

APPLICANT AND CANDIDATE HANDON BOOK APPLICANT AND CANDIDATE CONTROL CON

For questions about the Medical Writing
Certification Examination, contact

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Contents

About the Medical Writing Certification Program	3
About the Medical Writer Certified Credential.	3
Why Become Certified?	3
Applicant Eligibility Requirements	3
Application Process.	4
Denial of Eligibility	4
Eligibility Appeals	5
Medical Writing Certification Examination.	5
Schedule, Location, and Deadlines for Medical Writing	
Certification Examinations.	6
Delay or Cancellation of the Examination	6
Security	6
Day of the Examination.	6
Accommodation for Disabilities	7
Resources for Examination Preparation	7
Notification of Examination Results	7
Examination Appeals	7
Candidate Score Verification	7
Retaking the Examination	8
Use of the Medical Writer Certified (MWC*) Credential	8
Misrepresentation of Certification	8
Revocation of Certification.	8
Recertification	8
Confidentiality and the Release of Testing and Certification Information	9
Fees and Refund Policy	9
Appendix 1: Content Outline for the Examination	. 10
Appendix 2: Qualifying Work Experience.	. 12

About the Medical Writing Certification Program

Established by the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA), the Medical Writing Certification Commission ("the Commission") is responsible for developing and overseeing a credentialing program for professional medical writers. AMWA and the Commission created the certification program to advance medical writing as a professional discipline by identifying and testing the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are essential to this type of work and by encouraging continued professional growth of medical writers. The certification program was developed in a deliberate and evidence-based manner, with input from individuals with a broad range of medical writing backgrounds and specialties. To learn more about the program, visit www.amwa.org/mwc.

About the Medical Writer Certified Credential

but it offers many advantages.

The Medical Writer Certified (MWC*) credential is awarded by the Commission to medical writers who pass the Medical Writing Certification Examination ("the exam"). Certification is voluntary and is not required for a medical writer to be employed in the field,

The results of the exam are not intended to predict how well an individual may perform as a medical writer or to assess the relative level of that person's medical writing skill or ability. However, the results can provide insight into each candidate's level of knowledge in core content areas specific to medical writing. Therefore, some employers may consider certification in hiring decisions, job promotions, salary increases, recognition, or other considerations. In addition, certification will allow employers and clients to identify competency areas in the field; as a result, companies may be encouraged to promote professional development and, thus, improve the competency of their employees.

Why Become Certified?

By obtaining the Medical Writer Certified (MWC*) credential, medical writers not only enhance their professional credibility but also give an employer or client increased confidence in their knowledge in core content areas specific to medical writing, as certified by a third party. Certification also shows a high degree of commitment to continued professional development in the field of medical writing. Those who earn the MWC* credential are required to adhere to a code of ethics and professional standards. These factors may increase an individual's marketability and opportunities for career advancement and higher earnings. Also important is the personal satisfaction medical writers can derive from passing the exam and earning the MWC* credential.

Applicant Eligibility Requirements

The Commission provides equal opportunity to all applicants without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, veteran status, or other legally protected categories.

To apply for the exam, individuals must have the following qualifications:

- a bachelor's degree in any field of study.
- a minimum of 2 years of full-time work experience or equivalent (eg, 4 years of documented part-time work at 20 hours/week) within the past 5 years.
 Experience must be in a paid capacity in the field of medical writing.

Exceptions to the requirement for a bachelor's degree may be granted for individuals with at least 5 full-time years (or equivalent) of verifiable work experience in the field. Experience must have been in a paid capacity within the past 10 years.

For a more detailed explanation of what activities constitute 2 years of paid medical writing experience, including examples, see **Appendix 2**.

Application Process

- 1. Complete the **application form**.
- 2. Provide a current résumé or curriculum vitae with a short description of duties carried out in each job position.
- Provide an official university transcript sealed in its original envelope. If the transcript is not in English, provide an English translation for Commission review.
- 4. Provide 2 letters of reference from individuals who can document the applicant's previous or current relevant medical writing work experience. Please provide the *Request Form for Letter of Reference* to each of your references. This form may be found on the certification website (www.amwa.org/mwc).

