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# CRC Certification Through SOCRA & ACRP: Why It Matters and How to Prepare

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- What is SOCRA and ACRP?
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# Certification Is Worth Considering Because:

- Demonstrates commitment to professional development
- Validates knowledge and experience
- Supports career advancement opportunities
- Enhances confidence & a sense of professional accomplishment
- Promotes overall research quality

# What Certified CRCs say…

- *'CRC certification is often required by research institutions,* ***demonstrates a validated level of clinical research knowledge and experience,*** *supports ongoing professional education,* ***strengthens credibility with prospective employers, and enhances a professional CV****, even if it does not directly lead to higher compensation'*

- *'Although I initially pursued it because it was an employer-supported expectation,* ***CRC certification helped me consolidate years of research experience, renewed professional engagement and confidence****, and served as a valuable credential that demonstrates expertise. It also* ***helps individuals without a four-year degree to meet qualification requirements through equivalent education and experience.****'*

# What Certified CRCs say…

- *'Certification played a key role in reclassifying my position to a professional level, resulting in* ***higher compensation, enhanced credibility, and greater respect within research teams****. Beyond certification, I served on the* ***SOCRA National Board, was a certification exam proctor, Annual Conference poster reviewer, and longtime Washington State Chapter co-chair.*** *These roles provided valuable opportunities for leadership, and collaboration with coordinators across the* ***U.S. and internationally****.'*

- *'I pursued certification to gain a* ***comprehensive understanding of the full scope of research coordination****; the certification strengthened my knowledge of regulatory requirements, protocol conduct, and patient safety, and remains a valuable way* ***to identify knowledge gaps and continue professional growth****.'*

# What is SOCRA?

**Society of Clinical Research Associates (SOCRA)** is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to advancing clinical research through education, certification, and professional networking.



# Certified Clinical Research Professional (CCRP)

- **SOCRA's CCRP® Certification Program** establishes a globally recognized standard for clinical research professionals based on knowledge, education, and experience.

- **Certified individuals earn the CCRP® credential**, demonstrating professional competence and recognition within the clinical research community.

# Eligibility Requirements

## Multiple Pathways:

**Category 1**:
- 2 years full-time (or 3,500 hours part-time) clinical research experience within the past 5 years.

**Category 2:**
- Hold a degree in "Clinical Research conducted with humans according to the principles of Good Clinical Practice GCP" from an Associate, Undergraduate, or Graduate Degree Program AND
- 1 year full-time (or 1,750 hours part-time) clinical research experience within the past 2 years

**Category 3:**
- Holds an Undergraduate or Graduate Certificate in Clinical Research conducted with humans in accordance with Good Clinical Practice (GCP), with a curriculum comprising at least 12 semester credit hours (or 144 credit hours) from an accredited college or university.
- Holds an Associate's or Bachelor's Degree in Science, Health Sciences, Pharmacy, or a related field.
- Has completed a minimum of one year of full-time experience (or 1,750 hours part-time) as a Clinical Research Professional within the past two years.

# Application Process and Exam Fees

The applicant must submit the following:

- **Certification Application**
- **Signed Ethics Statement**
- **Resume / CV**
- **Job Description**
- **Verification of Employment Letter**

**Fees:**

- Current Members (North America - USA, Canada, Mexico): $510
- Non-Members (North America - USA, Canada, Mexico): $565

# Exam Format

- **Total Questions:** 130 multiple-choice questions
- **Scored Questions:** 100 (30 are unscored beta questions)
- **Passing Score:** Correctly answer 71 of 100 scored questions

**Exam Duration:** 4 hours

**Computer Based Testing options:**
Testing Centers and Remote Proctoring is offered at Prometric testing centers throughout the world or through Home Proctoring

Detailed outline:
https://www.socra.org/assets/Certification/2501.1-Major-Content-Outline-241007.pdf?vid=3

