

Pre-Hospital  
Emergency Care  
Council



**Council Rules for the Recognition of  
Institutions and Approval of  
Training Institutions**

## **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”*

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### **Version History**

(Please visit the [PHECC website](http://www.phecc.ie) to confirm current version)

<b>Name: RUL006 Council Rules for the Recognition of Institutions and Approval of Training Institutions</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>
1	Dec 2006	Council Rules approved and incorporated into the publication PUB004-2007 Education and Training Standards.
2	March 2011	Council Rules updated and approved by Council on 31st March 2011.
3	Oct 2011	Amendments to Council Rules Part II No. 43 & 107 and Application Checklist – Recognition of Courses Part II.
4	Nov 2013	Amendments to Council Rules Part II Paramedic standard and Application checklists in Appendix 1, QER in Appendix 4, duration of practitioner courses in appendix 5 and information on Appeals refreshed. Assistant tutor and tutor requirements revised.
5	July 2014	Rules for course approval, Teaching faculty framework and RPL guidelines removed. The Quality Review framework new added along with some changes to institution application requirements. Note Statutory Declaration (FOR031) accompanies this document.
6	Oct 2014	Amended by Council. Revised statutory declaration (FOR031 V2) accompanies this document.

7	Dec 2018	Amended, including name, by Council to delineate institutions recognised for practitioner/NQEMT course provision and training institutions approved for responder course provision. Revised statutory declaration (FOR031 V4) accompanies this document.
8	Apr 2021	Amended to update the statutory declaration (FOR031 V5), to clarify the requirements for faculty, clarity on breaches and actions that may be imposed and a new renewal process.

## Council Rules for the Recognition of Institutions and Approval of Training Institutions

Pursuant to S.I. No 109 of 2000 as amended by S.I. No 575 of 2004 and S.I. No 166 of 2008, one of the functions of the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (the “Council”) is to recognise, in accordance with rules made by Council, institutions providing education and training to persons pursuing the award of the N.Q.E.M.T at the level of competence of emergency medical technician, paramedic or advanced paramedic, as the case may be.

These Rules set out:

- the procedure for recognition which will apply to all institutions providing education and training to persons pursuing the award of the national qualification in emergency medical technology (NQEMT).
- the procedure for approval which will apply to all institutions providing education and training to persons pursuing certification of responder level courses.

### Interpretation

In these Rules -

“the Council” means the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council.

“recognised institution” means an institution recognised by the Council under Article 4(a) of S.I. 109 of 2000, as amended.

“approved training institution” means an institution approved by the Council to provide a recognised course in pre-hospital emergency care under Article 4 (h) (ii)

“applicant institution” or “The Applicant” refers to an organisation preparing to, or in the process of, applying for recognition at NQEMT course level or applying for approval at responder course level.

“education and training standard” means the standard of education and training in pre-hospital emergency care set by the Council in accordance with Article 4(f) of S.I. 109 of 2000, as amended.

“quality review framework” means the continuing cycle of reviews put in place by the Council to promote and maintain quality assurance/enhancement in the delivery of education and training standards and associated courses.

“Self-assessment toolkit (SAT)” is a quality improvement tool to enable self-examination by a recognised institution or approved training institution with reporting to the Council. There are three parts to the SAT, the self-assessment report, the quality improvement plan and the assessment matrix. A completed SAT will demonstrate a recognised or approved institution’s capacity to effectively deliver education and training standards while identifying good practices and areas needing improvement.

“breaches” means one or more incidents of poor or non-compliance with these Council Rules and current Council Education and Training Standards.

“teaching faculty” hereafter ‘faculty’ means, PHECC certified instructors, assistant tutors, tutors, facilitators and instructor trainers delivering PHECC courses and may be employees, subcontractors or operate as external/affiliate faculty.