Reference letters should

- be addressed to the Medical Writing Certification Commission.
- be written on official letterhead and include a current phone number and email address (the individual providing reference may be contacted if needed).
- attest to the applicant's knowledge, skills, and experience in medical writing.
- attest to the applicant's required years of experience in medical communications (at least 2 years of full-time work experience or equivalent in a paid capacity).
- be printed, dated, and signed.
- be written no earlier than 6 months before the date of the applicant's application. Out-of-date reference letters will not be accepted.
- 5. Answer background questions regarding any professional disciplinary proceedings. If applicants answer affirmatively to any of the background questions, their application will be subject to review by the Ethics and Appeals Committee of the Commission.
- 6. Read the *Adapted AMWA Code of Ethics and* the *Terms and Conditions of Certification* that are included in the application form. By signing the application, the applicant agrees to abide by these documents.
- 7. Pay the required application fee online through AMWA's website (<u>www.amwa.org/mwc</u>). Applicants

who have been denied eligibility to take the MWC Examination will automatically receive a refund of the MWC Application Submission Fee, less the \$75 administrative fee.

All original application materials must be sent to AMWA headquarters in 1 packet to the address on the application form. All submitted materials become the property of the Medical Writing Certification Commission. Once the submitted materials have been reviewed, the applicant will be notified regarding eligibility status.

IF ELIGIBLE: Within approximately 20 business days after receipt of materials at AMWA headquarters, applicants will receive an email notice of candidacy, along with instructions about how to register for the exam.

IF NOT ELIGIBLE: Within approximately 20 business days after receipt of materials at AMWA headquarters, applicants will receive an email notice of ineligibility, along with the reasons for the denial.

Approved applications will be good for 1 year after the receipt date of the application; the exam must be taken during this timeframe. If a candidate is unsuccessful in passing the exam, he or she has an additional year from the first exam date to retake and pass the exam. Examination Registration Fees will apply for each exam attempted. If the exam is not taken within 1 year from the application receipt date, or if the exam is taken with an unsuccessful result, and not retaken within 1 year from the failed exam date, then the individual must submit a new application, meet the eligibility requirements in effect for the new exam date, and pay an additional Application Fee.

Denial of Eligibility

Eligibility to take the Medical Writing Certification Examination will be denied if any of the following conditions are present when an application is received at AMWA headquarters:

- eligibility criteria not met (eg, degree, years of experience).
- application incomplete or illegible (eg, application not signed).

- verification documents missing or incomplete.
- correct fees not received.
- document(s) show evidence of tampering.

Eligibility Appeals

Applicants may appeal a denial of eligibility to take the Medical Writing Certification Examination by emailing a written appeal and supporting documentation to AMWA headquarters within 10 business days from the date of the denial notification. If the 10-day mark falls after the registration deadline for the exam, applicants submitting an appeal will not be able to take the exam during the date range originally requested.

The appeal-of-denial message MUST include the following:

- the reason for the appeal.
- documentation supporting the appeal or showing that the matter identified in the denial message has been corrected.

Failure to follow the directions in the *Applicant and Candidate Handbook* is not grounds for appeal. Appeals based on the failure of the postal system, other delivery methods, or a university transcript office will be considered only in documented extraordinary circumstances.

Once the appeal materials have been reviewed, applicants will receive an email notice of eligibility or continued ineligibility to sit for the exam.

AMWA headquarters will maintain files of all appeals and outcomes, including the complete documentation for each appeal, for a period of 5 years.

Medical Writing Certification Examination

The Medical Writing Certification Examination is based on the results of a job analysis survey of medical writers and the definition of a medical communicator that was developed by an AMWA task force and can be found on the AMWA website:

Medical communicators write, edit, or develop materials about medicine and health. They do this by gathering, evaluating, organizing, interpreting, and presenting information in a manner appropriate for the target audience. Professional medical writers also have communication expertise, awareness of ethical standards, and health care knowledge.

Materials prepared by medical communicators, collaborating with others or working independently, include the following:

- patient education brochures, news articles, web content, and books for the general public.
- journal articles and continuing education monographs for health care professionals.
- regulatory documents for government agencies.
- grant proposals for research scientists and institutions.
- sales training and marketing materials for the pharmaceutical industry.

