

P R O F E S S I O N A L
CRE  **ENTIAL**
S E R V I C E S , I N C .



Alabama

BOARD OF COSMETOLOGY and BARBERING

Cosmetology
Candidate Handbook
July 2014

Quick Reference

STEP ONE: COMPLETE APPLICATION

- Apply for Licensure with Alabama Board

STEP TWO: TAKE EXAMINATIONS

- Pass Theory Examination with PSI
- Register for Practical Examination with PCS
- Take Practical Examination with PCS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Professional Credential Services (PCS)

Regular Mailing Address

Attn: Alabama Coordinator
P.O. Box 198768
Nashville, Tennessee 37219-8768

Courier Mailing Address

Attn: Alabama Coordinator
150 Fourth Avenue North
Suite 800
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

Customer Service: (888) 822-3272

Fax: (615) 312-4130

Email: alcos@pcshq.com

Website: <http://www.pcshq.com>

Alabama Board of Cosmetology and Barbering

Regular Mailing Address

RSA Union Building
100 North Union Street, Suite 320
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-1750

Telephone: (334) 242-1918

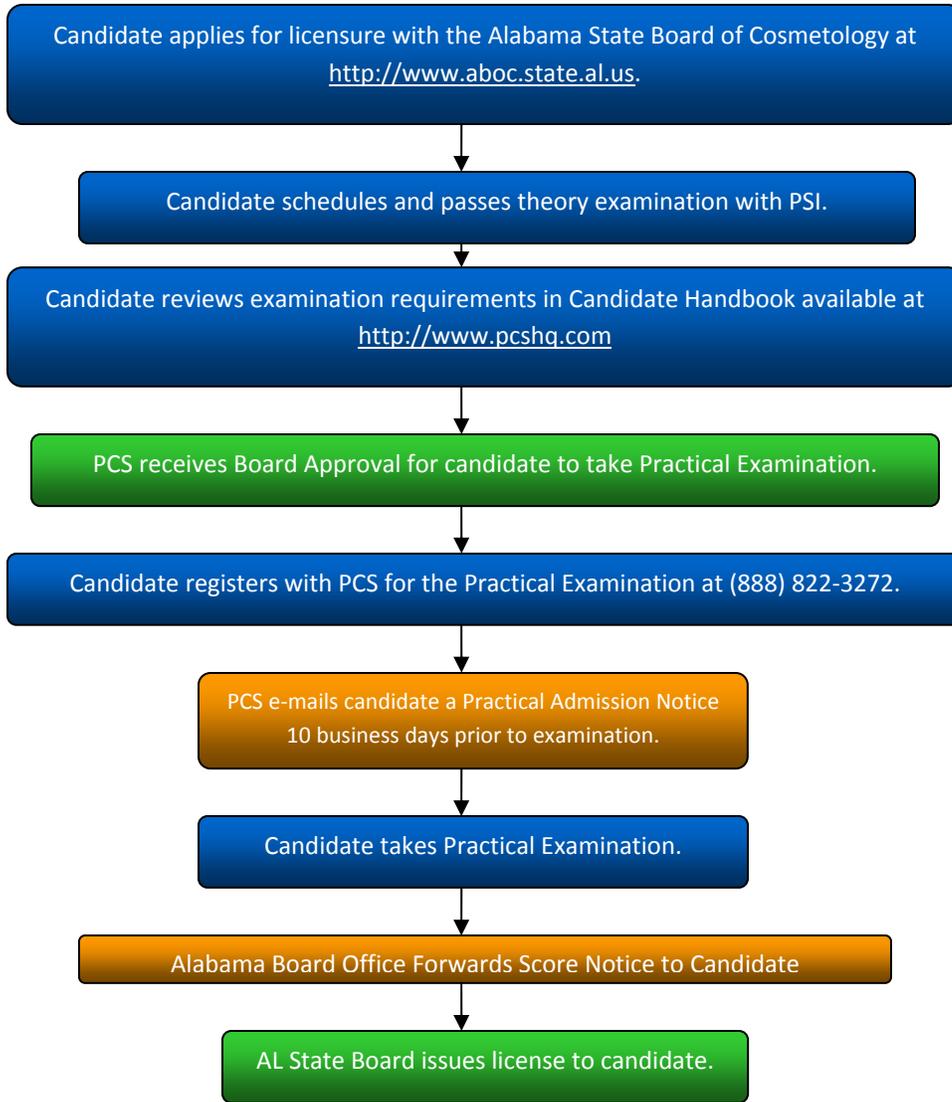
Toll-free: (800) 815-7453

Fax: (334) 242-1926

Website: <http://www.aboc.alabama.gov>

E-mail: cosmetology@aboc.alabama.gov

Application Process



Contents

Quick Reference	2
Application Process	3
Introduction	6
State Licensure Requirements	6
Special Accommodations	6
Practical Examination Dates	7
Practical Examination Registration	7
PCS Account Set-Up	8
PCS Registration	9
Registration Status	10
Reprinting Admission Letter	11
Examination Rescheduling	11
Registration Approval Process	12
Rescheduling Policy	12
Examination Day Requirements	13
General Examination Policies	14
Examination Results	15
Change of Information	16
Formal Complaints	17
State Practical Examination Guidelines	18
Practical Examination Supplies	19
National Cosmetology Practical Examination	20
Frequently Asked Questions	29

Introduction

The *Candidate Handbook* is intended to help you to prepare and to understand the processes and procedures for applying for licensure and for scheduling your examination(s). The Alabama Board for Cosmetology and Barbering (the “Board”) is responsible for licensing and regulating the profession of Cosmetology in the State of Alabama. The Board has contracted with Professional Credential Services (“PCS”) to provide administrative examination services. The Board, through PCS, will exclusively use the National-Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology (“NIC”) examinations. Any questions regarding your application or eligibility should be directed to the State Board office. The State Board will have the final authority to approve the issuance of a license.

State Licensure Requirements

Eligibility Requirements

If you wish to obtain a license in the state of Alabama, please contact the Alabama State Board office at (800) 815-7453 or visit <http://www.aboc.state.al.us>.