## Application criteria for applicant institutions

### The Applicant must:

1. Be an established legal entity with education and training as its principal function, or have a proposal for providing PHECC Education and Training Standards.
2. Comply with all applicable regulation and legislation in Ireland such as the tax requirements of the Revenue Commissioners, health and safety, data protection, the requirements of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012 and maintain current and valid insurance such as employers, public and professional indemnity for all services provided, as relevant.
3. Have sufficient corporate governance arrangements and structures in place to be able to provide high quality pre-hospital emergency care education and training to students on an ongoing basis. In this regard, the Applicant must be able to demonstrate appropriate governance, management and decision-making structures, appropriate training premises and equipment, have a stable compliment of faculty members. The Applicant must be in good financial standing and show tax clearance evidence.
4. Have sufficient corporate governance arrangements and structures to be able to satisfactorily comply with Council's Quality Review Framework. This includes having in place quality assurance/enhancement policies and procedures to systematically organise, deliver and monitor the quality of courses and awards.
5. Have adequate faculty management arrangements in place that demonstrates active monitoring of all faculty. For external/affiliated instructors, the Applicant must be able to provide evidence of teaching/instructor contract agreements, transparent instructor registration costs, provision of course materials and resources, e.g., assessment materials, management of student records, and provision of certification. Evidence of relevant insurance cover external/affiliated instructors will be sought.
6. Have met the standards contained in the Teaching Faculty Framework appropriate to their level of recognition at NQEMT course level and/or at responder course level and carry out periodic review and monitoring of faculty to satisfy themselves that those teaching students on PHECC approved courses are qualified and competent.
7. To demonstrate compliance with the Quality Standards in Council's QRF, have in place the following non-exhaustive list of policies and procedures:
  - a. Recognition of prior learning;
  - b. Data/Records management;
  - c. Complaints and appeals;
  - d. Safety, health and welfare;
  - e. Equality and Access;
  - f. Assessment and awards and
  - g. Quality assurance/improvement.

## Recognition/Approval process

8. The Applicant must complete the institution application form and include all relevant supporting documentation, including course application(s), faculty form(s) and the required statutory declaration (pursuant to the Statutory Declarations Act 1938). All Applicants must use the PHECC templates/forms or online Portal as relevant at the time of application.
9. The institution application form and course application(s) must be accompanied by the appropriate fee as per Council's Schedule of Fees that applies at the date of application.
10. Every new application for recognition of an institution or approval as a training institution must be accompanied by only one PHECC course application. Recognised Institutions or Approved Training Institutions may apply for approval for any number of PHECC courses thereafter.
11. Any Applicant that fails to submit all of the application requirements within 3 months will be written to and informed that the application is incomplete, and the application will be refused; fees if paid will be refunded.
12. Every PHECC course, for example, Cardiac First Response has specific course approval criteria such as duration of course and faculty requirements. These criteria are set out in the respective education and training standard and must be met on application.
13. On receipt of the completed Application Forms, together with the relevant supporting documentation, the Council will consider the application.
14. The Council reserves the right to request the Applicant to produce such further information and supporting documentation as it deems necessary in order to consider the application.
15. The Council reserves the right to make any reasonable enquiries with any body or persons in relation to the application, including making a preliminary site visit or a meeting with the Applicant prior to consideration of the application.
16. The outcome of the application process will be one of the following:
  - a. **Recognition of the institution** to deliver one approved course at NQEMT/ practitioner level. A renewal application is required after 1 year.
  - b. **Approval of the training institution** to deliver one approved course at responder level. A renewal application is required after 1 year.
  - c. **Conditional recognition/approval.** Council may attach conditions to its recognition of an institution or its approval of a training institution. The recognised institution/approved training institution will be required to show evidence of compliance with the specified conditions within a specified time period and will be subject to a Quality Review within 1 year. The recognised institution or approved training institution shall submit to the Council, on request, a progress report on the implementation of any conditions imposed at the time of initial recognition or approval. Failure to satisfactorily comply with one or more conditions will result in withdrawal of recognition or approval by Council. The Council shall provide reasons for its decision.
  - d. **Refusal.** The Council shall provide reasons for its decision.

