtain a copy of the Certification Handbook?**

You can download the SHRM Certification Handbook from the front page of [shrmcertification.org](http://shrmcertification.org)

**What was the pass rate for the exams?**

The pass rate for the SHRM-CP exam was 69 percent.

The pass rate for the SHRM-SCP exam was 53 percent.

**If I have several years of HR work experience, can I have the option to test for the SHRM-CP exam or will I automatically have to test for the SHRM-SCP?**

You can take whichever exam that you meet eligibility requirements for. If you are eligible for both you may choose which exam you would prefer to sit for. For help selecting the right exam, [click here](#) or visit [shrmcertification.org](http://shrmcertification.org).

**What is the process for becoming SHRM-SCP certified if one is already SHRM-CP certified?**

HR professionals who meet the eligibility requirements for SHRM-SCP will need to sit for exam to earn the certification. However, a SHRM-CP credential holder is eligible to sit for the SHRM-SCP exam after successful completion of one three-year SHRM-CP recertification cycle.

**What is the difference between the SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP exam and the SPHR/PHR exam?**

The SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP exams are the only exams offered by SHRM and are based upon the SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge. In addition, the SHRM Exams are designed to test both knowledge and behavioral competencies.

**If we change our minds on which exam to take, can we do it before taking the exam?**

A candidate may request one exam level change **once** during an exam window. If the exam appointment has already been scheduled the request must be submitted at least ten days prior to that date. To request an exam level change, visit [shrmcertification.org/contact](http://shrmcertification.org/contact), specifying which exam you wish to take.

**If I register for winter testing and then feel like I am not ready can I reschedule for spring without paying other fees?**

You will not be able to reschedule your exam to another test window without incurring fees.

However, a candidate may reschedule an exam appointment, at no charge, provided the change is made in the same exam window and more than 30 days before the originally scheduled appointment.

**What are the typical timeframes for spring testing and courses?** The Spring 2016 exam window begins May 1 and ends July 15. Courses typically begin in late January or February but some refresher courses will start as late as April. Many of the course start dates are already listed on SHRM partner websites.

**When can I register for the next scheduled exam window for the spring?**

Candidates can currently register for the winter test window by visiting [shrmcertification.org/apply](http://shrmcertification.org/apply). You can register for the spring window beginning in January.

**Is there a SHRM-sponsored California specific exam?**

At this time SHRM does not have a California specific certification exam. SHRM does offer a seminar that is *California HR: Applying CA Law to Employment Practices*. To learn more, visit [shrm.org/seminars](http://shrm.org/seminars).

**What roles are considered HR roles?**

HR experience may be classified directly, as working in an HR role, or indirectly, by consulting, educating, or researching HR practices linked specifically to human resource management.

**Does a Business degree with a concentration in Human resources count as an HR related degree?**

Yes. HR-related degrees may include but are not limited to the following: BA or BS in HRM; BA or BS in Management with concentration in HR; BA or BS in Business Administration with concentration in HRM; Bachelor of Business Administration with emphasis in HR; Organizational Behavior; Industrial Relations; Organizational Development; Management and Leadership.

**Will participants be notified immediately at the test site if we pass or fail the exam?**

Beginning with the December 1, 2015—February 15, 2016 exam window, SHRM intends to make preliminary results available for candidates at the test center immediately upon completion of the exam.

**Is sitting for the SHRM-CP exam first and then going on to sit for the SHRM-SCP a common practice?**

Each candidate has a unique situation when approaching certification. There are some candidates who will start with the SHRM-CP and then move to the SHRM-SCP and others who will start with the SHRM-SCP based on their experience.

**Are tests given each week during the timeframe indicated?**

Yes, students can sign up for exam appointments throughout the test windows.

**Is the test computer-based or paper/pencil-based?**

The certification exams are computer-based and are administered from Prometric testing centers around the world.

**Is the offer still available for those who were previously certified to take the online tutorial to earn the SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP?**

Any professional who currently holds an HR generalist certification\* in good standing and obtained that certification by January 31, 2015, is eligible for SHRM's new certification—at no cost—by completing a brief online tutorial focusing on HR competencies. The online pathway expires December 31, 2015.