From the job analysis, an Examination Content Outline (Appendix 1) was developed that delineated the core competencies (ie, knowledge, skills, and abilities [KSAs]) of professional medical writers. The KSAs were classified according to the 5 domains of AMWA's definition of a medical writer: Gathering, Evaluating, Organizing, Interpreting, and Presenting. The Examination Content Outline is included in the MWC Examination Candidate Study Guide available on the AMWA website.

The exam questions address all 5 KSA domains according to rankings of importance indicated by survey data. The questions are presented in the context of different types of medical writing (eg, scientific manuscripts, patient-oriented content, regulatory).

The 125-question multiple-choice exam is a computer-based examination, in English, over a 2.5-hour period. Example questions can be found in the MWC Examination Candidate Study Guide available on the AMWA website.

Schedule, Location, and Deadlines for Medical Writing Certification Examinations

The MWC Examination is administered via computer based testing (CBT) in a secure, proctored setting. It is offered at more than 300 testing centers throughout the world by the testing administration company, Iso-Quality Testing, Inc. (IQT). The examination can be taken at a location of the approved candidate's choosing within date ranges set by the Medical Writing Certification Commission. Examination appointments are subject to availability depending on the testing center. Payment of the MWC Examination Registration Fee entitles approved candidates to make an appointment to sit for the MWC Examination at an IQT proctored site. After paying the MWC Examination Registration Fee to AMWA, approved candidates receive an authorization email from IOT with information about how to schedule an exam appointment at an IQT testing center. If the IQT CBT Exam Appointment needs to be rescheduled or cancelled 5 or more calendar days before the exam, candidates will be charged a \$25 fee. If it is less than 5 calendar days, candidates will not be allowed to cancel or reschedule their IQT CBT Exam Appointment and no refund will be issued. For a complete list of testing centers, please see https://www.iso- qualitytesting.com/locations.aspx.

For information about upcoming exams, visit the Certification website (www.amwa.org/mwc).

Delay or Cancellation of the Examination

The exam will be delayed or canceled only in emergencies (eg, if severe weather or a disaster makes the examination center inaccessible or unsafe). As emergency situations vary by region, please contact your testing center directly to receive the most up to date information regarding any delays or cancellation.

Security

Any candidate who gives or receives assistance with test questions or whose behavior is disruptive during the exam will be required to leave the exam room and the situation will be reported to the Commission. The exam proctors are authorized to make security decisions; there is no onsite appeal.

The entire item bank and each form of the exam are the property of the Medical Writing Certification Commission. Distribution of exam content through any form of reproduction, including oral and written communication, is strictly prohibited and punishable by law. Discussion of exam content with other candidates after the test is also considered a breach of security and could cause revocation of certification.

Day of the Examination

Personal Identification

On the day of the exam, each candidate must present a government issued ID and the Candidate Admission Letter that was sent with the exam registration receipt from IOT.

Examples of valid government issued ID documents are a driver's license with photograph, state ID card with photograph, passport, and military ID card with photograph. A temporary ID card is not acceptable.

If the name on the exam registration list differs from that on the candidate's primary form of identification, proof of name change (eg, marriage license, divorce decree, or court order) must be brought to the exam site.

Please arrive at the testing center a minimum of 15 minutes before the scheduled appointment time to check in.

Restrictions

- No personal items or valuables should be brought to the exam room. Only a small purse or wallet and keys are permitted.
- No cameras, notes, or tape recorders are allowed in the exam room. Use of a cellular phone/smartphone or other electronic device is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the exam. Lockers are available onsite to secure personal belongings.
- No questions concerning the content of the exam may be asked during the exam.

- No food or drink will be permitted in the examination room for any reason.
- If a candidate taking the exam is dismissed for any reason, all exam fees will be forfeited.

Accommodation for Disabilities

The Medical Writing Certification Commission is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Accordingly, special examination accommodations will be reviewed on an individual basis in compliance with ADA requirements.

- Special accommodations will be made only if requested and approved at least 4 weeks before date of the exam.
- The <u>Special Accommodations Request Form</u> and a letter from a professional documenting the disability-related needs are required at the time of exam registration.
- Additional fees will not be charged to provide special accommodations, if approved.
- Information submitted to the Certification
 Commission about candidate disabilities and
 testing will be kept confidential unless required to
 be disclosed to provide the accommodation.