## Quality Review Framework

17. Council approved the Quality Review Framework (QRF) for institutions in 2015. The overarching aim of the QRF is to put in place a continued cycle of institutional reviews to systematically organise and promote quality assurance/improvement in the delivery of Council's education and training standards in keeping with the Council's statutory provisions. Refer to the current version of the Quality Review Framework for further information regarding the methodology employed for recognised institutions and approved training institutions.
18. Acknowledging the diversity of recognised institutions and approved training institutions, Council will apply the Quality Review Framework proportionately.
19. The key elements of the QRF are:
  - The themes, the quality standards and quality components
  - Systematic monitoring and annual self-assessment against the quality standards by institutions
  - External desktop and on-site quality reviews carried out by PHECC appointed assessors
  - Quality improvement planning and implementation by institutions.

## Statutory declaration

20. The Applicant must complete the Statutory Declaration confirming that the Applicant:
  - a. knows of no reason why the Council should not approve this application for recognition of institution or approval of training institution;
  - b. acknowledges that approval for recognition of institution or approval of training institution is at the discretion of the Council, in accordance with these Rules;
  - c. hereby consents and gives authority to the Council to make any reasonable enquiries with any body or persons in relation to the application including making a preliminary site visit or a meeting with the Applicant prior to consideration of the application;
  - d. accepts all Council Rules, standards in the Teaching Faculty Framework and course approval criteria (specifically set out in each education and training standard) along with any amendments thereto;
  - e. confirms that the information provided on the Application Form and supporting materials is true and accurate;
  - f. is compliant with applicable tax requirements of the Revenue Commissioners;
  - g. has and will maintain, current valid relevant insurance policies including employer, public liability and professional indemnity for all faculty;
  - h. has systems, processes and procedures in place to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and Council's Quality Standards (QRF) relating to the delivery of safe and effective PHECC courses;

### **If granted recognition or approval for training, the Applicant agrees that it shall:**

- i. Comply with any conditions attached to their recognition/approval within any specified period of such condition and submit on request a progress report on the implementation of any conditions imposed at the time;
- j. manage internal quality assurance quality improvement procedures to ensure full compliance with Council's Quality Review Framework including the annual submission of an organisational self-assessment toolkit (SAT);
- k. keep itself informed and ensure full compliance with relevant Council Rules on an ongoing basis;

- l. ensure full compliance with the current version of the Council's Education and Training Standards and Council's Quality Review Framework as soon as practically possible after issue and certainly no later than the timeframe outlined from time to time in correspondence on behalf of the Council to the institution;
- m. monitor and manage the quality of every approved courses delivered as per its QA policy/procedures;
- n. monitor and manage faculty where students are being prepared for an NQEMT examination and responder level examinations for award of joint PHECC and institution certificates, e.g., CFR and FAR;
- o. ensure full compliance with the assessment/examination and joint PHECC/institution certification requirements for students for every PHECC approved course;
- p. respond to information requests as determined by Council from time to time;
- q. maintain its website information accurate and up to date regarding PHECC approved courses and in compliance with Council's logo usage policy;
- r. apply to Council for approval for any subsequent organisational or governance changes that are relevant to its status as a PHECC recognised institution or approved training institution.
- s. In the event that an application is made to renew its recognition or approval status with the Council, that such an application is made in a timely manner as outlined in correspondence on behalf of the Council to the institution;