*\*Eligible HR generalist certification programs include PHR, SPHR, GPHR, HRBP, HRMP and IPMA-CP. PHR, SPHR, GPHR, HRBP, and HRMP are registered trademarks of the HR Certification Institute and are not SHRM certifications. SHRM has no rights to the "IPMA" trademark, and IPMA-CP is not a SHRM certification. Other HR generalist credentials may also qualify based on SHRM's review. Please e-mail [shrmcertification@shrm.org](mailto:shrmcertification@shrm.org) for more information.*

**How many recertification credits are needed every three (3) years?**

To recertify and maintain a SHRM-CP or SHRM-SCP credential, holders must earn 60 Professional Development Credits (PDCs) within a 3-year recertification period that ends on the last day of the credential holder's birth month (or retake the certification exam at the end of the 3-year recertification period.) For additional details download the *SHRM Recertification Requirements Handbook* at [shrmcertification.org/recertificationhandbook](http://shrmcertification.org/recertificationhandbook).

**If I am certified am I required to retest after 3 years or do you accept CE/PDC credits?**

Certified professionals have the option to earn 60 Professional Development Credits (PDCs) or retake the exam.

**What is the cost of the SHRM exams?**

The SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams are each \$300 for SHRM members and \$400 for nonmembers. (This price includes a \$50 nonrefundable processing fee.)

**Is the \$300 SHRM Member fee applicable for student members?**

Yes, student members are eligible for the member discount.

**Should someone obtain both SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP? Is it better to have both?**

As an HR professional you will only hold one of these credentials at a time. Determining whether to pursue the SHRM-CP or SHRM-SCP credential is an important decision involving multiple factors worthy of consideration. While education and years of experience are the criteria that determine eligibility, it is equally important to consider the nature of your HR role and responsibilities. Many professionals will start with the SHRM-CP and as their role progresses will move on to pursue the SHRM-SCP.

**Does SHRM-SCP certification demonstrate CP competency or does each certification stand alone?**

Each exam stands on its own to measure HR competencies. The SHRM-CP is designed for HR practitioners who are engaged primarily in an operational role—implementing policies, serving as the HR point of contact for staff and stakeholders, and/or performing day-to-day HR functions. SHRM-SCP certification is designed for HR professionals at a senior level who operate primarily in a strategic role—developing policies and strategies, overseeing the execution of HR operations, analyzing performance metrics, and/or contributing to the alignment of HR strategies to organizational goals.

**Do you have any websites that could provide sample testing questions to be used for practice?**

There are sample exam questions available in the certification handbook and within the SHRM Learning System. We are not aware of any additional sample questions that are currently available online.

**If I want to go to a senior level certification at a later time, would I have to retest?**

Yes, the only way you can earn a certification is to take the exam.

**Is the certification exam online?**

Yes, the SHRM certification exams are computer-based.

**Does 2,000 hours equate to 2 years of HR experience?**

Yes, 1,000 hours in an HR role in a calendar year equates to one year of experience. Therefore, 2,000 hours would equate to 2 years of HR experience if obtained in two calendar years.

**How long do you need to wait before taking the SHRM-SCP after you successfully complete the SHRM-CP?**

Professionals are able to sit for the SHRM-SCP exam once they meet eligibility requirements. If desired, a candidate may sit for both exams within the same test window.

**How are the 30 field test items chosen?**

Field test items are not scored and they are not used to measure examinees; instead, the items themselves are evaluated. An item field test is conducted to collect information about how well the items are likely to function operationally, before they are actually used to contribute to an examinee's score.

**Is the exam different for non US citizens?**

The functional area of U.S. Employment Law & Regulation is applicable only to examinees testing within the United States; examinees outside the U.S. will not be tested on it. The total number of questions on each exam is the same regardless of location.

**How can I take advantage of the SHRM-CP Membership rate?**

To receive discounted member pricing on the exam you need to include your member number when registering for the exam.

**Do I need to have passed the exam to be a SHRM member?**

SHRM membership is independent from SHRM certification. An HR professional can be a SHRM member without pursuing certification or earn certification without becoming a SHRM member. For more information on SHRM membership visit [shrm.org/join](http://shrm.org/join).

**How many times can you take the test?**

Candidates are able to retake the test as many times as they choose as long as they pay the necessary fees.

**If you don't pass the exam, how long do you have to retake the exam?**

HR professionals who do not pass the exam can retake the exam whenever they are ready to re-test. There is no time limit on when they need to retake it.

