

Master Evidence Technician Guidelines

Purpose of Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide instruction and information for students on how to successfully complete the Master Evidence Technician Certification through OPOTA's advanced training program. These guidelines will provide specific details concerning each phase of the testing process. Students will be required to complete each phase in order to successfully complete the program and obtain their Master Evidence Technician Certificate.

It should be noted that the OPOTA instructor(s) will make every effort to assist the student in completing the necessary phases of the testing process.

Note: These guidelines are in effect for any student attempting to obtain their Master Evidence Technician Certification after July 1st, 2019. Students who obtained their certification prior to July 1st, 2019 are not required to follow these procedures.

Prerequisite and Scheduling Requirements:

In order for students to be eligible to take the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam, they must have successfully completed the necessary courses to complete the Master Evidence Technician track. Those courses are as follows:

Core Courses

- Evidence Technician
- Bloodstain Evidence
- Crime Scene Photography I
- Crime Scene Photography II

Elective Courses (60 hour minimum)

- Death Investigation (40 hours)
- Forensic Aspects of Death (40 hours)
- Evidence Room Management (16 hours)
- Basic Fingerprint Classification (40 hours)
- Fingerprint Comparison Techniques (40 hours)
- Marijuana Identification (16 hours)
- Shooting Incident Reconstruction (40 hours)

Substitute courses will be accepted on a limited basis and must be submitted for approval prior to the student being allowed to request the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam.

Once the student has completed the necessary courses, they may request to be scheduled for the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam and Practical Exam. Requests can be made to schedule the Exam at either the London OPOTA campus or the Richfield OPOTA campus. Exams will be scheduled based on the schedules of the student and OPOTA instructor. Efforts will be made to schedule the exam in a reasonable amount of time.

Once the student has successfully completed the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam, they may begin the Master Evidence Technician Practical Exam. The written and practical exam may be taken on the same day; however, students who fail the written exam will not be permitted to move on to the practical exam.

Requests to take the written and practical exams can be submitted to the following OPOTA Law Enforcement Training Officers:

- Joshua Grusendorf (Richfield campus) – Joshua.Grusendorf@ohioattorneygeneral.gov
- Derek Foote (London campus) – Derek.Foote@ohioattorneygeneral.gov

Master Evidence Technician Written Exam

The Master Evidence Technician Written Exam will consist of two hundred questions. These questions will be taken from the following books:

- Crime Scene Photography 3rd Edition by Edward Robinson
 - Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9
- Practical Crime Scene Processing and Investigation by Ross Gardner
 - Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13

Students should have received a copy of each of these text books during the required Core Courses.

The questions on each exam will be randomly selected from a bank of test questions that have been previously prepared. There will be one hundred (100) questions taken from each of the required books. Each question will be in the multiple choice format.

Students will be required to receive a score of 80% or better in order to pass the written portion of the exam. Any student who receives a failing score on the written exam will be allowed to request one retest which will occur on a later date. The retest will be scheduled a minimum of two (2) weeks after the initial test date and will consist of a separate exam with randomly selected questions.

Any student who fails the written portion of the exam a second time will be required to complete remedial training as determined by the OPOTA instructor. Remedial training for the written exam will consist of one or more practice tests which will be emailed to the student to complete on their own time. The student may then request another test date a minimum of six (6) weeks after the date of the second failed test.

Students must successfully complete the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam before being permitted to take the Master Evidence Technician Practical Exam.

Master Evidence Technician Practical Exam

Once scheduled, the Master Evidence Technician Practical will consist of three parts. The photography portion of the exam will be completed by the student prior to the day of the scheduled exam. The crime scene portion of the exam will be completed at the selected OPOTA campus on the day scheduled.

Phase One: Photography

The photography portion of the exam will be assigned to the student approximately four weeks prior to the scheduled exam date. The student will be required to take and submit several photographs for review. These photographs will be evaluated by the LETO for correct exposure, composition and technique. Photographs should be submitted two weeks prior to the scheduled exam date to allow for review and potential corrections.

The following is a list of potential photographs that may be required of the student:

- Overall photographs
- Midrange photographs
- Close-up photographs (Subject to be determined by LETO)
- Shoe impression photographs
- Vehicle photographs
- Low light photographs

*The type and number of photographs that will be required will be determined by the LETO and will be based upon training the student received and types of cases the student would most typically be assigned to investigate

The photographs will be judged on a pass/fail basis. Any photograph that is deemed to be unacceptable will be returned to the student with an explanation of what should be corrected. Students will be allowed to resubmit any photograph a maximum of two times. If the student is unable to successfully complete the photography portion, they will not be allowed to progress to Phase Two of the exam.

Any student who fails the photography portion of the exam may reschedule their test within six (6) weeks of the failed exam. A student who fails the exam a second time will be required to complete remedial training as determined by the OPOTA instructor. Remedial training will be specifically designed by the OPOTA instructor to focus on the areas where the student was weakest. Remedial training may consist of practice photographs, reading assignments or any other method determined by the OPOTA instructor which could include retaking OPOTA photography course(s). Once this is complete, the student will be allowed to reschedule the Photography portion of the practical exam a minimum of six (6) weeks after the date of the second failed Photography practical.

