



# Pan-Canadian Examinations Invalidation of Results Policy

<b>Policy name</b>	Pan-Canadian Examinations Invalidation of Results Policy
<b>Type</b>	Exam administration and delivery policy
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<b>Audience</b>	Candidates, CARB-TCMPA members, CARB-TCMPA staff

## 1. Purpose

The Canadian Alliance of Regulatory Bodies of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists (CARB-TCMPA) develops and administers credentialing exams for Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists (TCM/A) in Canada. The results of the examination are used by regulatory bodies to make several important decisions including whether candidates for admission (“Candidates”) are permitted to practise a profession or hold themselves out as members of the profession. Confidence in the security and integrity of the examinations is essential to support the licensing decisions made by the regulatory bodies governing the profession in Canada.

This policy intends to establish a sound and rigorous process and practice for assessing the validity of examination results and invalidating results due to testing irregularities. For the purposes of this policy, a testing irregularity includes irregularities in examination results, such as unusual answer patterns or score increases from one examination to another, and conduct impacting the validity of examination results, such as cheating, discrepancies with or falsification of a candidate's identification, and candidate misconduct or plagiarism. Results may be invalidated in the case of a testing irregularity in the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in irregular activities.

Candidates are strongly advised to review this policy and any other relevant materials, such as the *Pan-Canadian Examinations Candidate Handbook*, to ensure they are aware of the circumstances under which examination results may be invalidated.

## 2. Scope

This policy is limited to the Pan-Canadian Examinations delivered by CARB-TCMPA and its test administrators. Questions regarding admission to the profession should be directed to the regulatory body that issued the decision.

During an examination, candidates are not permitted to communicate with anyone except the proctor(s). Disruptive, threatening, or fraudulent behaviour reported to CARB-TCMPA by the test administrator may be grounds for termination of the candidate's exam and the candidate's removal from the testing centre.

Candidates are monitored throughout delivery of the examination to ensure a high level of security and to ensure the integrity of the examination for all candidates. Audio and video may be recorded at testing centers and the test administrator will report any irregularities to CARB-TCMPA.

Candidates are not permitted to remove any examination content from the testing centre and may not share, discuss, or disseminate any examination content prior to, during, or following administration. The test administrator will report any irregularities to CARB-TCMPA. Candidates who suspect the misconduct of other candidates should report immediately to the proctor or, if the conduct occurred prior to or following the exam administration, report the violation to CARB-TCMPA. CARB-TCMPA will investigate all reported incidents.

Following administration of an exam, CARB-TCMPA may conduct a forensic data analysis of the results to identify irregularities. Such an analysis is conducted on the results of all candidates and takes into account multiple factors in the examination's conditions, such as graduates from the same program writing the examination at the same time. CARB-TCMPA does not provide specific details about the methods used to determine irregularities to prevent candidates from bypassing the statistical indicators used for forensic data analysis. This analysis is an ongoing process which makes it possible that exam results may be reviewed and invalidated at a later date than the original testing date.

## 3. Candidate Statement of Understanding

At the outset of each examination, all candidates must acknowledge the following Candidate Statement of Understanding regarding ethical conduct and the possibility of results invalidation:

"The following Canadian Alliance of Regulatory Bodies of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists (CARB-TCMPA) exam is highly confidential. The examination questions are the property of the CARB-TCMPA.

Unauthorized disclosure of the examination questions is prohibited under copyright laws. By agreeing to this statement of understanding, you agree to maintain the confidentiality of exam questions, even after writing the exam. This includes not discussing the content with anyone who wrote the exam before you, with you, or who has not written the exam yet.

Please review the following exam rules agreement. Contact the proctor if you have any questions.