Reinstatement/Reciprocity

If you wish to reinstate your expired Alabama license, please contact the Alabama State Board office at (800) 815-7453 or visit <http://www.aboc.state.al.us>.

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you must submit a request to the Alabama State Board office (800) 815-7453 or visit <http://www.aboc.state.al.us>.

Practical Examination Dates

Site	Exam Date	Application Deadline
North Alabama	1/6/2014	12/16/2013
	2/3/2014	1/13/2014
	3/3/2014	2/10/2014
	4/7/2014	3/17/2014
	5/5/2014	4/14/2014
	6/2/2014	5/12/2014
	7/7/2014	6/16/2014
	8/4/2014	7/14/2014
	9/22/2014	9/1/2014
	10/6/2014	9/15/2014
	11/3/2014	10/13/2014
	12/1/2014	11/10/2014

Site	Exam Date	Application Deadline
Mobile	1/27/2014	1/6/2014
	2/17/2014	1/27/2014
	3/17/2014	2/24/2014
	4/21/2014	3/31/2014
	5/19/2014	4/28/2014
	6/16/2014	5/26/2014
	7/21/2014	6/30/2014
	8/18/2014	7/28/2014
	9/15/2014	8/25/2014
	10/20/2014	9/29/2014
	11/17/2014	10/27/2014
	12/15/2014	11/24/2014

Site	Exam Date	Application Deadline
Birmingham	1/13/2014	12/23/2013
	2/10/2014	1/20/2014
	3/17/2014	2/24/2014
	4/14/2014	3/24/2014
	5/12/2014	4/21/2014
	6/9/2014	5/19/2014
	7/21/2014	6/30/2014
	8/25/2014	8/4/2014
	9/8/2014	8/18/2014
	10/13/2014	9/22/2014
	11/17/2014	10/27/2014
	12/8/2014	11/17/2014

Site	Exam Date	Application Deadline
Montgomery	1/27/2014	1/6/2014
	2/24/2014	2/3/2014
	3/24/2014	3/3/2014
	4/28/2014	4/7/2014
	5/19/2014	4/28/2014
	6/23/2014	6/2/2014
	7/28/2014	7/7/2014
	8/25/2014	8/4/2014
	9/29/2014	9/8/2014
	10/27/2014	10/6/2014
	11/24/2014	11/3/2014
	12/22/2014	12/1/2014

Practical Examination Registration

Examination Fees

Practical Examination fees are paid directly to the Alabama Board Office

Registration

Once you have passed the Theory Examination with PSI, the Alabama Board Office will forward an Approval File to PCS so that you can register with PCS for the Practical Examination. You must register online at <http://www.pcshq.com> (steps for online registration are outlined on pages 8 - 9).

! You must register with PCS using your legal name – the name which appears on your current government issued photo identification (i.e. Driver’s License, State Issued ID Card).

PCS Account Set-Up

Before you are able to complete an online registration with PCS, you must first become a registered user within the website. To do so, please follow the steps below.

1. Go to <http://www.pcshq.com>
2. Click **Candidates**
3. Click **Cosmetology & Barbering**
4. Click **Alabama**
5. Click **Cosmetology**
6. Click **Apply Online** (First Time)
7. *Creating a PCS Account (first time users only)*; enter valid, unique e-mail address, your first and last name, date of birth, and Social Security number.
8. Enter REcaptcha information as prompted; click **Create Account**
9. Check your e-mail account for a PCS system generated e-mail.
10. Click link in e-mail to verify account information and create PCS password.
11. Click **Enable Account**

New Professional Credential Services Account

By signing up for a free account, you can access your application and licensing information.

To access your information online, please create your personal account. You MUST use a unique e-mail address for electronic communication and account verification. Please DO NOT use your school instructor's e-mail address. This account is for applicants only.

E-Mail Address

First Name

Last Name

Birth Date (m/d/yyyy)

If you have applied with Professional Credential Services before, please provide the following in order to retrieve your records.

Social Security Number

Please enter the REcaptcha information below



Type the text

[Privacy & Terms](#)

reCAPTCHA™
stop spam.
read books.

PCS Registration

Once you have created your PCS account, you are then ready to complete the online application. To do so, please follow the steps below.

1. Complete steps 1-6 listed above.
2. Enter e-mail address and password provided during account set-up.
3. You are now in the online application; select appropriate license type (i.e. Cosmetology, Esthetician, etc.).
4. Enter Contact Information (Name, Address, and Telephone) valid E-mail address, and select School Attended and enter Graduation Date in appropriate fields; click Next.
5. Choose the examination region and date; click Next.
6. Answer Confirmation Agreement; click Next.

Registration is now complete. The system will take you directly to your Homepage.

The screenshot shows a user profile page with the following sections:

- Your Profile:** Name: Mr. John Douglas Doe, Address: 150 Fourth Avenue North Suite 800 NASHVILLE TN 37214, Phone: 8888223272, SSN: 222595252, Alt ID: 123456789, Birthdate: 05/05/1955, EMail: zopkey@pcshq.com, Username: zopkey@pcshq.com. Includes an **EDIT PROFILE** button.
- Documents:** Includes an **ADD NEW DOCUMENT** button.
- Education:** BLOUNT COUNTY AVC, CLEVELAND AL, From: 05/01/2011, Graduated: 09/01/2012. Includes a **CHANGE SCHOOL** button.
- PCS Contact Information:** Professional Credential Services, P.O. Box 198768, Nashville, TN 37219, (888) 822-3272, alcos@pcshq.com.
- Active Applications:** Alabama Cosmetology: Esthetician, ADD STATE APP#, ADD LICENSE NUMBER, ADD LIC EXP DATE, App Expires: 09/01/2014 EDIT, Applied: 12/12/2013, Most recent application: 12/12/2013, Status: Paid, Waiting for review. Includes an **Application Approval Requirements ADD** button.
- DOCUMENTS:** Application Form 12/12/2013, Last Changed: 12/12/2013. Includes **CREDENTIAL APPLICATION** and **NEW APPLICATION** buttons.
- Pending Examinations:** Alabama Esthetician Practical, Exam Date: 01/13/2014, Testing at: Birmingham Region, Schedule date: 12/12/2013, WAITING FOR APPLICATION APPROVAL. Includes **CANCEL** and **RESCHEDULE** buttons.