Phase Two: Crime Scene

The crime scene portion of the exam will take place on the scheduled date and at the assigned OPOTA campus. All materials needed for the exam will be provided to the student. The student may use their own photography equipment if they choose. Each student will be given a mock crime scene, which may be indoors or outdoors. The student will be required to complete the following:

- Collect evidence located in the scene

- Process any potential evidence for latent prints and/or DNA
- Properly package evidence

Students may be required to utilize fingerprint powders and/or chemical processes to locate and identify latent prints. All latent prints located during this exercise will be lifted and/or preserved according to standards learned.

Students will also be given at least one of the following items:

- Bloodstain

Student will be required to properly document a given bloodstain. This may include preparing the bloodstain for photographing, photographing the bloodstain and determining the angle of impact for a set number of individual stains.

- Shooting Box

-Student will be required to properly document a minimum of one (1) bullet hole in a 12 x 12 drywall box. This may include determining entry and exit defects, angle of bullet impact, and photographs to document the impact. Students may also be given a short scenario and be required to determine if the scenario matches with the bullet defect provided.

- Shoe Impression

-Student will be required to properly cast a shoe impression. The impression may be located in dirt, sand, mud or other material as determined by the LETO giving the exam.

*The LETO will assign a minimum of one (1) and no more than two (2) of the above items to each student. The assignments required will be determined by the LETO and will be based upon training the student received and types of cases the student would most typically be assigned to investigate.

The students will be judged on a pass/fail basis for the crime scene portion of the exam. The student must successfully complete all aspects of the crime scene portion in order pass the exam. If the student fails any portion of the crime scene phase of the exam, the student will be given an opportunity to receive remedial training on the day of the exam and retake the exercises if time allows. The student will **not** be required to retake the photography portion of the exam from Phase I during Phase II.

Any student who fails the crime scene portion of the exam may reschedule their test within six (6) weeks of the failed exam. A student who fails the exam will be required to complete remedial training as determined by the OPOTA instructor. Remedial training will be specifically designed by the OPOTA instructor to focus on the areas where the student was weakest. Remedial training may consist of reading assignments, hands-on practical assignments or any other method determined by the OPOTA instructor which could include retaking OPOTA crime scene processing courses. Once this is complete, the student will be allowed to reschedule the crime scene portion of the practical exam a minimum of six (6) weeks after the date of the second failed crime scene practical.

Results

Once the student has successfully completed the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam and the Master Evidence Technician Practical Exam, they will be issued their Master Evidence Technician Certificate.

Any student who, after three attempts, fails to complete any portion of the Master Evidence Technician Written Exam or the Master Evidence Technician Practical Exam will be required to schedule an in person meeting with the OPOTA instructor to discuss the areas that must be improved. The student will be allowed to re-test for their Master Evidence Technician certificate at the discretion of the OPOTA instructor.

Certification

All students who complete the Master Evidence Technician Certification Process as outlined above will be issued their Master Evidence Technician Certificate and will be authorized to use the title "Master Evidence Technician". Each Master Evidence Technician will be assigned a unique identifying number that will be assigned specifically to them. Students who receive this certificate are authorized to use the Master Evidence Technician title and unique identifying number during the course of their crime scene work. Students will also receive a pin indicating their completion of the Master Evidence Technician Certification Process. Students whose certifications have expired or have been revoked as outlined below will no longer be authorized to use the Master Evidence Technician title or unique identifying number.

Re-Certification

Students that successfully complete the requirements for their Master Evidence Technician and obtain their certificate **after July 1st, 2019** are required to re-certify after 5 years. In order to re-certify for another five-year period, the student must have taken a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education in one of several approved topics. The student will also be required to submit recent casework showing competency with the skills taught during the Master Evidence Technician Certification process. If casework is not available, the student may opt to take the Master Evidence Technician written and practical exams. Students who receive a passing score as outlined above will be recertified for another five-year period.

The Law Enforcement Training Officer in charge of the program will notify students of the need to re-certify and request the appropriate paperwork. Casework that is submitted for consideration for re-certification will be judged solely by the OPOTA Law Enforcement Training Officers responsible for the Master Evidence Technician Program.

Re-Certification Requirements

1. A minimum of 20 hours of continuing education during the previous five years in one of the following crime scene related topics:
 - a. Crime Scene Processing
 - b. Bloodstain
 - c. Shooting Reconstruction
 - d. Latent Fingerprints
 - e. Crime Scene Photography
 - f. Fingerprint Classification
 - g. Fingerprint Comparison
 - h. Evidence Collection and Packaging
 - i. Crime Scene Searches
 - j. Crime Scene Sketching
 - k. Search Warrants

**Other topics may be approved by the OPOTA Law Enforcement Training Officer
2. Submit casework showing competency with the skills taught during the Master Evidence Technician Certification Process.

**Students may opt to take the Master Evidence Technician written and practical exam in lieu of submitting casework.

Students who fail to re-certify within six months after their certificate expiration date will no longer be considered a Master Evidence Technician and their Master Evidence Technician ID number will be invalid. Students may re-certify after the six-month period by taking and passing the Master Evidence Technician written and practical exams.

Loss of Certification

A failure to re-certify will result in the expiration of the certification as outlined above. In extremely rare circumstances, Master Evidence Technician Certifications may be revoked at the sole discretion of the OPOTA Law Enforcement Training Officers in charge of the Master Evidence Technician Program. Revocation of the Certification may be done if a student is found to have committed perjury on the witness stand or has committed an offense that would prevent them from obtaining a Basic Peace Officer Certification in the State of Ohio.