

Assistance to Candidates

Interprovincial Red Seal Exam Preparation

Information Guide

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1) Introduction

In this guide, you will find useful information about Interprovincial Red Seal exams and strategies for preparing for and writing the exam of your trade. The distinction between a Red Seal endorsement and a provincial/ territorial certificate is Red Seal's recognition of competence within the **national scope** of the trade. All tasks within the scope of the Red Seal endorsement are outlined in the National Occupational Analysis (NOA).

If you are interested in writing the Red Seal exam, you must contact your provincial or territorial department responsible for apprenticeship training. To contact your local office, the provincial and territorial contact list can be found at: <http://www.red-seal.ca/c.4nt.2nt@-eng.jsp?cid=3>. They will verify if you are eligible to write the exam and tell you how to register for an exam session.

A special thank you is extended to all the provincial and territorial departments responsible for apprenticeship training for assistance in developing this guide.

2) Use of an NOA

a) What is an NOA?

The Red Seal National Occupational Analysis (NOA) is a document that lists all the tasks performed in the occupation and describes the knowledge, skills and abilities required to demonstrate competence in the trade.

b) Why Do I Need It?

NOAs for Red Seal trades provide the content upon which Red Seal exam questions are based. Examination questions are written to test your knowledge and competency related to the **sub-tasks** in the NOA. The NOA for your trade is the most important resource and a great tool to help you plan what to study and how to study for the Red Seal exam.

Important:

Although the most recent versions of all NOAs are available online at: <http://www.red-seal.ca/>, your exam might be based on a previous version of the NOA. Be sure to use the correct NOA for your exam.

c) Where can I find the NOA for my trade?

You can view the correct NOA for your exam by following these steps:

- Go to: <http://www.red-seal.ca>.
- Click on your language of choice.
- On the WELCOME page, click on the Red Seal Examinations tab on the left.
- On the INTERPROVINCIAL (IP) RED SEAL EXAMINATIONS page, scroll down to the list of trades and click on your trade.
- On the EXAM COUSELING SHEET page, click on the NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS link.
- If the NOA for your exam is not available on the Red Seal website, contact the Red Seal Secretariat by clicking on the link provided on the Exam Counselling Sheet.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you can request a printed copy of the correct NOA, along with a printed copy of the related exam counselling sheet from the apprenticeship representative assigned to your file. You can also ask how much time is allowed for the exam session and how many questions there are on the exam.

d) What is the Structure of an NOA?

BLOCKS: The NOA is divided into major content areas called BLOCKS.

BLOCK A	OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS
----------------	----------------------------

TASKS: These Blocks are then divided into TASKS.

Task 1	Uses tools and equipment.
---------------	----------------------------------

SUB-TASKS: Tasks are then divided into sub-tasks. The sub-tasks are the specific functions you perform in relation to a Task.

Sub-task
A-1.01 Uses hand tools.

CONTEXT: The context defines a specific Block or Task.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE: The knowledge a person needs in order to perform a specific task.

KEY COMPETENCIES: The activities related to a sub-task that a person should be able to do in order to be called “competent” in the trade.

APPENDICES: At the back of the NOA, there is an Appendices Section. Especially useful are the **Acronyms, Tools and Equipment List** and **Glossary**. Remember: Registered trade names for tools and equipment are **NOT** used on Red Seal exams.

e) How is the NOA used to Prepare for the Exam?

i) The percentage of number of questions on each area of an NOA can be found in Appendix D.

EXAMPLE The sample below is from the Mobile Crane Operator NOA, 2009.

APPENDIX D

BLOCK AND TASK WEIGHTING

BLOCK A OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS

	<u>NL</u>	<u>NS</u>	<u>PE</u>	<u>NB</u>	<u>QC</u>	<u>ON</u>	<u>MB</u>	<u>SK</u>	<u>AB</u>	<u>BC</u>	<u>NT</u>	<u>YT</u>	<u>NU</u>	National Average
%	5	7	NV	NV	10	2	NV	5	5	10	NV	ND	NV	6%

6% of the questions on the exam will be based on content found in Block A, Occupational Skills.

Task 1 Uses tools and equipment.

	<u>NL</u>	<u>NS</u>	<u>PE</u>	<u>NB</u>	<u>QC</u>	<u>ON</u>	<u>MB</u>	<u>SK</u>	<u>AB</u>	<u>BC</u>	<u>NT</u>	<u>YT</u>	<u>NU</u>	
%	30	30	NV	NV	30	20	NV	40	50	40	NV	ND	NV	34%

34% of the questions on Block A will be on Task 1, Uses tools and equipment.

