



ARDMS[®]

American Registry for
Diagnostic Medical Sonography

General Prerequisites

Registered Musculoskeletal Sonographer—RMSKS Certification Examination Prerequisite

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to application submission

Education

Must hold an active certification or license in a health related field*.

(Individuals who hold a valid medical license in good standing without any conditions or restrictions to practice medicine as an MD, DO, DPM, MBBS, DC, NP, PA, DPT or PT must apply for the RMSK® certification offered by APCA, ARDMS' companion Council.)

Required Clinical Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Experience

Performed a minimum of 150 musculoskeletal ultrasound studies within the preceding 36 months of application. None of the 150 case log requirement can be labeled as therapeutic (injection or aspiration). For purposes of satisfying this requirement, these studies must be completed on an actual patient in a clinical diagnostic** setting. Simulation is not acceptable for this attestation.

Recommended Continuing Medical Education (CME)

Although CMEs are not required to apply for the MSKS examination, ARDMS highly recommends and encourages applicants to earn a minimum of 30 musculoskeletal ultrasound specific CMEs to assist with preparing to take the MSKS examination. Applicants do not need to submit CME documentation as this is only a recommendation and not a requirement.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of current, valid license or active certification in a health related field***. (Education certificate/diploma does not meet this requirement.)
2. Completed online self-attestation form indicating that you have performed a minimum of 150 musculoskeletal ultrasound studies within the preceding 36 months of application. The self-attestation form is incorporated into the online application for the MSKS examination. Visit [ARDMS.org/MSKSAttestation](https://www.ardms.org/MSKSAttestation) to view a sample of the attestation form.
3. Applicants must maintain a patient log indicating that he/she has performed a minimum of 150 musculoskeletal ultrasound studies within the preceding 36 months of application. None of the 150 case log requirement can be labeled as therapeutic (injection or aspiration). This log does not need to be submitted with the application but may be requested as part of a random audit. This documentation should be maintained by the applicant for at least 36 months following the date of application for the MSKS examination.
4. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last names on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

**An individual whose health care practice is enhanced, or directly related to, the use of musculoskeletal sonography. Completion of an allied healthcare education program does not meet this requirement.*

***Clinical diagnostic settings include hospitals, clinics and private practices. ARDMS does not accept volunteer, instructorship, unpaid, barter or veterinarian experience.*

****Individuals who hold a valid medical license in good standing without any conditions or restrictions to practice medicine as an MD, DO, DPM, MBBS, DC, NP, PA, DPT or PT must apply for the RMSK certification offered by APCA, ARDMS' companion Council.*

Note: The name on all supporting documentation must be consistent and must match the name under which you apply. If it does not, you will need to submit legal documentation of the name change (e.g. a marriage/divorce certificate) and all other supporting documentation.

Prerequisite requirements are subject to change at any time and from time to time. Applicants must meet current prerequisite requirements in effect at the time of application. ARDMS, in its discretion, may request from you or others information concerning matters that may be relevant to your eligibility for certification and certification status. Documentation received in a language other than English must include a notarized translation in English. All documents, communications, and other information received by ARDMS become the property of ARDMS and will not be returned.

Sonography Principles & Instrumentation (SPI) Examination Requirement

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the SPI Requirement for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

Successful completion of a general, medical or sonographic physics class/seminar/course.

Documentation Required with Application

1) A transcript (see transcript requirements below) reflecting successful completion of a graded general, medical or sonographic college, post-secondary or higher education physics class (with a grade of C or above);

OR

A CME certificate denoting successful completion of a general, medical or sonographic physics seminar, physics review course, or physics correspondence course, denoting a minimum award of 12 ARDMS-accepted CME credits. The certificate must meet ARDMS CME documentation (visit ARDMS.org/CME to view ARDMS-accepted CMEs). The CME credits must be earned within two (2) years prior to application submission.

2) Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last names on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Transcript Requirements

- Name of applicant and school must be printed on the transcript; handwritten information will not be accepted.
- The class or course name must specifically indicate “Physics,” “Physical Principles” and/or “Instrumentation” in the title and be printed on the transcript. Supplementary information will not be accepted.
- Transcript can be unofficial or official.
- If submitting a foreign transcript or degree, an original course by course foreign transcript evaluation must accompany the application summary and indicate the aforementioned requirements.
- Transcripts indicating only a number grade must include a “grade key” printed on the transcript showing the letter grade. Supplementary information will not be accepted.
- A grade report will not be accepted in lieu of the transcript (unofficial or official).

Prerequisite 1

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

A single two-year allied health education program that is patient-care related.¹

Allied health occupations include, but are not limited to, diagnostic medical sonographer, radiologic technologist, respiratory therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist and registered nurse.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

12 months of full-time² clinical ultrasound/vascular experience.³

Note: If you are using your DMS/CVT program for the educational requirement, you still have to document an additional 12 months of full-time clinical ultrasound/vascular experience earned outside the two-year program.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Official transcript from two-year allied health education program as noted in the “Education” requirement of this prerequisite. Must state specific number of credits and indicate quarter or semester based system. Must include graduation information.
2. Copy of education program certificate, certification or license.
3. Original letter from supervising physician, ARDMS-Registered sonographer/technologist or educational program director indicating a minimum of 12 months

of full-time clinical/vascular experience including exact dates of ultrasound experience/successful completion of sonography program. For required letter content, please visit: ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.

4. Original signed and completed clinical verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms are available at ARDMS.org/CV.
5. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the identification must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

ARDMS now offers a Paperless Application Program for Prerequisite 2 applicants. For more information please visit ARDMS.org/Apply.

Prerequisite 2

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

Graduate or a student⁶ in a program accredited by an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), United States Department of Education (USDOE) or Canadian Medical Association (CMA), that specifically conducts programmatic accreditation for diagnostic medical sonography/diagnostic cardiac sonography/vascular technology. Currently the only organizations that offer programmatic accreditation under the aforementioned associations are the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and the Canadian Medical Association (CMA).

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

No additional experience is required.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of a diploma from an ultrasound/vascular program or an official transcript indicating the date the degree was conferred.
2. Original letter signed by program director and/or medical director indicating the date of graduation or successful completion of the program⁴. Program directors must use the mandatory formatted sample letter, available on ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. The CV form is not required if the application is submitted and received within one year after successful completion of the program. Otherwise an original signed and completed CV form for each appropriate specialty area(s) must be submitted. CV forms are available at ARDMS.org/CV.
4. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last names on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 3A

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

Bachelor’s degree (any major) or foreign degree equivalent to a Bachelor’s degree in the U.S. or Canada.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

12 months of full-time² clinical ultrasound/vascular experience.³

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of Bachelor’s degree or an official transcript earned in the U.S. or Canada, or an original foreign transcript evaluation indicating that the degree is equivalent to a Bachelor’s degree in the U.S. or Canada.
2. Original letter from supervising physician, ARDMS-Registered sonographer/technologist or educational program director indicating a minimum of 12 months of full-time clinical/vascular experience including exact dates of ultrasound experience/successful completion of sonography program. For required letter content, please visit: ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. Original signed and completed clinical verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms are available at ARDMS.org/CV.
4. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last names on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 3B

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

Graduate or student⁶ in a Bachelor's degree in sonography or vascular technology or foreign degree equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in sonography or vascular technology in the U.S. or Canada.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

No additional experience is required.

