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Introduction

This guide will help you prepare for the Red Seal Certification Examination. It provides information on the resources available and how to use these resources to develop a customized study plan.

What is the Red Seal Examination?

Red Seal Examinations determine whether apprentices and trade qualifiers meet the national standard of knowledge and skills in a particular Red Seal trade. The examinations are reviewed regularly by certified Journeypersons and trained developers to maintain their accuracy and relevance.

Red Seal Examinations assess knowledge of trade activities and skills performed on the job. They are used by all provinces and territories to issue a Red Seal Journeyperson or Endorsement. Successful completion of the certification examination, in addition to obtaining full trade time, is required to receive a Journeyperson Certificate in Saskatchewan.

All questions on the examination are multiple-choice. Each question is worth one mark. There are no trick questions. Of the four choices, there is one correct answer, and three incorrect options.

The Red Seal Examination has a pass mark of 70%.

Who is involved in the development of Red Seal Examinations?

The Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) and its sub-committee, the Interprovincial Standards and Examinations Committee (ISEC) are responsible for planning and collaborating on the development of Red Seal standards and examinations.

As part of their apprenticeship and trade certification system, each provincial and territorial apprenticeship authority administers the Red Seal Program. Industry is a key partner and plays an important role in the development of Red Seal examinations.

Staff from all apprenticeship authorities and Employment and Social Development Canada organize and facilitate the development process.

However, the most important people in the process are the qualified tradespersons and apprenticeship technical training providers who take part in workshops and meetings.

All the content that goes into each exam comes from these highly qualified experts from across Canada.
Section 1

Study Checklist

Below is a checklist that can be used to keep track of study tasks.

| ☐ | Complete the Self-Assessment on Red Seal Website | Page 4 |
| ☐ | Review Red Seal Occupational Standard (RSOS) | Page 5 |
| ☐ | Review Guide to Course Content | Page 6 |
| ☐ | Determine where RSOS weak areas are taught in technical training | Page 6 |

The Self-Assessment Tool

The Red Seal Website provides a self-assessment tool to help you understand your readiness for the Red Seal examination. The information in the tool is specific to each Red Seal trade and covers all areas assessed on the examination. The self-assessment tool's purpose is to get a user to reflect on their own experience and knowledge in each area of the trade. Then, it will provide a report that prioritizes areas of study based on two factors: a user's own level of understanding and the number of questions on the examination. This understanding, marked as low, medium or high, will be unique for each user. With this information, a customized study plan can be built that prioritizes areas of low understanding with the largest number of questions on the examination.

The self-assessment tool details the number of questions on the Red Seal examination for each unique action of the trade, called a Task. Each Task is to be rated based on the user’s familiarity. The user should consider both their work experience and technical training when considering their understanding with a given Task. Any Tasks that are identified as low or medium understanding are areas that require additional study time to ensure success on the Red Seal examination. Those Tasks can then be cross-referenced with the Red Seal Occupational Standard, for more information on the knowledge and skills of that activity, and with SATCC’s Guide to Course Content. The Guide to Course Content can be used to determine the courses where a Task is taught and the materials to be reviewed when improving understanding on a given Task.

The Red Seal trade-specific self-assessment tool is available on the Red Seal website:

www.red-seal.ca
Access the Self-Assessment Tool on the Red Seal Website

1. Visit www.red-seal.ca/ and select Red Seal Trades from the Trades drop-down menu.

2. Scroll through the list and select your trade.

3. Scroll down and select Exam Information.

4. The Self-Assessment for each trade listed includes an online version and a downloadable pdf.

Pro Tip

Save or print the Self-Assessment Guide to better track your progress.
Complete the Self-Assessment on Red Seal Website

Ready to start the Self-Assessment? It is available in both an online version and a downloadable PDF. The online version will calculate your score while the PDF requires a manual score calculation at the end of the assessment.

Example of the Plumber online self-assessment tool.

Pro Tip
Limit your time in areas (tasks) with only one or two questions.

Example of the Plumber PDF self-assessment tool.

In this example, D-11 was marked as low understanding. This apprentice believes they will only answer one or two questions correctly out of four.

D-12 was marked as medium understanding. This area will not require as much study as other low-understanding areas.
Review Red Seal Occupational Standard (RSOS)

Once the Self-Assessment is completed, the results will indicate low-understanding areas, which require further study.

The RSOS can be found on the Red Seal website under your Red Seal trade page.

Refer to the sections in the RSOS identified during the Self-Assessment. The areas identified as low understanding should be the primary focus. These are usually areas where you may have little on-the-job experience.

Example from the Plumber RSOS.

The candidate has identified Task D-11 Installs, tests and services water service as a weak, or low understanding area.

Candidates can use the RSOS to determine which knowledge and skills are performed within a Task.
Review SATCC’s Guide to Course Content

Once Self-Assessment results are calculated, use the Guide to Course Content to determine where low-scoring RSOS areas are taught in technical training.

