



# **Compliance Official Qualification Examination (Series 14)**

## **Content Outline**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This content outline provides a comprehensive guide to the topics covered by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Compliance Official Qualification Examination (Series 14). The outline is intended to familiarize exam candidates with the range of subjects covered by the exam as well as the depth of knowledge required. Sample questions are also included to acquaint candidates with the principal **formats** of multiple-choice items used on the exam. These items are not indicative of the level of difficulty of the exam.

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE EXAM**

The Series 14 was created by NYSE Regulation as one of a series of regulatory initiatives designed to codify, clarify and give specificity to compliance obligations, in general, of members and member organizations. The Series 14 exam is now owned by FINRA. The qualification exam is intended to ensure that the individuals designated as having day-to-day compliance responsibilities for their respective firms or who supervise ten or more people engaged in compliance activities have the knowledge necessary to carry out their job responsibilities. Given this purpose, the Series 14 exam seeks to measure accurately and reliably the degree to which each candidate possesses the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the job functions identified as being essential to the position of Compliance Official.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXAM**

The Series 14 exam was developed based on a job analysis of the compliance official position. The job analysis process included collecting data from a wide variety of firms both through questionnaires and personal interviews involving compliance officials, their peers, subordinates and superiors. A committee of compliance professionals representative of FINRA member organizations then identified the major tasks and determined the knowledge and skills necessary to perform these tasks.

All items on the exam are written by a committee of experienced compliance officials in cooperation with FINRA staff. The passing score is also determined by the committee following professionally accepted standard-setting procedures.

Exam items and their statistical performance are analyzed routinely to ensure that items are accurate and continue to be relevant to the functions of a compliance official.

Please note that exam items are updated when necessary to reflect current industry practices and regulations. Candidates are responsible for keeping current on rule changes as the exam is updated to reflect pertinent rule changes. If there are substantive changes to the exam's subject matter, an information memo will be distributed announcing these revisions prior to their inclusion in the exam.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE EXAM

The exam contains 110 multiple-choice items, which are divided into nine categories reflecting the overall knowledge, skills and abilities required of compliance officials. Federal, state, and self-regulatory organization (SRO) rules are listed for reference purposes under each topic heading. Although these references provide an overview of the subject matter and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of references, it may be helpful for candidates to include the review of pertinent SEC releases and/or cases as part of their study. The allocation of items for each category is as follows:

	<u>Content Area</u>	<u>Item Allocation</u>
Section 1	Regulatory Agencies	3
Section 2	Markets and Operations	20
Section 3	Broker-Dealer Operations	10
Section 4	Credit Regulation/Capital Requirements	7
Section 5	General Supervision	20
Section 6	Investment Banking	15
Section 7	Registration	9
Section 8	Sales Practice-Customer/Employee Accounts	16
Section 9	Sales Practice-Solicitations	10
	Total	110

Candidates are given three hours to complete the exam.

# COMPLIANCE OFFICIAL QUALIFICATION EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

## 1.0 REGULATORY AGENCIES -- The jurisdictional authority of the various regulatory organizations

The list below represents the resources for the rules and regulations contained in this examination:

- Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC)
  - Securities Act of 1933
  - Securities and Exchange Act of 1934
  - Investment Advisers Act of 1940
  - Investment Company Act of 1940
- Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA)
- New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)
- Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB)

## 1.1 Disciplinary Capabilities and Procedures -- General knowledge and understanding of arbitration rules and disciplinary regulations of self-regulatory organizations.

## 2.0 MARKETS and OPERATIONS -- Understands how listed and OTC securities markets operate, how trades and orders are executed, the role of the firm's market makers and traders, and how these practices impact compliance monitoring activities.

### 2.1 Sales, Trading Practices & Surveillance -- Advises on and monitors procedures covering all aspects of the firm's trading activities including proprietary accounts. Develops surveillance procedures for review of trading. Reviews and/or develops policies for firm participation in new products and trading strategies.

