

Pre-Hospital  
Emergency Care  
Council



# **NQEMT** Examination Handbook

## Mission Statement

*“The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council protects the public by independently specifying, reviewing, maintaining and monitoring standards of excellence for the safe provision of quality pre-hospital emergency care”*

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](http://www.phecc.ie).

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## Contents

1 General Information.....	5
Introduction .....	5
Legal Basis .....	5
Data Protection .....	5
Retention of Examination Materials.....	6
Examination Validity and Reliability .....	6
Examination Quality Group Role .....	6
Examiners Role .....	6
Test Delivery Service .....	6
2 Examination Structure & Content .....	7
Eligibility to sit the Examination .....	7
Overview .....	7
MCQ .....	7
Duration .....	8
Marking .....	8
Unsuccessful Candidates .....	8
SWA.....	8
Duration .....	8
Marking .....	8
Unsuccessful Candidates .....	8
OSCE .....	8
OSCE Success Requirement .....	9
OSCE Same Day Re-sits.....	9
Paramedic Candidates .....	9
Special Needs Candidates.....	9
3 Exam Deferral.....	11
General.....	11
EMT .....	11
MCQ .....	11
OSCE .....	11
Paramedic .....	11
MCQ and SWA.....	11
Scheduling .....	11
Cancellation - Rescheduling .....	12
4 Terms & Conditions.....	12
Entry to the Examination Centre.....	12

During the Exam .....	13
Examination Security.....	14
5 EMT Application .....	14
Application Process and Fee Payment.....	14
Exam Progression .....	15
MCQ Examination .....	15
Candidate - Exam Application to PHECC.....	15
EMT Candidate Fee .....	15
NQEMT OSCE EMT .....	15
6 Paramedic Application .....	17
Application Process and Fee Payment.....	17
NQEMT MCQ Paramedic Examination .....	17
Candidate – Exam Application to PHECC.....	17
MCQ Candidate Fees.....	17
SWA Examination .....	17
Candidate – Exam Application to PHECC.....	17
MCQ Candidate Fees.....	18
7 Advanced Paramedic.....	21
8 After the Examination .....	21
Results.....	21
EMT Examinations .....	21
Paramedic .....	21
NQEMT Certificates.....	21
Viewings and Rechecks .....	21
Application and Fee Payment.....	21
Viewing procedures.....	21
Terms & Conditions of Viewing sessions .....	21
Penalties for Violation of Procedures.....	22
Recheck process .....	23

Examination Appeals.....	23
Repeats & Unsuccessful Candidates .....	24
MCQ & SWA repeats .....	24
EMT .....	24
Paramedic .....	24
OSCE Repeats .....	24
EMT .....	24
Paramedic .....	24
9 Joining the PHECC Register.....	24
Glossary.....	25

# 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 institutions 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 detail 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

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.

PHECC staff will only communicate directly with examination candidates during the examination process.

Interaction with third parties, on behalf of a candidate, will not take place.

## 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 twelve (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 three (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:

1. Ensuring the validity and reliability of the NQEMT examination content.
2. 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:

1. Assessing candidates at Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE)
2. 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 only undertake the PHECC computer based NQEMT EMT Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) examination at a Prometric Test Centre (PTC), within the Republic of Ireland. The test centres operate on a demand led basis.

Prior to undergoing the examination a completed [application form](#) must be submitted to PHECC and the test scheduled online.

## 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), First Aid Response (FAR), 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 one hundred (100) questions, 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 helpful information is available on the PHECC website:

Paramedic: An online practice/demonstration. [MCQ Exam](#).

EMT: [MCQ Exam Guide](#)

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 one hundred (100) MCQ exam questions carry one mark each, with eighty (80) being the pass mark.

## Unsuccessful Candidates

Unsuccessful candidates will be offered one repeat only of the MCQ exam. See [SECTION 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 are 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 only of the SWA exam. See [SECTION 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 one (1) circuit, until all are completed. On occasion there may be a number of OSCE circuits for an exam, depending on the number of exam candidates.

