



AMT
American Medical Technologists
Certifying Excellence in Allied Health

AMERICAN MEDICAL TECHNOLOGISTS POLICY

Subject: Subject Matter Expert Panel Composition and Requirements

Date approved by EQS Committee: April 5, 2016

Effective Date: April 5, 2016

Supersedes: None

References: NCCA Accreditation Standards;
AMT Organizational Manual;
Committee Participant Interest Form

POLICY

The Policy establishes the responsibility, scope, and characteristics of subject matter expert panels participating in examination development and specifies the requirements for appointment to those panels.

PURPOSE

The Policy is implemented to ensure that examination development committees are composed only of subject matter experts actively participating as practitioners or instructors in their fields. The Policy establishes the role and scope of examination development committees and ensures thorough representation of varied input through a system that allows for the rotation of subject matter expert appointments over time.



American Medical Technologists

Subject Matter Expert Panel Composition and Requirements

Subject matter expert (SME) panels serve a key role in forming the foundation for a valid and quality certification program. Activities include working with psychometric staff to develop lists of requisite competencies that inform test blueprints, authoring test items, assembling test forms, setting test passing scores, monitoring test and item performance, and establishing requirements for certification eligibility. Many practitioners and educators express interest in participating in examination development opportunities at American Medical Technologists (AMT). The purpose of this document is to define the composition and duties of SME panels and describe the requirements for participating in those panels. The descriptions and requirements appearing here are not arbitrary, but are intended to be consistent with both testing and certification industry practices, and the organizational goals of AMT as established by the AMT Board of Directors. As an agency accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), AMT adheres to accreditation standards regarding expert panel composition.

Primary committee/panel responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the subcommittee to develop and revise certification examination specifications, construct and review certification examinations, monitor examination outcomes, and monitor examination validity. The committee assists the AMT Examinations, Qualifications, and Standards Oversight Committee in the determination of policies and procedures regarding examination administration for the certification discipline assigned to the committee. Depending upon the nature of the task and the panel's charge, participants will be responsible for the following certification program elements:

- 1) Prepare, review, and approve certification examinations for the certified discipline.
- 2) Maintain an adequate item pool from which questions may be generated for certification examinations.
- 3) Supervise the development of competency-based examinations for certification programs.
- 4) Establish a schedule for generating certification examinations on a timely basis.
- 5) Monitor passing standards for each examination.

- 6) Supervise the scoring, grading, and compilation of statistical data at item and examination levels.
- 7) Supervise the manner in which test scores are released to applicants and schools.
- 8) Periodically review and assess AMT's compliance with NCCA accreditation criteria.
- 9) Supervise the type and quantity of statistical data necessary to satisfy NCCA accreditation criteria.
- 10) Determine and/or recommend to EQS appropriate practitioner education and experience standards for the certification discipline.
- 11) Periodically conduct practice analysis survey research to determine the current practices in the field of discipline.
- 12) Review any complaints/inquiries related to the examination and/or certification process and forward to the EQS Oversight Committee.
- 13) Perform other duties as requested by the EQS Oversight Committee and/or the AMT Board of Directors.

Note: The Examinations, Qualifications, and Standards Oversight Committee and the Board of Directors must approve all policy recommendations.

Representation from the field of practice. Participants in the certification process must be representative of the certified population. The committee should exhibit balanced representation from both working practitioners and instructors active in the discipline. Range of experience should also be representative to include at least one practitioner reflecting competent, entry-level experience. To be considered for committee participation, appointees must be either actively employed or actively instructing/teaching in the certified discipline or a related discipline.

Committee (panel) composition. The committee may be composed of two or more subdivisions or teams. Where a team structure is present, each team will consist of an appointed team leader and other members as appropriate, consistent with the accreditation requirements of the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The AMT Director of Testing and Competency Assurance serves as an ex-officio member of the committee. As knowledge in healthcare professions is dynamic, it is essential that SME panel participants either be currently employed or currently teaching in their fields. Although panels by their nature often include highly-experienced professionals, panels should also include input from entry-level practitioners as well, particularly where standard setting is involved. Panels should also be both geographically representative (to account for regional differences in practice) and representative in terms of varying employment settings.

Documentation of qualifications. To both ensure fit of participants with committee activities and to comply with accreditation standards, a resume or curriculum vitae must be submitted by all panel candidates and retained on file by the certification program administration.

Appointment of SME participants. Appointments of all participants are rendered by the AMT Examinations, Qualifications, and Standards Committee who acts on behalf of the AMT Board of Directors. Appointments are made in consultation with acting chairs or coordinators of individual SME panels. Committee participants are appointed annually, for one-year terms. Terms may be extended to more than one year. Appointees must submit resumes for consideration to the AMT EQS Oversight Committee prior to appointment. Current resumes are retained on file, in accordance with accreditation requirements.

Terms of service. Accreditation requirements specify that broad SME representation take place with respect to service on panels. Accordingly, a rotation schedule for panel participation with guidelines regarding terms of service is appropriate for ensuring new perspectives and input regarding subject matter content. According to NCCA commentary, individuals may serve on more than one panel, and they may serve for several years; however, certification programs should ensure that there is fair opportunity for a broad range of SMEs to participate over time (*Standard 13, Commentary 4*). By comparison, the term of service for elected members of the AMT Board of Directors is three terms consisting of three years per term. Committee appointments may generally follow the schedule observed by the AMT Board of Directors to allow for varied subject matter expertise input over time.

While the general principle of term limits and rotation of SMEs strongly guides committee composition, in cases where essential subject matter knowledge is not widely found among the community of certificants and stakeholders but instead resides in only a small handful of individuals, exceptions may have to be made in order to retain the services of the occasional rare subject matter expert in a more specialized field of knowledge.

Reporting. Written reports of committee activities are submitted to the AMT Examinations, Qualifications, and Standards Oversight Committee.

Avoiding potential conflicts of interest and disproportionate influence.

Accreditation criteria require that the process of recruitment and involvement of SMEs must prevent the undue or disproportionate influence of any individual or group. In addition, certification programs must demonstrate that policies and procedures are established and applied to avoid conflicts of interest for all personnel who are involved in certification decisions or examination development, implementation, maintenance, delivery, and revision (*Standard 11*).

Acknowledgments and agreements. SMEs appointed to committees will be asked to review and agree to observe provisions outlined in three separate policy documents

addressing: 1) disclaimer of any potential conflicts of interest, 2) examination materials confidentiality and security considerations, and 3) item author disclaimer of item ownership.

Opportunities for participation. Practitioners and educators may have the opportunity to participate in examination development efforts beyond the appointed EQS committees. For example, qualified participants may be engaged in special panels responsible for item writing, standard setting, scope of practice evaluations, examination pilot testing, or other critical examination development activities.

Conveying interest in participation. Qualified candidates interested in participating on an AMT SME panel should submit a curriculum vitae (resume) along with the Committee Participant Interest Form. Submissions will be reviewed by the appropriate committee chair or administrative member of leadership responsible for panel appointments. Qualified individuals will be appointed as appropriate or added to a participant prospect list for future consideration.



American Medical Technologists

Subject Matter Expert Panel and Committee Participant Interest Form

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

City/State/Zip code: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

AMT ID# (if certified by AMT): _____

Name of committee/panel of interest: _____

Participant type: Practitioner

Instructor

Experience: New to field

Experienced in field

Please attach resume to this form upon submission.