#### 2.1.1 Sales Practices

FINRA Rule 2010 (Standards of Commercial Honor and Principles of Trade)  
FINRA Rule 2121 (Fair Prices and Commissions)  
FINRA Rule 5130 (Restrictions on the Purchase and Sale of Initial Equity Public Offerings)  
FINRA Rule 5270 (Front Running)  
FINRA Rule 5280 (Trading Ahead of Research Reports)  
FINRA Rule 5310 (Best Execution and Interpositioning)  
FINRA Rule 5320 (Prohibition Against Trading Ahead of Customer Orders)

#### 2.1.2 Trading Practices

FINRA Rule 2232 (Customer Confirmations)  
FINRA Rule 4320 (Short Sale Delivery Requirements)  
FINRA Rule 6380A (Transaction Reporting)  
FINRA Rule 6700 Series (Trade Reporting and Compliance Engine- TRACE)  
FINRA Rule 11892 (Clearly Erroneous Reports in Exchange-Listed Securities)

NYSE Rule 7.31 (Orders and Modifiers)  
NYSE Rule 7.35 Series (Auctions)  
NYSE Rule 7.37 (Order Execution and Routing)  
NYSE Rule 72(d) (Priority of Cross Transactions) and Supplemental Material .10 (Definition of a Block)  
NYSE Rule 76 ("Crossing" Orders)

### 2.1.3 SEC Rules

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 10b-5 (Employment of Manipulative and Deceptive Devices)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15c2-11 (Initiation or Resumption of Quotations without Specified Information)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 16(b) Short Swing Profits  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation M  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 10b-18 (Purchases of Certain Equity Securities by the Issuer and Others)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1933 - Rule 415 (Delayed or Continuous Offering and Sale of Securities - Shelf Registration)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation NMS  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation SHO

### 2.1.4 Surveillance

FINRA Rule Series 6600 (OTC Reporting Facility)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 11a-1 (Regulation of Floor Trading)  
Treasury Department's Auction Market Rules  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15g-1 (Exemptions for Certain Transactions)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15c2-11 (Initiation or Resumption of Quotations Without Specified Information)

3.0 **BROKER-DEALER OPERATIONS** -- Understands manual and computer systems required to capture and analyze market and trading information for surveillance purposes; assembles internal and external data for surveillance purposes; develops, modifies, implements, and reviews manual and/or computer-based central surveillance procedures; reviews principal and customer daily trading activities; retrieves background for regulatory inquiries.

### 3.1 Record keeping

FINRA Rule 2232 (Customer Confirmations)  
FINRA Rule 3210 Accounts Other Broker Dealers and Financial Institution  
FINRA Rule 4511 (General Requirements)  
FINRA Rule 4512 (Customer Account Information)  
FINRA Rule 4513 (Records of Written Customer Complaints)  
FINRA Rule 4514 (Authorization Records for Negotiable Instruments Drawn From a Customer's Account)  
FINRA Rule 4515 (Approval and Documentation of Changes in Account Name or

Designation)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 17(a) (Record keeping Requirements)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 10b-10 (Confirmation of Transactions)

### 3.2 Reporting Requirements

FINRA Rule 4560 (Short-Interest Reporting)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 13(d) (Accumulations and Reporting Requirements)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 13(f) (Reports by Institutional Investment Managers)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 13(g) (Disclosure of Shares)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 16(a) (Directors, Officers, and Principal Stockholders)

#### 3.2.1 Program Trading (Practical Knowledge)

NYSE Rule 7.12 (Trading Halts Due to Extraordinary Market Volatility)

### 4.0 CREDIT REGULATION/CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS -- General understanding of regulatory requirements regarding the extension of credit; general implications of events or trades on net capital (emphasis on knowledge of general concepts).

#### 4.1 Capital Requirements

FINRA Rule 4110 (Capital Compliance)  
FINRA Rule 4120 (Regulatory Notification and Business Curtailment)  
FINRA Rule 4521 (Notifications, Questionnaires and Reports)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15c3-1 (Net Capital Requirements for Brokers or Dealers)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15c3-3 (Possession and Control of Customer Securities/Reserve Requirements)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 17a-11 (Notification Provisions for Brokers and Dealers)

#### 4.2 Credit Regulation

Day Trading  
Prime Brokerage Arrangements  
Joint Back Office Arrangements

FINRA Rule 4210 (Margin Requirements)  
FINRA Rule 4220 (Daily Record of Required Margin)  
Regulation T  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 11d (Prohibitions on the extension of credit by a broker-dealer)  
SEC No-Action Letter – January 25, 1994

5.0 GENERAL SUPERVISION -- Advises on, implements and monitors procedures pertaining to the proper delegation of authority throughout the firm's full range of business and to the supervision of its employees.

