

Scheduling and Test Day Policies and Procedures for the NBME (MSS) Subject Examination Program

NBME subject examinations are provided to medical schools and other health profession organizations as an external measure of achievement for individuals in various content areas. This document contains procedural and policy information related to your upcoming testing experience.

Your Scheduling Permit

You should verify the information on your Scheduling Permit before scheduling your appointment. Your Scheduling Permit includes the following:

- your name
- the examination for which you registered
- your Scheduling Number (for scheduling your appointment)
- your Candidate Identification Number (CIN) (for use only on test day to access your exam)

Be sure to print your Scheduling Permit at least several days in advance of your scheduled testing appointment to avoid any problems accessing or printing your permit on your scheduled test date.

You will not be able to take the test if you do not bring your Scheduling Permit to the test center. Your Scheduling Number is needed when you contact Prometric to schedule a test appointment. It differs from your Candidate Identification Number (CIN), which is your private key, and is needed to start the test. Prometric does not have access to your CIN.

Scheduling Your Test Date

You must have your Scheduling Permit before you contact Prometric to schedule a testing appointment. Appointments are assigned on a "first-come, first-served" basis; therefore, you should contact Prometric to schedule as soon as possible after you print your Scheduling Permit.

You will be required to provide information found only on your Scheduling Permit. When you schedule your appointment, you will receive the following specific information:

- the confirmed test date and time;
- the address and telephone number of the Prometric Test Center where you will test; and
- your Prometric Confirmation Number(s).

After you schedule your testing appointment, you can print a confirmation of your appointment from the Prometric website (<http://www.prometric.com/MSS>) . In addition, it is highly recommended that you access (<http://www.prometric.com/MSS>) to confirm your testing appointment approximately one week before your test date.

Test Length and Format

Click [here](#) for information about the test length, number of questions, and whether or not there are multiple blocks in your exam.

During the defined time to complete the questions in each block, you may answer the questions in any order, review your responses, and change answers. After you exit the block, or when time expires, you can no longer review test questions or change answers.

Admission to the Test

When you arrive at the test center, you must present your Scheduling Permit and the required identification described on your Scheduling Permit. Acceptable forms of identification include the following forms of unexpired identification:

- passport
- driver's license with photograph
- national identity card
- other form of unexpired, government-issued identification

Your identification must contain both your signature and photograph. If it contains your photograph but not your signature, you can use another form of unexpired identification that contains your signature, such as an employee identification card or a credit card, to supplement your photo-bearing, government-issued identification.

The first and last names on your identification **must exactly match** the names on your permit. The only acceptable difference would be the presence of a middle name, middle initial or suffix on one document and its absence on the other. Immediately contact the medical school or health profession organization that registered you for your examination if the name on your permit is misspelled or differs from your name as it appears on your identification. **Name changes or corrections cannot be made within 7 business days of your scheduled testing appointment.**

IMPORTANT: If you do not bring your Scheduling Permit and acceptable identification, you will not be admitted to the test.

Test Centers and Testing Conditions

Prometric provides computer-based testing services for academic assessment, professional licensure, and certification. The examinations are given at Prometric Test Centers worldwide. These centers provide the resources necessary for secure administration, including video and audio monitoring and recording, and use of digital cameras to record the identity of examinees.

You should arrive at the Prometric Test Center 30 minutes before your scheduled testing appointment on your testing day. If you arrive after your appointment time, you **may not** be admitted. If you arrive more than 30 minutes after your scheduled testing appointment, you **will not** be admitted.

Upon arrival at the test center:

- You must present the required identification, sign a test center log, be photographed, and store your personal belongings in your assigned locker.
- You will be asked to empty and turn your pockets inside out prior to entry into the testing room to confirm that you have no prohibited items. You will be asked to repeat this process prior to every entry into the testing room after a break.
- Test center staff will collect your Scheduling Permit. Your Scheduling Permit will be retained at the Test Center Administrator's station.
- Test center staff will provide you with two laminated note boards and a marker.
- You will be instructed to write your name and Candidate Identification Number (CIN) on one of the laminated note boards provided. You may request access to the permit during the examination if it becomes necessary for you to rewrite the CIN on the note board.
- Test center staff will escort you to your assigned testing station and provide brief instructions on use of the computer equipment. You must enter your CIN to start the examination, which begins with a tutorial.

Personal Items

Unauthorized possession of personal items while in the secure areas of the testing centers may lead to a finding of irregular behavior. **It is important that you read and understand the rules regarding personal possessions.** You may bring soft-foam earplugs into the testing room. However, they must be out of the packaging and ready for inspection by test center staff during check-in. Earplugs must be left at the workstation during all breaks.