PCS Candidate Homepage

1. Go to <http://www.pcshq.com>
2. Click **Client Portal**
3. Enter e-mail address and password
4. Click **Log In**

The screenshot shows the login page for Professional Credential Services, Inc. with the following elements:

- Logo: PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIAL SERVICES, INC.
- Section: **Log into your account**
- Fields: E-Mail Address (with a dropdown arrow), Password.
- Button: **Log In**
- Text: "If you have forgotten your password or you have received an email from PCS instructing you to create your password, [Click here.](#)"
- Text: "If you have not previously created a PCS account please go to your [profession and state home page.](#)"

Registration Status

You may check the status of your online registration 24/7 by logging into your PCS account.

Unapproved Registration

- Registration will show a question mark by “Final Review”
- Practical Exam Date will state “Waiting for Application Approval”

The screenshot shows the 'Active Applications' section for an Alabama Cosmetology, Esthetician application. The status is 'Paid, Waiting for review'. A red box highlights the 'Application Approval Requirements' section, which contains a question mark icon and the text 'Final Review'. Below this is the 'DOCUMENTS' section, showing the 'Application Form 12/12/2013'. The 'Pending Examinations' section shows the exam date as 01/13/2014 and the status as 'WAITING FOR APPLICATION APPROVAL'. Buttons for 'CANCEL' and 'RESCHEDULE' are visible at the bottom.

Approved Registration

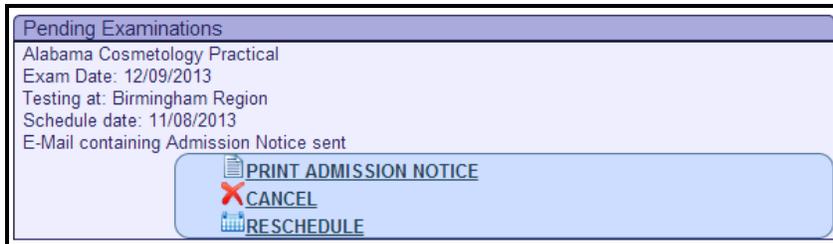
- As long as PCS has received Board Approval, your Registration will be approved by PCS for the Practical Examination within three business days.

The screenshot shows the 'Active Applications' section for the same Alabama Cosmetology, Esthetician application. The status is now 'Approved'. A green checkmark icon is visible in the 'Application Approval Requirements' section. The 'Pending Examinations' section shows the exam date as 01/13/2014 and the status as 'Waiting for scheduling'. Buttons for 'CANCEL' and 'RESCHEDULE' are visible at the bottom.

Reprinting Admission Letter

If you do not receive your Practical Admission Notice at least 5 business days prior to your scheduled date or if you have misplaced your Practical Admission Notice, you may reprint this document at any time by logging into your PCS Homepage.

- Click **Print Score Notice** option next to item you wish to reprint a score notice.



Pending Examinations

Alabama Cosmetology Practical
Exam Date: 12/09/2013
Testing at: Birmingham Region
Schedule date: 11/08/2013
E-Mail containing Admission Notice sent

 **PRINT ADMISSION NOTICE**
 **CANCEL**
 **RESCHEDULE**

Examination Rescheduling

If you do not attend your scheduled Practical Examination date or if you fail the examination, you must reschedule with the Alabama Board Office at (800) 815-7453. Once you have rescheduled with the State Board, they will forward another Approval to PCS. At this point, you may reschedule your Practical Examination online at <http://www.pcshq.com>.

- Click **Reschedule Practical** under Active Applications.



Active Applications.

Arizona
Cosmetology, Aesthetician
[ADD STATE APP#](#)
[ADD LICENSE NUMBER](#)
[ADD LIC EXP DATE](#)
App Expires: 04/16/2014 [EDIT](#)
Applied 04/16/2013
Most recent application: 04/16/2013
Status: Approved.

Application Approval Requirements [ADD](#)

[Board Review](#)
 [Coordinator Review](#)
 [Final Review](#)

 **VIEW APPLICATION FORM**
 **RESCHEDULE PRACTICAL**

Registration Approval Process

Once an online registration has been completed, PCS will review this registration and confirm that Board Approval has been received. As long as Board Approval has been received, PCS will approve your registration for the Practical Examination. As long as Board Approval and registration are received by the deadline date outlined on page seven of this Handbook, you will receive your requested date.

Examination Notification

1. A Practical Admission Notice confirming your assigned date, time, and location will be sent via e-mail 10 business days prior to your examination date.

! If you do not receive an e-mail at least five business days prior to your requested examination date, it is your responsibility to check your PCS account and reprint this information. If you are unable to access your account, it is your responsibility to contact PCS at (888) 822-3272.

Rescheduling Policy

Rescheduling is not permitted unless you are hospitalized or involved in a traffic accident on the way to the test center which prevents you from arriving on time. In these cases, e-mail documentation to your coordinator at alcos@pcshq.com or upload documentation onto your homepage. PCS will review this documentation with the State Board Office and advise you of the procedure to reschedule your examination.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather or similar emergency, a scheduled examination may be canceled or delayed. However, this decision is made only in rare instances and at the discretion of PCS. If a test center is open for testing, and you choose not to appear for your scheduled examination, your fee will be forfeited. You will have to reschedule your appointment and pay the appropriate fee to the Alabama State Board Office. If you have reason to question whether or not a center will be closed due to an emergency, please call PCS to make inquiries regarding the practical examination.

Examination Day Requirements

What do I need to take with me to the examination?

- Admission Notice
- A current 2x2 passport type photo
- Two (2) forms of identification with one form must be a government issued photo id (see below)
- Examination Supplies

If you fail to bring these items, you will not be allowed to take the examination and you will forfeit your examination fee.

Acceptable Forms of Identification

Both forms of Identification must be listed under the name which you applied.