FINRA Rule 2010 (Standards of Commercial Honor and Principles of Trade)  
FINRA Rule 2040 (Payments to Unregistered Persons)  
FINRA Rule 2150 (Improper Use of Customers' Securities or Funds; Prohibition Against Guarantees and Sharing in Accounts)  
FINRA Rule 3110 (Supervision)  
FINRA Rule 3130 (Annual Certification of Compliance and Supervisory Processes)  
FINRA Rule 3220 (Influencing or Rewarding Employees of Others)  
FINRA Rule 4311 (Carrying Agreements)  
FINRA Rule 4370 (Business Continuity Plans and Emergency Contact Information)  
FINRA Rule 4530 (Reporting Requirements)  
FINRA Rule 6140 (Other Trading Practices)  
FINRA By-Laws of the Corporation, Article III, Section 4 (Definition of Disqualification)  
MSRB Rule G-32 (Disclosures in Connection with Primary Offerings)  
MSRB Rule G-37 (Political Contributions and Prohibitions on Municipal Securities Business)  
MSRB Rule G-38 (Solicitation of Municipal Securities Business)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15c2-12 (Municipal Securities Disclosure)

5.1 Soft Dollar Arrangements

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 28(e)  
Securities Exchange Act Release 34-23170

6.0 INVESTMENT BANKING – General understanding of regulations regarding the underwriting process and other investment banking activities; general implications of efforts such as protection of confidential material.

6.1 The underwriting Process, Mergers and Acquisitions, and other Corporate Restructuring

FINRA Rule 2241 (Research Analysts and Research Reports)  
FINRA Rule 5190 (Notification Requirements for Offering Participants)  
Securities Act of 1933 - Section 5 (Prohibitions Relating to Interstate Commerce and the Mails)  
Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 137 (Publications or Distributions of Research Reports by Brokers or Dealers That Are Not Participating in an Issuer's Registered Distribution of Securities)  
Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 138 (Publications or Distributions of Research Reports by Brokers or Dealers Other Than Those They Are Distributing)  
Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 139 ((Publications or Distributions of Research Reports by Brokers or Dealers Distributing Securities)  
Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 174 (Prospectus Delivery)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation M

Information Barrier Procedures

Insider Trading Regulations

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 15(f) (Policies and procedures to be developed by broker-dealers to prevent misuse of material, non-public information)

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 10b-5 (Employment of Manipulative and Deceptive Devices)

Insider Trading & Enforcement Act of 1988

State Securities Laws – Blue Sky Regulations

## 6.2 Fixed Price Offerings

FINRA Rule 5141 (Sale of Securities in a Fixed Price Offering)

## 6.3 Tender Offers

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 13e-1 (Purchase of Securities by the Issuer During Third Party Tender Offers)

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 14e-3 (Transactions in Securities on the Basis of Material, Nonpublic Information in the Context of Tender Offers)

## 6.4 Control and Restricted Securities

Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 144 (Control or Restricted Securities)

Securities Act of 1933 - Section 4 (Transactions Exempt from Registration)

Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 145 (Reclassification of Securities, Mergers, Consolidations and Acquisitions of Assets)

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation D (Rules Governing the Limited Offer and Sale of Securities Without Registration Under the Securities Act of 1933)

## 6.5 Private Placements

Securities Act of 1933 - Rule 144A (Private Resales of Securities to Institutions)

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation S (Rules Governing Offers and Sales Made Outside the United States without Registration under the Securities Act of 1933)

FINRA Rule 5122 (Private Placement of Securities Issued by Members)

FINRA Rule 5123 (Private Placement of Securities)

## 6.6 Limited Offerings

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Regulation A (Confidential Small Issues Exemption)

## 7.0 REGISTRATION Provides firm and branch registration personnel with advice on specific registration and termination procedures; provides regulators with information and documentation on circumstances where employees fail to properly follow NYSE and other SRO rules; monitors firm's registration and trading practices for compliance with regulatory procedures.

- 7.1 Registration of personnel -- Advises on and monitors the proper registration and employment of industry personnel in compliance with industry regulations

FINRA Rule 1200 Series (Registration and Qualification)  
FINRA Rule 1240 (Continuing Education)  
FINRA Rule 3110 (Supervision)  
FINRA Rule 3270 (Outside Business Activities of an Associated Person)  
FINRA By-Laws of the Corporation, Article III, Section 4 (Definition of Disqualification)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 19h-1 (Statutory Disqualification and Application for Relief)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 3(a)39 (Statutory Disqualification)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 15(b)4 (Sanctions Against Broker or Dealer)  
FINRA By-Laws of the Corporation, Article V (Registered Representatives and Associated Persons)  
State Registration/Licensing Regulations

- 7.2 Registration Forms (Personnel and Broker-Dealer) – Understanding of the use of and proper filing requirements

FINRA Firm Gateway  
Form U4 and amendments (Registration Application)  
Form U5 and amendments (Registration Termination)  
Form BD and amendments (Broker-Dealer Registration)  
Form ADV

- 8.0 SALES PRACTICE - CUSTOMER/EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTS -- Implements and monitors the firm's procedures for opening and supervising customer and employee accounts.