Task 2 Organizes work.

	<u>NL</u>	<u>NS</u>	<u>PE</u>	<u>NB</u>	<u>QC</u>	<u>ON</u>	<u>MB</u>	<u>SK</u>	<u>AB</u>	<u>BC</u>	<u>NT</u>	<u>YT</u>	<u>NU</u>	
%	70	70	NV	NV	70	80	NV	60	50	60	NV	ND	NV	66%

The other 66% of the questions on Block A will be on Task 2, Organizes work.

ii) A list of all sub-tasks can be found in Appendix F.

Scroll down or go to the back of the NOA to the Task Profile Chart in the Appendices section. This chart is a simple visual tool of all the Blocks, Tasks, and Sub-tasks in the NOA. It can be used as a handy checklist to help compare what you know with what you will be tested on the exam.

On the Task Profile Chart, check off the Sub-tasks that you have already mastered.

EXAMPLE The sample below is from the Mobile Crane Operator NOA, 2009.

APPENDIX F		TASK PROFILE CHART – MOBILE CRANE OPERATOR			
BLOCKS	TASKS	SUB-TASKS			
A - OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS	1. Uses tools and equipment.	1.01 Uses hand tools.	1.02 Uses power tools.	1.03 Uses torches.	1.04 Uses measuring equipment.
	2. Organizes work.	2.01 Communicates with others.	2.02 Uses documentation.	2.03 Identifies hazards.	

Focus your study on the Blocks and Tasks where the majority of the questions are. If you have difficulty with areas where there will not be many questions, don't spend too much time studying these areas.

3) Studying for the Red Seal Exam

a) Resources You Can Use to Study for the Red Seal Exam

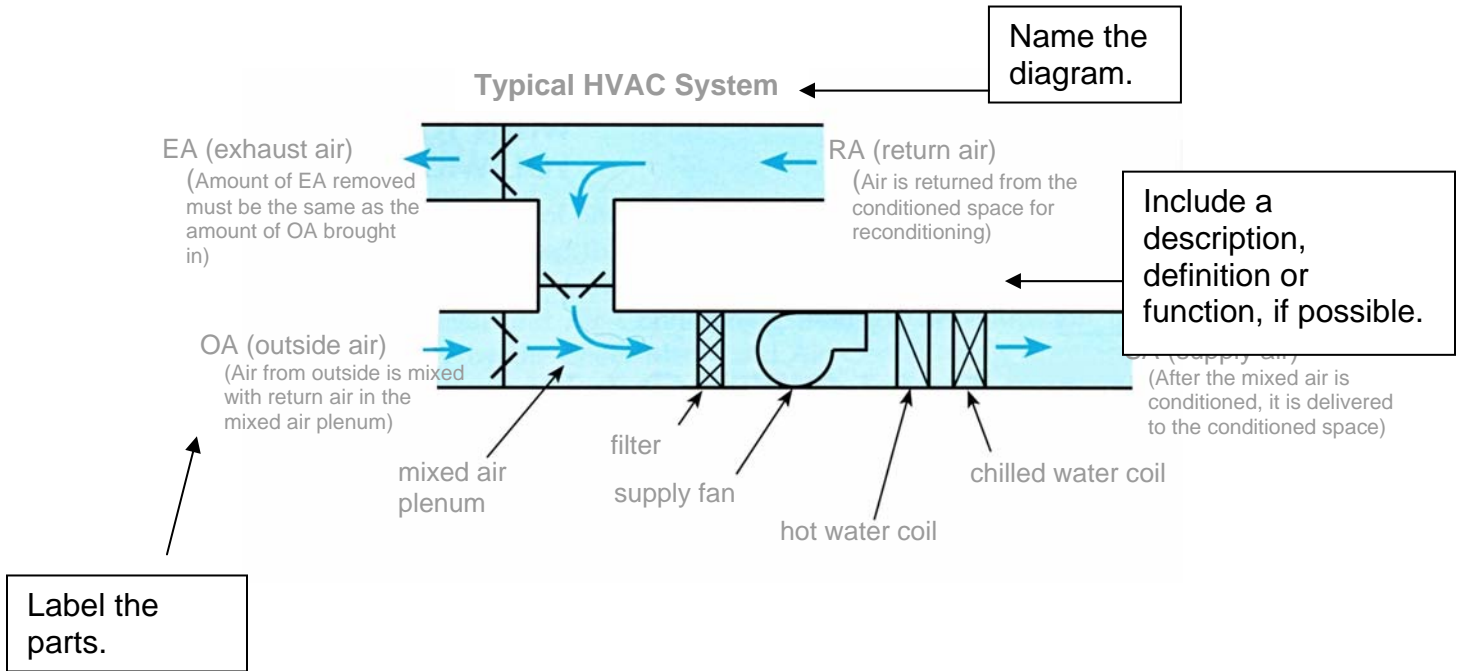
- Obtain a list of textbooks and other resources currently being used for apprentices in your trade. Textbooks and other resources can be found at a local college or, at public library, on the Internet, or at your place of employment.
- For Sub-tasks you have not checked off, research some questions that could be asked by performing the following steps:
 - Look at the self-study questions at the end of textbooks. They are a good source of practice exam questions.
 - Ask a co-worker or a friend who has written the Red Seal exam for your trade to identify study materials and resources they found helpful.
 - Find someone on the job that has the experience in specific tasks and have them make up some trial questions for you.

