

National Qualification in Emergency Medical Technology

NOEMT Examination Handbook

7th Edition

Mission Statement

“The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council exists to specify, review, maintain and monitor standards of excellence for the delivery of pre-hospital emergency care for people in Ireland.”

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) is the statutory regulator with responsibility for the conduct of the National Qualification in Emergency Medical Technology (NQEMT) examinations for all levels of pre-hospital emergency care practice: Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic (AP).

Information in this handbook represents a comprehensive account of current policies and procedures as well as providing general guidance towards undertaking the NQEMT EMT examination. This edition supersedes information contained in any previously published editions and should be read in conjunction with the most current information available on the PHECC website – www.phecc.ie.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 GENERAL INFORMATION	1
Introduction.....	1
Legal Basis.....	1
Data Protection	1
Retention of Examination Materials	2
Examination Validity and Reliability	2
Examination Quality Group Role	2
Examiners Role	2
Test Delivery Service.....	2
RI Role.....	2
2 EXAMINATION STRUCTURE & CONTENT	3
Eligibility to sit the Examination	3
Overview.....	3
MCQ.....	3
Duration	3
Marking	3
Unsuccessful Candidates	3
SWA	4
Duration	4
Marking.....	4
Unsuccessful Candidates	4
OSCE.....	4
OSCE Success Requirement	4
OSCE Same Day Re-sits.....	5
Paramedic Candidates	5
Special Needs Candidates.....	5
RI Role Prior to Examinations	6
RI Role – OSCE Examination Centre	6
3 EXAM DEFERRAL	7
General	7
EMT.....	7
MCQ.....	7
OSCE.....	7
Paramedic.....	7
MCQ and SWA	7
Scheduling	7
Cancellation - Rescheduling	8
4 TERMS & CONDITIONS	8
Entry to the Examination Centre.....	8
During the Exam	9
Examination Security.....	10
5 EMT APPLICATION	11
Application Process and Fee Payment	11
Exam Progression	11
MCQ Examination.....	11
Candidate - Exam Application to PHECC.....	11

EMT Candidate Fee.....	11
Candidate Prometric Test Centre Booking.....	11
NQEMT OSCE EMT.....	11
Framework for the Emergency Medical Technician Standard.....	12
6 PARAMEDIC APPLICATION.....	13
Application Process and Fee Payment.....	13
Exam Progression.....	13
OSCE.....	13
NQEMT MCQ Paramedic Examination.....	13
Candidate – Exam Application to PHECC.....	13
MCQ Candidate Fees.....	13
SWA Examination.....	13
Candidate – Exam Application to PHECC.....	13
MCQ Candidate Fees.....	14
Framework for the Paramedic Standard.....	15
7 ADVANCED PARAMEDIC.....	17
8 AFTER THE EXAMINATION.....	17
Results.....	17
EMT Examinations.....	17
Paramedic.....	17
NQEMT Certificates.....	17
Viewing and Rechecks.....	17
Terms & Conditions of Viewing sessions.....	18
Examination Appeals.....	18
Repeats & Unsuccessful Candidates.....	19
MCQ & SWA repeats.....	19
EMT.....	19
Paramedic.....	19
OSCE Repeats.....	19
EMT.....	20
Paramedic.....	20
9 JOINING THE PHECC REGISTER.....	20
GLOSSARY:.....	21

1 General Information

Introduction

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) is an independent statutory body with responsibility for standards in education and training in the field of pre-hospital emergency care in Ireland.

PHECC was established by the Minister for Health and Children by Statutory Instrument 109 of 2000 (PHECC Establishment Order). PHECC's responsibilities were enhanced by Statutory Instrument 575 of 2004 (PHECC Amendment Order) and the Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2007.

PHECC oversees the NQEMT examination process from setting the standard for course content, writing examination questions, training and approving examiners, marking examinations and awarding the National Qualification in Emergency Medical Technology (NQEMT). We are committed to working in partnership with our training and test centre providers in order to deliver high quality examinations that are efficient, fair and accessible.

The NQEMT examination is a benchmark process, which assesses the knowledge and skills for competent practice as an EMT, Paramedic and AP. PHECC is empowered to award the NQEMT to successful candidates. Holders of the NQEMT apply to PHECC for entry on to the national professional register for pre-hospital emergency care practitioners.

This examination handbook aims to acquaint candidates and Recognised Institutions (RIs) with the examination process, how it is conducted and the specific focus of each of its components. This will ensure candidates are prepared appropriately.

Legal Basis

PHECC is charged with responsibility for the conduct of examinations with respect to Pre-Hospital Emergency Medical Technology.

Extract from Establishment Order (S.I. No 109 of 2000)/Amendment Order (S.I. No 575 of 2004):

Article 4. The functions of the Council shall be to

- (a) Conduct examinations leading to the award of the NQEMT at the level of competence of Emergency Medical Technician, Paramedic or Advanced Paramedic, as the case may be.
- (b) Award the NQEMT to such persons as have completed a recognised course under sub-article (h) (i) in a RI and have passed the relevant examination conducted by the Council pursuant to sub-article (b) of this Article.

