



EXAMINATION PREPARATION & ADMINISTRATION GUIDE FOR U.S. CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS

This U.S. certification examination preparation & administration guide will provide valuable information in the following areas: (1) About the Exam, (2) Preparing and Studying for the Exam, (3) Scheduling the Exam, (4) Day of Exam, and (5) After the Exam.

ABOUT THE EXAM

Exam Questions

All certification examination questions are multiple-choice with one best answer. The examinees will be asked questions at different cognitive skills. The three types of cognitive skills: recall, application, and analysis, which are described in the following table:

COGNITIVE SKILLS	PURPOSE	PERFORMANCE/ABILITY REQUIRED
Recall	To measure memory	Ability to recall or recognize previously learned (memorized) knowledge ranging from specific facts to complete theories
Application	To measure basic interpretation of data	Ability to utilize recalled knowledge to interpret or apply written, numeric or visual data
Analysis	To measure the application of knowledge	Ability to utilize recalled knowledge and the interpretation/application of distinct criteria to resolve a problem or situation and/or make an appropriate decision

Exam Length

EXAM TYPE	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS	TIME FRAME ALLOTTED
PBT CMLT (Medical Laboratory Technician for California State Licensure ONLY)	80	2 HOURS
DPT	90	2 HOURS 30 MINUTES
Technician: HT, MLT	100	2 HOURS 30 MINUTES
Technologist: BB, C, CG, CT, H, HTL, MLS, M, MB		
Specialist: SBB, SC, SCT, SH, SM, PA		
Diplomate: DLM		

Computer Adaptive Testing

The ASCP Board of Certification uses the format of computer adaptive testing (CAT) for all certification examinations. With CAT, when a person answers a question correctly, the next test question has a slightly higher level of difficulty. The difficulty level of the questions presented to the examinee continues to increase until a question is answered incorrectly. Then a slightly easier question is presented. In this way, the test is tailored to the individual's ability level.

Each question in the test bank is calibrated for level of difficulty and is assigned a content area that matches with the subtest area of the content outline for a particular examination. The weight (value) given to each question is determined by the level of difficulty. Therefore, the examinee must answer enough difficult questions to achieve a score above the pass point. To pass the certification examination, the examinee's scores must exceed the minimum pass score, previously established by the examination committee.

Exam Development

The members of Board of Certification Examination Committees and Work Groups include technicians, technologists, laboratory scientists, supervisors, program directors, and physicians from across the country. Examination Committees meet annually and are responsible for the planning, development, and review of the examination databases. They also determine the accuracy and relevancy of test items, confirm the standards for each examination, and perform job or practice analyses.

If you are interested in serving on a BOC Examination Committee, please complete the [Abbreviated C.V. form](#).

PREPARING AND STUDYING FOR THE EXAM

Begin early to prepare for the Certification Examination. Because of the broad range of knowledge and skills tested by the examination, even applicants with college education and those completing formal laboratory education training programs will find that review is necessary, although the exact amount will vary from applicant to applicant. Generally, last-minute cramming is the least effective method for preparing for the examination. The earlier you begin, the more time you will have to prepare; and the more you prepare, the better your chance of successfully passing the examination and scoring well.

Plan a course of study that allows more time for your weaker areas. Although it is important to study your areas of weakness, be sure to allow enough time to review all areas. It is better to spend a short time studying every day than to spend several hours every week or two. Setting aside a regular time and a special place to study will help ensure studying becomes a part of your daily routine.

Study Materials

To help you prepare for the certification/qualification examination, the following study materials are available. Please click on the appropriate links below for further information on these study materials.

- Purchase of the [Online Practice Tests](#) include a 90-day online access to the practice tests, comprehensive diagnostic scores, and discussion boards.
- Board of Certification (Board of Registry) Study Guides are a good resource for practice in taking certification exams:
 - [Board of Certification Study Guide: Clinical Laboratory Certification Examinations \(5th edition\)](#)
 - [BOC Study Guide Errata Pages \(10/01/2010\)](#)
 - [Board of Registry Study Guide: Histotechnology Examinations \(2nd edition\)](#)
- [Examination content guidelines](#) are useful tools for exam preparation and are available free of charge for all certification exams.
- [Reading lists](#) of suggested material are available free of charge for examination preparation in all certification categories.