b) Study Plan

Circumstances, schedules and time available for studying vary for each individual. The following strategies are effective for studying for the Red Seal exam.

- Find a quiet, comfortable place to study and try to use that same place each time you study.
- Maintain a regular daily routine of eating, sleeping, and exercise.
- Establish a regular studying routine and keep track of your study time each week.
- Divide your study sessions into short periods for each subject. Trying to study too much content at once isn't effective.
- At the end of every day, take 10 minutes for every hour you spent studying to review.
- Do your most difficult studying during the hours when you feel best (save easy tasks for less productive times of the day).
- Take notes (all in your own words) and highlight important information.
- If possible, spend some time studying with others who are preparing to write the same exam.
- Teach the lesson to another tradesperson or to a friend. When you teach someone, you will find that you need to have a good understanding of the subject to explain it well.
- Refer to the NOA Glossary in the Appendices section for specific and accurate terminology and definitions.
- Prepare flashcards, flowcharts and diagrams of key information including formulas, definitions and key concepts. On the flashcards, put the definitions in your own words. See examples below:

Example of Diagram:



Example of Flashcard:

Write the word on the front.

Write the definition or important points on the back.

Keep it short, to the point and written in your own words.

joist

* a piece of lumber 2 to 4 inches thick, 6 or more inches wide, various lengths.

* used horizontally to support a ceiling or floor.

Front **Back**

Example of Flowchart based on text below:

GROUT COLUMNS AND BASE PLATES

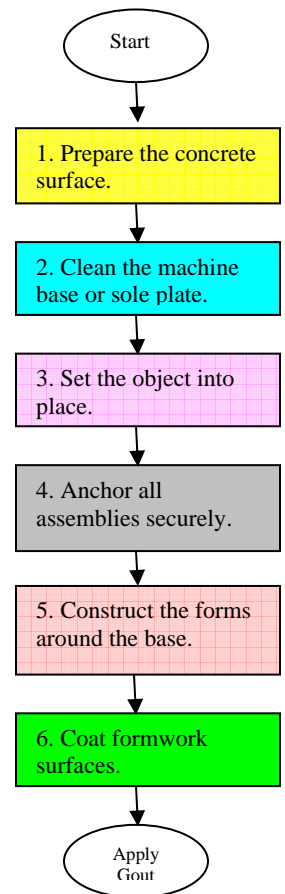
This learning guide will outline the basic procedures for grouting columns and base plates. **1.** It is important to prepare the concrete surface before setting the column or machine base. The surface must be cleaned and roughened enough to promote adhesion. There are different procedures depending on the type of grout you will be using.

2. To remove rust, paint, oil, grease, or scale remains, clean the machine base or sole plate. If you will be using a cement grout, devise a means for wetting the metal base before grouting. This will assist the flow of grout around foundation bolts and other metal parts.

Once the machine is properly cleaned, set the object into place **3.** so that all items to be grouted are properly positioned and anchored before grouting. This is generally accomplished by using metal shims to set the base or soleplate to grade.

4. To make sure that the anchors will not shift out of alignment from grout pressure or tamping, anchor all assemblies securely. Once everything is secure, construct the forms around the **5.** base. Ensure that the formwork is strong and watertight, **6.** and coat formwork surfaces with a recommended release agent.

Grouting Columns and Base Plates



4) The Red Seal Exam

Red Seal exam questions are written to test your knowledge and competency related to the sub-tasks in the NOA.