Resources for Examination Preparation

The MWC Examination Content Outline appears in Appendix 1 and is available in the MWC **Examination** Candidate Study Guide available on the AMWA website. The Study Guide also includes examination preparation recommendations, definition of medical writing, examples of topic categories, example questions with and answer key and references, and select examination preparation resources. The Examination Content Outline lists the KSAs considered necessary for competency in the field of medical writing and the approximate percentage of exam questions that will come from each area of the outline. Because the exam will include questions from all of the content areas (domains), the content outline can be used to guide candidate review in preparing for the exam. For example, if unfamiliar with a particular type of medical writing found on the

content outline, such as regulatory writing or grant writing, MWC candidates can prepare themselves in those specific areas before taking the exam. Candidates can choose to review content from the references listed in the *Selected Resources* section of the **Study Guide** or from other resources in the content areas. Other opportunities for learning new content or reviewing material for the exam could include attending a workshop at an AMWA annual conference or chapter conference, or attending meetings of other organizations. As mentioned earlier, a few example questions that are representative of the types that may be included on the certification exam can be found in the **Study Guide**.

Notification of Examination Results

Candidates who complete the exam will receive notification of their results (passing/certified or not passing/not certified), from the Medical Writing Certification Commission, typically within 60 days after the exam date. Those who achieve at least the minimum required score will be mailed an official document attesting to their certification. During this process, candidates should notify AMWA of any contact information (email or mailing address) changes.

Note: Examination results will not be provided over the telephone or by facsimile under any circumstances.

Examination Appeals

Individuals may appeal the exam results, citing and providing evidence of extraordinary circumstances. Taking the exam with an unsuccessful result is not sufficient grounds for appeal. Appeals must include the reason for the appeal and supporting documentation. Appeals will be considered by the Ethics and Appeals Committee and must be submitted via email within 30 days from the date of notification of the exam score.

Candidate Score Verification

After exam results are received, candidates may request that the testing agency conduct a computer-based comparison of the candidates' responses and the answer key for the examination in order to assure the accuracy of the reported score. The Candidate Score Verification Fee of \$50 must be paid in advance and will be refunded if a scoring error is discovered.

Retaking the Examination

Once an applicant's eligibility to sit for the Medical Writing Certification Examination has been approved, the exam may be retaken without resubmitting original verification, as long as current eligibility requirements are fulfilled and remain current at the time of the subsequent exam. However, Examination Registration Fees will apply for each exam attempted.

Approved applications will be good for 1 year after the receipt date of the application; the exam must be taken during this timeframe. If a candidate is unsuccessful when taking the exam, he or she has an additional year from the first exam date to retake and pass the exam. Examination Registration Fees will apply for each exam attempted. If the exam is not taken within 1 year from the application receipt date, or if the exam is taken with an unsuccessful result and not retaken within 1 year from the failed exam date, then the individual must submit a new application, meet the eligibility requirements in effect for the new exam date, and pay an additional Application Fee.

Use of the Medical Writer Certified (MWC®) Credential

Candidates who pass the Medical Writing Certification Examination will be considered certified as of the exam date and will be entitled to use the credential Medical Writer Certified or MWC* after their names. Before using the certification mark, candidates should review the *Terms and Conditions of Certification* agreed upon when the application form was signed. MWC* is a registered certification mark. It is not to be punctuated with periods. Certification will expire at the end of the calendar year in which the 5-year certification anniversary falls.

By granting a Medical Writer Certified (MWC°) credential, the Commission and its affiliates assume

no responsibility for the actions or activities of the certified individual and are released from all liability.

Misrepresentation of Certification

Inappropriate use of the credential will be referred to the Ethics and Appeals Committee for action. Individuals using the Medical Writer Certified (MWC*) credential without being duly certified by the Commission will be advised in writing by the Commission Chairperson of the seriousness of this offense and the legal ramifications of professional misrepresentation. Individuals found to be using the credential after receiving such notification will not be permitted to take the Medical Writing Certification Examination. If the individual persists in using the credential, legal action may be taken.