SCHEDULING THE EXAM

Scheduling Your Appointment

Once your application and eligibility documentation have been approved by the BOC, you'll receive email notification to login to view your Admission Notice. Once you receive your Admission Notice, verify all information for accuracy. You may schedule an appointment to take the examination at your convenience Monday through Saturday within the chosen three month period at a Pearson Professional Center.

It is strongly recommended that you contact Pearson registration as early as possible to make your appointment within the three-month examination period. After you have made your appointment, a confirmation letter will be mailed to you. The confirmation letter is not required to sit for the examination. You must take the examination within the three-month examination period indicated on your Admission Notice.

Application fees are not transferable to another three-month period nor are they refundable.

Applicants are solely responsible for making and keeping their scheduled examination appointment date. To verify your appointment, call Pearson registration.

Rescheduling Appointments

If you wish to reschedule your testing appointment, within the three month period, you must contact Pearson Registration at least one full business day (24 hours) prior to the date and time of the test to reschedule another date within the same three-month period. The Test Cancellation and Change Deadlines for a Schedule Test are shown below:

Test Day	Last Cancel/Change Day (at least 24 hours before time of appointment)
Monday	Friday of the preceding week
Tuesday	Monday of the same week
Wednesday	Tuesday of the same week
Thursday	Wednesday of the same week
Friday	Thursday of the same week
Saturday	Friday of the same week

Scheduling changes must be made and confirmed by direct contact with Pearson Registration. Leaving a message on voice mail or on a recorder is not sufficient to reschedule your appointment.

If you have successfully rescheduled your test date online, you will receive a confirmation email from Pearson Vue within 24 hours. *If you do not receive an email, you have not successfully rescheduled.*

If you call *within 24 hours* (one full business day) of your appointment, you will not be permitted to reschedule and you will be considered a "no show". You will not receive any refund of your application fee nor can it be transferred to another examination period. *A full fee will be required to reschedule the examination for another three-month period.*

Cancellation Policy

You will not receive any refund of your application fee nor can it be transferred to another examination period if you do not make an appointment within the three-month examination period, if you cancel your application, OR if you do not appear for your scheduled appointment. *A full fee will be required to reschedule the examination.*

Reapplying for Examination

Your application and the supporting documentation required to establish your eligibility will remain valid for a period of five attempts* under one eligibility route. After five unsuccessful attempts, you must reapply under an alternate eligibility route. If you do not meet the requirements for any other eligibility route for that particular examination category, you will no longer be eligible to apply for that particular category of examination.

*NAACLS accredited programs are valid for a period of five years from the date of completion. Your application under a NAACLS accredited program is valid for five years from the date of application.

Your laboratory experience must have been obtained within the required time limit from the date of application.

DAY OF THE EXAM

What to Bring to the Exam Center

When you arrive at the Pearson examination center, you must present a drivers license with photo and signature or a valid state identification card with photo and signature. You must also present a second personal ID containing your signature to the proctor. Your first and last name on the valid drivers license/state ID and secondary ID must match your first and last name registered at Pearson. Your identification must be valid (not expired) or it will not be accepted. [View acceptable forms of ID.](#)

If you appear without a valid driver's license with photo, valid state ID with photo, or the first and last names do not match the names registered at Pearson, you will not be permitted to take the examination. You will be required to reapply and pay another application fee for a new exam period.

Testing Center Security

You must report to the testing center 30 minutes prior to your scheduled time. Upon check-in Pearson VUE will collect your signature, photographic image, and palm vein image. This is a standard procedure at all Pearson Professional Centers. Biometric technology ensures that each candidate will only have a single record in the Pearson VUE system and will help safeguard the integrity of the ASCP Board of Certification examinations. You will be given a checklist of rules to read. Another palm vein image will be taken before you are seated in the exam room and again if you leave the room at any time during your exam.

Electronic Devices

Only non-programmable calculators may be brought to the testing center. Writing material for calculations will be provided for you. Cell phones will not be permitted in the exam room.