Sales practice issues include: misrepresentation, unauthorized trades, excessive trading, best interest obligations/suitability requirements, failure to follow instructions, documentation, solicitation, misappropriation/forgery, communications with the public, research, product origination/investment banking, trading

Requirements for Opening, Maintaining and Monitoring Accounts

- 8.1. SEC/FINRA/OFAC Rules

Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15l-1 (Regulation Best Interest)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Rule 15c1-7 (Discretionary Accounts)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 - Section 15(g) (Requirements for Transactions in Penny Stocks)  
Securities Exchange Act of 1934 – Rule 17a-14 (Form CRS, for Preparation, Filing and Delivery of Form CRS)  
FINRA Rule 2111 (Suitability)  
FINRA Rule 2262 (Disclosure of Control Relationship with Issuer)  
FINRA Rule 2269 (Disclosure of Participation or Interest in Primary or Secondary Distribution)  
FINRA Rule 2360 (Options)

FINRA Rule 3110 (Supervision)  
FINRA Rule 3210 (Accounts at Other Broker-Dealers and Financial Institutions)  
FINRA Rule 3250 (Designation of Accounts)  
FINRA Rule 3260 (Discretionary Accounts)  
FINRA Rule 3310 (Anti-Money Laundering Compliance Program)  
FINRA Rule 11870 (Customer Account Transfer Contracts)  
Bank Secrecy Act  
USA PATRIOT Act of 2001  
Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Rules  
Suspicious activity monitoring  
Penny Stock Reform Act of 1990

- 8.2 Customer Complaints--Reports, maintains records and participates in the preparation of responses

FINRA Rule 2360 (Options)  
FINRA Rule 3110 (Supervision)  
FINRA Rule 4530 (Reporting Requirements)  
MSRB Rule G-10 (Delivery of Investor Brochure)

- 9.0 SALES PRACTICE - SOLICITATIONS -- Reviews and/or develops policies for firm and product advertising, research reports, lectures, seminars, magazine and newspaper articles and media appearances, and direct solicitation, etc.

- 9.1 Definition and approval of public communications

FINRA Rule 2210 (Communications with the Public)  
FINRA Rule 2220 (Options Communications to Customers)  
FINRA Rule 2241 (Research Analysts and Research Reports)  
FINRA Rule 3110 (Supervision)

- 9.2 Regulation of telephone solicitations ("cold calling") -- Reviews and advises marketing and sales personnel on procedures for cold calling.

FINRA Rule 3230 (Telemarketing)  
Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991

## EXAM ITEMS FORMATS & ORIENTATION

The items in the exam range from simple recall of basic facts to the drawing of conclusions from a set of facts. Many of the questions are presented as job-related scenarios or problems that typically require candidates to go beyond the simple recall of facts. Other questions require the evaluation of subjective information to arrive at decisions about the "BEST" or the "FIRST" action to take in a particular situation.

All exam items will be presented in one of three multiple-choice formats: closed stem, sentence completion, and "EXCEPT". Examples of these formats are shown below. Candidates are advised to become familiar with them.

1. Closed Stem Format - In this type of item, you are asked a question and are given four possible answers from which to choose.

Under Rule 144, what is the holding period for stock purchased in the open market by a control person?

- (A) Two years
- (B) One year
- (C) Six months
- (D) No holding period \*\*

2. Incomplete Sentence Format-This type of item is characterized by an incomplete sentence followed by four options that represent conclusions to that sentence.

According to NYSE rules, a block of stock is defined as:

- (A) 10,000 shares, or a quantity with a market value of \$150,000 or more, whichever is less.
- (B) 10,000 shares, or a quantity with a market value of \$200,000 or more, whichever is less. \*\*
- (C) 20,000 shares, or a quantity with a market value of \$200,000 or more, which is less.
- (D) 20,000 shares, or a quantity with a market value of \$200,000 or more, whichever is more.

3. "EXCEPT" Format-This type of item requires you to recognize the one choice that is an exception among the four answer choices presented.

All of the following require the successful completion of one or more exams **except** a:

- (A) specialist.
- (B) trader.
- (C) securities lending representative. \*\*
- (D) research analyst.