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 O<sub>2</sub> 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 two or more skill stations 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 [SECTION 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.

When registering at the test centre candidates should make Prometric staff aware of their requirements.

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

1. Notification of specific learning difficulty and application for the special consideration required, is submitted **with** the exam application.
2. Application is accompanied by a relevant report prepared by a suitably-qualified medical practitioner.
3. 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, when a course begins.
- Fully completed candidate exam application forms have been submitted to PHECC.
- Certification of course completion, to PHECC's requirement, is completed on the candidate application form.
- EMT candidates are informed that there is a limited time period of 6 months from completion of training to successful completion of the NQMT examination. An extension to 9 months would be allowed only in extenuating circumstances.
- 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 listed in Section 4 of this Handbook, non-compliance will result in the candidate being refused admission or being asked to leave the exam.

## 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.

In general, 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.
- ICT: PA System (hire, set up).

## 3 Exam Deferral

### General

In the case of a temporary incapacity (e.g. 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.

EMT candidates can access the NQEMT EMT examination for a fixed time period of 6 months from completion date of training course to completion of successful assessment. An extension to 9 months would be allowed only in extenuating circumstances. Candidates who do not successfully complete their examination within this fixed time period will be required to seek guidance from their Recognised Institution where upskilling maybe offered using the institutions recognition of prior learning (RPL) process or the candidate may be required to retake the EMT course in order to be eligible to take the examination.

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 deferral occurs, after the MCQ exam has been scheduled, the candidate must inform Prometric, via the website or Candidate Contact Centre [Prometric Web Page](#) as soon as possible **before** the MCQ exam date.

If an exam is rescheduled or cancelled due to sudden illness, accident or other extenuating circumstances, less than **“five (5) business days before”** the exam date, an appropriate medical certificate must be furnished, within **“five (5) business days following”** the exam date. Failure to do so will result in the exam booking being regarded as a failed attempt.

#### OSCE

Where deferral 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 **“following”** 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 within **“five (5) business days following”** the exam 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.

**Note: Non-attendance at an NQEMT examination in addition to non-compliance of the above will be regarded as an “unsuccessful result”.**

## 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 to PHECC of a 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 REFUSAL OF ADMISSION 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. Nevertheless they will be entitled to apply for a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt, if applicable. Should a candidate fail to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt, he/she will be deemed unsuccessful in the NQEMT exam. Thereafter they should contact their training institution, which will advise them on what training requires completion, before another application to undergo the NQEMT exam can be submitted.
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 by means 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

Notes:

- \*\* Candidates must ensure that the name on the exam booking application matches the name on the photographic ID, i.e. the first name, surname, double surname or hyphenated name must match the photographic ID you present at the exam test centre.
- \*\*\* Copies will not be accepted.

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. If due to unforeseen circumstances the exam start time is delayed the PTC coordinator will inform the candidate.
9. Prometric do not provide paper copies of the MCQ exam.
10. Candidates for EMT MCQ examinations, who bring personal belongings into the PTC, will be required to check all of these belongings into a provided locker.
11. 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.
12. Candidates for EMT MCQ examinations may be asked to turn their pockets out to ensure they have no prohibited aids.
13. If candidates arrive late for a scheduled EMT MCQ exam the PTC staff may choose not to seat the candidate.
14. If a candidate is not seated due to late arrival, a full rescheduling fee will be required.
15. Candidates leaving personal items in the exam centre do so at their own risk.
16. PHECC reserves the right to determine if circumstances arise which warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling of an exam.
17. 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:
  - Direct viewing of testing area.
  - Video monitoring, with or without audio (MCQ).
  - Other method sufficient to visually ensure testing area security, including proctor walkthroughs 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 any section of the NQEMT exam 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 resit 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 the OSCE.