The Guide to Course Content can be found on Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification’s (SATCC) website under your specific trade page.

The example below is from the Plumber Guide to Course Content on the SATCC website. The Task Matrix in the Guide to Course Content can be used to learn where a task was taught in technical training.

Next, refer to the Technical Training Course Content section within the Guide to Course Content. Here you can determine where RSOS weak areas are taught in technical training. In this example, under Level 3, look for where D-11 is shown under the RSOS topics covered in this section of training heading.

Task D-11 is primarily taught in Level 3 Plumbing Systems.

Note: an RSOS task may be present in more than one course.

Pro Tip

Use course training modules and notes from courses identified as low understanding to help prepare for certification.
Section 2

Getting Ready for the Examination

Differences in experience and scope require a personalized approach to prepare for Red Seal examinations.

- **Study Strategies and Exam Preparation**
  - Choose convenient study times.
  - Identify resources. Gather the correct materials.
  - Determine your strengths and weaknesses.
  - Create a study schedule and stick to it.
  - Study in 30-minute blocks.
  - Allow time to reflect between blocks.

- **Context Can Help**
  - Relate new knowledge to a familiar concept to increase understanding and the ability for recall.
  - Example: Prepping steel pipe is a similar skill to prepping iron pipe.

- **Partner Up**
  - Ask a friend or spouse to help with your studies.
  - Retaining information can be easier if you can explain it to someone else.

- **Seek Out Additional Help if Needed**
  - Instructors are available to help students.
  - The SATCC provides learning and accessibility services for those who require extra assistance or may qualify for accommodations.
    - Phone: (306) 933-8476
    - Email: accessibilityservices@gov.sk.ca
  - Many technical training providers have Learning Services that can help students with study techniques and tutoring in basic skills such as math.
  - Co-workers, classmates, and journeypersons are also valuable resources.

---

**Caution**

Many outside resources will claim to assist with certification but may be unaware or unfamiliar with the RSOS.

These resources can have limited value when used as a resource in preparation for the certification examination.

The Red Seal exam is designed to test the skills practiced on the job.

Approximately 85% of an apprenticeship is spent learning on the job under the guidance of a journeyperson.
Section 3

Study Strategies

The following study tips can be used to help you improve your study habits.

➢ Define Clear Goals
  • Have reasonable expectations.
  • Set SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound.

➢ Organize Your Workspace
  • Ensure your workspace is comfortable with plenty of light. Minimize distractions.

➢ Do Your Most Important Tasks First
  • Prioritize difficult areas to improve on areas of significant weakness.

➢ Use Association
  • Associate content with personal work experience to help understand and visualize ideas in real world scenarios.

➢ Study in Small Blocks of Time
  • Break the material into manageable chunks and plan which tasks you will study each day.
  • Focus on a task for a period of time of 30 minutes then take a 5-minute break.
  • If you study for 4 cycles of 30 minutes, be sure to take a longer break.
  • Ensure you give yourself enough time to sufficiently study all material over a longer period of time, as it helps with retention compared to cramming.

➢ Actively Engage with your Study Material
  • Study specific knowledge and skills in different ways through reading, rewriting, drawing, watching videos and delivering an explanation.
  • While studying take hand-written notes to enhance your understanding and to use to study from as you get closer to writing your examination.

Start Now!

Choose one or two tips from this list that you can commit to this week.
• Take theoretical information and apply it practically on-the-job.

➢ Review Your Notes Often

• Review notes of study at the end of each day and make sure each concept is understood or develop a plan to address any questions.

➢ Reward Yourself

• Set goals and reward yourself for achieving them.
• Schedule days off; time spent resting, exercising and spending time with family and friends will help with rest and future focus.
Section 4

Examination Tips

➤ Cover the Answers to a Question and Try to Answer Without Looking
  - Check all available answers. If the answer is not listed, this may indicate you missed something in the question.

➤ Be Familiar with Your Code Book
  - If the trade has a code book, be comfortable using it and understand the tools that are provided.
  - Move on from questions where code rules are difficult to find and come back to them later. Do not spend too much time aimlessly looking through the code book.
  - Be sure to check appendices if they are mentioned in a code clause.

➤ Be Familiar with the Formulas Used in Your Trade
  - Be familiar with what formulas are provided during the exam and how to apply them.

➤ Questions Containing Code References
  - Phrases such as minimum, maximum and requirement imply a rule or regulation which is typically determined by the applicable code.

➤ Understand the Full Scope of Your Trade Including Troubleshooting
  - The exam will include skills learned in all levels of training as well as skills learned on the job.
  - The RSOS is the best resource for determining what knowledge should be known to become certified.

➤ Be Efficient with Time
  - If the correct answer is not obvious, skip that question and come back to it later.
  - An answer may become more apparent later during the exam.
  - Questions on similar material may refresh knowledge of a skipped question.

