

Your Guide to aPHR/PHR/SPHR and SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP Certification

If you are an HR professional interested in obtaining HR certification, you have options to consider. Both the HR Certification Institute (HRCI) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) are certifying bodies for professional HR certification. The exams differ in both requirements and in content. The following chart highlights a summary of each certification option.

CERTIFICATION EQUIVALENTS

aPHR = N/A

PHR=SHRM-CP

SPHR or GPHR = SHRM-SCP

EXAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Certification/ Credential	Less than Bachelor's Degree		Bachelor's Degree		Master's Degree	
aPHR	High school diploma or global equivalent required. No HR experience necessary.		N/A		N/A	
PHR	A minimum of 4 years of experience in a professional-level HR position		A minimum of 2 years of experience in a professional-level HR position		A minimum of 1 year of experience in a professional-level HR position	
SPHR	A minimum of 7 years of experience in a professional-level HR position		A minimum of 5 years of experience in a professional-level HR position		A minimum of 4 years of experience in a professional-level HR position	
	HR-Related Program	Non-HR Program	HR-Related Degree	Non-HR Degree	HR-Related Degree	Non-HR Degree
SHRM-CP	3 years in HR role	4 years in HR role	1 year in HR role	2 years in HR role	Currently in HR role	1 year in HR role
SHRM-SCP	6 years in HR role	7 years in HR role	4 years in HR role	5 years in HR role	3 years in HR role	4 years in HR role

BODY OF COMPETENCY/KNOWLEDGE COMPARISON

aPHR	PHR	SPHR	SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP
Talent Acquisition	Talent planning and acquisition	Talent planning and acquisition	Business acumen
Learning & Development	Learning and development	Learning and development	Ethical practice
Compensation & Benefits	Total rewards	Total rewards	Relationship management
Employee Relations	Employee and labor relations	Employee relations and engagement	Consultation
Compliance & Risk Management	Business management	Leadership and strategy	Critical evaluation
			Global and cultural effectiveness
			Communication
			HR expertise (HR knowledge domains: people, organization, workplace, strategy)
			Leadership and navigation



EXAM FEES

aPHR	PHR	SPHR	SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP
\$300*	\$395*	\$495*	\$400 (non-member) or \$300 (SHRM member)

*In addition to the exam fee, there is a \$100 USD non-refundable application fee. Visit hrci.org and shrmcertification.org for the most up-to-date information on fees.

EXAM COMPARISON

aPHR	PHR (effective 5/1/21)	SPHR (effective 5/1/21)	SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP
Exams are certified by the HR Certification Institute (HRCI)	Exams are certified by the HR Certification Institute (HRCI)	Exams are certified by the HR Certification Institute (HRCI)	Exams are certified by SHRM Certification Commission
100 scored questions (mostly multiple choice) + 25 pretest questions	115 questions (mostly multiple choice)	140 questions (mostly multiple choice)	160 multiple-choice questions (95 knowledge items/65 situational judgment items)
2 hours 15 minutes	2 hours	2 hours 30 minutes	4 hours
Pearson VUE Testing Center	Pearson VUE Testing Center	Pearson VUE Testing Center	Prometric Testing Center

EXAM DATES

aPHR/PHR/SPHR	SHRM-CP/SHRM-SCP
Testing window: Year round	Testing window: Check shrmcertification.org for testing period
Applications accepted: Year round	Applications accepted: Check shrmcertification.org for application timeframes

MRA CAN HELP YOU PREPARE

Each HR certification has its benefits and challenges and each is recognized in the field. Ultimately, you will want to obtain the certification that makes sense for you. MRA can help you successfully prepare with our exam preparation courses. Our exam preparation programs feature highly experienced, certified instructors who enhance your knowledge through intense material review and help you sharpen your test-taking skills. To learn more about our upcoming prep course dates, times, and locations, please visit our website at www.mranet.org or contact us at 1-800-488-4845. 

