

What is a Competency-Based Exam?

The Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) exam is a **competency-based exam**. What does that mean?

- The exam assesses knowledge and skills of professionals.
- Questions on the exam assess a candidate's ability to solve problems related to the field.
- Competencies are pre-determined based on the realities of the profession.
- Both knowledge and application questions are used to bring a candidate's mastery of competencies into context.
- Questions focus on real-world situations; while not standard for all candidates' realities, there are similarities that make questions comprehensible.

Competency-based exams are NOT:

- Directly based on a text. Questions are written based on the competencies, not based on memorization of a specific source.
- Linked to a specific class, course or training program. The exam assesses the candidate's knowledge-in-practice developed through career growth and a variety of learning sources. The exam is not a follow-up or summative assessment of a class, course or training program, where the learning from the program is on the exam.
- Based on theories. The exam requires candidates to apply skills through real-world consideration. It does not focus on memorization of concepts.
- Based on comparing candidates to each other. Questions are written following the competencies, and each question has a single correct answer.



Council for
**Certification in
Volunteer
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