➤ Use Calculation Sheets
  - Each candidate is given three calculation sheets (front and back) to assist with keeping track of skipped questions, performing calculations, and drawing diagrams.
  - A simple diagram can help clarify a question’s intent, as well as ensure that important information is not missed.
### Task 8 – Constructs Framework

**C-8.01 Erects Excavation Shoring and Underpinning**
- Inspect materials for structural integrity
- Fasten excavation shoring firmly in place using fasteners such as rock anchors, bolts and pilings
- Identify underpinning requirements according to location of new construction

**How Well Do I Know It?**
- Average

**What Resources Do I Need to Access?**
- Package Commercial Formwork
- SK Employment Act & The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations
- Publications
- The National Building Code of Canada 2015

**When?**
- Tuesdays 7-8pm
- Thursdays 6:30-7pm
- Saturdays 11am -12pm

### Task 7 – Performs Layout

**C-7.08 Lays Out Stairs**
- Measure total rise and run of stairs and length of stair well opening
- Determine and mark measurements such as unit rise, unit run, length of stringer, allowable headroom, and landing locations

**How Well Do I Know It?**
- Low

**What Resources Do I Need to Access?**
- Level 2 note package Wood Stairs
- Level 3 note package Concrete stairs
- Level 4 note package Wood Stairs

**When?**
- Wednesdays 7:30-8pm
- Fridays 6:30-7pm
- Sundays 2-3pm
## Appendix B – Blank Study Plan

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Appendix C – Red Seal Occupational Standard Information

The RSOS outlines the skills required for certification and is the source document for all certification and training activities within the trade. Anything listed in a trade’s RSOS is eligible to be tested during the certification exam. The exception is sub-tasks labeled NOT COMMON CORE. These are skills that are not practised in every jurisdiction in Canada and will not be tested on the certification exam. No content outside of the RSOS will be assessed on the exam.

This document outlines the knowledge and abilities a journeyperson working in that trade requires. The content for the Red Seal exam is drawn from the RSOS. The specific RSOS for your trade can be found at www.red-seal.ca.

The Red Seal exam has sections based on each Major Work Activity in the RSOS. The exam questions in each section are all based on the sub-tasks that make up the Major Work Activity. More detail about the RSOS structure is included in the next section.

- If industry in at least 70% of the responding jurisdictions performs a sub-task, it is considered common core.

Structure of the RSOS

The information in an RSOS is organized into Major Work Activities (MWA), Tasks and Sub-tasks.

- **MWA**: are the largest division within the standard that is comprised of a distinct set of trade activities.

- **Tasks**: Distinct actions that describe the activities within an MWA.

- **Sub-tasks**: Distinct actions that describe the activities within a task.

- **Skills**: Include Performance Criteria and Evidence of Attainment.

- **Performance Criteria**: Description of the activities that are done as the sub-task is performed.

- **Evidence of Attainment**: Proof that the activities of the sub-task meet the expected performance of a tradesperson who has reached journeyperson level.
Appendix D – Breakdown of RSOS Skills Chart

Major Work Activity D
Installs, tests and services water service and distribution

Task D-11 Installs, tests and services water service

Task Descriptor
By connecting piping from city or municipal or private water supply to the water distribution system, plumbers make water available for use. Plumbers determine water demand in order to be able to size and install piping and equipment. For the purpose of this standard, service includes troubleshooting, diagnosing, maintenance and repairs.

D-11.01 Plans and sizes piping and components for water service

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<th>Evidence of Attainment</th>
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<td>Hydrant demand flow requirements</td>
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<td>D-11.01.02P</td>
<td>Calculate required peak demand flow for water service</td>
<td>Peak demand flow is calculated considering fire protection requirements for residential/commercial/industrial</td>
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Sub-tasks are distinct actions that describe the activities within the task.

Performance criteria is a description of the on-the-job-skills a new journeyperson should have.

Evidence of attainment is a more detailed description of the skills that prove that the performance criteria is met.
Appendix E – References

Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission

- Toll Free: 1-877-363-0536
  Email: apprenticeship@gov.sk.ca
- Learning and Accessibility Services
  - saskapprenticeship.ca/learning-support/
  - Phone: (306) 933-8476
  - Email: accessibilityservices@gov.sk.ca
- Website: www.saskapprenticeship.ca/
- Designated trades page: www.saskapprenticeship.ca/designated-trades-searchable/
  - Each designated trades page has links to the following documents:
    - A Guide to Course Content
    - On the job training guide
    - Exam information sheet
    - Course Outline

Red Seal Canada

- Website: www.red-seal.ca/
- Red Seal Trades: www.red-seal.ca/eng/trades/tr.1d.2s_l.3st.shtml
  - Each Red Seal trade has a link to the RSOS
- Self-assessment tool: www.red-seal.ca/eng/resources/selfexamlist.shtml

Additional Suggested Resources

- Other resources include your textbook, your instructors, and approved educational resources.
- Additional trade resources are included in the exam information sheet for each trade found on the SATCC website under your trade.
- Independent Learning Modules (ILMs) are also available for purchase for some trades through the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Bookstore at 1-800-569-8398.