Revocation of Certification

An individual's certification may be revoked at the Commission's discretion after review by the Ethics and Appeals Committee. Grounds for revocation include the following situations:

- falsifying an application for certification.
- falsifying any information requested by the Medical Writing Certification Commission.
- cheating on the exam.
- failing to maintain the confidentiality of the exam.
- failing to recertify.
- violating the *Terms and Conditions of Certification* or the *Adapted AMWA Code of Ethics*.
- being convicted of a felony or of a crime relating to the provision of medical writing services.

Recertification

To maintain the Medical Writer Certified (MWC°) credential, individuals must recertify by the end of each 5-year certification period, before December 31 of the fifth year after certification was granted. (For example, if certified in October 2015, the individual must recertify by December 31, 2020.) Individuals may recertify by reexamination or by obtaining 50 continuing education (CE) credits related to the exam content outline. Those

who choose to recertify by reexamination will be bound by the Medical Writing Certification Examination policies and procedures in place at that time. Those who choose to recertify by obtaining at least 50 points from qualifying recertification activities will need to reestablish eligibility under current requirements and submit a full application, with supporting documentation and appropriate examination fees.

To locate the current version of this *Handbook* and the **Recertification Handbook**, visit the Certification webpages (www.amwa.org/mwc). The Recertification Handbook also delineates the procedures to follow and the qualifying activities and credits required for recertification. Certificants can begin accruing MWC* recertification points once they have passed the exam.

Confidentiality and the Release of Testing and Certification Information

AMWA staff will verify certification status to members of the public on request, and an online directory will be accessible on the AMWA website. To protect privacy, no individual results (test scores) will be made available.

Fees and Refund Policy

All currency is expressed in U.S. dollars.

- MWC Application Submission Fee: \$150 (includes nonrefundable \$75 administration fee)
- MWC Examination Registration Fee: \$495 (includes nonrefundable \$75 administration fee)
- IQT CBT Exam Appointment Rescheduling/ Cancellation Fee (with 5 or more days' notice): \$25
- Exam Score Verification Fee, upon candidate request: \$50

- MWC Recertification by Application Fee: \$375 (includes nonrefundable \$75 administration fee)
- MWC Recertification by Examination Fee: \$495 (includes nonrefundable \$75 administration fee)

Refunds to payments made with a credit card will be refunded only to the credit card used in the original transaction. Refunds to payments made by check will be issued to the payor as identified on the check.

Applicants who have been denied eligibility to take the MWC Examination will automatically receive a refund of the MWC Application Submission Fee, less the \$75 administrative fee.

Requests for refunds of the MWC Examination
Registration Fee must be received, in writing, more than
5 days before the IQT CBT Exam Appointment date.
Refunds for the MWC Examination Registration Fee,
less a \$75 administrative fee, will be distributed only
to individuals who cancel more than 5 days before the
MWC CBT Exam Appointment date.

No refunds or credits will be given for failure to attend, late arrival, or early departure of the IQT CBT Exam Appointment. Exceptions may be made, with proper documentation, in extraordinary circumstances such as a medical or personal emergency, death of an immediate family member, jury duty, active duty military assignment, or severe weather or a disaster precludes reaching the examination site. The nonrefundable \$75 administration fee still applies in these extraordinary circumstances.

The Commission reserves the right to verify any information submitted regarding an absence at the time of examination.

Appendix 1: Content Outline for the Examination

The Examination Content Outline is used to develop the Medical Writing Certification Examination and thus can be used to guide preparation and to ensure the appropriate knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary to earn the Medical Writer Certified (MWC*) credential. All areas of the content outline will be represented on the exam. Thus, the outline will allow individuals to

- become familiar with the emphasis (approximate percentage of content) for each content area.
- know the topics and the appropriate medical writing tasks associated with each content area.
- inventory their current knowledge related to each content area.
- build a study plan based on their knowledge inventory (for example, those not familiar with regulatory writing will probably need to study materials in this area).