To undergo the MCQ examination the candidate will submit [an application form](#) to PHECC and thereafter schedule the MCQ examination at a Prometric Test Centre (PTC), following receipt of an authorisation email from PHECC. Candidates are required to successfully complete their examination within 6 months of completion of their training course. In extenuating circumstances special consideration may be given.

## Exam Progression

NQEMT EMT candidates cannot progress to the OSCE until they have “**successfully completed**” the MCQ portion of the exam. Successful MCQ candidates will automatically be assigned a place at the next available OSCE. PHECC will notify the relevant Recognised Institutions of candidates who are eligible for OSCE and the RIs will inform candidates of the OSCE schedule.

## MCQ Examination

### Candidate - Exam Application to PHECC

The candidate must complete and submit, an exam application form to PHECC.

#### The application form must:

- Be certified by the course director or education manager.
- Stamped by the RI.
- Have photo ID attached – (passport size: minimum size 35mm x 45mm – maximum size 38mm x 50mm).

#### Candidates are made aware of the following:

1. If a candidate wishes, to sit the next OSCE, the exam application form must be received by PHECC, no later than the deadline published in the [PHECC Examination Calendar](#), twenty-five (25) business days prior to the date of the OSCE exam.
2. Candidates must have “**successfully completed**” the MCQ examination no later than fifteen (15) business days prior to the date of the next OSCE exam.
3. Candidates should be aware that there may be a minimum of a five (5) business day turnaround period, involving PHECC and Prometric administration, before the EMT MCQ exam can be booked online.
4. Failure to submit a fully-completed application form will result in the application being refused.
5. 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 Conditions, Section 4](#).
6. 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.
7. Candidates are required to successfully complete their examination within 6 months of completion of their training course.
8. 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.

On receipt of the authorisation email candidates can commence online booking with Prometric through the PHECC website. The examination fee will be paid, by the candidate, to Prometric online to complete the booking.

## NQEMT OSCE EMT

Following the successful completion of the MCQ, PHECC will notify the relevant Recognised Institutions of candidates who are eligible for OSCE, and the RIs will notify their own candidates.

**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](#)



Framework for the Emergency Medical Technician Standard		
Learning Outcome (L)	Educational Domain(D)	Module(s)
	Recognition and assessment of common life-threatening and common serious medical and trauma conditions (L1D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary survey</li> <li>2. Secondary Survey</li> </ol>
	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"> <li>1. Airway and ventilation</li> <li>2. Respiratory emergencies</li> <li>3. Cardiac first response<sup>1</sup></li> <li>4. Cardiovascular emergencies</li> <li>5. General medical emergencies</li> <li>6. Bleeding, shock and soft tissue injuries</li> <li>7. Musculoskeletal, head and spinal injuries</li> <li>8. Childbirth and neonatal resuscitation</li> <li>9. Paediatrics</li> </ol>
	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"> <li>1. Legislation and Information management</li> <li>2. Communications</li> </ol>
Safely and appropriately access, retrieve and transport patients (L2)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Basic patient care</li> <li>2. Gaining access to the patient at scene</li> <li>3. Ambulance operations</li> </ol>
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"> <li>1. Professional practice and medicolegal issues concerning the EMT</li> <li>2. Patient safety and Quality assurance.</li> </ol>
	Basing their professional practice on a solid foundation of both basic and clinical sciences (L3D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clinical anatomy and physiology</li> <li>2. Pharmacology</li> <li>3. Infection prevention and control</li> <li>4. Intramuscular injection</li> </ol>
	Utilising best practice as prescribed by standard pre-hospital emergency care operational procedures (L3D3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Radio communications</li> <li>2. Hazardous material incident</li> <li>3. Major Emergency</li> <li>4. Civil disorder</li> </ol>
Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional competence (L4)	Maintaining personal well-being and professional relationships with colleagues (L4D1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The well-being of the EMT</li> </ol>
	Identify with the role of the EMT (L4D2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuum of pre-hospital emergency care</li> <li>2. Continuous professional competence</li> </ol>

<sup>1</sup> The CFR Advanced level course 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:

- OSCE skills assessment.
- Computer based MCQ examination.
- Paper based SWA examination.