<b>Post recognition/post approval</b>
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- 21. When Council approves an application at NQEMT/practitioner level, the institution shall be regarded and known as a 'recognised institution (RI)'. When Council approves an application at responder level, the institution shall be regarded and known as an 'approved training institution (ATI)'.
- 22. Any significant change to a recognised institution or approved training institution noted by Council requires a new application. This includes significant structural, organisational or governance changes that may be relevant to its status as a recognised institution or approved training institution. Significant changes to a recognised institution/approved training institution accepted by Council may result in the withdrawal of recognition or approval.
- 23. The recognised institution or approved training institution must maintain an up-to-date record of faculty including their qualifications and PHECC certification. The annual renewal application to Council must disclose all faculty membership. Permission must be sought and retained from each faculty member named by the recognised institution or approved training institution, cognisant that this information will be shared with PHECC for the purposes of recognition/approval. The responsibility to maintain valid instructor and/or tutor certification is with every individual faculty member and the responsibility to monitor certification of faculty lies with the institution.
- 24. The recognised institution or approved training institution must examine responder level course participants in full compliance with the PHECC Responder Examination Handbook (PUB034) and prepare and support practitioner level students in accordance with the NQEMT Examination Handbook (PUB023).
- 25. The recognised institution or approved training institution must issue responder level certificates and cards at the appropriate level to all successful students. Dual logos for both PHECC and the RI/ATI must be included on every certificate/card.
- 26. The Council publishes a list of recognised institutions and approved training institutions and contact details (including website links) on its website. Recognised institutions and approved training institutions must keep their website information accurate and up to date and websites advertising PHECC approved courses must comply with the Council's logo usage policy.



27. Recognised institutions and approved training institutions wishing to use the PHECC logo must comply with the terms of usage outlined in the Council's current logo usage policy.

#### Application renewal process

28. The renewal process applies to those institutions that have received recognition or approval as an institution to deliver PHECC courses.

29. A renewal application is required on an annual basis for every recognised institution and approved training institution as outlined in correspondence on behalf of the Council to the institution.

30. PHECC institutions must apply for renewal at least 60 days before their designated renewal date every year and include:

- Completed renewal information
- Completed declaration form (non-statutory)
- Payment of appropriate fees in accordance with Council's current Schedule of fees.

31. Council will assess a renewal application based on the following:

- Payment of appropriate fees in accordance with Council's current Schedule of fees.
- Completed renewal application form and declaration form.
- Submission of a completed self-assessment toolkit (SAT). This demonstrates the institution's commitment and ability to meet the QRF.
- Confirmation of institution profile details, current valid policies of insurance in place and tax compliance.
- Submission of a record of all faculty and their in-date qualification (PHECC instructor or tutor certification) to teach PHECC courses.
- The results of any reviews carried out in accordance with the Quality Review Framework.

32. The outcome of the application renewal process will be one of the following:

- Recognition of the institution** to deliver one approved course at NQEMT/ practitioner level. A renewal application is required after 1 year.
- Approval of the training institution** to deliver one approved course at responder level. A renewal application is required after 1 year.
- Conditional recognition/approval.** Council may attach conditions to its recognition of an institution or its approval of a training institution. The recognised institution/approved training institution will be required to show evidence of compliance with the specified conditions within a specified time period and may be scheduled for a Quality Review. The recognised institution or approved training institution shall submit to the Council, on request, a progress report on the implementation of any conditions imposed at the time of renewal. Failure to satisfactorily comply with one or more conditions will result in withdrawal of recognition or approval by Council. The Council shall provide reasons for its decision.
- Refusal.** The Council shall provide reasons for its decision.

## Breaches and appeals

33. Breaches by institutions of current Council Rules, the Quality Review Framework, the Teaching Faculty Framework and the Education and Training Standards will be recorded and analysed according to the potential risk they present.
34. The Council may attach conditions to the continued recognition/approval of an institution or suspend the recognition/approval for a designated time period or remove the recognition/approval. Any such steps taken shall be proportionate to the potential risk.
35. Such actions as outlined in paragraph 34 above may be considered:
  - when breaches of Council Rules are found
  - for an overall compliance rating of 'Not Met' (<1.0) on a Quality Review composite report
  - for non-payment of fees as set out in Council Policy and Schedule of Fees.
36. The Council Policy and Procedures for Appeals (POL019) sets out the manner in which such appeals are conducted. The fees related to appeals are detailed in the Council Policy & Schedule of Fees (POL006). The Applicant has the right to appeal the following decisions:
  - Granting of conditional recognition or approval on application or renewal.
  - Suspension of recognition/approval status.
  - Refusal of recognition/approval.
  - Removal of recognition/approval status.