Medical Writing Certification Examination Content Outline

1. Gathering (16% of content)

- A. Determine purpose of document
- B. Identify context for document
- C. Identify target audience
 - 1) Assess needs
 - 2) Identify knowledge gaps
- D. Select appropriate output type (eg, publications, regulatory documents, continuing medical education materials, patient education)
- E. Identify appropriate outlet (eg, target journal, other print media, web)
- F. Apply effective processes to gather information
 - Conduct a literature search (eg, PubMed/ MEDLINE)
 - 2) Elicit information from collaborators and stakeholders (eg, interview researchers, statisticians, clinicians, patients, regulators, thought leaders)
 - 3) Identify other relevant sources (eg, websites, databases, data outputs, clinical guidelines)
 - Identify relevant writing guidelines, instructions, and ethical standards (eg, journal instructions for authors, grant application instructions, regulatory requirements)
 - 5) Identify relevant document models and templates
 - Identify necessary forms and supporting materials (eg, permission to reprint, disclosures, copyright)

2. Evaluating (19% of content)

- A. Evaluate collected information with regard to
 - 1) content (ie, quality and relevance, level of evidence)
 - 2) audience (ie, appropriate and relevant to needs)
 - 3) context (ie, credibility of sources and suitability for purpose)
- B. Perform fact or data check
- C. Identify inconsistencies in data or other content presented
- D. Conduct critical review of a draft
 - 1) Assess quality of writing (eg, clarity, readability, usability, logic, organization, consistency)
 - 2) Provide constructive criticism
 - a) Provide options for solutions
 - b) Craft appropriate queries
 - 3) Evaluate representation and description of data
 - 4) Recognize ethical considerations with respect to self and others (eg, conflict of interest, disclosure, authorship, plagiarism, duplicate publications)
- E. Evaluate for completeness, fair balance, and absence of bias
- F. Determine appropriate level(s) of editing (eg, proof-reading, microediting, macroediting)
- G Implement best approach to resolve issues (eg, author disagreements, scope change, unexpected delays)

3. Organizing (19% of content)

- A. Determine correct organization of a document (eg, IMRAD)
- B. Identify and prioritize key elements of content
- C. Structure content to communicate message
- D. Develop an outline
- E. Apply templates and guidelines to documents (eg, CONSORT, ICMJE, FDA, ICH, PRISMA, ACCME, HIPAA, health literacy)
- F. Determine structure of tables and figures to best communicate data
- G. Determine which references to cite in a document
- H. Comprehend processes of developing and disseminating documents (eg, news releases, publications, grant and regulatory submissions)
- I. Design project work plan
 - 1) Determine deliverables
 - 2) Develop timeline
 - 3) Recognize roles, responsibilities, and processes
- J. Track progress and status of project
- K. Determine process for tracking changes and version control
- L. Recognize and apply appropriate software and technology to use in developing the document

4. Interpreting (19% of content)

- A. Comprehend relevant medical and scientific content
 - 1) Understand terminology
 - 2) Understand concepts (eg, cellular and molecular level, organism level, and population level)
 - 3) Understand study design (eg, clinical trial, casecontrol, longitudinal study)
 - 4) Understand statistical concepts (eg, P value, confidence interval, power)
- B. Interpret clinical and numerical data
- C. Derive key message(s)
- D. Determine inferences, implications, or clinical relevance

- E. Synthesize and integrate information
- F. Revise or repurpose existing content
- G. Comprehend review processes (eg, peer review, grant review, regulatory review)
- H. Respond to reviewers' comments
 - 1) Interpret feedback from reviewers
 - 2) Determine appropriate responses

5. Presenting (27% of content)

- A. Present the message logically and coherently (ie, tell the story)
- B. Retain the intended meaning of source materials or original document
- C. Communicate scientific content appropriately
- D. Communicate statistical content appropriately
- E. Develop clear, concise prose
- F. Write an abstract (eg, for presentation or publication) or executive summary
- G. Tailor prose to the audience
- H. Build logical and science-based arguments
- I. Apply proper mechanics
 - 1) Apply rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation
 - 2) Apply proper word usage (general and medical), correct nomenclature, and nondiscriminatory language
 - 3) Construct effective sentences
 - 4) Construct effective paragraphs (eg, topic sentences, transitions, repetition of key terms)
 - 5) Apply techniques for cohesion between paragraphs and sections
- J. Apply principles of proofreading
- K. Apply basic principles of design and layout (eg, document, slide, poster, web)
- L. Apply principles of visual presentation of data (eg, tables, figures)
- M. Write document to adhere to standardized formats, guidelines, instructions, and ethical standards

