Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. How do I keep my PCNSE Certification Current?

To align with the fast pace of changes occurring in the field of cybersecurity and to adhere to industry best practices, you will need to retake the exam every 2 years (24 months) to keep your certification current. As of October 2017 PCNSE Certifications no longer will be designated with a specific version number.

Q2. Why do Palo Alto Networks certifications expire?

Certification expirations are implemented to ensure that Palo Alto Networks certified security engineers are equipped with the latest skill set. The PCNSE exam helps cybersecurity certified professionals prepare for the ever-changing security landscape.

As of October 2017 Palo Alto Networks no longer has a version number designation with its PCNSE, to emphasize it as a role-based certification for network security engineers.

Q3. What is the format of the new PCNSE exam?

- Certification Name: Palo Alto Networks Certified Network Security Engineer
- Delivered through Pearson VUE: www.pearsonvue.com/paloaltonetworks
- Exam Series: PCNSE
- Seat Time: 90 minutes
- Total Exam Time: 80 minutes
- Palo Alto Networks Exam Security Policy: 5 minutes; Survey: 5 minutes
- Number of items: 75
- Format: Multiple Choice, Scenarios with Graphics, and Matching
- Languages: English and Japanese

Q4. Will my former CNSEx, PCNSE6, or PCNSE7 certification have expiration dates?

There is no change to the expiration policy if you currently hold CNSEx, PCNSE 6, or PCNSE7 certification. We highly encourage you to take the latest PCNSE to keep your skill set aligned with the
changing security landscape. This new policy applies to the new PCNSE and future releases and does not affect older certifications.

Customers are looking for differentiation and technical expertise. Beginning August 2018, PCNSE7 will no longer comply with NextWave Channel Partner Program requirements. Partners will be required to have an unexpired PCNSE certificate to meet compliance requirements. For more information, view the NextWave Interactive Program Guide.

Q5. What does the PCNSE exam cover?

The exam covers topics related to PAN-OS® software, Panorama, GlobalProtect, and other aspects of the Palo Alto Networks network security platform that a firewall administrator needs to know to design, install, configure, maintain, and troubleshoot the vast majority of Palo Alto Networks implementations. This exam does not cover Aperture, Traps, or AutoFocus.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Palo Alto Networks Certified Network Security Engineer – PCNSE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Based on PAN-OS® Version 9.1</td>
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<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
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<td>Deploy and Configure</td>
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<td>Operate</td>
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<td>Configuration Troubleshooting</td>
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For exact details of what is covered in the exam, please refer to our PCNSE Blueprint and Study Guide.

Q6. How should I prepare for the PCNSE exam?

The best way to prepare for our certification exams is to have extensive hands-on experience with our next-generation hardware firewalls, VM-Series firewalls, GlobalProtect, and Panorama management environment. That experience should be in a wide variety of situations, including both large and small deployments, and in edge and data center deployments.
If your experience is incomplete, you should strongly consider attending our most current training courses:

People who take the PCNSE exam might find the PCNSE Blueprint and Study Guide useful.

In addition to the study guide, many other resources are available to help you prepare for the exam. Check them out:

1. **PCNSE Exam Preparation Series**: This self-paced online courseware includes technical videos on some of the exam topics, best practices, and helpful tips.

2. **Free Digital Learning** – Note: You need an account in our learning system to access the free digital learning. If you don’t have one, please use this link to create your account.
   - PCNSE Practice Test – [Practice Test](https://www.paloaltonetworks.com/pcnse)

**Q7. Where do I sign up to take the exam?**

The PCNSE exam is hosted and proctored by a third-party testing company, Pearson VUE. Pearson VUE has testing facilities in major cities worldwide.

Please visit the Pearson VUE website at [http://pearsonvue.com/paloaltonetworks/](http://pearsonvue.com/paloaltonetworks/) to schedule an exam.

**Q7. Can I take my exam at home or in my office?**

- You can take your Online Proctored exam at home or in your office. Wherever you test, you should be in a walled room, with a closed door and without distractions. No one else is permitted in the room with you while you are testing. For more information on online proctoring

**Q8. How much does the exam cost?**

Each exam attempt costs USD$160. Each attempt must be paid for by the exam taker. Prices can vary by country, depending on various factors.
**Q9. What if I need to change my exam date after I've scheduled it?**

You can cancel an exam free of charge up to three (3) business days before the scheduled time slot of the exam. You can sign up for a new date and apply the payment toward the new exam date.

However, if you cancel during the three (3) business days before your scheduled exam, there will be no refund. If you want to take the exam on a later date, you must pay the full USD $160 for the new appointment.

**Q10. Do I get a certificate after I pass the exam?**

Yes. Upon passing, you will receive an email with instructions about how to access our Certification Management System. From there you can download the PCNSE eCertificate, Logo, and Digital Badge. You also will get a link to the instructions for how to order an achievement gift.

Because the new PCNSE is not associated with a specific product version, your PCNSE eCertificate, Logo, and Digital Badge will not have a PCNSE version number. PCNSE eCertificates in the past showed PCNSE6 or PCNSE7.

**Q11. Can I use the Logo on my business cards?**

Yes. You can use the Logo as long as you keep an “Active” certification status.

**Q12. What happens if I don't pass the exam?**

You will receive a score report that suggests the topic areas where you need to focus. Before you try to take the exam again, please refer to the Certification Exam Retake Policy.

**Q13. What is the Certification Exam Retake Policy?**

Palo Alto Networks requires any candidate that fails their first attempt to pass any certification exam to wait five (5) business days. A candidate that fails their second attempt must wait 15 business days before they take the exam again. Any candidate that is unsuccessful after the third attempt must contact certification@paloaltonetworks.com before making any additional attempts.

**Q14. How do I check whether my PCNSE Certification is about to expire?**

You can log in to our Certification Management System and look at the “Certifications” section to check whether your certification is still active or is about to expire.

Contact us at certification@paloaltonetworks.com if you have additional questions.