Reference Materials

Do not bring reference books, notes, or other study materials into the testing center. If the test proctor determines that you have engaged in inappropriate conduct during the exam (such as giving or obtaining unauthorized information or aid, or looking at notes/reference books/study guides), your exam session will be terminated, and you will be unable to complete your exam. You will need to appeal to the Board of Certification. The Board will review your case and determine the appropriate course of action.

Examination Irregularities

Please view the [appeals procedure](#) regarding exam content or administration irregularities.

Taking the Test

At the beginning of the examination, you must verify that your name and examination category are correct as shown on the computer screen. Next, the directions for entering responses will appear. You should read these directions carefully before beginning the test.

The examinations in all categories consist of multiple choice questions, presented one at a time on the computer screen. Visual material such as graphs or photographs, appear on the computer screen with the question. You answer each question by pressing the letter key (A, B, C or D) corresponding to the letter of the response you select. You may also use the computer mouse to choose and record your answers. Responses may be changed as many times as you wish by pressing the key for a different response number or by using the mouse. When you are satisfied with the response, press the "ENTER" key or click the NEXT key to record it. The next question will then appear.

You must answer each question to the best of your ability when it is presented. However, at the end of the test, you may review some or all of your responses and change them if you wish.

When you have completed reviewing the exam, you will use the END EXAM (E) button on the screen. A message will appear on the screen, asking you to verify that you wish to exit the examination. If you respond using the YES button, your test will be complete.

AFTER THE EXAM

Exam Reporting Mechanisms

After completion of the examination at the testing center, the preliminary test results (pass/fail) will appear on the computer screen. Notification to view your examination scores post login will be emailed to you two business days after you have taken the examination provided all official transcripts verifying the appropriate degree have been received. Note: examination results cannot be released by telephone, to anyone.

Your official score report can be viewed online post login. It will indicate “pass” or “fail” status and the scaled score on the total examination. A scaled score is mathematically derived (in part) from the raw score (number of correctly answered questions) and the difficulty level of the questions. Because each examinee has taken a different form of the examination, scaled scores are used so that tests may be compared on the same scale. The minimum passing score is 400. The highest attainable score is 999.

In the event that a “PASS” status is achieved, it is important that you retain the examination score report as this report will be the only document from the Board of Certification that will contain your *Certification Number*. If lost, your certification number can only be obtained through the certification verification service. You will be required to pay a fee for this service.

If you were unsuccessful in passing the examination, your scaled scores on each of the subtests will be indicated on this report as well. These subtest scores cannot be calculated to obtain your total score. These scores are provided as a means of demonstrating your areas of strengths and weaknesses in comparison to the minimum pass score.

Re-examination

If you are unsuccessful in passing the examination, information on re-testing will be emailed with your examination scores. DO NOT submit an application fee to retake the examination until you receive your examination score. You may not reapply to retest within the same three month period.

Maximum Number of Examination Attempts

You are permitted to take the examination in any one particular category a total of five times under one route. If you are unsuccessful after five attempts, you are ineligible for further examination in that category under the same route.

Certification Maintenance Program

Upon successful completion of the certification examination, your certification will remain valid for a period of three years, with the validation dates indicated on your certificate. The initials “CM” in superscript must be used after your certification initials immediately upon receipt of your certification [i.e., MLS(ASCP)^{CM}]. Individuals certified in all categories will be required to participate in the BOC [Certification Maintenance Program \(CMP\)](#) every three years. If you fail to complete the CMP as required, your certification will expire and no longer be valid.

Requests for Examination Scores Mailed/Emailed to a Third Party

Requests for submitting verification of certification or examination scores to a third party, such as a State licensing board or employer, must be ordered online by the examinee after successful completion of the examination. A link to the online verification of certification process is provided on the online examinee score report or by going to www.ascp.org/verification after successful completion of the examination. There is a \$15 service fee (payable by credit card) for each 3rd party verification request. Verification requests may also be submitted in writing and mailed with a \$15 check to: ASCP Board of Certification, 3462 Eagle Way, Chicago, IL 60678

Additional Information

For complete information on eligibility requirements, application guidelines and examination procedures, please refer to the [ASCP Board of Certification U.S. Procedures for Examination & Certification](#)