Appendix 2: Qualifying Work Experience

Activities That Constitute 2 Years of Paid Medical Writing Experience

To qualify for the MWC° medical writing certification examination, an applicant must have at least 2 years of full-time, paid work experience in medical writing, or the equivalent (eg, 4 years of documented part-time work at 20 hours/week) within the past 5 years. This eligibility criterion selects people whose core focus of their paid professional activity is medical writing. This criterion excludes individuals from other professions who want to transition to medical writing and also excludes physicians, clinical researchers, project managers, regulatory scientists, and other research and medical professionals for whom medical writing is not the core focus of their job. However, applicants may qualify even if their job title is not Medical Writer. For example, someone at a small company who has mixed responsibilities but is performing medical writing tasks at least part time in some substantial capacity may qualify as long as they meet the requirements for part-time work.

An applicant's cover letter, letters of recommendation, and curriculum vitae must show that the individual meets this professional paid medical writing requirement. If the medical writing activities are performed less than full time or are not the focus of the applicant's job title, then it is important to specifically describe how the applicant meets this requirement. The essence of the professional medical writing experience needs to be in clearly conveying medical/scientific information (data, knowledge, scientific advancements, etc) to patients, health care professionals, researchers, regulators, payers, and/or relevant others. Activities must fall within the medical communication umbrella defined as follows: Medical communicators write, edit, or develop materials about medicine and health for target audiences.

Professional medical writers also have communication expertise, awareness of ethical standards in the profession, and health care knowledge. Materials prepared by medical communicators, collaborating with others or working independently, include the following:

- patient education brochures, news articles, web content, and books for the general public.
- journal articles for health care professionals and biomedical researchers.
- continuing education monographs for health care professionals.
- regulatory documents for government agencies.
- grant proposals for research scientists and institutions
- sales training and marketing materials for the pharmaceutical industry.

One example of how to think about job role and certification qualification is by analogy with certification outside the medical writing field. Medical writers may extensively use project management in their roles, may co-author clinical trial protocols, and may communicate statistical concepts, but they would not thereby qualify by default for project management, clinical research, or statistics certification. Similarly, just because some individuals have writing as an element of their jobs, they do not by default qualify to apply for medical writing certification. Again, to qualify for the MWC medical writing certification exam, an applicant must have a minimum of 2 years' full-time work experience or the equivalent within the past 5 years wherein medical writing was the core focus of their paid professional activity.

Table 1 lists work activities that do and do not qualify as medical writing experience.

Table 1. Medical Writing Experience: Examples*

Qualifies Toward 2-Year Experience **	Does Not Qualify Toward 2-Year Experience
Pharmaceutical, clinical research organization, or freelance medical writer who writes drug development publications (eg, abstracts, posters, and manuscripts), regulatory documents (eg, clinical study reports, and Common Technical Document clinical summaries and overviews), medical information documents (eg, medical letters), or continuing medical education materials (eg, medical education slide decks)	Physician who writes patient notes or insurance claim reports
Medical writer who writes clinical research manuscripts at a medical communication company	Physician, pharmacist, pharmaceutical clinical researcher, or university faculty member who writes research publications as only a part of his or her role
Medical education content developer who writes continuing medical education content for a medical communications company or agency	Physician who assembles lecture materials to teach a medical course
Medical writer who writes journal articles for a research institution	Physician, scientist, or statistician who writes articles as a product of his or her scientific or medical research
Medical editor who contributes substantive, macro- level reworking of journal articles, clinical research grant proposals, or protocol text to aid authors in document refinement	Researcher who helps colleagues or students refine manuscripts or other clinical research documents as part of his or her research role
Medical journalist, public health information writer, medical marketing content developer / writer, or freelance writer who prepares medical information documents to inform lay audiences about medical topics	Health professional whose clinical work includes preparing materials informing patients about medical topics
Writer of online medical content for a medical information company providing comprehensive clinical information to physicians and other health professionals	Educator who, as part of his or her teaching role, prepares materials for students about medical topics
Health outcomes writer who prepares clinical content for health economic/outcome journal articles or health technology assessments	Physician or medical consultant who works for a payer organization (eg, insurance or government) and as part of his or her role writes claimant medical record case reports

^{*}This table is not all-inclusive.

^{**} Qualified experience must be core to the individual's job description and daily tasks.