

PHLEBOTOMY TECHNICIAN, PBT(ASCP) INTERNATIONAL PHLEBOTOMY TECHNICIAN, PBT(ASCPⁱ) EXAMINATION CONTENT GUIDELINE

EXAMINATION MODEL

The PBT(ASCP) and PBT(ASCPⁱ) certification examination is composed of 80 questions given in a 2 hour time frame. All exam questions are multiple-choice with one best answer. The certification exam is administered using the format of computer adaptive testing (CAT).

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 in order to successfully pass the certification examination.

EXAMINATION CONTENT AREAS

The PBT certification exam questions encompass the following content areas within Phlebotomy: Circulatory System; Specimen Collection; Specimen Handling, Transport and Processing; Waived and Point-of-Care Testing; Non-Blood Specimens; and Laboratory Operations. Each of these content areas comprises a specific percentage of the overall 80-question exam. The percentages and content areas are described below:

| CONTENT AREA | DESCRIPTION | EXAM PERCENTAGE |
|--|---|-----------------|
| CIRCULATORY SYSTEM | Structure and function of the circulatory system, composition/function of blood | 5 – 10% |
| SPECIMEN COLLECTION | Review and clarification of orders, patient communication, patient identification, patient assessment/preparation, site selection, techniques, common tests, order of draw, complications and considerations, equipment | 45 – 50% |
| SPECIMEN HANDLING, TRANSPORT, AND PROCESSING | Specimen types/suitability, accessioning, labeling, specimen quality assessment, transport and storage, equipment | 15 – 20% |
| WAIVED AND POINT-OF-CARE TESTING (POCT) | Performance/operation of rapid tests: urinalysis (e.g., dipstick), hemoglobin and hematocrit, coagulation (e.g., PT/INR), glucose, kit tests | 5 – 10% |
| NON-BLOOD SPECIMENS | Physiology, patient preparation, patient collection, specimen processing and handling | 5 – 10% |
| LABORATORY OPERATIONS | Quality control, quality improvement, interpersonal relations, professional ethics, regulatory applications, safety, infection control, coding/billing, patient confidentiality (e.g., HIPAA) | 15 – 20% |

For a more specific overview of the PBT exam, please refer to the [CONTENT OUTLINE](#) starting on page 2.

PHLEBOTOMY TECHNICIAN, PBT(ASCP) INTERNATIONAL PHLEBOTOMY TECHNICIAN, PBT(ASCPⁱ) EXAMINATION CONTENT OUTLINE

Examination questions, which are related to the subtest areas outlined below, may be both theoretical and/or procedural. Theoretical questions measure skills necessary to apply knowledge. Procedural questions measure skills necessary to perform phlebotomy techniques and follow quality assurance protocols. Additionally, regulatory questions are based on U.S. sources (e.g., AABB, FDA, CLIA, CLSI, etc.).

I. CIRCULATORY SYSTEM (5 – 10%)

- A. Structure and Function of the Circulatory System
 - 1. Heart
 - 2. Arteries
 - 3. Veins
 - 4. Capillaries
- B. Composition/Function of Blood
 - 1. Types of blood (venous, capillary, arterial)
 - 2. Plasma
 - 3. Serum
 - 4. Cellular elements (RBC, WBC, platelets)
- C. Terminology

II. SPECIMEN COLLECTION (Venipuncture, Skin Puncture) (45 – 50%)

- A. Review and Clarification of Orders
- B. Patient Communication (pre and post collection)
- C. Patient Identification
- D. Patient Assessment/Preparation
- E. Site Selection
- F. Techniques
- G. Common Tests
- H. Order of Draw
 - 1. Venous
 - 2. Capillary
- I. Complications and Considerations (e.g., fainting, edema, hematoma, IV, mastectomy)
- J. Equipment (e.g., tubes/anticoagulants, needles, tourniquet, lancets, syringes, vein viewers)
- K. Terminology

III. SPECIMEN HANDLING, TRANSPORT, AND PROCESSING (15 – 20%)

- A. Specimen Types/Suitability
 - 1. Routine specimens
 - 2. Unusual specimen types (e.g., trace metal elements)
 - 3. Newborn screening
 - 4. Chain-of-custody specimens
- B. Accessioning
- C. Labeling
- D. Assess Specimen Quality (e.g., hemolysis, QNS, clotting, incorrect specimen type)
- E. Transport and Storage
 - 1. Temperature
 - 2. Light
 - 3. Time
 - 4. Shipping
- F. Equipment (e.g., centrifuge)
- G. Terminology

IV. WAIVED AND POINT-OF-CARE TESTING (POCT) (5 – 10%)

- A. Urinalysis (e.g., dipstick)
- B. Hemoglobin and Hematocrit
- C. Coagulation (e.g., PT/INR)
- D. Glucose
- E. Kit Tests (e.g., Strep screen, rapid flu test, pregnancy test)
- F. Performance/Operations
- G. Terminology

**V. NON-BLOOD SPECIMENS (e.g., Urine, CSF, Breath, Stool, Nasal/Nasopharyngeal)
(5 – 10%)**

- A. Physiology
- B. Patient Preparation
- C. Patient Collection
- D. Processing and Handling
- E. Terminology

VI. LABORATORY OPERATIONS (15 – 20%)

- A. Quality Control
 - 1. Techniques
 - 2. Equipment
- B. Quality Improvement
- C. Interpersonal Relations (e.g., age-specific communication, Americans with Disabilities Act)
- D. Professional Ethics
- E. Regulatory Applications (e.g., OSHA, CLSI, CDC, CLIA)
 - 1. Safety
 - a. Patient
 - b. Personal (e.g., PPE, Standard Precautions)
 - c. Equipment
 - d. Laboratory/hospital (e.g., fire, chemical)
 - 2. Infection control
 - a. Protective equipment (e.g., isolation)
 - b. Disposal of contaminated equipment
 - c. Hand hygiene
 - 3. Coding/billing
 - 4. Patient confidentiality (e.g., HIPAA)
- F. Terminology

Examples provided (as indicated by e.g.) are not limited to those listed.

All Board of Certification examinations use conventional and SI units for results and reference ranges.

END OF CONTENT GUIDELINE