Primary ID (current, non-expired Governments Issued ID)

- State issued Driver's License
- State issued Identification Card
- US Government issued Passport
- US Government issued Military Identification Card
- US Government issued Alien Registration Card

Secondary ID (signature, non-expired)

- Credit Card or Debit (ATM) Card
- Social Security Card
- US issued Birth Certificate
- An alternate form of Primary ID (i.e. if you have a Driver's License, you can bring your US Passport as a Secondary ID)

Arrival

You must arrive at the test center at least thirty (30) minutes prior to your examination for registration. If you arrive past your examination time, you will not be permitted to test.

General Examination Policies

Security Policy

Suspected security breaches during either the theory or practical test administrations, such as an act of impersonation, creating a disturbance, giving or receiving unauthorized information or aiding other candidates, attempting to remove test information by any means, possessing prohibited materials or sharing supplies may be sufficient cause to dismiss you from the examination site or to invalidate or cancel your scores. Suspected breaches may be identified by observation or suspicion by the test center staff, or may be evidenced by subsequent statistical analysis of examination materials. PCS reserves the right to investigate each incident of misconduct and will report such incidents directly to the Board. The Board will make all final decisions on examination score invalidations or cancellations. **No visitors, guests or children are allowed in the test center.**

Copyrighted Examination Questions

All test questions are the express copyrighted property of NIC. It is forbidden under federal copyright law to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these test questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject you to severe civil and criminal penalties, including prison incarceration and/or fined up to \$250,000 for criminal violations.

Prohibited Items

No food, beverages, purses, notebooks, magazines, backpacks, briefcases, hats, caps, reference books or electronic devices such as cameras, computers or computerized devices, iPods, radios, recording devices, portable fax machines, cellular telephones, calculator watches, reproduction equipment, smoking or the use of tobacco are strictly prohibited in the examination room. Failure to comply with any of these conditions will result in you being dismissed immediately, and your actions reported to the proper authorities. PCS is not responsible for **any** personal items brought to the examination site.

Environmental Distracters

Although every attempt is made to provide a quiet and comfortable test environment, noise and room temperature may be an unforeseen and unavoidable distracter. It is suggested that you wear the type of clothing that would allow you to adapt to a cooler or warmer climate at the testing site.

Examination Results

Score Notices

An official score notice will be forwarded to you from the State Board Office. If you fail the examination, you will also receive information on how to reschedule.

State Score Requirements

When you pass the Practical Examination, the State Board Office will automatically send a “Congratulations” letter along with information on how to submit your licensure fee to their office. Once this fee has been received, the State Board Office will issue your license.

Change of Information

Directions

Complete the following form – all applicable areas of this form should be completed in order for PCS to properly locate and updated your account.

If you need to update your name, you must provide a copy of your marriage certificate, divorce decree or other court documentation that confirms your name change.

Fax: 615-312-4130

Email: alcos@pcshq.com

Print your name as it appears on your Application below.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Print your updated name or address below.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Print Social Security Number: _____

Sign and Date your Request:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

! It is your responsibility to notify the State Board Office of any changes to your name, address, etc.

Formal Complaints

Directions

If you have a complaint regarding any aspect of the application and examination process, you must submit a formal written complaint. Complaints regarding examinations must be mailed to PCS within 48 hours of incident. Written complaint must include the following information.

- First and Last Name
- Last four digits of Social Security Number
- State in which you are applying for a license
- Examination Date & Location if applicable

Mail Complaint to:

Professional Credential Services, Inc.
Attn: Alabama Coordinator
P.O. Box 198768
Nashville, Tennessee 37219-8768

Complaint Review Process

Upon receipt of your complaint, PCS will thoroughly review all necessary information. A written reply will be emailed to you within three (3) business days.

State Practical Examination Guidelines

The Alabama State Board of Cosmetology and Barbering require you to be examined on the following services on the practical examination:

Core Domain Services

- Set Up and Client Protection
- Thermal Curling (cold iron will be used to demonstrate)
- Haircutting
- Chemical Waiving
- Virgin Hair Lightening Application and Hair Color Retouch
- Virgin Relaxer Application and Relaxer Retouch
- Basic Facial
- Manicure

Mannequins

A mannequin is required for all services. You are required to bring two mannequin heads. You must provide the necessary clamp to properly secure a mannequin head and hand to a table during the examination. A suitable substitute for a commercial mannequin hand is a medical quality glove filled to its entirety with sand or cornmeal and sealed.

Aerosol Products

You are not permitted to use aerosol products at anytime during the examination.

Kit Size

Recommended kit size is no larger than 30" x 30". For safety reasons, all kits must fit completely under table areas.

Practical Examination Supplies

Recommended General Supplies

All supplies must be labeled in English

- dry storage kit/container
- hand sanitizer
- mannequin head(s) and a table clamp (pre-marked mannequins are NOT permitted)
- a towel to place between the clamp and the table
- EPA registered disinfectant that demonstrates bactericidal, fungicidal and virucidal properties must be used
- container/bag for soiled/trash items
- container or bag for items to be disinfected
- cloth and paper towel(s)
- neck strip(s)
- shampoo cape (child size is appropriate for mannequin)
- hair clamp(s)
- comb(s)
- hair brush(es)
- spray bottle
- protective cream
- spatula(s)
- protective cotton
- protective gloves
- first aide supplies (blood spill kit)
- tape

Thermal Curling Supplies

- thermal curling iron
- comb(s)
- material for testing temperature of iron

Haircutting Supplies

- haircutting shears
- razor
- comb(s)

Chemical Waiving Supplies

- chemical wave rods
- end papers
- applicator bottle with simulated waving lotion (water)

- comb(s)

Hair Lightening/Coloring Supplies

- tint brush and bowl or bottle applicator
- thick gel or colored cholesterol
- comb(s)
- hair clips

Chemical Relaxing Supplies

- tint brush and bowl or bottle applicator
- thick gel or colored cholesterol
- comb(s)

Basic Facial Supplies

- hair drape
- cleansing cream
- massage cream
- toner or astringent

Manicuring Supplies

- Mannequin hand(s) with artificial nails attached (Trainer hands are NOT permitted.)
- bowl and container of water
- cuticle cream/remover
- filing and buffing implements
- cuticle pusher
- nail brush
- hand lotion or massage product
- cuticle oil
- base coat
- top coat
- red polish
- polish remover