**Will we be able to see what we passed/missed once the exam has been taken?**

In order to protect the integrity of the testing process, copies of the exam will not be provided. Those who do not pass receive a score report which identifies at least two areas in which they have the greatest opportunity for improvement.

**[SHRM Learning System](#)**

**Are the same materials used to prepare for SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP?**

Yes, The SHRM Learning System provides preparation materials for both the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP exams in one system. The student will have access to unique content and questions for both exams and can select the path they choose. However, we do recommend that students utilize both the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP levels of the Learning System for additional practice—regardless of which exam they plan to take.

**Is the 2015 SHRM Learning System the only prep course available out there for the SHRM-CP exam?**

While we recommend using the SHRM Learning System as a preparation tool based on the comprehensive tools available, HR professionals can also review the SHRM Body of Competency and Knowledge to identify the key areas that will be tested on the exam and supplement their knowledge with additional resources on specific topics.

**My friend took her PHR class two years ago. She offered me the books she used to pass her PHR exam. Can I use the books she has to study for the SHRM-CP exam?**

No. The content for these two exams are different as they are based on unique bodies of knowledge. In addition, the SHRM-CP exam also covers 8 behavioral competencies that are not covered in other materials.

**Is it possible to purchase elements of the Learning System a la carte?**

No. The SHRM Learning System is sold as a complete system as it is designed to use a variety of tools to help prepare a student for success on the exam. Each of the components work together to address different learning styles and includes reinforcement learning activities to increase success.

**How many hours per week would you recommend putting into using the SHRM Learning System?**

The actual amount of time needed to study will vary based on your HR experience, reading speed, learning style, and comfort with studying and test taking. The hours per week would be based on the amount of time you have prior to your exam date. We generally encourage students to allow for a minimum of 60 hours of study. However, many students report spending between 60-100 total hours studying.

**Can you share the success rate for In Class vs Home Study graduates?**

With exam results recently released, the success rate for an instructor-led course versus self-study participants have not been calculated.

**Which tools help determine the time and hours needed to prepare for a self-study test?**

The SHRM Learning System includes a SmartStudy tool that allows students to create a detailed plan to study based on their current experience and knowledge as the time will vary based on those factors. The tool highlights the average time per week to study, identifies areas to work on and provides a checklist of learning activities to prioritize studying.

**Is October too late to start studying for the SHRM-CP if I were to take the exam in February?**

We generally recommend you study a minimum of 60 hours for your exam. You will have 4-5 months to prepare to take your exam which should provide you ample time to study if you commit the time. You can use the smartstudy tools in the SHRM Learning System to help you outline your study plan.

**How long after studying the program should I wait to take the test?**

We recommend that you ensure your study plan provides time for you to take the post-test and then close any identified knowledge gaps prior to your exam. In addition to that, you will want to balance the retention of information leading up to your exam. Therefore we do not recommend a large gap in time between studying and sitting for the exam. Ultimately, your schedule should account for this.

### **Are there any funding options available to non-US residents to offset the cost of the preparation?**

Save time and money in the long run by choosing a quality exam preparation program now. The SHRM Learning System provides all the content, tests, study tools, and expert resources you will need to prepare for the SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP exam in one convenient program — and it's more affordable than you may think!

- **Member discount:** Become a new SHRM member and **save**.
- **Quantity discount:** Gather a group of friends and co-workers who are looking for training. By ordering together in groups of 2 or more, you'll **save a minimum of \$70 per person**.
- **Tuition reimbursement:** While some companies will not reimburse for training materials, they may offer tuition reimbursement.
- **SHRM scholarships:** SHRM offers various scholarships for professional development and certification. For more information visit [www.shrm.org/about/awards/Pages/Scholarships.aspx](http://www.shrm.org/about/awards/Pages/Scholarships.aspx).

### **Can you retake the post-test multiple times?**

Yes, you may take the post-test in SHRM Learning System as many times as you choose. However, as you repeat the post-test you will see the same questions in a randomized order. As a reminder, the questions on the SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP menus vary so we encourage you to utilize the product in its entirety.

### **How much does the SHRM Learning System cost?**

A self-study version of the SHRM Learning System is \$695 for SHRM members and \$860 for non-members. There are volume discounts available if you are able to bring a few people together to purchase. If you are interested in taking an instructor-led course or seminar the cost of the Learning System will be included in the fees for the course which generally range from \$900- \$1,500.