- Once you have started your exam, you may not communicate with other people, including but not limited to other test takers, family members, friends or colleagues. Any disruptive, threatening or fraudulent behavior may be grounds for termination of the exam.
- To ensure a high level of security throughout the testing experience, you will be monitored at all times. Both audio and video may be recorded.
- If you wish to take a washroom break or if you experience any problems or distractions or if you have other questions or concerns, you must communicate directly with the proctor at the testing center and the proctor will assist you. The proctor cannot answer questions related to exam functionality or content. If you have concerns about a test question or image, make a note of the item (question) number, if available, in order for the item to be reviewed.
- You must not remove copies of exam questions and/or answers from the examination and may not share, discuss, post or otherwise disseminate the content of the exam (i.e., questions, answers seen, or general content) with anyone. Failure to comply with the above rules, tamper with the computer or if you are otherwise suspected of an exam violation, appropriate action will be taken.
- If you suspect or feel like another candidate is in violation of the exam instructions and/or candidate statement of understanding, you must report the violation to the proctor or to CARB-TCMPA immediately following your exam submission.
- Your results may be canceled if there is a good faith basis to question the validity of the results for any reason, notwithstanding, the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in irregular activities. Evidence which may invalidate one's exam results may include, but are not limited to, unusual answer patterns or unusual score increases from one exam to another.

You understand the information provided above and agree to follow those rules in addition to any other program rules you may have agreed to during registration for this exam. If you do not follow the rules or are suspected of cheating or tampering with the computer, this will be reported to CARB-TCMPA. CARB-TCMPA reserves the right to cancel or withhold any examination results when, in the sole opinion of CARB-TCMPA, a testing irregularity occurs; cheating has occurred; there is an apparent discrepancy in, or falsification of, a candidate's identification; a candidate engages in misconduct or plagiarism; or the results are believed to be invalid for any reason."

#### **4. Investigation Process**

Candidates who demonstrate disruptive, threatening, or fraudulent behaviour during the examination as reported by the test administrator may be removed from the testing centre and have their examination terminated. If a candidate is removed from the testing centre, the CARB-TCMPA Executive Director will report the circumstances to the candidate's regulatory body.

If CARB-TCMPA identifies an irregularity in examination results or receives an allegation of a testing irregularity, an investigation will be initiated. Investigation may include, but is not limited to, review of logs and reports from the test administrator, requests for written responses from or interviews with the candidate(s) in question and any witnesses, a review of documentary evidence supplied with the allegation or collected during the investigation, and forensic analysis of examination data. Candidates are expected to cooperate in the investigation process. Refusal by an individual to cooperate in an investigation may result in invalidation of their examination results.

CARB-TCMPA will take the following steps if evidence by observation, discovery, or statistical analysis suggests that one or more candidate scores may be invalid because of an irregularity:

- a) The Executive Director will initiate an investigation and notify the candidate(s) in question that an irregularity has been identified. Candidates will have an opportunity to respond in relation to the irregularity.
- b) The PCE Steering Committee will convene a meeting to review the investigation findings once complete.
- c) The PCE Steering Committee will determine whether the results of individual candidates will be invalidated based on the investigation findings. Candidates who have invalidated results will not receive a score (Pass/Fail) for the examination.
- d) The CARB-TCMPA Executive Director will issue the following communications after a decision to invalidate candidate results:

- i. Letter to the candidate outlining the PCE Steering Committee's decision to invalidate the results; a copy of this letter will be provided to the Registrar of the candidate's regulatory body.
  - ii. Letter to the TCM/A regulatory bodies across Canada to notify the Registrars of the PCE Steering Committee's decision to invalidate the candidate's results. This step is taken to ensure all regulators are aware of the decision in the event that a candidate seeks licensure in a different province.
- e) The candidate's regulatory body will determine, according to its own policies, whether the candidate will be permitted to re-write the examination and whether any other action is required in response to the invalidation of results.

If the investigation results indicate that a CARB-TCMPA copyright has been violated, recovery of damages may be sought. In the case of illegal activities, CARB-TCMPA may report the circumstances to appropriate law enforcement agencies. CARB-TCMPA reserves the right to take any necessary legal action in relation to copyright violation and testing irregularities.

## **5. Final Decision**

There is no appeal process for the invalidation of results. The PCE Steering Committee invalidates results only in those cases where an investigation determines the examination results are not valid. The decision of the Steering Committee is final. Candidates must contact their regulatory body for information on re-writing the examination.