

# Comparison of the AANP and ANCC Exams

## Signing Up:

### AANP

- Create an online profile and apply for certification.
- Process can be started six months before the intended certification date.
- Typically, applications take between 3 and 6 weeks to process.
- Once approved, you will receive a notification including instructions on signing up for a test location, date and time.
- **The test must be taken within 120 days of receiving notification.**

### ANCC

- Complete an application online
- Verifies that you possess an RN license and have graduated from an accredited NP program.
- Once approved, you will receive an authorization to test notice along with instructions on signing up for a test date, time and location
- **Applicants have 90 days from receiving this letter to take the test.**

Testing slots can fill up quickly. So, complete the process in a timely manner so you can test at your preferred location and on your preferred date

## Where will I take my test?

The AANP and ANCC use Prometric testing centers. Check to see if the AANP or ANCC exam will be located most conveniently for you on the Prometric website because not all testing centers offer the same exams.

## What content is covered in the exam?

### AANP

- Breaks the exam down into four domains:
  - Assessment – 35%
  - Diagnosis – 25%
  - Plan – 22%
  - Evaluation – 18%

### ANCC

- Content is broken down into different areas for all specialties.
- Most common areas are:
  - Foundations for advanced practice
  - Professional practice
  - Independent practice.
- For each specialty the percentage of content associated with each area varies.
- Typically has a higher percentage of questions focused on professional issues

Both exams cover a wide range of topics including anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, health promotion and disease prevention, taking a health history, evaluation of symptoms, developing an evidence-based care plan, diagnostic testing, legal and ethical issues, cultural competence, epidemiology, healthcare economics, and healthcare management.

## How long is the test and how many questions does it contain?

### AANP

- Contains 150 questions
  - 15 being sample test items that are not counted towards the final exam score
- The exam is 3 hours long.
- On average, 50 seconds to answer each question

### ANCC

- 175 or 200 questions depending on specialty
  - 25 are sample test items that are not counted toward the total score
- 3.5 or 4 hours to take the test
- On average, 50 seconds to answer each question

15 minutes are allowed before the test to become oriented to the computer testing software. This software is straightforward and easy to use. Test-takers should, however spend at least a few minutes familiarizing themselves with how to operate the testing program correctly.

## How do I get my results?

### AANP

- Exam results are given in a pass/ fail format immediately upon completion of the test.
- Candidates who fail the exam will receive:
  - Official letter indicating strengths and weaknesses of knowledge areas covered on the test

### ANCC

- Test results are given in a pass/ fail format immediately upon completion of the test.
- In cases where the test is failed
  - Score report will be sent
  - Performance on each content area of the test

## What happens if I fail the exam?

### AANP

- May apply to retake the test.
- Must complete 15 hours of continuing education credit in the area or areas of weakness identified on the score report.
- Exam may not be taken more than two times in any calendar year.

### ANCC

- May apply to retake the test after 60 days of the last testing date.
- Exam cannot be taken more than three times in any 12 month period