Article 31. The Council may charge such fees as may, from time to time, be determined by the Council, with the consent of the Minister, for

- (a) The admission for any person to an examination conducted by the Council pursuant to Article 4(b) of this Order.

Data Protection

PHECC administers its responsibilities, under the Data Protection Act 1988 Revised 30th March 2012, in accordance with the principles outlined in the Act.

Personal identifiable information will never be released to a third party, an exception to this will be when a specific agreement is in place with an approved and authorised external organisation i.e. Prometric.

Candidates for NQEMT examination authorise PHECC and Prometric, PHECC's service partner under contract, to process Personal Identification Data in order to fulfil obligations to the candidate.

Retention of Examination Materials

The retention schedule will be reviewed periodically in light of experience and any legal or other relevant indications:

1. De-identified electronic analysis of examination results will be retained indefinitely for quality improvement purposes
2. All examination material will be retained for current month plus 12 months
3. All examination material will be destroyed by confidential shredding
4. All examination appeals material will be retained for the current year plus 3 years
5. All examination appeal material will be destroyed by confidential shredding

Examination Validity and Reliability

Examination Quality Group Role

The Examination Quality Group is responsible for:

Ensuring the validity and reliability of the NQEMT examination content
Facilitating continuous quality improvement of the examination function.

Details are outlined in [Terms of Reference for the Examination Quality Group](#).

Examiners Role

Examiners are responsible for:

Assessing candidates at Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE)
Correcting Short Written Answer (SWA) papers, Paramedic level.

Details are outlined in [Terms of Reference for the Examiner Panel](#).

Test Delivery Service

Prometric is an international organisation which operates an extensive multi-channel network of secure, invigilated test centres in Ireland. Candidates can undertake the PHECC computer based NQEMT EMT Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examination at a Prometric Test Centre (PTC), having first scheduled the examination online, at a location and on a date of their choice.

RI Role

- A PHECC RI is an education and training institution that has been approved to deliver courses which have been approved by PHECC under Article 4 (a) of the PHECC Establishment Order.
- PHECC recognition as a training institution is a mandatory step before one or all of the following PHECC recognised courses can be delivered: Cardiac First Response (CFR), Emergency First Response (EFR), EMT, Paramedic, AP and other courses as approved.
- PHECC RIs commit to delivering pre-hospital emergency care courses in accordance with [PHECC's Education and Training Standards](#) and current [Clinical Practice Guidelines](#) (CPGs)

2 Examination Structure & Content

Eligibility to sit the Examination

To be eligible to sit the NQEMT examination you must:

Complete the relevant PHECC recognised course or be requested to sit the exam as part of PHECC's recognition process. This process is associated with recognition of equivalence of professional qualifications in pre-hospital emergency care obtained in or outside the state.

Overview

The NQEMT examination components for EMT & Paramedic are assessed through theoretical and practical examination elements.

The theoretical elements, assess knowledge:

- MCQ
- SWA (Paramedic level only)

Practical elements, assess skills competency:

- OSCE

All components are based on PHECC Education and Training Standards and current Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs).

MCQ

The MCQ examination is a computer based theory test consisting of 100 topics or stems, each of which is followed by four possible answers. The candidate will select the correct answer to the question. The questions are randomly selected by computer software and delivered according to the weighting allocated to each section of the EMT Standard, on which the examination is based. Each exam is individual to each candidate.

To help candidates prepare for the MCQ, on the PHECC website there is:

Paramedic: An online practice/demonstration. [MCQ exam](#).
EMT: An online tutorial. [Tutorial](#)

The practice exam is not a knowledge test but a demonstration for students on how to use the software as well as being an exercise in familiarisation with the exam process. The demonstration and tutorial are continually available online so students can have access at their convenience.

It is not compulsory, to undertake the demonstration exam or review the tutorial, but students are strongly encouraged to make use of the facility.

Duration

NQEMT Examination EMT	-	80 minutes
NQEMT Examination Paramedic	-	75 minutes

Marking

All 100 MCQ exam questions carry one mark each with 80 being the pass mark.

Unsuccessful Candidates

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered one repeat exam only of the MCQ exam. See [8 After the Examination](#).

SWA

The Paramedic SWA examination consists of three parts, A, B and C with three questions in each part. Candidates answer six questions in total attempting two questions from each part.

Part A – attempt 2 from 3 questions

Part B – attempt 2 from 3 questions

Part C – attempt 2 from 3 questions

The first two answers presented, in each part, will be corrected. Additional answers will not be corrected and therefore not marked.

Duration

NQEMT Paramedic: - Two (2) hours.

Marking

All questions carry 20 marks each. The pass mark is 70.

Unsuccessful Candidates

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered one repeat exam only of the SWA exam. See [8 After the Examination](#).