Each exam has between 100 and 150 multiple choice questions.

Each question has four responses (A, B, C and D); only one of which is correct.

All questions are of equal value.

The pass mark is 70%.

Red Seal exams are bilingual. French questions are on the left hand pages and the same English questions are on the right hand pages of the examination booklet.

a) Writing a Multiple Choice Exam

Red Seal exams are written exclusively in a multiple choice format. The three incorrect responses are called distracters because they are intended to look plausible and 'distract' you from the correct answer if you are not confident in your knowledge.

Example:

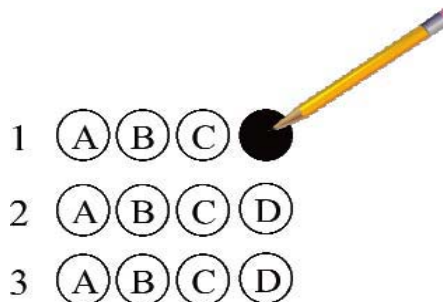
1. Which of the following is a Red Seal trade?

- A. Florist
- B. Locksmith
- C. Shipwright
- D. Boilermaker

In this example, the correct response or answer is D. The other three alternative responses are the distracters. Although plausible, as they are all trades, all three are incorrect because they are not Red Seal trades.

Using the above example, you would respond to the question by filling in the appropriate circle on the answer sheet which will be provided to you.

Make sure you mark each answer in the corresponding number on your answer sheet (i.e., When reading question number 1 in the exam booklet, make sure you respond to question number 1 on the answer sheet).



b) Samples of Exam Questions

Sample Question: 1. (Concrete Finisher)

What occurs at the surface of the concrete if floating takes place while the bleedwater is present?

- A. Lowers surface water/cement ratio.
- B. Raise surfaces water/cement ratio.
- C. Preserves surface water/cement ratio.
- D. Raises surface aggregate/cement ratio.

Sample Question: 2. (Agricultural Technician)

What is done when installing a pressed steel oil pan when raised metal is noted around the rail bolt holes?

- A. Use double gaskets with gasket sealer.
- B. Use silicone sealer to replace gasket.
- C. Replace oil pan with silicone sealer.
- D. Straighten sealing surface and install new gasket.


Sample Question: 3. (Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic)

What is the minimum required sleeve size when installing a 50 mm (2 in.) nominal pipe with 38 mm (1 1/2 in.) insulation through a 200 mm (8 in.) concrete block exterior wall?

- A. 50 mm / 2 in.
- B. 100 mm / 4 in.
- C. 150 mm / 6 in.
- D. 200 mm / 8 in.

c) Example of Answer Sheet

The answer sheet for multiple choice questions is separate from the exam booklet. Below, is an example of what you might be handed at the exam:




**Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System/
Système Informatisé de Gestion des Examens Interprovinciaux**