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Important Instructions

- Do not leave the examination area without permission. Permission must be obtained to leave the examination area for any reason, including restroom usage or at the completion of the examination.
- Candidates are required to bring their own kit with sufficient quantity of supplies in sanitary condition. This includes the required implements in proper working order and protective drapes. The kit must be kept closed except when removing or replacing materials for a particular service. The kit will be used during the examination as dry storage and is considered part of the work area.
- All examinations are administered in a testing environment. Candidates should bring a container of water if needed for any section of the examination. Candidates may bring a thermos of hot water if desired. All water and their containers must be taken with the candidates and may not be disposed of at the testing facility.
- Candidates are evaluated at all times. Continue demonstrating until you have completed the entire section.
- Candidates will be given 10 minutes for client protection and to set up the general supplies that they will use throughout the examination.
- Candidates will also be given 2 minutes to set up the supplies for each section of the examination.
- The verbal instructions will be read twice for each section of the examination. Each examination section has a maximum time allowance. Once you have completed all tasks in the section please step back to indicate that you are finished. In the event that all candidates complete the section before the time has elapsed the examiners will proceed to the next section of the examination.
- Candidates must follow all appropriate public protection and infection control procedures during all phases of the practical examination that will ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the public. In the event of a blood spill candidates will be expected to follow the NIC Health and Safety Standards. Failure to do so may result in your dismissal from the examination.
- Cellular phones, pagers, any electronic device, printed materials, and handwritten notes are NOT permitted in the examination room. Talking to

other candidates or any examiner is strictly prohibited. Failure to comply with any of these conditions will result in you being dismissed immediately, and your actions reported to the proper authorities. Your examiner has been instructed not to answer any questions concerning your examination. This ensures equal opportunity for all candidates and standardization in testing for the National Practical Examination. If you have an emergency situation please ask to speak with the supervisor.

- Chemicals for Chemical Waving, Virgin Hair Lightening, Hair Color Retouch, Virgin Relaxer Application and Relaxer Retouch will be simulated.
- Manufacturer's labels are required on all disinfectants and sanitizers. An EPA registered disinfectant that demonstrates bactericidal, fungicidal and virucidal properties must be used. Simulated products are NOT allowed for disinfectants and hand sanitizers.

Mannequin(s)

You are required to bring a mannequin head(s); it is the candidate's responsibility to appear at the practical examination with their mannequin head(s).

Mannequin heads that have been purchased pre-sectioned indicating the sections by various colors and/or notches are NOT allowed during any part of the practical examination.

You are required to bring a mannequin hand(s) for the practical examination. Mannequin hands with digital fingers (trainer hands) are **NOT** permitted during the examinations. Prior to reporting to the examination candidates **MUST** apply a set of nails to the mannequin hand. The artificial nails must cover the entire nail bed of each finger.

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Set Up and Client Protection (10 minutes)

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now set up the general supplies that you will use throughout your examination." "You will also set up the thermal curling supplies." "You will be observed for client protection, safety, and infection control procedures." "You will have 10 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining." (1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin set up."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

- Disinfects work area or uses protective covering
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Sanitizes hands
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary
- Uses neck strip or towel and applies drape
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout setup
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout setup

Thermal Curling (10 minutes)

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now perform the thermal curling section of this examination." "You will form three curls on the top of the head and four curls on one side of the head." "You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 10 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining." (1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Demonstration of Curling

- Tests temperature of iron PRIOR to applying to hair
- Subsections hair same width as barrel of iron
- Length of subsection is no longer than 3 inches
- Establishes a base
- Distributes hair evenly around iron
- Forms a complete curl
- Protects scalp from iron with comb

- Forms curl so that the hair is smooth and unmarked

Safety and Infection Control

- Uses iron safely at all times
- Maintains neck strip or towel and drape for protection throughout service
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

Haircutting (30 minutes)

Verbal Instructions for Set Up:

"You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit, wet the hair and brush it straight back for the haircutting section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now perform the haircutting section of this examination."

"You will complete a basic layered haircut using shears and a razor." "You will cut the nape section with a razor." "You will complete the haircut using the shears." "Please do not sweep the hair from the floor until you are instructed." "You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures."

"You will have 30 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 15 minutes remaining." "The instructions will be repeated." "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Preparation

- Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sanitizes hands

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Haircutting Continued

Demonstration of Haircutting

- Uses razor to establish nape guide
- Cuts entire nape section with elevation using razor
- Handles razor safely at all times
- Uses consistent subsections/partings while cutting hair
- Uses established guides
- Handles shears safely at all times

The following will be read to each candidate after candidate has stepped back to indicate that they have completed their haircut or the timing has elapsed: *(Individually)*

"May I please use your comb to check your haircut?"

- Cuts nape line to a uniform length
- Cuts sides uniform in length
- Blends haircut evenly
- Cuts at least one inch of hair throughout haircut

Safety and Infection Control

The following will be read to each candidate after checking their haircut: *(Individually)*

"You may clean up only your hair at this time."

- Removes hair clippings from skin, drape, and work area
- Removes hair from floor completely
- Maintains neck strip or towel and drape for protection throughout service
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

Chemical Waving (20 minutes)

Verbal Instructions for Set Up:

"You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the chemical waving section of this examination. Please

do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now perform the chemical waving section of this examination." "You will wrap the center back section of the head, from crown to nape." "You will be instructed to apply simulated waving lotion." "You will be instructed to demonstrate a test curl."

"Once you are finished or if the timing has elapsed, please step back for instructions to demonstrate saturation and a test curl." "Do not remove the perm rods until the examiner instructs you to remove them." "You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 20 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining." (1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Preparation

- Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sanitizes hands

Demonstration of Chemical Waving

- Subsections hair straight and evenly
- Subsections hair no longer than length of rod
- Subsections hair same width as diameter of rod
- Wraps hair evenly and smoothly around rod
- Distributes hair evenly across end paper
- Extends end papers beyond hair ends
- Places bands correctly
- Uses same rod base placement throughout section
- Wraps hair around rod at least 1 1/2 times

The following will be read to each candidate: *(Individually)*

"Please demonstrate saturation."