OSCE

The OSCE is a clinical skill performance and competency based assessment, with each assessment having a duration of eight (8) minutes. The candidates are observed and evaluated as they progress through a series of eight (8) controlled scenarios/stations, on a circuit, until all are completed. On occasion there may be a number of OSCE circuits for an exam.

Participation in an OSCE is normally limited to one hundred (100) candidates.

A skill station may consist of three possible scenarios:

1. **One complete skill** capable of being completed within the 8 minute time frame, i.e. application of a traction splint.
2. **A number of short skills** capable of being completed within the 8 minute time frame, i.e. selection and application of a number of different O₂ masks.
3. **An element of a skill**, where the complete skill would normally take longer than the 8 minute time frame, i.e. application of an extrication device taken from a specific point in the process.

The OSCE at EMT level is divided into **four primary** and **four secondary** skills stations. The skills assessed in the primary stations are more critical in terms of patient outcome than those assessed in secondary stations. Assessment sheets are available on the [PHECC website](#) to guide candidates through the assessment process.

Note: Assessment sheets will not be changed within 60 days prior to an exam.

OSCE Success Requirement

Candidates are required to complete and pass all skill stations on the day, in order to be deemed successful.

Candidates who are unsuccessful in one skill station will be offered a re-sit on the same day.

Candidates who are unsuccessful in more than one skill station will be automatically deemed unsuccessful in the OSCE and will not be offered a same day re-sit.

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered one repeat only of the OSCE. See [8 After the Examination](#).

OSCE Same Day Re-sits

Candidates who are unsuccessful in one skill station will be offered a re-sit on the same day.

Such candidates will be required to re-sit the unsuccessful station only.

Candidates who do not avail of the same day re-sit at the scheduled time will be deemed unsuccessful.

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to repeat the OSCE, if they have a second attempt remaining.

Paramedic Candidates

The NQEMT OSCE at Paramedic level was devolved to NASC/UCD and DFB/RCSI. Details are outlined in the Paramedic Assessment Schedules.

Special Needs Candidates

A candidate who can provide evidence demonstrating that he/she has specific learning difficulty/difficulties may apply for special consideration when sitting the MCQ exam. Considerations available include provision of a voice over, and/or an additional 40 minutes to complete the exam, based on the recommendations outlined in the candidate's supporting report.

Applications for special consideration will only be accepted when the following conditions are met:

1. Notification of specific learning difficulty and application for special consideration is submitted **with** the exam application.
2. Application is accompanied by a relevant report prepared by a suitably-qualified medical practitioner.
3. The application must detail the specific learning difficulty and the special consideration(s) required.
4. In the case of a dyslexic candidate, a psycho-educational assessment report by an educational psychologist must be submitted **with** the application.

RI Role Prior to Examinations

Ensure that:

- A course commencement notification form has been submitted to PHECC, once a course begins.
- Fully completed candidate exam application forms have been submitted to PHECC.
- Certification of course completion to PHECC's requirement. This is completed on the candidate application form.
- Failure to submit a fully-completed application form, with supporting documentation where relevant, will result in the exam application being refused.
- EMT candidates have scheduled their MCQ exams through Prometric via the PHECC website.
- OSCE candidates are issued with their exam details.
- Candidates have read and fully understand the requirement to fully comply with the Terms & Conditions Section 4 of this Handbook, non-compliance will result in the candidate being refused admission or asked to leave the exam.
- Candidates are aware of the [MCQ demonstration](#) facility on www.phecc.ie

RI Role – OSCE Examination Centre

The overall responsibility for the provision of OSCE exam facilities lies with the RI. While local factors and conditions may determine the exact nature of the facilities being provided, RIs must endeavour to comply with the agreed specification.

Generally, RIs are responsible for providing:

Scheduling of Personnel

- Examiners, assisting practitioners and patient substitutes as specified by PHECC.
- Personnel for candidate supervision.
- Equipment
- OSCE station set up, check and troubleshoot (including equipment, signage).
- Signage must not be in place until the exam centre is secured by the PHECC examination coordinator.
- Provide *moulage* (kit, application and appropriate dress) for patients.
- Organisation and supply of all OSCE equipment.
- Refreshments/catering for exam personnel.
- ICT: PA System (hire, set up).

3 Exam Deferral

General

In the case of a temporary incapacity (eg sudden illness, accident, other extenuating circumstances), a candidate may make an application for deferral of an examination

An application for deferral will only be considered when accompanied by an original medical certificate. Scans, photocopies, or faxed copies will not be accepted.

Failure to furnish an appropriate medical certificate will be regarded as a failed exam attempt.

A candidate, who does not attend a scheduled sitting of an MCQ/OSCE/SWA (by reason of medical certification), may only apply to undergo the next NQEMT exam.

Candidates who do not avail of the next scheduled NQEMT exam, will forfeit their fee for that exam.

In contingent circumstances (e.g. family bereavement), special consideration may be given

EMT

MCQ

Where this occurs, after the exam application has been submitted and the MCQ exam has been scheduled, the candidate must inform Prometric, via the website or Candidate Contact Centre ([Prometric webpage](#)) as soon as possible **before** the MCQ exam date.