Note: Sonography or vascular technology Bachelor's degree applicants may take the examination one year prior to the completion of degree, provided they have completed 12 months of full-time² clinical experience³ within the program.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of Bachelor's degree or an official transcript earned in the U.S. or Canada or an original foreign transcript evaluation indicating that the degree is equivalent to a Bachelor's degree in the U.S. or Canada.
2. Original letter signed by education program director verifying length of ultrasound or vascular experience. If program is not completed at the time of application, a letter signed by the program director stating graduation date and completion of appropriate clinical ultrasound experience³ is needed⁵. Program directors must use the mandatory formatted student or graduate sample letters, available on ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. The clinical verification (CV) form is not required if the application is submitted and received in the ARDMS office within one year prior to successful completion of the program, provided that the applicant has completed 12 months of full-time clinical experience within the program at the time that the application is submitted. Otherwise, an original signed and completed CV form for each appropriate specialty area(s) must be submitted. CV forms are available at ARDMS.org/CV.
4. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 4A1

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

General, U.S., and Canada — MD or DO degree earned in the U.S. or Canada.

Formal Training — Attendance of an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) or Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPS) accredited residency or fellowship that includes didactic and clinical ultrasound/vascular experience as an integral part of the program.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

The applicant must be able to document clinical experience with a minimum of 800 studies in the area in which he/she is applying for.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of medical school diploma.
2. Original letter from residency/fellowship program director verifying dates of attendance and completion of a minimum of 800 studies in the area in which you are applying. For required letter content, please visit: ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. Original signed and completed clinical verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms may be found at: ARDMS.org/CV.
4. Applicants should maintain a patient log or other record of the 800 studies. This log does not need to be submitted with the application but may be requested as part of a random audit. This documentation should be maintained by the applicant for at least three (3) years following the date of application for examination.
5. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 4A2

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

General, U.S., and Canada — MD or DO degree earned in the U.S. or Canada.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

12 months of full-time² clinical ultrasound/vascular experience.³

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of medical school diploma.
2. Original letter from supervising physician, ARDMS-Registered sonographer/technologist or educational program director indicating a minimum of 12 months of full-time clinical/vascular experience including exact dates of ultrasound experience/successful completion of sonography program. If you are the supervising physician, you may write your own letter. For required letter content, please visit: ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. Original signed and completed clinical verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms may be found at: ARDMS.org/CV.
4. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 4B1

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

General - Outside U.S., and Canada — MD or DO degrees equivalent to those of the U.S. or Canada.

Formal Training — Attendance of an accredited residency or fellowship that includes didactic and clinical ultrasound/vascular experience as an integral part of the program.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

The applicant must be able to document clinical experience with a minimum of 800 studies in the area in which he/she is applying for.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Original certification report or official notarized copy of the evaluation converting the foreign medical degree must indicate that this medical degree is equivalent to a doctor of medicine degree in the U.S. or Canada. A listing of organizations that produce individualized, written reports describing each certificate, diploma or degree earned, and specifying its U.S. or Canadian equivalent can be found at ARDMS.org/ForeignTranscripts. If the applicant has taken and passed all three parts of and earned the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification, a copy of the ECFMG[®] certificate may be submitted with a copy of a current, valid MD or DO license from the U.S. or Canada in lieu of the evaluation.
2. Original letter from residency/fellowship program director verifying dates of attendance and completion of a minimum of 800 studies in the area in which you are applying. For required letter content, please visit: ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. Original signed and completed clinical verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms may be found at: ARDMS.org/CV.
4. Applicants should maintain a patient log or other record of the 800 studies. This log does not need to be submitted with the application but may be requested as part of a random audit. This documentation should be maintained by the applicant for at least three (3) years following the date of application for examination.
5. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 4B2

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

General - Outside U.S., and Canada — MD or DO degrees equivalent to those of the U.S. or Canada.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

12 months of full-time² clinical ultrasound/vascular experience.³

Documentation Required with Application

1. Original certification report or official notarized copy of the evaluation converting the foreign medical degree must indicate that this medical degree is equivalent to a doctor of medicine degree in the U.S. or Canada. A listing of organizations that produce individualized, written reports describing each certificate, diploma or degree earned, and specifying its U.S. or Canadian equivalent can be found at ARDMS.org/ForeignTranscripts. If the applicant has taken and passed all three parts of and earned the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG[®]) certification, a copy of the ECFMG[®] certificate may be submitted with a copy of a current, valid MD or DO license from the U.S. or Canada in lieu of the evaluation.
2. Original letter from supervising physician, sonographer/technologist or educational program director indicating a minimum of 12 months of full-time clinical/vascular experience including exact dates of ultrasound experience/successful completion of sonography program. If you are the supervising physician, you may write your own letter. For required letter content, please visit: ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. Original signed and completed clinical verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s).
4. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 5

