

# HRCI Recertification: 4 steps to maintaining your certification

You worked hard to pass a certification exam given by the HR Certification Institute (HRCI). Now, remain eligible to continue using that mark of distinction by paying attention to the recertification process.

Whether you are an aPHR relatively new to the human resources industry or a seasoned SPHR, HRCI requires ongoing continuing education and professional development beyond the initial certification. Recertification activities expand competency, keep HR professionals abreast of best practices, and demonstrate commitment.

Since HRCI recertification does take time, it pays to plan ahead. Here, we break the process down into four vital components.

## 1. Determine the date by which you must recertify, and pick your recertification method

HRCI certification is valid for three years after initially passing the test.

**To maintain the credential, the holder must do one of two things:**

- Retake the certification exam before the end of that three-year time span.
- Earn a specified number of recertification credits during that three-year period.

The majority of people choose the second option. Some like to avoid the stress of test-taking. Others find it convenient that they can pursue recertification credit hours a little at a time over the stretch of three years. Many find continuous learning stimulating and helpful to their careers.

Be aware that recertification is not a one-time thing. Certificants continue to recertify every three years throughout their career. Smart HR professionals make a point of always knowing their next recertification cycle renewal date so as not to be caught unaware.

## 2. Know the necessary amount of recertification credits

HR knowledge is the focal point of all HRCI certifications. Thus, all people choosing to recertify by earning HRCI recertification credits must complete a specified number of what are known as HR credits. Some certifications demand other types of credits in addition to the HR credits.

**The following breaks down requirements for each of the eight HRCI certifications:**

- aPHR (Associate Professional in Human Resources), 45 HR recertification credits
- aPHRi (Associate Professional in Human Resources – International), 45 HR recertification credits
- PHR (Professional in Human Resources), 60 HR recertification credits
- PHRi (Professional in Human Resources – International), 60 HR recertification credits
- SPHR (Senior Professional in Human Resources), 45 HR recertification credits, 15 business credits
- SPHRi (Senior Professional in Human Resources — International), 45 HR recertification credits, 15 business credits
- PHRca (Professional in Human Resources — California), 45 HR recertification credits, 15 California credits
- GPHR (Global Professional in Human Resources), 45 HR recertification credits, 15 global credits

## **Business credits**

Business credits go beyond basic HR-related responsibilities. They help senior-level HR professionals enhance their knowledge of their organization's industry and operations. Business credits involve learning about different business functions or entering into partnerships with other departments. A better understanding of, say, finance or marketing helps HR to impact the company's overall growth, development, and vision.

## **California credits**

California credits ensure continued understanding of California-specific business operations. They develop competency regarding that state's unique laws, regulations, and HR management practices.

## **Global credits**

Global credits help HR professionals with multinational HR responsibilities keep up with advancements and changes in the ever-growing global marketplace. Global credits aid in things such as understanding U.S. employment law and how to integrate it with the employment law, culture, and environment impacting employees in other countries.

## **Ethics requirement**

In 2021, HRCI began implementing an ethics requirement for all candidates undergoing recertification. It is not a special type of credit like business credit, California credit, or global credit. Rather, it is simply a required subject matter for one of the 45/60 HR credits.

As explained on <http://www.hrci.org>, "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."

### 3. Explore recertification credit options

A top reason many HR professionals prefer earning HRCI recertification credits over retaking the certification exam is that so many ways exist to earn these hours. Individuals can tailor their HR recertification plan to meet their interests and contribute to their career goals.

HR credits fall into two basic categories:

#### Professional Development

Credits earned in this manner add to a learner's knowledge base. Teaching methods range from on-site seminars and conferences to e-learning opportunities such as webinars and online courses.

#### Professional Achievement

Receiving credit in this manner involves doing HR-related activities, such as presenting on a webcast, completing a special project at work, conducting research, or publishing. You even can earn up to 12 credits for holding HR membership in industry associations.

Numerous recertification resources exist to find valid ways to gain credits. The HRCI Learning Center's [catalog](#) is a good place to start. It presents a variety of opportunities, and you can search by topic of interest or credit type (HR, business, global, or California).

HRCI also operates a search engine of [upcoming activities](#) such as webcasts and on-site conferences. Use filters to target specific locations, type of opportunity, number of credit hours, and type of credit.

Another search engine alerts certificants to [approved providers](#). These are third-party organizations whose continuing education activities HRCI already has reviewed and pre-approved.

But what about getting proper credit for independent study or work-based achievements? Be ready to show their relevance. 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."

This last line is very important. Personal development courses or activities are NOT eligible for recertification credit. Learning about, say, stress reduction or time management may be interesting or useful, but it will not be accepted toward recertification. Keep the relevance to human resources top of mind.

### 4. Submit your recertification application

A great way to keep track of progress toward recertification is by recording credits as you earn them. All HRCI credential holders possess an online profile on the [HRCI website](#), which proves a convenient place to store this information. Uploading relevant supporting documentation, such as registration confirmations or certificates of attendance, helps should you be randomly selected for a [recertification audit](#).

When you have completed the number of recertification credits necessary to your specific certification, you can submit your [recertification application](#). Take a look at the associated [fees and deadlines](#) beforehand. Then, you will have everything at the ready when you sit down to present evidence of your on-going commitment to the human resources industry!