ANSWER SHEET / FEUILLE RÉPONSE

Form/ Formulaire: 239238-1

1 (A) (B) (C) (D)	21 (A) (B) (C) (D)	41 (A) (B) (C) (D)	61 (A) (B) (C) (D)	81 (A) (B) (C) (D)
2 (A) (B) (C) (D)	22 (A) (B) (C) (D)	42 (A) (B) (C) (D)	62 (A) (B) (C) (D)	82 (A) (B) (C) (D)
3 (A) (B) (C) (D)	23 (A) (B) (C) (D)	43 (A) (B) (C) (D)	63 (A) (B) (C) (D)	83 (A) (B) (C) (D)
4 (A) (B) (C) (D)	24 (A) (B) (C) (D)	44 (A) (B) (C) (D)	64 (A) (B) (C) (D)	84 (A) (B) (C) (D)
5 (A) (B) (C) (D)	25 (A) (B) (C) (D)	45 (A) (B) (C) (D)	65 (A) (B) (C) (D)	85 (A) (B) (C) (D)
6 (A) (B) (C) (D)	26 (A) (B) (C) (D)	46 (A) (B) (C) (D)	66 (A) (B) (C) (D)	86 (A) (B) (C) (D)
7 (A) (B) (C) (D)	27 (A) (B) (C) (D)	47 (A) (B) (C) (D)	67 (A) (B) (C) (D)	87 (A) (B) (C) (D)
8 (A) (B) (C) (D)	28 (A) (B) (C) (D)	48 (A) (B) (C) (D)	68 (A) (B) (C) (D)	88 (A) (B) (C) (D)
9 (A) (B) (C) (D)	29 (A) (B) (C) (D)	49 (A) (B) (C) (D)	69 (A) (B) (C) (D)	89 (A) (B) (C) (D)
10 (A) (B) (C) (D)	30 (A) (B) (C) (D)	50 (A) (B) (C) (D)	70 (A) (B) (C) (D)	90 (A) (B) (C) (D)
11 (A) (B) (C) (D)	31 (A) (B) (C) (D)	51 (A) (B) (C) (D)	71 (A) (B) (C) (D)	91 (A) (B) (C) (D)
12 (A) (B) (C) (D)	32 (A) (B) (C) (D)	52 (A) (B) (C) (D)	72 (A) (B) (C) (D)	92 (A) (B) (C) (D)
13 (A) (B) (C) (D)	33 (A) (B) (C) (D)	53 (A) (B) (C) (D)	73 (A) (B) (C) (D)	93 (A) (B) (C) (D)
14 (A) (B) (C) (D)	34 (A) (B) (C) (D)	54 (A) (B) (C) (D)	74 (A) (B) (C) (D)	94 (A) (B) (C) (D)
15 (A) (B) (C) (D)	35 (A) (B) (C) (D)	55 (A) (B) (C) (D)	75 (A) (B) (C) (D)	95 (A) (B) (C) (D)
16 (A) (B) (C) (D)	36 (A) (B) (C) (D)	56 (A) (B) (C) (D)	76 (A) (B) (C) (D)	96 (A) (B) (C) (D)
17 (A) (B) (C) (D)	37 (A) (B) (C) (D)	57 (A) (B) (C) (D)	77 (A) (B) (C) (D)	97 (A) (B) (C) (D)
18 (A) (B) (C) (D)	38 (A) (B) (C) (D)	58 (A) (B) (C) (D)	78 (A) (B) (C) (D)	98 (A) (B) (C) (D)
19 (A) (B) (C) (D)	39 (A) (B) (C) (D)	59 (A) (B) (C) (D)	79 (A) (B) (C) (D)	99 (A) (B) (C) (D)
20 (A) (B) (C) (D)	40 (A) (B) (C) (D)	60 (A) (B) (C) (D)	80 (A) (B) (C) (D)	100 (A) (B) (C) (D)

Mark Reflex® forms MM239238-1 654321 ED05 Printed by NCS Pearson Canada. To re-order, call 1-800-665-4



EXAMPLES/ EXEMPLES	Important Directions For Marking Answers/ Directions Importantes Pour La Correction Des Réponses
<p>WRONG/ MAL</p> <p>1 (A) (B) (C) (D)</p> <p>WRONG/ MAL</p> <p>2 (A) (B) (C) (D)</p> <p>WRONG/ MAL</p> <p>3 (A) (B) (C) (D)</p> <p>RIGHT/ BIEN</p> <p>4 (A) (B) (C) (D)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use HB pencil only/ Utilisez un crayon HB seulement. Do NOT use ink or ballpoint pens/ N'utilisez pas d'encre ni de stylo à bille. Make heavy black marks that fill the circle completely/ Noircissez les cercles complètement. Erase cleanly any answer you wish to change/ Effacez proprement les réponses que vous désirez changer. Make no stray marks on the answer sheet/ Ne laissez aucune marque indésirable sur la feuille de réponse.

5) Preparing for the Red Seal Exam

- Get adequate sleep the night before the exam.
- Avoid excess alcohol or caffeine the night before the exam.
- Make a note of where to park and how long it takes you to get there.

6) Writing the Red Seal Exam

a) Before the Exam

- Bring your photo ID.
- You will be asked to show your photo ID and your exam confirmation letter.
- You will be assigned a seat in the room or, if possible, choose a seat in which you feel comfortable.
- Handbags, cellular phones, programmable or trade-specific calculators, other electronic equipment, textbooks, code books or notes might not be allowed into the examination room.
- You will be handed an exam booklet, a diagram booklet (if required), and everything you will need to write the exam (code book (if required), paper and an answer sheet).
- Do **NOT** open or begin the exam until instructed to do so by the exam official.
- Organize and lay out your allowable exam materials
- You will be provided with instructions and rules on how to fill out the answer sheet.
- You will be told to begin the exam.
- Bring a watch to pace yourself. (For example, a 3 hour exam with 120 questions = 40 questions per hour, 20 questions per ½ hour, 10 questions per 15 minutes).
- Bring pre-sharpened pencils and a good eraser.
- Dress in layers. Exam locations are notorious for being too warm or too cold.
- Check with your apprenticeship representative in your jurisdiction for instructions regarding a personal calculator. If permitted or necessary, bring a non-programmable (scientific) calculator. In some jurisdictions,

personal calculators are not allowed. You would then be provided with a calculator for the exam.