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education

General—Must hold one of the following Active certifications:

ONLY RCS, RCCS or RVS through Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI), or

ONLY Sonography, Vascular Sonography or Breast Sonography through American Registry of Radiologic Technologist (ARRT), or

DMU through Australian Society of Ultrasound in Medicine (ASUM).

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

Previously met by achievement of other organization's certification.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of Active certification identification card or copy of license.
2. Original signed and completed CV form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms are available at ARDMS.org/CV.
3. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Prerequisite 6

Eliminated effective January 1, 2015

Prerequisite 7

Prerequisite 7 is scheduled to expire on 12/31/2017.

Note: All listed items must be met and completed prior to submission. See the Notes About the Prerequisites for footnotes, definitions and complete details.

Education:

High school graduate or U.S. or Canadian equivalent of foreign high school graduate.

Required Clinical Ultrasound/Vascular Experience

Minimum of 48 months full-time² clinical ultrasound/vascular experience³ and a minimum of 3,200 cases in each applied for specialty area.

Documentation Required with Application

1. Copy of high school diploma or U.S. or Canadian equivalent of foreign high school graduate. (For individuals whose high school diploma/equivalent was earned outside of the U.S. or Canada, an original credential report or official notarized copy of the evaluation is required. A listing of organizations that produce individualized, written reports describing each certificate, diploma or degree earned, and specifying its U.S. or Canadian equivalent, can be found at ARDMS.org/ForeignTranscripts).
2. Original Physician's Statement Experience letter(s) from reporting physician(s) indicating a minimum of 6,720 clinical ultrasound hours earned over a 48 month period, a minimum of 3,200 cases in the applied for specialty area and including exact dates of ultrasound experience in each applied-for specialty area. The Physician's Statement Experience letter(s) may be found on ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
3. Original Sonographer's Statement letter from an ARDMS Registered Sonographer verifying the applicant has performed independently and effectively under his or her supervision the required minimum number of cases for each type of study (indicate the number of cases for each applied-for specialty area(s) in the letter). The Sonographer's Statement letter may be found on ARDMS.org/SampleLetters.
4. Original signed and completed Clinical Verification (CV) form for each appropriate specialty area(s). CV forms may be found at ARDMS.org/CV.
5. Thirty ARDMS accepted CMEs that are ultrasound related in the specific applied for specialty area earned within three years prior to the date of application for examination.
6. Applicants should maintain a patient log or other record of the 3,200 cases for each applied for specialty area. This log does not need to be submitted with the application but may be requested as part of a random audit. This documentation should be maintained by the applicant for at least three (3) years following the date of examination.
7. Photocopy of a non-expired government-issued photo identification (ID) with signature; the first and last name on the ID must exactly match the first and last names in your ARDMS/APCA record.

Notes About the SPI Examination Requirement

- The SPI Examination Requirement applies to the SPI examination only.
- If the SPI examination is your first ARDMS examination, please note: those who can fully meet an existing ARDMS prerequisite (1 through 7) are strongly encouraged to apply under that prerequisite, as future application processing will be faster and easier.
- Applicants who have been approved to take one of the following examinations will apply as a re-applicant (no required supporting documentation): AB, BR, OB/GYN, FE, AE, PE, VT, PS, MSKS.
- A clinical verification (CV) form is not required for the SPI Examination.
- To apply for an ARDMS specialty examination (e.g. AB, BR, OB/GYN, FE, AE, PE, PS, VT, PS, MSKS), an existing ARDMS prerequisite (1 through 7) must be met.