- Applies cotton and/or protective cream at nape

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Chemical Waving Continued

- Wears gloves during application of simulated product
- Applies simulated product across entire rod safely

**The following will be read to each candidate:
(Individually)**

“Please demonstrate a test curl.”

- Unwraps rod at least 1 1/2 turns and hair is held to relax

Safety and Infection Control

- Maintains neck strip or towel and drape for protection throughout service
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

The following will be read to the entire group of candidates when the timer goes off: *“Please stop the chemical waving procedure. Do not remove the perm rods until the examiner instructs you to remove them.”*

The following will be read to the entire group of candidates after examiners have finished checking all candidates:

“Please remove all rods from the head and brush the hair straight back.”

Virgin Hair Lightening Application and Hair Color Retouch (20 minutes, in two 10 minute segments)

Verbal Instructions for Set Up:

“You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the virgin hair lightening application and hair coloring retouch sections of this examination. Please do not begin

any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up.”

Verbal Instructions:

“You will now perform the virgin hair lightening application section of this examination.” “You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures.” “You will have 10 minutes to complete the virgin hair lightening section.” “You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining.” “Upon completion, you will step back until instructed to apply the hair coloring retouch section.” “You will have 10 minutes to complete the hair coloring retouch section.” “You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining.” (1) “The instructions will be repeated.” (2) “You may begin.”

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Preparation

- Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sanitizes hands
- Performs Predisposition/Patch Test with simulated product behind the ear or in the fold of the arm
- Divides head into four equal sections
- Applies protective cream around hairline
- Wears gloves during application of simulated lightener and hair color products

Demonstration of Virgin Hair Lightening Application (10 minutes)

- Subsections hair 1/8 inch wide or less
- Applies simulated product 1/2 inch from scalp
- Applies simulated product up to but not including last 1 inch of hair
- Completely covers subsections with simulated product

Candidates will be asked to step back until the hair color retouch begins.

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Virgin Hair Lightening Application and Hair Color Retouch continued

The following will be read to all candidates after timing is completed for virgin hair lightening and all candidates have stepped back: "You have 10 minutes to complete the hair coloring section. "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining." "You may begin."

Demonstration of Hair Color Retouch (10 minutes)

- Outlines hair color retouch quadrant with simulated product
- Subsections hair 1/2 inch wide or less
- Applies simulated product on the scalp out to 2 inches
- Completely covers subsections with simulated product

Safety and Infection Control

- Keeps perimeter skin free of product
- Maintains neck strip or towel and drape for protection throughout service
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

Virgin Relaxer Application and Relaxer Retouch (20 minutes, in two 10 minute segments)

Verbal Instructions for Set Up:

"You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the virgin relaxer application and relaxer retouch section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now perform the virgin relaxer application section of this examination." "You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 10 minutes to complete the virgin relaxer section." "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes

remaining." "Upon completion, you will step back until instructed to apply the relaxer retouch section." "You will have 10 minutes to complete the relaxer retouch section." "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining."(1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Preparation

- Sets up implements that are visibly clean and sanitary
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sanitizes hands
- Applies protective cream around hairline
- Wears gloves during application of simulated relaxer product

Demonstration of Virgin Relaxer Application (10 minutes)

- Subsections hair 1/4 inch wide or less
- Applies simulated product 1/2 inch from scalp
- Applies simulated product up to but not including last 1 inch of hair
- Completely covers subsections with simulated product

Candidates will be asked to step back until the relaxer retouch application begins.

The following will be read to all candidates after timing is completed for virgin relaxer and all candidates have stepped back: "You have 10 minutes to complete the relaxer retouch section. "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining." "You may begin."

Demonstration of Relaxer Retouch (10 minutes)

- Subsections hair 1/4 inch wide or less
- Applies simulated product starting slightly off scalp, up to 1/4 inch from scalp and out to 2 inches
- Completely covers subsections with simulated product

The following will be read to each candidate: (Individually)

"Please demonstrate smoothing the relaxer retouch product."

- Demonstrates smoothing of subsection in direction of hair growth and cuticle with moderate tension

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Virgin Relaxer Application and Relaxer Retouch continued

Safety and Infection Control

- Keeps perimeter skin free of product
- Maintains neck strip or towel and drape for protection throughout service
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

Basic Facial (10 minutes)

Verbal Instructions for Set Up:

"You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the basic facial section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now perform the basic facial section of this examination."

"You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 10 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 5 minutes remaining."(1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Preparation

- Disinfects work area or uses protective covering
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sanitizes hands
- Applies hair drape to completely cover hair
- Re-sanitizes hands

Demonstration of Facial

- Removes cleanser from container using infection control procedures and applies it to the entire face safely
- Removes cleanser from face without dragging or pulling skin
- Removes massage product from container using infection control procedures and applies it to entire face safely
- Distributes massage product over entire face safely
- Demonstrates massage maintaining continuous contact
- Removes massage product from face without dragging or pulling skin
- Removes all residual massage product safely
- Applies toner/astringent safely

Safety and Infection Control

- Maintains hair drape throughout service
- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

Manicure (20 minutes)

Verbal Instructions for Set Up:

"You have 2 minutes to remove the supplies from your kit for the manicure section of this examination. Please do not begin any procedures until the verbal instructions have been read and you are instructed to begin. You may begin set up."

Verbal Instructions:

"You will now perform the manicure section of this examination." "You will be observed for client protection, safety and infection control procedures." "You will have 20 minutes to complete this section." "You will be informed when you have 10 minutes remaining." "Upon completion of the manicure section of this examination, please turn the hand toward the examiner to indicate that you are finished." (1) "The instructions will be repeated." (2) "You may begin."