- A brisk walk or a stretching routine just before the exam can increase the oxygen level in the bloodstream.
- Eat a light, healthy snack and use the washroom just before the exam.
- It is best to avoid other students, especially those who are unprepared and anxious or, conversely, who are overly-confident.
- Arrive early prior to beginning the exam. If you are late, you will not be permitted to write the exam and will have to reschedule for a later date.

b) During the Exam

- Think positive.
- Do **NOT** talk to other candidates.
- Raise your hand if you do not understand the instructions.
- There are many different versions of the same trade exam. The exam you write likely has different questions from those sitting close to you. If you are caught trying to cheat, your exam will be removed and scored zero, and your privilege of writing the exam may be forfeited and other penalties may be imposed.
- Use only materials authorized by the officer administering the exam.
- Scrap paper will be provided.
- As soon as the exam session begins, write down on scrap paper all significant formulas, data, or memorized content.
- Quickly go over the exam sections.
- Stick to the facts.
- Separate long questions into smaller parts to make them easier to understand.
- Read the whole question carefully.
- If needed, draw a diagram or jot down a formula on scrap paper if it helps you answer a question. Have an estimate of what the correct answer will be so that once you calculate the answer, you can check to see if it looks right.
- Try to answer the question without looking at the four responses, then look for the option that matches your answer.

- On scrap paper, make note of responses you know are wrong to narrow your options.
- Check that you are marking your answers in the right place on the answer sheet.
- Use the pencil to place a dark mark in the space for one of A, B, C, or D to indicate your chosen answer.
- If you must change an answer, erase it **completely** before filling in another choice.
- Do **NOT** place other marks on the sheet.
- If you don't know the answer, mark the number of the question on scrap paper, move on, and return to it later.
- Remember you have limited time to write the exam. Pace yourself. Don't spend too much time on any one question.
- Watch for questions written in the negative form and for key words, and choose your answer based on the way the question is worded:
 - qualifiers*: words such as "usually", "often", "generally", "may" and "seldom"
 - negatives* such as "**not**" or "**no**" (the negatives are written in bold in the questions)
 - superlatives*: words such as "every", "all", "none", "always", "only"
- When you're done, go back to questions you skipped or had difficulty with.
- Answer all the questions, even if you have to guess. Do not leave any question unanswered.
- Review your answers once you have finished the exam
- Take advantage of the entire time allocated for writing the exam – you get no extra points for leaving early, so don't panic when you see others handing in their exams. Leave only when you are satisfied that you have done your best.
- Return **ALL** materials (including all used and unused scrap paper) and booklets to the examination officer.
- If you believe that there is a mistake on the exam, make note of it on scrap paper provided and notify the exam officer when you return all materials at the end of the exam session.

c) After the Exam

- Your exam result, complete with an analysis, will be mailed to you after the exam has been scored. Exam results – marks, pass/fail – will not be released over the telephone.
- Once you have met all of the requirements for certification, you will be issued a Certificate of Qualification with the Red Seal endorsement.
- If you were not successful in achieving the 70% passing mark and are eligible for a supplemental exam, you should realize that there are many Red Seal exams, as they are continually updated and developed. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that you will write the same version of the exam as before and it could be based on a new NOA.
- Contact your apprenticeship representative to confirm the correct NOA for your exam and your eligibility for a supplemental exam.

7) Conclusion

We hope that this guide has provided you with some strategies and helpful tips to assist you in preparing for and writing the Red Seal exam. If you have any questions, comments, or would like more information, please feel free to contact your provincial or territorial apprenticeship office.

The complete list of provincial and territorial contacts is available at:

http://www.red-seal.ca/c.4nt.1cts@-eng.jsp?#contact_

To make an inquiry about the Red Seal Program, you may contact us at:

Red Seal Program
Workplace Partnerships Directorate
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
140 Promenade du Portage
5th floor, Phase IV
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0J9

Telephone (toll free) 1-877-599-6933

Teletypewriter 1-800-926-9105

Fax 819-994-0202

Or by email at: redseal-sceaurouge@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

We appreciate your comments and feedback on the usefulness of the materials and resources identified. If you are aware of other helpful resources, feel free to forward your recommendations to us.