Notes About the Prerequisites

¹ A two-year allied health education program that is patient-care related is defined as (1) 24 full-time consecutive calendar months or (2) 60 semester credits or (3) 84 quarter credits (4) and requiring a clinical internship/externship to complete the program. Credit hours are based on U.S. equivalency in a post-secondary institution. The program or school must be authorized by an accrediting agency to award semester or quarter credits and the type of credits granted must be reflected on the transcript. Transcripts reflecting clock hours must be converted to credit hours. If submitting a foreign degree, an original course by course foreign transcript evaluation must accompany the application summary and indicate the aforementioned requirements.

² Full-time is defined as 35 hours per week, at least 48 weeks per year. If working part time, the requirements are prorated. Twenty hours per week would take approximately two years. The full-time definition applies to both paid clinical ultrasound/vascular experience and experience earned through completion of a formal ultrasound/vascular program.

³ Clinical ultrasound/vascular experience may be obtained one of two ways: (1) being employed as an ultrasound/vascular sonographer in a clinical setting for a minimum of 12 months and a minimum of 1680 hours, or (2) successfully completing a formal, full-time ultrasound/vascular program that is a minimum of 12 months in length, a minimum of 1680 total program hours, including appropriate clinical and didactic hours, and requires a clinical internship/externship to complete the program. If the total length of the program exceeds 12 months, the applicant must successfully complete the program in its entirety prior to using the program as documentation of the required clinical ultrasound/vascular experience. Note: the above two options are not applicable to Prerequisite 3B. To apply as a student under Prerequisite 3B, the applicant must have completed 12 months of full-time scanning experience within the program. It is recommended that an applicant be directly involved in a minimum of 800 diagnostic cases during his/her clinical experience in each specialty area for which he/she is applying. Clinical diagnostic settings include hospitals, clinics and private practices. ARDMS does not accept volunteer, instructorship, unpaid, barter or veterinarian experience. The time frames in which the education and clinical requirements are met cannot overlap. Clinical experience earned to document the education requirement cannot also be used to support the clinical requirement.

⁴ The mandatory Prerequisite 2 Application letter (found on [ARDMS.org/SampleLetters](https://www.ardms.org/SampleLetters)) is valid for one year from the date of graduation. If the application and appropriate supporting documentation are not received within one year from the date of graduation, after one year of successful completion of the program, the applicant will need new documentation verifying successful program completion, and a current, completed, original signed CV form for each applied-for specialty area will be required. An original letter per student is required. First-time applicants applying under Prerequisite 2 must apply for either the Sonography Principles & Instrumentation (SPI) examination or a specialty area that is included within the programmatically accredited curriculum.

⁵ The mandatory Student Prerequisite 3B Application Letter (found on [ARDMS.org/SampleLetters](https://www.ardms.org/SampleLetters)), is valid through the expected graduation date. If the student chooses to apply after graduation, then the Graduate Prerequisite 3B Application letter (found on [ARDMS.org/SampleLetters](https://www.ardms.org/SampleLetters)) and a current, completed, original CV form for each applied-for specialty area will be required. An original letter per student is required.

Note: If the Bachelor's Degree sonography/vascular technology program is also programmatically accredited through one of the following: Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), United States Department of Education (USDOE), or Canadian Medical Association (CMA), and the students have graduated, then the prerequisite 3B students should apply under Prerequisite 2.

⁶ Students deemed eligible for examination under Prerequisite 2 or 3B prior to graduation must successfully complete said program in order to be able to keep and certifications awarded by the ARDMS. In the event that the student does not successfully complete said program, ARDMS, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to rescind any credentials earned.

Note: ARDMS, in its discretion, may request from you or others information concerning matters that may be relevant to your eligibility for certification and certification status.

Documentation (MD licenses, CMEs, etc.) received in a language other than English must include a notarized translation in English and all submitted foreign degrees must be accompanied by a course by course evaluation done by a Foreign Education Transcript Evaluation Organization.

All documents, communications, and other information received by ARDMS become the property of ARDMS and will not be returned.