

HOW DO I APPLY FOR THE OCCUPATIONAL COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT (OCA) EXAMINATION?

The following information will assist you in completing the application.

Purpose

The Pennsylvania State University has been authorized by the Pennsylvania State Department of Education to administer the Occupational Competency Assessment evaluation program in the Central region of the commonwealth to verify minimum occupational competency required for vocational instructor certification.

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum qualifications for admission to the program are high school graduation or GED, plus two years or the equivalent, of full-time wage earning work experience beyond a two-year learning period (vocational school or post secondary vocational training). The occupation for which competency is verified must be one for which a vocational course has been approved by the State Department of Education.

Fee

The fee for this program is \$350 for the paper/pencil/performance exam, and \$350 for committee/panel jury evaluations (some examples: all computer areas, emergency medical technicians, protective services, law enforcement, highway design/construction, to name a few). The fee for a credential review (health and dental areas, cosmetologists, etc.) is \$100. If your application is not accepted, the full amount will be refunded; if the application is accepted, the full amount is non-refundable.

Steps to Admission

Each of the following steps must be completed before an applicant will be admitted to the program.

Both pages of the application must be completed. The second page of the application must be notarized and both pages, along with any supporting documentation you have available, should be mailed to the Coordinator of Occupational Competency Assessment, 301 Keller Building, University Park, PA, 16802.

Education must be verified with transcripts, diplomas and certificates.

Occupational experience must be verified in one of two ways. We will accept a letter written on company letterhead, or you may use the Verification of Work Experience Form DEBE 1619. The work experience verifications may be mailed directly from the employer to the address above, or you may enclose the letter(s) with your application packet. Dates of employment, salary received, hours worked per week, duties and

responsibilities, and reason for leaving should be indicated in the letter. Letters should be signed by an official of the firm, and should include the agent's official title.

Verification of self-employment should include a statement by the candidate, and should indicate the nature and extent of the duties and responsibilities you performed. You are also required to provide a total of six letters of reference from reliable sources, (ideally, four customers and two suppliers), who will be willing and able to verify the period of your self-employment. Do not provide names and addresses of your references to the test center; it is your responsibility to make request these letters be written on your behalf.

Examinations and Evaluation

After the applicant has successfully completed the required steps and has been admitted to the program, you will be informed as to the date, time and location(s) that the written and practical examinations will be offered. Examinations are scheduled during the spring, summer and fall semester. The results of the evaluation, either pass or fail, will be forwarded to the candidate as quickly as possible after they are received at Penn State from the National Occupational Competency Testing (NOCTI) center
< <http://www.nocti.org> >.

A review of the NOCTI web site provides valuable information on the national examinations used in Pennsylvania. At the web site, click on: **Assessment Lists, Teacher**. At this site you will find a description of NOCTI and its mission statement. You may also view or print a brief summary (scope) of the specific NOCTI exam you are scheduling. It is important that you know that not all exams available through NOCTI are used recognized or used in Pennsylvania. If you need clarification on a specific examination please call (814) 863-0804.