If rescheduling or cancelling your MCQ exam due to sudden illness, accident, and other extenuating circumstances less than 5 business days before the exam date, your exam booking will be regarded as a failed attempt if you fail to furnish an appropriate medical certificate to PHECC within 5 business days following the exam date.

OSCE

Where this occurs, after the exam application has been submitted and the OSCE has been scheduled, the candidate must inform PHECC, as soon as possible **before** the exam date. A medical certificate must be forwarded and received by PHECC no later than five (5) business days after the examination date.

Paramedic

MCQ and SWA

Where this occurs after the exam has been scheduled, the candidate must inform PHECC, via email or phone, as soon as possible **before** the exam date, enclosing a medical certificate or letter supporting the claim. A Medical certificate must be received by PHECC no later than five (5) business days after the examination date.

Scheduling

Examination candidates can only schedule one exam per exam application form submitted to PHECC. Once an appointment is made, three options exist:

1. Cancel the appointment.
2. Change the appointment (which automatically cancels the previous appointment).
3. Take the exam at the place and time scheduled.

Cancellation - Rescheduling

For each candidate who reschedules, cancels, arrives late or does not appear for a scheduled MCQ exam Prometric shall be entitled to payment of the following Cancellation/Rescheduling Fees for such candidate:

Category	Cancellation/Reschedule	Cancellation/Rescheduling Fee
1* See Notes Below	Reschedule 5 days (business days) or more before the exam date.	€30.75
2	Reschedule 5 days (business days) or less before the exam date	Full Fee
3	Reschedule / cancel less than 5 days before the exam date due to sudden illness, accident, and other extenuating circumstances	No Fee (pending delivery of medical certificate within 5 business days of the exam date)
4	Fails to appear on the day for the exam	Full Exam Fee
5	Refused admission for presenting himself/herself late after the scheduled start time	Full Exam Fee
6	Removal from the examination centre	Full Exam Fee

*Notes:

- If rescheduling or cancelling your exam you must do so no later than 5 business days (to include 4 complete business days) before the date of your scheduled exam, excluding your exam day. For example if your exam is booked for Friday you must reschedule or cancel your exam with Prometric the previous Friday. If you do not do so you will incur full exam fee of €100 next time you book your exam.
- For administration purposes exams falling on a Saturday will be treated as if occurring on a Friday.

4 Terms & Conditions

PLEASE READ THESE TERMS & CONDITIONS CAREFULLY AS FAILURE TO COMPLY MAY RESULT IN EXPULSION

Entry to the Examination Centre

1. It is the candidate's responsibility to present themselves at the designated exam centre on the date and time specified.
2. Candidates who do not attend an exam will be deemed unsuccessful at that sitting and will be entitled to apply for a 2nd attempt. Should a candidate fail to attend the 2nd attempt, he/she will be required to repeat the complete training course prior to re-applying to sit the exam.
3. A candidate found to be in breach of any PHECC NQEMT/Prometric exam rule or regulation will be asked to leave the exam and will forfeit any results from other sections of the exam.
4. Candidates may, on occasion, be required to be separated into groups for a limited period. This requirement depends on the number of candidates for the exam.

5. Check-in procedures will include:
 - Candidate identification through verification of one unexpired government-issued photo and one signature bearing ID. In the case of MCQ examinations the information guide emailed to candidates will contain details of what constitutes an acceptable ID, as follows:
 - All Passports.
 - Driving Licence or Learner Permit (it must be issued in Ireland or one from another EU/EEA Member States or Switzerland).
 - Garda National Age Card plus Birth Certificate/Adoption Certificate issued in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland or Great Britain.
 - Mandatory signing of attendance book
6. Candidates who do not produce a valid acceptable ID will not be allowed to take the exam.
7. In this event, the candidate will not receive a refund of the Candidate Testing Fee.
8. Candidates for EMT MCQ examinations, who bring personal belonging into the PTC, will be required to check all of these belongings into a provided locker.
9. Candidates leaving personal items in the exam centre do so at their own risk.
10. Candidates for EMT MCQ examinations may be scanned with a metal detector wand prior to each entry into the testing room. Candidates seeking exemption must produce relevant medical documentation.
11. Candidates for EMT MCQ examinations may be asked to turn their pockets out to ensure they have no prohibited aids.
12. If candidates arrive late for a scheduled EMT MCQ exam the PTC staff may choose not to seat the candidate.
13. If a candidate is not seated due to late arrival, a full rescheduling fee will be required.
14. PHECC reserves the right to determine if circumstances arise which warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling of an exam.
15. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that they fully understand the terms and conditions under which they apply to sit the NQEMT EMT examination.