### OSCE

The NQEMT OSCE at paramedic level has been devolved to the RIs.

### 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 twenty-eight (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 twenty eight (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 [Section 4](#), Terms and Conditions
7. The candidate is solely responsible for attending the examination 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 business 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 [Section 4, Terms and 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 interfaculty 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"> <li>1. Primary Survey</li> <li>2. Secondary Survey</li> </ol>
	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"> <li>3. Airway and ventilation</li> <li>4. Respiratory emergencies</li> <li>5. Cardiac First Response<sup>2</sup></li> <li>6. Cardiovascular emergencies</li> <li>7. Diabetic emergencies</li> <li>8. Allergies and anaphylaxis</li> <li>9. Poisoning and overdose</li> <li>10. Environmental emergencies</li> <li>11. Mental health and behavioural emergencies</li> <li>12. Altered level of consciousness and seizures</li> <li>13. Bleeding and shock</li> <li>14. Soft tissue injuries</li> <li>15. Musculoskeletal injuries</li> <li>16. Head and spinal injuries</li> <li>17. Pregnancy and pre-delivery emergencies</li> <li>18. Childbirth and neonatal resuscitation</li> <li>19. Paediatrics</li> </ol>
Learning Outcome (L)	Educational Domain (D)	Module(s)
Safely and appropriately access, retrieve and transport patients (L2)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Basic patient care</li> <li>2. Scene assessment</li> <li>3. Gaining access to the patient at scene</li> <li>4. Ambulance operations</li> </ol>
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"> <li>1. Professional practice &amp; medico-legal issues concerning the paramedic</li> <li>2. Patient safety and Quality assurance</li> </ol>

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

<sup>2</sup>The CFR Advanced level course is either a pre-requisite or co-requisite.

## 7 Advanced Paramedic

The NQEMT examination at AP level is conducted by NASC/UCD.

## 8 After the Examination

### Results

#### EMT Examinations

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

#### Paramedic

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**), using the email provided by the candidate.

Results for the SWA examination will be emailed to each candidate **within twenty-eight (28) business days** after the completion of the SWA exam, using the email provided by the candidate.

#### NQEMT Certificates

NQEMT certificates will be awarded to successful candidates **within twenty-eight (28) business days** of the results being issued.

### Viewings and Rechecks

#### Application and Fee Payment

Following NQEMT examinations unsuccessful candidates can be facilitated with a viewing and or a recheck. [Applications](#) for viewings and rechecks must be made in writing, using the [NQEMT Viewing and Recheck Application Form](#), submitted to the PHECC examinations officer, Abbey Moat House, Abbey St., Naas, Co. Kildare. Applications must be received as follows:

- Viewings - within ten (10) business days of receipt of results,
- Rechecks - within twenty-eight (28) days of receipt of results.

Candidates must submit the appropriate fee, details are outlined in the [current schedule of fees](#). Payment can be made through [PayPal](#) cheque, bank draft or postal order, made payable to the Pre-Hospital Emergency Council.

On receipt of an application and the appropriate fee:

- The candidate will be contacted with a viewing appointment ,  
or
- The recheck process will be organised by the PHECC examinations officer.

PHECC will maintain a record of all applications for viewings and rechecks for statistical analysis purposes.

#### Viewing procedures

The following information will be provided to candidates at the viewing session:

- **MCQs:** A printed report of incorrectly answered questions is provided to the candidate.
- **OSCE:** A printed report of the unsuccessful OSCE stations is provided to the candidate.
- **SWAs:** The candidate's answer book and exam paper are provided to the candidate.

