

What is the “early testing” option for RHIT and RHIA students?

Beginning October 6th 2008, students in a CAHIIM-accredited HIA or HIT program enrolled in their final term of study are now eligible to apply and take their respective certification exam early.

Eligible students include the following:

- (1) Students currently enrolled in their last term of study.
- (2) Students that have completed their course work but have not graduated yet.
- (3) Graduates that are currently waiting for their official transcripts.

What does “final term of study” mean?

“Final term of study” means that students will graduate at the end of their current term.¹ For example:

- Fall – students that are completing coursework in anticipation of receiving their degree in December.
- Spring – students that are completing coursework in anticipation of receiving their degree in May/June, at the end of the current term
- Summer – students that are completing coursework in anticipation of receiving their degree in August, at the end of the current term

As a student, why should I apply for the early testing option?

Early testing gives candidates a significant competitive advantage immediately upon graduation. Specifically, an AHIMA credential distinguishes you from other individuals in the employment pool that may be vying for the same or similar job positions. Additionally, early testing allows the candidate to sit for the exam near the end of his/her education. This allows the candidate to take the exam when he/she is best prepared. The earlier a student tests after graduation, the better they are likely to perform on their respective exam.

How can I apply?

Candidates must apply using two forms. The first form is the standard exam application form used for the RHIA and RHIT. The second form is the early testing verification form. Early testing verification forms must be signed by the current school Program Director. Please send the application and verification form together. The exam application and early testing verification form can be found under the “Exam Information” tab of the RHIA or RHIT exam links found at <http://www.ahima.org/certification/credentials.aspx>

I am a Program Director for a CAHIIM-accredited program. What do I need to do?

You will need to provide each eligible candidate with a signed verification form that confirms the student is in the last term of study and is eligible to apply for the early testing option. This form will serve as a temporary placeholder for the official transcript. Separate forms will need to be signed and dated by the Program Director for each student. **Program directors reserve the right not to endorse their students for early testing.**

The exam application and early testing verification form can be found under the “Exam Information” tab of the RHIA or RHIT exam links found at <http://www.ahima.org/certification/credentials.aspx>

What are the eligibility requirements and initial standards for certification for RHIA certification?

- I. Academic Prerequisites*
Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) applicants must meet one (1) of the following three (3) eligibility requirements:
 1. Successfully complete the academic requirements, at the baccalaureate level, of a health information management (HIM) program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).

¹ Note: The student must satisfy all general education requirements in addition to being in his/her final term of study.

2. Graduate from an HIM program approved by a foreign association with which AHIMA has a reciprocity agreement.
3. Students interested in obtaining a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate, Certificate of Completion, or Transfer of Credits information, must contact the CAHIIM-accredited program in which they wish to enroll. You may visit www.cahiim.org to access a list of CAHIIM accredited programs.

****NOTE: The academic prerequisites are confirmed when the applicant submits an official transcript from their academic institution that validates any of the eligibility requirements listed above. Program directors reserve the right not to endorse their students for early testing.***

II. Competency Validation

Applicants must **PASS** the RHIA certification exam PRIOR to becoming an RHIA Certified Professional in good standing.

What are the eligibility requirements and initial standards for certification for RHIT certification?

I. Academic Prerequisites*

Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) applicants must meet one (1) of the following two (2) eligibility requirements:

1. Successfully complete the academic requirements, at the Associate level, of a health information management (HIM) program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM).
2. Graduate from an HIM program approved by a foreign association with which AHIMA has a reciprocity agreement.

****NOTE: The academic prerequisites are confirmed when the applicant submits an official transcript from their academic institution that validates any of the eligibility requirements listed above. Program directors reserve the right not to endorse their students for early testing.***

II. Competency Validation

Applicants must **PASS** the RHIT certification exam PRIOR to becoming a RHIT Certified Professional in good standing.

Can I apply online?

No. Online applications are currently NOT available for the early testing option. Interested candidates must apply with a printed application, described above.

Can I apply over the phone?

No. AHIMA does not allow certification exam registration over the phone in any circumstance.

What are the exam fees?

Current exam fee pricing can be found at. <https://secure.ahima.org/certification/exams/>

How long do I have to schedule to sit for my exam?

You will have a four-month eligibility window to schedule and take your exam. Your eligibility window will be printed on your ATT (Authorization to Test) letter. After you have registered for your exam, the ATT letter will take 1-2 weeks to arrive by mail.

What If I can't take the exam during the four-month window of eligibility?

If a candidate is not able to test within their four-month eligibility window, Candidates that are unable to test within the four-month eligibility window can be referred to the following link:

<http://www.ahima.org/certification/scheduling.asp#fees>

How long do I have to wait before retaking the exam?

There is a 91 day waiting period between exams. Candidates that wish to retake the exam are required to re-register. Effective October 1, 2009 the waiting period for the RHIA and RHIT will change to 45 days.

What will I receive if I pass the exam?

When your exam is complete, you will receive a score report at the test site. The score report will contain your passing score with a congratulatory message.

OR

You may receive a test completion notice rather than a score report if immediate scoring is not available for your exam. Please consult AHIMA's Web site for current information on immediate scoring for your exam.

What will I receive if I fail the exam?

A score report will be printed after the exam is completed that will show how you scored on each domain.

OR

You may receive a test completion notice rather than a score report if immediate scoring is not available for your examination. Please consult AHIMA's Web site for current information on immediate scoring for your examination.

When do I actually become certified?

Early testing candidates will be awarded the RHIA/RHIT credential once they have met the following standards for Initial Certification.

- A. An official transcript has been submitted to AHIMA showing that the candidate successfully completed the academic requirements at the Baccalaureate/Associate degree level of the respective Health Information Management (HIM) program accredited by the Commission of Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM), **AND**
- B. The RHIA/RHIT certification examination has been successfully completed.

When both requirements have been fulfilled, your name will be updated on the AHIMA website under recently credentialed individuals and your certificate will be requested.

Once I fulfill all the requirements for eligibility and the initial standards of certification, how long will I need to wait until I receive my certificate designating me as either a RHIA or RHIT Certified Professional?

After all standards of initial certification have been submitted and verified by AHIMA staff, a certificate will be mailed within 4 months. (Note: Certificates may take longer during exam beta periods.)

Where can I find additional information on the early testing option for RHIA and RHIT students?

Visit the Certification website at: <http://www.ahima.org/certification/credentials.aspx> You may also e-mail info@AHIMA.org