During the Exam

1. Candidates are expected to be polite in their dealing with the supervisory staff, unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in refused entry or removal from the PTC.
2. Uniforms, emblems, badges or any paraphernalia that may identify a service or level of competence must not be worn while attending for exam.
3. Your NQEMT exam number is required to access the MCQ computer-based examination and at every OSCE skills station.
4. Mobile phones or any form of electronic device are not permitted in the examination centre **under any circumstances**. Any candidate found to be in breach of this rule will be asked to leave the exam and will be deemed unsuccessful in all sections of the exam.
5. Text books, written notes etc. are not allowed in the examination rooms or on the OSCE circuits.
6. Candidates are not allowed to communicate with each other in the exam rooms or on OSCE circuits.
7. Candidates who fail to adhere to this condition will be asked to leave the exam and will be deemed unsuccessful in all sections of the exam.

8. Candidates will be **supervised at all times** during the course of the exam, by:
 - Direct viewing of testing area
 - Video monitoring, with or without audio (MCQ)
 - Other method sufficient to visually ensure testing area security, including proctor walk-throughs of the testing area.
9. Where a candidate, during any part of the exam, wishes to query any matter relating to the conduct of the exam, examiners/invigilators and/or the application of the rules of the exam, he/she should raise the matter with the exam coordinator on the day.
10. Candidates must obey all instructions given by the exam coordinator or any other member of conducting staff.

Examination Security

Any candidate found breaching the security of the examination shall be deemed unsuccessful in all sections of the exam.

Candidates should note that the following may be sufficient cause to terminate participation in the exam, to invalidate the results of an exam, to withhold or revoke scores, or to take other appropriate action:

1. The giving or receiving of aid in the exam as evidenced either by observation or by statistical analysis of answers of one or more participants in the exam.
2. The unauthorised access to, possession of, reproduction, disclosure or use of any materials, including, but not limited to, examination questions or answers before, during or after the exam.
3. The offering of any benefit to any agent of PHECC in return for any aid or assistance in taking an exam.
4. The engaging in irregular behaviour in connection with the administration of the exam. Irregular behaviour which may be cause for invalidation of the exam or the taking of disciplinary action, includes, but is not limited to:
 - Referring to books, notes, or other devices at any time during the exam. This prohibited material includes written information or information transferred by electronic, acoustical, or other means.
 - Transfer of any information or signals between candidates during the exam. This prohibition includes any transfer of information between the candidate and any other person at any time during the testing period, including during OSCE station change-over or OSCE rest stations.
 - Attempting to view the exam of another candidate.
 - Permitting another candidate to view one's exam or otherwise assisting another candidate in the exam. The candidates involved will be deemed unsuccessful in all sections of the exam.
 - Taking any exam materials outside the examination centre. All exam materials must be left in the room at the end of the exam.

PHECC may also require a candidate to repeat the exam if presented with sufficient evidence that the security of the exam has been compromised, notwithstanding the absence of any evidence of a candidate's personal involvement in such activities.

5 EMT Application

Application Process and Fee Payment

To be awarded the NQEMT an EMT candidate must successfully complete a two (2) stage examination process. Firstly, successfully complete the computer based MCQ examination and secondly successfully complete a practical OSCE.

To undergo the MCQ Examination the candidate will submit an application form to PHECC and thereafter schedule the MCQ examination at a PTC, following receipt of an authorisation email from PHECC.

Exam Progression

NQEMT EMT candidates may not progress to the OSCE until they have successfully completed the MCQ portion of the exam. PHECC will notify candidates, by email, of their allocated OSCE.

MCQ Examination

Candidate - Exam Application to PHECC

The candidate must complete an exam application form, ensure that it is certified by the course director or education manager and stamped by the RI. The application form, with ID photo – (passport size: minimum size 35mm x 45mm – maximum size 38mm x 50mm), must be submitted to PHECC no later than the deadline published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#).

1. Failure to submit a fully-completed application form will result in the application being refused.
2. A candidates' signature on the application form verifies that all sections of the exam handbook have been read and understood and that he/she is committed to abiding by the terms and condition, see [4 Terms & Conditions](#)
3. On receipt of the application form PHECC will issue each candidate with an authorisation email which will include a unique examination/eligibility number, together with an MCQ guide. This will normally involve a five (5) business day turnaround period.
4. If applying for special consideration see [Special Needs Candidates](#).

EMT Candidate Fee

The candidate must submit the appropriate fee according to the [current Schedule of Fees](#) for the NQEMT exam. Payment has to be made as part of online booking with Prometric to ensure the booking transaction is completed. This fee is non-refundable.

Candidate Prometric Test Centre Booking

1. On receipt of the authorisation email candidates can commence online booking with Prometric through the PHECC website. The examination fee will be paid to Prometric online to complete the booking.
2. PTCs will be available to eligible candidates to undertake the MCQ examination at a location and date/time of their choice.
3. Candidates should ensure that there are five (5) full business days between the date of booking and the date of taking the exam.
4. At the conclusion of the MCQ examination candidate result scores will be available on screen and in printed format.

NQEMT OSCE EMT

PHECC will receive official confirmation of all MCQ results from Prometric.

Following the successful completion of the MCQ, PHECC will notify candidates, by email, of the date, time and location of their OSCE.

