

HRCI Credits — Earn recertification with approved trainings

Earning certification from the HR Certification Institute (HRCI) demonstrates a level of competence and commitment that employers find attractive. The designation adds credibility to one's reputation in the industry and can open doors to higher titles and responsibilities. Some job descriptions may even include certifications as a prerequisite.

But while holding HRCI certification is a mark of achievement in human resources, do not view it as a one-and-done endeavor. For HR professionals to keep their distinction, they must commit to ongoing professional development.

HRCI certification is valid for three years after initially passing the test. To maintain the credential, the holder must earn a specified number of recertification credits over that three-year time span or retake the exam. (The majority of people choose the first option.) Subsequently, certificants must continue to recertify every three years throughout their career.

The necessary number of HRCI recertification credits

Earning recertification credits does not happen overnight. Thus, it pays for HR professionals to know from the get-go how many credits they will need in each three-year cycle. This information allows ample time to plan out a course of action.

The following HRCI certifications require 45 HR recertification credits:

- aPHR, Associate Professional in Human Resources
- aPHRi, Associate Professional in Human Resources – International

These certifications require 60 recertification credits, divided as noted:

- PHR, Professional in Human Resources (60 HR credits)
- PHRi, Professional in Human Resources — International (60 HR credits)
- SPHR, Senior Professional in Human Resources (45 HR credits, 15 business credits)
- SPHRi, Senior Professional in Human Resources — International (45 HR credits, 15 business credits)

- PHRca, Professional in Human Resources — California (45 HR credits, 15 California credits)
- GPHR, Global Professional in Human Resources (45 HR credits, 15 global recertification credits)

Let's take an in-depth look at the various categories of credits and how HR professionals can obtain them.

HR credits

HR knowledge is at the heart of all HRCI certifications. Thus, everyone seeking to recertify needs to focus on HR-related continuing education and achievement. HRCI designed its HR credit requirement to expand skill sets and keep people up-to-date on industry practices.

Many ways exist to earn recertification hours. According to [HRCI's Recertification Policies and Procedures Handbook](#), "In general, if an activity can be tied to the specific HRCI Exam Content Outline associated with your designation and adds to a professional's knowledge of the HR field, it will be awarded recertification credit. When you submit your recertification application, you must show how the activities are all HR-related."

HR credits fall into two basic categories, Professional Development and Professional Achievement.

The first includes things such as pre-approved programs, continuing education, and self-directed learning. Delivery methods take various forms, such as on-demand webinars, podcasts, virtual conferences, seminars, on-site or online courses, and independent study.

The second involves receiving credit for professional activity, such as membership in an industry organization, presenting on a webcast, completing a special project at work, conducting research, or publishing. Note that sometimes limits exist on how many credits may be earned in a given manner.

In 2021, HRCI began requiring an [ethics credit](#) as one of the 45 HR credits. As explained on the HRCI website, "This requirement ensures our certificants remain aware of crucial ethical practices and behaviors in the workplace. There is NOT a specific 'Ethics Credit' designation to select from when entering the activity. Simply include one ethics-themed activity in your recertification plan and check the required 'ethics affirmation box' to submit your recertification application."

Business credits

Renewing an SPHR or SPHRi involves earning 15 business credits in addition to the 45 HR credits. Business credits help these higher-level HR professionals enhance their knowledge of their organization's operations and its industry.

Activities that qualify for business credits go beyond basic HR responsibilities. Rather, they are ones that require learning about a different business function or entering into a partnership with another department. A better understanding of, say, finance or marketing helps HR to impact the company's overall growth, development, and vision.

When considering the types of activities that meet the objectives of the business credit requirement, HRCI recommends referring back to the relevant exam: The "Leadership and Strategy" area of the SPHR Exam Content Outline or the "Business Leadership" functional area of the SPHRi Exam Content Outline. This [chart of activities that qualify for business credit](#) also may prove useful. It contains the categories "on the job," "continuing education," "training/instruction," and "research and publishing" with examples of approved recertification activities and what participants stand to gain from them.

California credits

California employers value HR professionals holding a PHRca. This certification shows competency regarding the state's unique laws, regulations, and HR management practices. The 15 special California credits required for recertification ensure continued understanding and practicing of California-specific business operations to maximize employee performance and organizational success.

Like the PHRca exam itself, opportunities to earn California credits deal with such topics as compensation, employment lifecycle and employment relations, leaves of absence and benefits, health and safety, workers' compensation, compliance, and risk management. A good way to identify relevant recertification activities is by searching the [HRCI database](#) and filtering for California credits.

Global credits

Holding the GPHR credential demonstrates expertise of multinational HR responsibilities. Keeping up with advancements and changes in the ever-growing global marketplace, however, involves obtaining 15 global credits during each three-year recertification period (in addition to 45 HR credits).

According to HRCI's Recertification Policies and Procedures Handbook, the specialized global credits require a GPHR certificant to demonstrate:

- Understanding of U.S. Employment Law and regulations and how to integrate with the employment law, culture, and environment impacting employees in other countries.
- Practical experience in managing cross-border employees while supporting organizational growth through balancing and prioritizing business operations between these separate cultural/geographic environments.
- Experiential learning focused on global HR strategies, policies, global staffing and talent development, compensation and benefits, and risk mitigation.

Further information

Maintaining HRCI certification is an important, ongoing commitment. HRCI's website, <http://www.hrci.org>, provides a significant amount of information regarding recertification.

Four of the sections HR professionals may find most useful when determining how they will obtain their necessary credits include:

- The HRCI Learning Center. The [catalog](#) shows a plethora of opportunities. Search by topic or credit type, or browse the full catalog and see what sparks your interest.
- A search engine of [approved providers](#). These are organizations whose continuing education activities HRCI already has reviewed and pre-approved.
- A search engine of [upcoming activities](#) such as webinars, workshops, and seminars. Use filters to target specific locations, type of opportunity, number of credit hours, and type of credit (HR, business, California, or global).
- [HRCI's Recertification Policies and Procedures Handbook](#). Consider the most current edition of this brief manual required reading whether you are recertifying for the first time or the tenth!

Business Management Daily webinars

One easy way to keep up with your HRCI credits is through the wide variety of [webinars and recorded trainings](#) offered by Business Management Daily. Here you can find training on a wide variety of HR related topics to fit your needs and continue to accrue HRCI credits!