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Manicure continued

Candidates will be evaluated on the following tasks:

Preparation

- Disinfects work area or uses protective covering
- Sets up work area with supplies labeled in English
- Sanitizes hands
- Sanitizes hand to be manicured

Demonstration of Filing

- Shapes free edge safely
- Establishes uniform length and shape

Demonstration of Cuticle Care

- Immerses fingers in bowl of water
- Dries hand completely
- Applies cuticle cream or remover using infection control procedures
- Pushes back cuticle safely
- Cleans under free edge safely
- Buffs nail safely
- Applies cuticle oil using infection control procedures

Demonstration of Hand Massage

- Applies massage product using infection control procedures
- Massages palm, back of hand, and fingers while maintaining continuous contact
- Cleanses massage product from each nail plate

Application of Polish

- Applies base coat to cover nail plate
- Applies red polish to cover nail plate
- Applies top coat to cover nail plate

Final Appearance of Nails

- Final appearance of polish is smooth and even
- Cuticle and surrounding skin remain free of polish

Safety and Infection Control

- Disposes of soiled materials using infection control procedures
- Disposes of items to be disinfected in properly labeled receptacle
- Practices infection control procedures safely throughout service
- Maintains work area in a safe manner throughout service

Candidate Summary and Final Cleanup

Verbal Instructions:

"This concludes the national practical examination. Please make sure that all kit supplies and disposable materials are taken with you. Please do not dispose of waste materials, chemicals, or water in the trash receptacles or restrooms as they are unable to accommodate all waste materials from every candidate that takes the examination."

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

Cosmetology References

Milady's Standard Cosmetology, 2012

Milady
5 Maxwell Drive
Clifton Park, NY 12065
(800) 347-7707
www.Milady.com

Salon Fundamentals, Cosmetology, 2010

Pivot Point International, Inc.
Evanston, IL 60201
(800) 886-4247
www.pivot-point.com

Cosmetology Career Concepts, Haircutting, Hairdressing, Haircoloring, and Success Dynamics, 2010

CLiC International
396 Pottsville-St. Clair Highway
Pottsville, PA 17901
(800) 207-5400
www.clicusa.com

NIC Health and Safety Standards

NIC, Inc., October 2002
www.nictesting.org

NIC Cleaning and Disinfecting of Circulating and Non Circulating Tubs and Spa's for All Industry Modalities

NIC, Inc., August 2007
www.nictesting.org

Optional References

Milady's Standard Cosmetology, 2004 & 2008

Milady
5 Maxwell Drive
Clifton Park, NY 12065
(800) 347-7707
www.Milady.com

Salon Fundamentals Cosmetology, 2006 & 2007

Pivot Point International, Inc.
Evanston, IL 60201
(800) 886-4247
www.pivot-point.com

Milady's Standard Nail Technology, 2007

Milady
5 Maxwell Drive
Clifton Park, NY 12065
(800) 347-7707
www.Milady.com

National Cosmetology Practical Examination

NIC Health and Safety Standards Blood Spill Procedure

If a blood spill should occur, the following steps MUST be followed:

- **SUPPLY INJURED PARTY WITH LIQUID STYPTIC/ANTISEPTIC AND THE APPROPRIATE DRESSING TO COVER THE INJURY.**
- **DOUBLE BAG ALL BLOOD-SOILED (CONTAMINATED) ARTICLES AND LABEL WITH RED OR ORANGE BIOHAZARD WARNING.** This is the responsibility of the candidate and should be executed as follows:

CANDIDATE INJURY – FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES

1. **PROTECTION** – If a cut is sustained, stop the service and clean the injured area.
2. **APPLY** antiseptic and/or liquid or spray styptic as appropriate (see NOTE).
3. **DRESSING** - cover the injury with the appropriate dressing.
4. **COVER** injured area with finger guard or glove as appropriate.
5. **CLEAN** model/client and station as appropriate.
6. **DOUBLE BAG** and dispose of all contaminated objects. Clean hands with antimicrobial cleanser.
7. **RETURN** to service.

MODEL INJURY – FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES

1. **STOP** service.
2. **GLOVE** hands of candidate/student/licensee.
3. **CLEAN** injured area as appropriate.
4. **APPLY** antiseptic and/or liquid or spray styptic as appropriate (see NOTE).
5. **COVER** the injury with the appropriate dressing to prevent further blood exposure.
6. **DOUBLE BAG** and dispose of all contaminated objects. Clean hands with antimicrobial cleanser.
7. **RETURN** to service.

EXAMINERS:

- **EXAMINER IS TO USE UNUSED DISPOSABLE LATEX GLOVES OR NON-ALLERGENIC EQUIVALENT WHEN**

CHECKING THAT CANDIDATE'S SERVICE. DOUBLE BAG AND DISPOSE USED GLOVES.

- **FOLLOW WITH ANTIMICROBIAL SCRUB ON HANDS.**
- **DOCUMENT INCIDENT IN BLOOD SPILL LOG.**

NOTE: DO NOT ALLOW CONTAINERS, BRUSHES, NOZZLES OR LIQUID STYPTIC TO TOUCH THE SKIN OR CONTACT THE WOUND. USE AN APPLICATOR. EXAMINERS SHOULD ALSO COMPLETE AN INCIDENT REPORT.

Wet Disinfection Standard

1. All tools and implements, **EXCEPT THOSE THAT HAVE COME IN CONTACT WITH BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS** must be disinfected, at minimum, by complete immersion in an EPA registered, bactericidal, virucidal, fungicidal, and pseudomonacidal (Formulated for Hospitals) disinfectant that is mixed and used according to the manufacturer's directions.
2. All tools and implements **WHICH HAVE COME IN CONTACT WITH BLOOD OR BODY FLUIDS** must be disinfected, at minimum, by complete immersion in an EPA registered disinfectant that is effective against HIV-1 and human Hepatitis B Virus or Tuberculocidal that is mixed and used according to the manufacturer's directions.

Dry Storage Standard

Disinfected implements must be stored in a disinfected, dry, covered container and be isolated from contaminants.

Hand Washing

(Anti-Bacterial Soap is recommended)

Thoroughly wash hands and the exposed portions of arms with antibacterial soap and water before providing services to **each client** and after smoking, drinking, eating, and using the restroom.

Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

- 1. What is NIC?**
 - NIC is the abbreviation for the National Interstate Council of State Boards of Cosmetology, Inc. NIC is the founder of national testing for cosmetology, and cosmetology related fields.
- 2. Are the NIC examinations offered in other languages?**
 - All NIC practical examinations are administered in English.
- 3. What if I do not know what a task means on the NIC practical examination?**
 - All questions and tasks are referenced to all textbooks listed in this Candidate Handbook. The information must be the same in all referenced textbooks in order for it to be used on the examination. NIC has a National Textbook Committee that works with the textbook companies to ensure the information is consistent and correct.
- 4. Will I be evaluated on technique?**
 - NIC examinations do not evaluate technique. This Candidate Handbook lists the tasks that are evaluated.
- 5. What if I have an emergency during the practical examination?**
 - You may ask to speak with the examination proctor if you are experiencing an emergency situation. Problems with the kit or supplies are not an emergency situation and you should do the best you can with what you have available.
- 6. What if I need to use the restroom during the practical examination?**
 - You may ask the examiner to be excused to use the restroom; you will be asked to sign out and back into the examination. The examinations will continue and they will not be permitted extra time.
- 7. What should I do if I cut myself during the examination?**
 - You are expected to follow the NIC Health and Safety Standards; failure to do so may result in your dismissal from the examination. Please refer to the page in this handbook that outlines the NIC Health and Safety Standards procedures.
- 8. What if I forgot to pack something that I need for the practical examination?**
 - In the event that you forget an item or implement or something breaks, you should do the best you can do with what you have available. You should continue as you are able and perform as many tasks as you are able.
- 9. Do kits need to have a cover and does it have to be kept closed during the examination?**
 - Implements and supplies must be in a closed container. Kits must be kept closed at the exam site except when removing or replacing supplies. Suitcases must be zipped shut.

Frequently Asked Questions

Specific Cosmetology Practical Questions

- 1. Does the mannequin have to be brand new?**
 - Candidates should **not** bring a brand new mannequin. The mannequin should be prepped prior to the examination with color or a perm to provide texture to the hair. Candidates should leave the hair long enough so that 1 inch of hair can be removed throughout the haircut and still be long enough to complete all remaining areas of the examination.
- 2. Why are pre-marked mannequins not allowed?**
 - NIC does not permit pre-marked mannequins because the mannequin heads have been pre-sectioned to indicate the sections by various colors and/or notches. Pre-marked mannequins are intended for teaching purposes but are not permitted during examinations.
- 3. Can I drape my mannequin during the 10 minute set up time?**
 - Candidates are given 10 minutes to set up the general supplies and to perform client protection. Your mannequin should be considered one client throughout all services but candidates must maintain their work area in a safe and sanitary manner. It is helpful to use a towel under the drape instead of a neck strip because it will stay in place better. Candidates may use one cape (fabric or plastic) throughout the entire examination but, if the cape slides down it must be re-applied. Child size capes are recommended for mannequins.
- 4. Why do I need two separate bags or receptacle?**
 - One bag or receptacle must be labeled "items to be disinfected" and a second bag or receptacle must be labeled "items to be discarded"
- 5. Do I need to roll the iron from base to ends while clicking during the thermal curling section of the Cosmetology examination?**
 - The Cosmetology examination does not require feeding and guiding the hair but candidates must establish a base and form a complete curl.
- 6. Does the haircut need to be at a 90 degree angle and do I start in the nape section?**
 - Candidates must demonstrate elevation. NIC does not evaluate the level of elevation but it must be layered and cannot be all one length. Candidates may start the haircut in any area of the head but, most candidates start with the razor in the nape section. NIC does not evaluate candidates sectioning of the head. The only tasks that are evaluated are listed in this Candidate Handbook.
- 7. Do I need a guard on my razor?**
 - Guards are not required but you must handle your razor in a safe manner at all times.
- 8. Can I go back over the nape section with the shears after I have finished with the razor?**
 - After cutting the entire nape section with the razor candidates may go back over the nape section with the shears.
- 9. Can I sweep my hair after completing the haircut or do I have to wait for the examiner to instruct me? Do I need to bring a broom and dustpan for my practical examination?**
 - The examiners will instruct candidates to clean up their hair after they have checked the haircut. PCS provides brooms and dustpans.

Frequently Asked Questions

10. **Should I section the head for chemical waving?**
 - Candidates do not have to section the head as they are only evaluated on the center back section of the head from crown to nape.
11. **Do I need to use a particular size rod for chemical waving?**
 - NIC does not require a specific rod size but candidates must demonstrate subsections that are the same size as the rod used and the hair must be long enough to wrap around the rod at least 1 ½ times.
12. **Will the examiner tell me when to demonstrate saturation and a test curl?**
 - The examiners instruct each candidate to demonstrate saturation and a test curl. If a candidate finishes before the time has elapsed the candidate must wait for the examiner to instruct them. If a candidate is not finished before the time has elapsed the examiner will instruct them to stop the service, demonstrate saturation and a test curl before continuing to the next section of the exam.
13. **Does the examiner expect to see an “S” formation when a test curl is demonstrated?**
 - The examiners do not expect to see an “S” formation because a simulated product is being applied for a very short period of time. Candidates should allow the hair to relax when demonstrating a test curl and should not push the hair.
14. **What product should I use to demonstrate the Predisposition/Patch Test, Hair Lightening, Hair Coloring and Chemical Relaxing?**
 - Candidate should use something with color like cholesterol or conditioner, etc... We recommend **not** using a clear gel.
15. **Can I use the same simulated product for Predisposition/Patch Test, Hair Lightening, Hair Coloring and Chemical Relaxing?**
 - Candidates may use one product with a label for Patch Test and Lightener over another label that states Hair Color and then a label for Chemical Relaxing. They can remove the labels as they move from section to section without having to have multiple products or containers.
16. **Can I apply the protective cream for all sections at once?**
 - Candidates may apply the protective cream around the hairline for all 4 sections at once.
17. **Why is NIC requiring a 2 inch hair color retouch and a 2 inch relaxer retouch?**
 - NIC requires a 2 inch retouch to allow plenty of coverage for the examiners to evaluate without having to invade the candidate’s space.
18. **Will the examiner tell me to demonstrate smoothing the relaxer product?**
 - The examiner instructs each candidate to demonstrate smoothing the relaxer retouch product.