Note: In the event of an OSCE being fully subscribed candidates will be automatically assigned a place on the next OSCE.

OSCE dates can be viewed on the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#)

Uncontrolled document when printed or copied. Check www.phecc.ie to verify current version.

Framework for the Emergency Medical Technician Standard		
Learning Outcome (L)	Educational Domain(D)	Module(s)
Provide the appropriate standard of patient care for Interfaculty transfers and pre-hospital emergency care services (L1)	Recognition and assessment of common life-threatening and common serious medical and trauma conditions (L1D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Primary survey 2. Secondary Survey
	Selection of an appropriate patient management plan, application of appropriate interventions, and the correct monitoring of the patient according to PHECC clinical practice guidelines and scope of practice (L1D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Airway and ventilation 2. Respiratory emergencies 3. Cardiac first response¹ 4. Cardiovascular emergencies 5. General medical emergencies 6. Bleeding, shock and soft tissue injuries 7. Musculoskeletal, head and spinal injuries 8. Childbirth and neonatal resuscitation 9. Paediatrics
	Appropriate on-going maintenance of the patient record and utilisation of best communication practices including patient handover procedures (L1D3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legislation and Information management 2. Communications
Safely and appropriately access, retrieve and transport patients (L2)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic patient care 2. Gaining access to the patient at scene 3. Ambulance operations
Adopt a professional approach to their practice (L3)	Retaining a professional manner and method in the performance of their duties as a registered EMT (L3D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional practice and medico-legal issues concerning the EMT 2. Patient safety and Quality assurance
	Basing their professional practice on a solid foundation of both basic and clinical sciences (L3D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clinical anatomy and physiology 2. Pharmacology 3. Infection prevention and control 4. Intramuscular injection
	Utilising best practice as prescribed by standard pre-hospital emergency care operational procedures (L3D3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Radio communications 2. Hazardous material incident 3. Major Emergency 4. Civil disorder
Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional competence (L4)	Maintaining personal well-being and professional relationships with colleagues (L4D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The well-being of the EMT
	Identify with the role of the EMT (L4D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuum of pre-hospital emergency care 2. Continuous professional competence

¹ The CFR Advanced level is either a pre-requisite or co-requisite.

6 Paramedic Application

Application Process and Fee Payment

The NQEMT qualification requires a candidate to successfully complete a three (3) stage examination process:

- Practical OSCE.
- Computer based MCQ examination.
- Paper based SWA examination.

Exam Progression

NQEMT paramedic exams are sequential and candidates will only progress as directed by the RI.

OSCE

The NQEMT OSCE at paramedic level has been devolved to NASC/UCD and DFB/RCSI. Details are outlined in the Paramedic assessment schedules.

NQEMT MCQ Paramedic Examination

Candidate – Exam Application to PHECC

1. The candidate must have completed or be undergoing, in an RI, the relevant course or be requested to sit the exam as part of PHECC's recognition process. This process is associated with recognition of equivalence of professional qualifications in pre-hospital emergency care obtained in or outside the state.
2. Complete an exam application form, ensure that it is certified by the course director or education manager and stamped by the RI and submitted to PHECC no later than 28 days prior to the date of the exam, published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#).
3. Candidates are advised that completed applications must be submitted to PHECC by the RI, on behalf of the student, **no later than 28 days prior to the date of the examination** published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#).
4. Submit the appropriate fee, details are outlined in the [current schedule of fees](#) with the exam application form.
5. Each candidate is responsible for ensuring that his/her completed exam application has been submitted to PHECC within the required timeframe. Failure to submit a fully-completed application form will result in the application being refused.
6. A candidate's signature on the application form verifies that all sections of the exam handbook have been read and understood and that he/she is committed to abiding by the terms and conditions, see [4 Terms & Conditions](#).
7. There is an onus on the candidate to present themselves for their exam at the scheduled date and time.

MCQ Candidate Fees

The candidate must submit the appropriate fee according to the [current schedule of fees](#) for the NQEMT exam, with the examination [application form](#). This fee is non-refundable.

SWA Examination

Candidate – Exam Application to PHECC

1. The candidate must have completed or be undergoing, in an RI, the relevant course or be requested to sit the exam as part of PHECC's recognition process. This process is associated with recognition of equivalence of professional qualifications in pre-hospital emergency care obtained in or outside the state.

2. Complete an exam application form, ensure that it is certified by the course director or education manager and stamped by the recognised institution and submitted to PHECC no later than 28 days prior to the date of the exam, published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#).
3. Candidates are advised that completed applications must be submitted to PHECC by the recognised institution, on behalf of the student, **no later than 28 days prior to the date of the examination** published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#).
4. Submit the appropriate fee, details outlined in the [current schedule of fees](#) with the exam application form.
5. Each candidate is responsible for ensuring that his/her completed exam application has been submitted to PHECC within the required timeframe. Failure to submit a fully-completed application form will result in the application being refused.
6. A candidate's signature on the application form verifies that all sections of the exam handbook have been read and understood and that he/she is committed to abiding by the terms and conditions, see [4 Terms & Conditions](#).
7. There is an onus on the candidate to present themselves for their exam at the scheduled date and time.