Unauthorized items include, but are not limited to:

- mechanical or electronic devices, such as cellular telephones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), calculators, watches of any type, electronic paging devices, recording or filming devices, radios
- outerwear, such as coats, jackets, head wear, gloves

- book bags, backpacks, handbags, briefcases, wallets
- books, notes, written materials, or scratch paper
- food, candy, gum, or beverages

If you bring personal items to the test center, you must store them in a designated locker outside the secure testing area. Keep in mind that the storage facilities are small and that all stored mechanical or electronic devices must be turned off. Personal items and their contents may be subject to inspection. Any materials that reasonably appear to be reproductions of any examination materials will be confiscated. Making notes of any kind during an examination, except on the laminated note boards provided by the test center for this purpose, is not permitted. Removal of those materials from the secure testing area is prohibited.

Testing Regulations and Rules of Conduct

Test center staff monitor all testing sessions. You must follow instructions of test center staff throughout the examination. Failure to do so may result in a determination of irregular behavior.

Test center staff are not authorized to answer questions from examinees regarding examination content, testing software, or scoring. Test center staff are also not authorized to answer inquiries with regard to registration or retesting.

You may not remove materials in any form (written, printed, recorded, or any other type) from the test center.

All examination materials are the property of the NBME and you are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the materials. You may not reproduce or attempt to reproduce examination materials through memorization or any other means. Also, you may not provide information related to examination content that may give or attempt to give unfair advantage to individuals who may be taking the examination. This includes postings regarding examination content and/or answers on the Internet.

Taking the Examination

Your entire testing session is scheduled for a fixed amount of time as noted in the [exam timing table](#) at the end of this document. Depending on the exam, there will be either one block of questions or multiple blocks. The computer keeps track of your overall time and the time allocated for each block of the test.

If you fill up the laminated note boards during your exam, raise your hand to notify test center staff, who will collect the note boards and replace them with clean ones.

If you experience a computer problem during the test, notify test center staff *immediately*. The testing software is designed to allow the test to restart at the point it was interrupted. In most cases, your test can be restarted at the point of interruption with no loss of testing time. However, it is possible that a

technical problem may occur that does not permit you to complete your examination. In the rare event that this occurs, please notify your medical school or the health profession organization that registered you for this exam. Test center staff will also submit a report to the NBME.

Taking Breaks

There is no scheduled break time allotted for your exam. Please note the following:

- While you are testing, the block and overall test session clocks *continue to run even if you leave the testing room*, (e.g., for a personal emergency or restroom break).
- If your test has multiple blocks, you should use the time summary feature (as described in the tutorial) in the testing software to monitor how many blocks are remaining and how much time is left in your overall test session.
- If you leave during a block, the test center staff will report that fact as an irregular incident. Because there is no scheduled break time in your exam, however, these reports may not be considered unfavorably.
- The "unauthorized break" screen, as described in the tutorial, may appear on the monitor at your workstation during a testing block after a defined period of inactivity (no mouse click or key entry).
- Thirty seconds before the appearance of the unauthorized break screen, an "inactivity timeout" warning will appear. If you do not click as instructed on the warning screen, the unauthorized break screen will appear after 30 seconds.
- You will then have to enter your Candidate Identification Number (CIN) in order to continue with the examination.
- Each time you leave the testing room, you are required to sign out and sign in when you return. You must present your identification each time you sign in.
- Each block ends when the block time expires or when you exit from it.

Completing the Test

The test session ends when you have started and exited all blocks or the total time for the test expires. You will sign out as you leave the test center, and hand in the laminated note boards. The Test Center Administrator will provide you with a printout that confirms you appeared for your testing session. Once you leave the test center, Prometric cannot reproduce the printout.

NBME Subject Examination Timing and Structure

The table below shows the structure and timing for the examinations available for test administration at a Prometric Test Center.

Clinical Science Examinations

Exam Name	# of Questions	Exam Length	Tutorial Time	Total Session Time	# of Blocks
Clinical Neurology	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1
Family Medicine Core	80	2 hours	15 minutes	2 hours, 15 minutes	1
Family Medicine Core + Chronic Care	90	2 hours, 15 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 30 minutes	1
Family Medicine Core + Chronic Care + Musculoskeletal	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1
Medicine	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1
Obstetrics and Gynecology	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1
Pediatrics	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1
Psychiatry	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1
Surgery	100	2 hours, 30 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours, 45 minutes	1

Comprehensive Examinations

Exam Name	# of Questions	Exam Length	Tutorial Time	Total Session Time	# of Blocks	# of Questions per Block	Timing per Block
Comprehensive Basic Science Examination	184	4 hours	15 minutes	4 hours, 15 minutes	4	46	1 hour
Comprehensive Clinical Science Examination	184	4 hours, 16 minutes	15 minutes	4 hours, 31 minutes	4	46	1 hour, 4 minutes

NOTE: *If you will be taking an examination with extra testing time, the exam lengths shown above will be multiplied to reflect the pacing requested by your medical school or health profession organization (e.g., time-and-a-half, double time).*