Information and Tips for New PA Programs

Program Portal

NCCPA provides PA programs with a secure portal for entering the student data required to establish eligibility for the PANCE. Through this portal, PA program staff can also access registration reports for the PANCE, scores, certification status, and program performance reports.

Student eligibility information can be entered in the Program Portal at any time; however, students cannot apply for the PANCE until 90 days prior to their expected completion/graduation date as entered in the Program Portal.

Updates to the student information (i.e., change in expected graduation dates, correction in gender or date of birth, confirmation of graduation/completion of program) must be made through the Program Portal. However, these changes are not finalized and may not be reflected until NCCPA has accepted them through the system. This is conducted several times each day to ensure the portal information is up to date.

A Program Portal User Manual is available in the Resources section of the portal.

Expected Graduation Date (EGD)

An expected graduation date (EGD) must be provided for each graduation class and student. This date is determined by the program and may be the date the class will "walk", the date the degree is conferred, or the date the student has met all program/graduation requirements. In most cases, this will be the same for all students within a given class. However, it is possible to change the EGD for individual students should the need arise due to not meeting requirements when expected, a leave of absence, etc.

Changes to Expected Graduation Dates

NCCPA policy states that students cannot schedule an exam date earlier than seven (7) days after their expected—and ultimately, confirmed—graduation date. NCCPA must receive confirmation of graduation prior from the PA program through the portal prior to a student taking the PANCE. Therefore, ensuring that NCCPA has accurate information regarding a student's expected and confirmed graduation dates is important to their ability to take the PANCE.

If a student's expected graduation date (EGD) changes, update it through the Program Portal as soon as possible. If you are unsure of the exact date the student will graduate, enter an expected graduation date using your best estimation. Please keep in mind that since students are able to apply for the PANCE 90 days prior to their EGD, unless the change is made before this 90-day period, any changes to the EGD date may have serious implications for students' PANCE applications and scheduled exam dates, if applicable. Depending on where the students are in their PANCE application, they may be notified of a change in their testing window or the impact may be as serious as the student's application being withdrawn and testing dates cancelled.

Therefore, the exam timeframe during which they can take the exam will change with any EGD change. What occurs when a change in a student's EGD is made varies based on whether the student has applied for the PANCE and set an exam date. Please keep these potential impacts to your students in mind when making adjustments to the EGD.

Graduation/Completion Confirmations

Important Eligibility Info

Student Eligibility

When entering student data (i.e., name, email address, expected graduation date, date of birth, etc.), it is extremely important to ensure the accuracy of the information provided. Names should be entered exactly as they appear on the students' driver's licenses or passports. Students will receive a "Welcome" email to set up their account once NCCPA accepts their eligibility, and this process will not be completed if the email address provided is incorrect.

Expected Graduation Dates

If a student's expected graduation date changes, update it through the Program Portal as soon as possible. If you are unsure of the exact date the student will graduate, enter an expected graduation date using your best estimation.

Graduation/Completion Confirmations

A confirmed graduation/completion date may be provided to NCCPA 24 hours prior to the expected graduation date on record, and it must be received no later than 48 hours after the expected graduation date. Failure to provide the graduation/ completion confirmation will result in your students' PANCE applications being withdrawn by NCCPA.

Deletion of Student Eligibility

Do not delete a student's eligibility unless the student has been withdrawn or removed from the program. Delays in graduation should be handled as a change in expected graduation date. Deletion of eligibility for a graduation delay will result in issues once the student does graduate.

Graduation/completion of the PA Program is a much-anticipated accomplishment for both students and program staff. One of the most important tasks related to graduation and allowing the new members of the PA profession to become certified and begin contributing to the health and wellness of their future patients is the ability to take the PANCE.

NCCPA is committed to allowing students to apply for and set an exam date to take the PANCE prior to graduation to assist them with the ability to become certified and begin practicing medicine as soon as possible. This also improves the likelihood that they will obtain the test center and date of their choice. However, it is also important that we consistently apply NCCPA's policy to ensure that students do not take the PANCE prior to graduation/completion of their PA Program.

Students who apply for the PANCE prior to graduation will have a testing window that begins seven (7) days after their EGD. For this reason, if the confirmation of graduation/completion is not provided to NCCPA via the Program Portal within 48 hours of the EGD that was provided to NCCPA, students' PANCE applications will be withdrawn, and their exam date (if already scheduled) will be cancelled.

Exam Accommodations

NCCPA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations for examinees with documented physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activity. Accommodations may also be approved for examinees with documented qualifying medical conditions that may be temporary or are not otherwise covered by the ADA, including those that require the use of medical devices or medication during the examination. The request for accommodations is made during the PANCE application process.

Students must submit the appropriate supporting documentation of a disability or qualifying medical condition from a qualified medical professional. Documentation of prior approved accommodations in and of itself does not guarantee approval of the requested accommodation.

If the student has received examination accommodations at the PA Program, these accommodations should be documented on the *Certificate of Prior Accommodations* form and submitted to NCCPA.

The Policies and Procedures for Examination Accommodations provide detailed information regarding requesting accommodations and the required documentation and are available on NCCPA's web site under Resources, is provided during the application process, and is also available in the Program Portal Resources section.

Upcoming Changes

NCCPA provides practice exams for the PANCE to help students become acquainted with the testing platform and style of questions. Some programs prefer to purchase practice exams for their students to take either as a class or individually on their own. Currently, this is handled through a manual process. NCCPA is excited to announce that we are working on automating this process so that programs will be able to purchase practice exams for their students through the program portal. We will provide additional information on this as soon as it is available. In the interim, if you are interested in purchasing practice exams, please reach out to NCCPA's staff for additional information.

Resources Available from the Program Portal
A Program Portal User Manual is available under the Resources section of the Portal.

Videos:
- What to Expect about PANCE
- What to Expect on Test Day
- Information on Earning and Logging CME Activities
- What to expect about PANRE

Note: The exam lengths shown in the videos have changed and are listed on the What To Expect on Test Day page.

Presentation and Handouts:
- Special Accommodations Guidelines
- Code of Conduct
- NCCPA Practice Exams
- Name and ID Policy for Testing
- NCCPA Newsletters
- PA History Society
- nccPA Health Foundation

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