MCQ Candidate Fees

The candidate must submit the appropriate fee according to the [current schedule of fees](#) for the NQEMT exam, with the examination [application form](#). This fee is non-refundable.

Framework for the Paramedic Standard		
Learning Outcome (L)	Educational Domain (D)	Module(s)
Provide the appropriate standard of patient care for interfacility transfers and pre-hospital emergency care services (L1)	Recognition and assessment of both common life-threatening and common serious medical conditions (L1D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Primary Survey 2. Secondary Survey
	Selection of an appropriate patient management plan, application of appropriate interventions as required, and the correct monitoring of the patient (L1D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Airway and ventilation 4. Respiratory emergencies 5. Cardiac First Response² 6. Cardiovascular emergencies 7. Diabetic emergencies 8. Allergies and anaphylaxis 9. Poisoning and overdose 10. Environmental emergencies 11. Mental health and behavioural emergencies 12. Altered level of consciousness and seizures 13. Bleeding and shock 14. Soft tissue injuries 15. Musculoskeletal injuries 16. Head and spinal injuries 17. Pregnancy and pre-delivery emergencies 18. Childbirth and neonatal resuscitation 19. Paediatrics
Learning Outcome (L)	Educational Domain (D)	Module(s)
Safely and appropriately access, retrieve and transport patients (L2)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic patient care 2. Scene assessment 3. Gaining access to the patient at scene 4. Ambulance operations
Adopt a professional approach to their practice (L3)	Retaining a professional manner and method in the performance of their duties (L2D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional practice & medico-legal issues concerning the paramedic 2. Patient safety and Quality assurance

² The CFR Advanced level course is either a pre-requisite or co-requisite.

	Basing their professional practice on a solid foundation of both basic and clinical sciences (L2D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clinical anatomy and physiology 2. Pharmacology 3. Infection prevention and control 4. Intravenous/intraosseous therapy 5. Intramuscular injection
Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional competence	Utilising best practice as prescribed by pre-hospital standard operational procedures and CPGs (L2D3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Radio communications 2. Hazardous Material Incident 3. Major Emergency 4. Civil disorder 5. Treat and refer
	Maintaining personal well-being and professional relationships with colleagues (L4D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The well-being of the paramedic
	Identify with the role of the paramedic (L4D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuum of pre-hospital emergency care 2. Manage personal work priorities and professional development 3. Interpersonal and team management skills 4. Mentorship

7 Advanced Paramedic

The NQEMT examination at AP level was devolved to NASC/UCD in 2012. Details are outlined in the NASC/UCD AP assessment schedule.

8 After the Examination

Results

EMT Examinations

Results for the MCQ examination will be available on screen and by printout at the end of the exam, results are expressed as percentages awarded. Results for OSCEs will issue via email within twenty-eight (28) days of the OSCE.

Paramedic

Candidates will be notified of their results within 28 days of the SWA exam completion date via the email address provided by the candidate to PHECC.

Results for the MCQ examination, expressed as percentages awarded, will be emailed to each candidate as soon as possible after the completion of the MCQ exam (usually within 24 hours).

NQEMT Certificates

NQEMT certificates will be awarded to successful candidates within 28 days of the results being issued.

Viewing and Rechecks

Unsuccessful candidates, following the NQEMT MCQ examination, will be facilitated with a viewing of their examination coaching report/exam questions for educational purposes. In addition students who wish to challenge their results can request a viewing and a recheck of their examination Coaching Reports/exam questions. The following rules apply:

1. Students are required to read the NQEMT Examination Handbook before initiating a viewing and recheck of their examination coaching reports/exam questions.
2. Viewings and rechecks apply to MCQs and SWAs.
3. The viewing and recheck procedure exists to ensure that the answer matrix was fully and properly applied to that specific examination (MCQ or SWA). In the interests of treating all students equitably, PHECC is committed to applying the answer matrices consistently and fairly for all students.
4. The viewing and recheck procedure for an exam will be organised by the PHECC examination officer.
5. The results of a recheck will be final.
6. The Director will approve results of a recheck.
7. The examination officer will inform the student by email of the final results after the recheck.

Terms & Conditions of Viewing sessions

1. The notification of examination results, letter/email, for unsuccessful candidates will contain details and instructions in relation to arranging a viewing appointment.
2. Candidates have 10 business days from receipt of the examination results in which to make contact with the PHECC office to arrange a viewing appointment.
3. A viewing appointment will not be granted until the appropriate fee has been received by the PHECC office in advance of the viewing. This fee is non-refundable. (See [current schedule of fees](#)).
4. Viewing sessions are carried out in the PHECC office located in Naas, Co. Kildare.
5. It is the candidates own responsibility to present themselves at the appointed time for the viewing session.
6. Candidates may be accompanied by one other person.
7. Candidates must bring their results letter and personal identification.
8. Candidates must be present, in person, to access coaching reports/exam questions, viewed under supervision.
9. On arrival the candidate and any person accompanying him/her must sign the attendance sheet.
10. All candidates must certify in writing that they are aware and understand the rules and penalties.

