



Emergency Services Division

Emergency Medical Science (EMS) Technical Standards

Purpose Statement

All students in the Emergency Medical Science (EMS) Program are expected to meet certain technical standards which are essential for successful completion of all phases of the program, and which reflect industry requirements and standards. To verify the student's ability to perform these essential functions, students may be required to demonstrate the technical standards below.

Meeting these technical standards does not guarantee employment in this field upon graduation. Ability to meet the program's technical standards does not guarantee a student's eligibility for any licensure, certification exam, or successful completion of the program.

Technical Standard	Definition of Standards	Examples
Critical Thinking	Sufficient cognitive skills and critical thinking abilities such that the student can formulate and implement reasonable decisions based on available information in the absence of other personnel and/or supervisors; make fast and appropriate decisions in rapidly-evolving situations, particularly pertaining to creating and implementing a patient care plan in accord with established protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess scene safety in uncontrolled environments • Assess patient's medical history and condition • Determine and prioritize the severity of the illness/injury • Determine correct treatment modalities, including exceptions to approved modalities • Determine limits of acceptable span of control in ordinary/extraordinary circumstances (ex: hazardous scene)
Problem Solving Skills	Ability to calmly intervene in various tense, stressful, emergency situations; make correct initial decisions and draw reasonable conclusions that allow selection and pursuit of acceptable outcome options; synthesize information gathered from consecutive assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate correct decisions • Integrate correct treatment protocol(s) • Devise an accepted plan to provide patient care in typical/atypical case • Utilize standard accepted equipment for safe patient care and movement
Interpersonal Skills	Sufficient ability to interact with individuals, families, groups, public safety personnel and other medical professionals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain supportive relationships with patients, family members, bystanders, public safety, media, political officials, and other health care providers under stressful and non-stressful situations
Communication Skills	Sufficient ability to interact effectively with others via the English language using non-verbal, verbal, and written forms of communication. Communication occurs via face-to-face interaction, telephone, two-way radio, and computer-based written reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions to quickly obtain information related to emergency situations • Receive and interpret information from patients, bystanders, other responders • Identify and communicate the need for additional resources • Request and clarify orders from supervisors

Technical Standard	Definition of Standards	Examples
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate and legible hand written or computer entry written reports in a timely manner • Read and understand treatment protocols, policies and standard operating procedures • Quickly communicate effectively with others in verbal and written forms
Coping Skills	Ability to deal effectively with stress produced by work and interaction situations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately handle emotional situations that affect citizens, victims, families, friends, coworkers, bystanders, and other public safety personnel • Recognize personal limitations and request assistance as appropriate
Mobility	Sufficient physical abilities to drive and work in an ambulance; lift, and move immobile patients; engage in regular physical fitness training; prolonged standing, walking; jogging/running; jumping; climbing; crawling; pushing/pulling; negotiating stairs, hazardous and/or uneven terrain, all while carrying a patient in or on a carrying device.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly enter/exit and drive an ambulance or other emergency vehicle without assistance • Perform physical EMS activities such as CPR, airway management, medication administration, lifting and moving patients in a variety of body positions and environmental conditions • Recognize and negotiate hazards in all environmental extremes including but not limited to light/dark, heat/cold, wet/dry/frozen scenes • Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) without assistance (ex: gloves, masks, etc.) • Perform rescue duties • Operate emergency vehicle under extreme environmental conditions
Motor Skills	Ability to perform gross and fine motor skills required in the performance EMS duties as indicated in the state and national standard curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform physical tasks requiring prolonged physical exertion (ex: walking for long periods of time while carrying equipment and/or patients, vehicle extrication, extrication of a victim from the confines of a structure) • Perform tasks requiring walking, crawling, stooping, bending, kneeling, or working prone or supine
Auditory Skills	Sufficient auditory ability to quickly send and receive information, engage in urgent situations, discern personal danger at emergency scenes, hear requests for aid, hear verbal orders and instructions from other people in noisy environments; safely operate patrol vehicle under emergency conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively use sense of hearing to aid in assessing the scene and patients in duress • Recognize various signals from medical equipment or emergency alarms, dangers/warnings associated with hazardous scenes • Communicate via two-way radio and telephone links • Receive and respond to instructors, team leaders and others

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Visual Skills	Sufficient visual acuity (corrected or not) for safe performance of EMS duties under normal and emergency conditions; observation and implementation of appropriate care for patients; assessment and determination of scene hazards potentially effecting the safety of self and others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize signs during patient assessment • Recognize hazards, interpret indicators and measurements from medical monitoring and treatment equipment • Discern settings and parameters of settings of medical equipment such as cardiac monitor/defibrillator, ventilator, syringes, size identifiers, medical procedures such as starting an I.V., administering medication, reading an EKG • Prepare and submit written reports
Tactile Skills	Sufficient sense of touch and tactile acuity necessary in the performance of EMS duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palpate a pulse and detect changes or abnormalities of surface, texture, skin temperature, body segment contour, muscle tone and/or joint movement
Environmental	Olfactory senses sufficient for maintaining environmental, personal, and coworker safety, and for detecting changes that may indicate a deterioration in the current environment or the presence of a hazardous situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detect and identify smells, visible signs, audible signals related to EMS duties and contributory to self-preservation and safety of others, including but not limited to smoke, burning materials, gasoline and noxious fumes
Emotional/Behavioral	Ability to demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate flexibility, honesty, empathy, patience and cooperative behaviors • Display high levels of personal responsibility, accountability and development • Demonstrate respect for citizens, patients, witnesses, suspects, and other public safety professionals • Maintain strict confidentiality of federally protected healthcare information, present a professional appearance and maintain personal hygiene

In the case of an otherwise qualified individual with a documented disability, appropriate and reasonable accommodations will be made unless to do so would fundamentally alter the essential training elements, cause undue hardship, or produce a direct threat to the safety of the patient or student.

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College is invested in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Support Services is part of Student Services and is located in the K. Ray Bailey Student Services Center. For detailed information or to request accommodations visit www.abtech.edu/supportservices. An appointment is recommended prior to enrollment in order to discuss any special concerns.