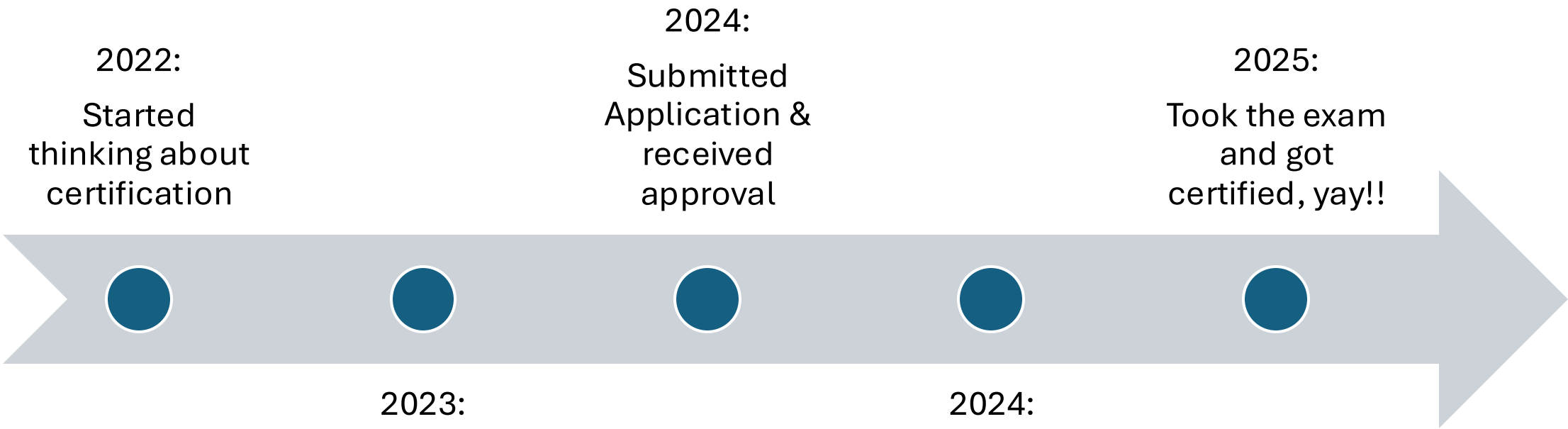
# Exam Outline

- **Research Study Start-Up:**
  Approximately **40** questions
  Regulatory Requirements of IRB/IEC, sponsors and investigators related duties/task related to study start up

- **Research Study Implementation:**
  Approximately **50** questions
  Regulatory Requirements of IRB/IEC, sponsors and investigators related duties/task related to conduct of the study

- **Research Study Closure:**
  Approximately **10** questions
  Conduct study closeout activities, submit closure reports, and archive research study records.

# My Certification Journey:



# How to prepare?

- **Start early**
- Connect with CRCs who are certified
- Review Sample questions on SOCRA website
- Industry sponsored study coordination experience
- Read the program reference manual thoroughly (I read it 3 times)
- Create a focused preparation plan based on the exam outline
- Follow a consistent study schedule
- Block dedicated weekly study times on your calendar
- Utilize commute/break time to review flashcards

# Recertification

- **Recertification period**: every 3 years

- **Requirement**:

1. Continuing Education (CE)
   Complete **45 hours/credits** of CE during the certification period

a. 22 CE must be related to Clinical Research regulations, policy, etc.
b. Remaining CE may relate to your Therapeutic or Professional Area

2. Complete a self-administered **Continuing Competence Learning Module**.

3. Submit recertification application. Fees $350.

# Helpful Resources:

- Candidate Handbook- Version Date: 5/14/2026
- Program reference manual – A Complimentary electronic copy.
- Quizlet and Brainscape Free Flashcards
- SOCRA CCRP Practice Exam Quiz - Quiz & Trivia

# ACRP Certification

**Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP)** is a professional organization that provides education, certification, and resources for clinical research personnel.

# Certification Types

**CCRC**: Clinical Research Coordinator
**CCRA**: Clinical Research Associate
**CPI**: Principal Investigator
**ACRP-CP**: Certified Professional
**ACRP-PM**: Project Manager
**ACRP-MDP**: Medical Device Professional

# Application Process

**Eligibility**

- 3,000 hours of verifiable humans subjects work experience
- 1,500 work experience + waiver
  - Education program
  - ACRP certification

**Online Application**

- Detailed resume
- Job description and/or education transcript
- Attestation statement
- Pay application & exam fees

**Schedule Exam**

- In-person testing center
- Remote proctor

*Source: ACRP Certification Handbook*

# Exam Format

**Questions**: 125 multiple-choice, recall and decision-making scenarios

**Time limit**: 3 hours

**Passing score**: 600

# Exam Content

Scientific Concepts and Research Design – **8**
Ethical and Participant Safety Considerations – **19**
Product Development and Regulation - **13**
Clinical Trial Operations (GCPs) - **23**
Study and Site Management – **22**
Data Management and Informatics – **15**

*Source: ACRP CCRC Exam Content Outline*

# Exam Prep

## Review ACRP Handbook

- Exam details and expectations

## Create Study Plan

- 8-12 weeks minimum before exam date
- Daily or weekly plans
- Block your calendar

## Identify Knowledge Gaps

- ACRP Exam Content Outline
- ACRP Gap Analysis Tools

## Study Resources

- ICH Guidelines & Declaration of Helsinki
- Educational webinars
- Retake required trainings

## Test Knowledge

- Practice Exams
- Notecards

# Certification Maintenance

**Recertification period**: every 2 years

**Requirement**: 24 activity points or retake exam

1. 12 continuing education points
2. 12 continuing involvement and/or continuing education points

**Fee:** $225-325

*Source: ACRP Maintenance of Certification Handbook*

# Helpful Resources:

- ACRP Certification Handbook
- ACRP Exam Content Outline
- ACRP Practice Exam & Gap Analysis Tools
- ICH Guidelines E6, E2A, E8, E9, E11
- The Declaration of Helsinki
- Online courses/webinars: ITHS TREE, CITI, WCG Clinical

# Comparison

| | ACRP | SOCRA |
|---|---|---|
| **Certification Types** | Specialized role-based certifications | Single, universal certification |
| **Certification Scope** | Role-focused and based on ICH guidelines | Broad-focus and based on ICH guidelines and federal regulation |
| **Certification Fees** | $135 application fee<br>$300-465 exam fee | $510-565 |
| **Maintenance** | Every 2 years | Every 3 years |
| **Recertification Fees** | $225-325 | $350 |
| **Membership Fees** | $160/year | $75/year (free with certification) |

# Cost & Time Considerations

- Department/organization buy-in
- Discounted rates
- Scholarships
- Free resources for exam prep and continuing education credits

# Getting Started:

1. Compare certifications
2. Engage with leadership about financing & support
3. Create realistic timeline and goals

# QUESTIONS?

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