Examination Appeals

Set out below are the circumstances where consideration will be given to NQEMT Exam appeals.

1. Only appeals of one of the following will be considered by the Appeals Panel:
 - a) That PHECC's examination procedures, available in the NQEMT Examination Handbook, were not properly employed in the conduct of the examination and that this procedural irregularity disadvantaged the appellant. For example, equipment failure in an OSCE or PC malfunctions not immediately rectified, e.g. by provision of a paper MCQ exam.
 - b) Extenuating circumstances, referring to a serious or unforeseen event in which the appellant suffered an illness or some personal or family trauma at the time of examination. The appellant must provide original medical certificates or other supporting information to support their case that extenuating circumstances apply. The illness or trauma must be shown to have affected them in the examination or in the period immediately leading up to it. See [3 Exam Deferral](#)
2. A successful appeal will not lead to an examination result being altered. When an appeal is upheld, the usual outcome is to allow an opportunity to retake that part of the examination that was in dispute without payment for further examination fees.
3. If a student has cause to appeal a matter in relation to the RI's conduct of an NQEMT they should follow the RI's appeals and complaint procedures.

4. The following circumstances will not be considered grounds for appeal and any such applications will be returned:
 - a) Perceived past shortcomings in tuition, supervision or support from the RI. The RI's complaints procedures must be followed to address these issues as they arise.
 - b) The structure, content or presentation of MCQ/SWA exams. Perceived shortcomings in individual MCQ/SWA questions cannot be considered as grounds for appeal.
 - c) The actual mark awarded for an examination. Being close to the pass mark is not grounds for appeal. If a student wishes to have clarification about results for a part of an examination, except the OSCE, an examination viewing and recheck can be considered.
5. Please note the following regarding OSCE appeals:
 - a) An EMT candidate who has cause to appeal a matter in relation to the conduct of an OSCE must appeal to the Director (via the examination officer) prior to leaving the OSCE circuit. Appeal requests for an OSCE will not be accepted after the candidate has left the OSCE circuit.

or

 - b) A paramedic candidate who has cause to appeal a matter in relation to the conduct of an OSCE must follow the RI's appeals and complaint procedures.

Repeats & Unsuccessful Candidates

EMT candidates will be permitted to repeat, once only, the MCQ/OSCE component of the NQEMT EMT examination.

MCQ & SWA repeats

Unsuccessful candidates may apply to repeat the MCQ and SWA by meeting the current entry requirements and submitting another application to PHECC, in addition EMT candidates will have to schedule the repeat MCQ at a PTC, with the appropriate fee.

Candidates must be aware that there may be a minimum of a ten (10) business day turnaround period, involving PHECC and Prometric administration, before the EMT MCQ exam can be booked online.

If a candidate's repeat attempt at the exam is unsuccessful **no further repeats** will be permitted, until the following has been completed:

EMT

Unsuccessful candidates will be required to undergo the complete NQEMT EMT training course at a RI prior to re-applying to sit the NQEMT examination.

Paramedic

Candidates who are unsuccessful at their repeat attempt must complete that section of the training course in order to be eligible to apply for subsequent exam sittings.

OSCE Repeats

Candidates applying for repeat OSCEs must submit their application, together with the appropriate fee, **no later than twenty-eight days** prior to the OSCE date published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#).

If a candidate's repeat attempt at the exam is unsuccessful **no further repeats** will be permitted, until the following has been completed:

EMT

Unsuccessful candidates will be required to undergo the complete NQEMT EMT training course at a RI prior to re-applying to sit the NQEMT examination.

Paramedic

The NQEMT OSCE at Paramedic level was devolved to NASC/UCD and DFB/RCSI. Details are outlined in the Paramedic assessment schedules.

9 Joining the PHECC Register

Holders of the NQEMT are eligible to apply to PHECC for entry onto the PHECC Register at their appropriate level. This is the national professional register of practitioners who are licensed to practice at their appropriate level.

Membership of the PHECC Register is evidence that the practitioner has achieved the academic standard required, complies with a professional code of conduct and ethics and is subject to fitness to practice provisions in the interest of protecting the public and the profession. Practitioners also undertake to maintain and develop their competency through Continuing Professional Competency (CPC).

Full details of the [registration application process](#).

Glossary:

Advanced Paramedic	AP
Cardiac First Response	CFR
Clinical Practice Guidelines	CPGs
Emergency First Response	EFR
Emergency Medical Technician	EMT
Multiple Choice Questions	MCQ
National Qualification in Emergency Medical Technology	NQEMT
Objective Structured Clinical Examinations	OSCE
Prometric Test Centre	PTC
Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council	PHECC
Recognised Institution	RI
Short Written Answers	SWA

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