#### Terms & Conditions of Viewing sessions

1. Viewings will be carried out in the PHECC offices, Abbey Moat House, Abbey St., Naas, Co Kildare.
2. All viewings will be conducted in accordance with [Council Policy for Viewing and Rechecks](#) and the terms and conditions contained in this Handbook.
3. The viewing will be organised by the PHECC examinations officer.
4. Viewing sessions will be supervised at all times.
5. The notification of examination results email, for unsuccessful candidates, will contain details and instructions in relation to arranging a viewing appointment.

6. A viewing appointment will not be granted until the viewing application has been submitted and the appropriate fee has been received by the PHECC. (See [current schedule of fees](#)). Payment can be made through PayPal (Link), cheque, bank draft or postal order, made payable to the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council.
7. It is the candidates own responsibility to present themselves at the appointed time for the viewing session.
8. Candidates may be accompanied by one other person, preferably by a suitably qualified representative from their Recognised Institution.
9. Viewing reports are for educational purposes.
10. The candidate or any accompanying person must not bring pens, writing material, mobile phones or other electronic devices into the viewing session.
11. Candidates must bring personal identification.
12. Candidates must be present in person to view the unsuccessful portion of their examination (MCQ) or answer book (SWA), supervised by a PHECC officer.
13. On arrival the candidate and any person accompanying him/her must sign the attendance sheet.
14. Students are required to read the NQEMT Examination Handbook before initiating a viewing and recheck of their examination results
15. All candidates must certify in writing that they are aware and understand the rules and penalties. [Viewing Undertaking](#)
16. Candidates in breach of the above conditions will be cautioned that they may have infringed the integrity of the process and have surrendered the right to viewing, recheck or appeal as appropriate.
17. Candidates can view each section of the examination once only.

#### Penalties for Violation of Procedures

Any candidate, or any person accompanying him/her\*\*\*, found breaching or attempting to breach the conditions in this Handbook for the purpose of obtaining an examination result to which the candidate is not entitled, shall be deemed unsuccessful in all sections of the exam. The conditions include:

- Write on any examination script or part thereof.
- Furnish or attempts to furnish any material not originally furnished for examination.
- Alter or attempt to alter the material returned to him/her for viewing.
- Remove, attempt to remove or copy an examination script or any part thereof from the viewing session.
- Use or attempt to use any form of an electronic communication device during a viewing session.

In addition, Council may exclude the candidate from applying for any Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council examination, for any period as determined by Council.

\*\*\* Note: In the event of misconduct by an accompanying person Council will consider sanction as appropriate.

## Recheck process

Rechecks apply to MCQs and SWAs.

### MCQs

The examinations officer will request that a recheck of marks is conducted, by the service provider, with verification provided. The examinations officer will validate the marks received and ensure that the answer matrix was fully and properly applied.

### SWAs

Rechecks of SWA scripts will be carried out by a PHECC examiner who will independently review and remark the script.

- Rechecks will be conducted in accordance with [Council Policy for Viewing and Rechecks](#)
- The recheck procedure exists to ensure that the answer matrix was fully and properly applied to the examination script (MCQ or SWA) be it electronic or paper.
- The recheck of an exam result will be organised by the PHECC examinations coordinator.
- Candidates have twenty-eight (28) calendar days from receipt of the examination results in which to make an application for a recheck.
- The results of a recheck will be final.
- The Director will approve results of a recheck.
- The examinations officer will inform the candidates by email of the final results after the recheck.

## 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.
  - 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 [SECTION 3 Scheduling](#).
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 an RI's conduct of an NQEMT examination they should follow the RI's appeals and complaints procedure.
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:
  - An OSCE appeal must be lodged with the exam coordinator before the candidate leaves the OSCE circuit.
  - All appeals will be brought to the attention of the Director.



## Repeats & Unsuccessful Candidates

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

### 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 should be aware that there may be approximately a five (5) 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 contact their training institution which will advise on training requirements. Which may involve:

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL),  
or
- Retaking the course.

### 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 is conducted by NASC/UCD and DFB/RCSI.

## 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. The PHECC register 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