### **What is the difference in cost for the different Learning Systems?**

There is only one SHRM Learning System available for purchase. A self-study version of the SHRM Learning System is \$695 for SHRM members and \$860 for non-members. If you are interested in taking an instructor-led course or seminar the cost of the Learning System will be included in the fees for the course which generally range from \$900- \$1,500.

### **Can you access your Learning System on more than one computer?**

Yes. While the SHRM Learning System is licensed for one user you are able to access your Learning System from multiple computers and devices to make studying convenient.

### **Is purchasing the SHRM Learning System via eBay or other online resource valid for study?**

The SHRM Learning System is licensed to an individual user and cannot be transferred. Therefore, if you find a program on eBay or other sources you will not have access to the online tools available with the system which would greatly affect your success.

### **The 2015 SHRM Learning System is available to the user for 18 months after purchase. If I purchase the Learning System in September 2015, would I have access to the updated material in the 2016 Learning System?**

As a 2015 SHRM Learning System purchaser you will indeed have access to the online portion of your Learning System for 18 months which should help you prepare through three test windows.

**If an individual participates in the instructor-led classroom, will the flashcards be part of their Learning System or are the flashcards available for online use only?**

Flashcards are available in the SHRM Learning System program for all participants regardless of whether or not they attend a class or not.

**How can you get a scholarship to help pay for the learning system as a member?**

SHRM offers various scholarships for professional development and certification. For more information visit [www.shrm.org/about/awards/Pages/Scholarships.aspx](http://www.shrm.org/about/awards/Pages/Scholarships.aspx).

**Instructor-Led Courses**

**Where can I find a list of colleges that support classroom learning for the SHRM exams?**

There are 250+ Education Partners that offer SHRM-CP and SHRM-SCP preparation courses around the world. To find a course near you visit [shrmcertification.org/learning/partners](http://shrmcertification.org/learning/partners).

**Can you provide some good online/interactive learning options? I will not be able to make it into a classroom.**

There are over 50 online course offerings available to meet your needs. To find a course visit [shrmcertification.org/learning/partners](http://shrmcertification.org/learning/partners) and look in the online section.

**I just picked up my learning tool packet for classroom training beginning in September. Is the classroom learning center to be used in conjunction with my home PC or will the Learning System be used exclusively in the classroom setting?**

Each course participant will have access to their own SHRM Learning System which can be used anytime on your own through online access. Most courses will encourage students to use the system both outside and inside the classroom to prepare and get the most of the system.

**Are there any payment plans for prep classes?**

Many Education Partners offer payment plans to help students pay for their courses. You will need to check with the individual partners to understand the programs they have available.

**Is the classroom option a separate charge from the SHRM Learning System? If so, what is the price?**

If you are interested in taking an instructor-led course or seminar the cost of the Learning System will be included in the fees for the course which generally range from \$900- \$1,500. You will need to check with the individual partners for specific pricing.

**Will the instructor led classroom setting also provide the SHRM Learning System?**

Yes. All SHRM Education Partners will provide the SHRM Learning System materials (both print and online components) to each student in their courses.

**I am signed up for in-classroom instruction 8/15 to 12/15. When would I sign up to take the exam during the winter exam window?**

The application for the winter window is currently open so you can sign up now. You will save money if you register before October 16, 2015 which is the regular application deadline. It is also best to schedule your exam right away to ensure you can get the location and time you would prefer.

**Do you think the 3 day seminar or the 12 week course is more effective?**

Both of these options are effective study methods. The choice comes down to your current knowledge and experience, preferences and learning styles. The 12 week course is designed to cover all the material on the exam week-by-week where the 3 day seminar is designed to provide a refresher course after you have already been exposed to the full content prior to sitting for the exam.

**Where can we find information for the blended learning?**

Many of the SHRM Education Partners offer blended learning options for their certification preparation courses. You will need to check with the Education Partner course you are interested in to find out about their blended learning options.

**Do I have to wait for the first day of class to obtain my class/learning materials?**

Many Education Partners wait until the first day of class to provide the learning materials to students so they can walk through the course outline and expectations in detail. If you would like to receive your materials prior to the class we would encourage you to call your course coordinator to request them.