

FAQ about the ECHT

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1. Benefits and who can apply

What is the benefit to me to become an ECHT?

The early ECHTs report personal recognition from gaining the ECHT. It increases their profile in their own country and within Europe. It also raises the profile of the profession and offers recognition to therapists who continue to practice and actively continue their professional development. The ECHT is designed for therapists that work with patients. Achieving the ECHT demonstrates a therapist's commitment to professional development and achievement.

What if I do not have National Certification, can I apply for the ECHT?

National certification is a pre-requisite for the ECHT application! National certification processes are different in each country and in many countries they are just developing. The Education Committee has put together the paper: "Hand Therapy Certification in Europe an overview of the process in different countries". This paper aims to briefly outline how certification can be obtained at the national level in the different countries. You can download this paper on the EFSHT website: <http://www.eurohandtherapy.org/efsht/echt/>

2. ECHT Application Process

How do I send in my initial application?

You have to complete the online initial application form. This form can be found on the EFSHT website (www.eurohandtherapy.org) under "European Certification - download documents". Please scroll down to find all documents!

Am I ready to apply for the ECHT?

A self-assessment list has been formulated to clarify the criteria of the extended CV. You can find this list on the EFSHT website. It will give you a listing of professional accomplishments so that you can self-assess if you are ready to apply for the ECHT. Please take a look at this self-assessment list prior to application!

Where can I find the documents?

All ECHT documents (Profile, Curriculum, Handbook, can be found on the EFSHT website (www.eurohandtherapy.org) under "European Certification - download documents". Please scroll down to find all documents!

The documents that are listed are:

1. Hand Therapist Profile
2. Curriculum
3. Handbook & Markform
4. Self-evaluation form
5. Online initial application form

Please take a good look at the ECHT handbook! On page 2 you will find a checklist with all the details of the process to become an ECHT.

What type of proof of accomplishments do I need to include the portfolio?

This information is in the handbook. You will need to provide written proof of any accomplishments you are using to promote your case e.g.: certificates from courses attended, time tables of teaching sessions, program of course/conference presentations, copies of audits/research etc. Additionally a self-assessment table for professional accomplishments is available on the EFSHT website.

Is it necessary to have done international presentations and articles to apply for the ECHT?

Not necessarily. The ECHT process is focused on the recognition of therapists who have made a contribution to the profession in a number of ways. This could also be teaching, presenting regionally/nationally, national committee work, production of guidelines/leaflets, mentoring colleagues etc.

3. ECHT timeline and deadlines

Is there a time limit between initial application and deadline for the formal submission of my portfolio?

*Yes, after you have received a confirmation of your initial application from the ECHT coordinator you have **one year** to complete the application process and send in your portfolio.*

How much time between submission and assessment ?

When the ECHT coordinator has received your portfolios and confirmation that the application fee has been paid, your portfolios will be forwarded to two independent assessors (not from your own country) who will evaluate it using the marking criteria. Within 16 weeks of submission and confirmation of payment you will be notified by the ECHT coordinator of the results. This will be either a PASS or a RETURNED for REVISION.

Can I get an extension, if I can't get my portfolio within 1 year?

You may apply for an extension if health or other extenuating circumstances prevent you from submitting the portfolio in time.

What happens if I don't get the application submitted within a year?

Your initial application will be deleted from the ECHT applications list after one year and you must resubmit the initial application.

4. Cost of the ECHT

How much does the application cost?

The initial application is free of charge. Once the applicant has prepared their portfolio and submits it, the application fee of 250 euro to cover all assessor fees, administration costs and postage, must be paid. The assessment of your portfolio will only commence upon confirmation of payment.

How do I pay the application fee?

The application fee should be paid by bank transfer. Once an application is received precise payment directions with bank information will be sent to you by the ECHT coordinator (or the EFSHT Treasurer will send you an invoice for the assessment of the portfolio). Please keep in mind that possible bank transfer costs have to be included in the payment, so the actual fee may be a bit higher depending on banking costs in your country.

5. Submission of the Portfolio

Should I send my portfolios by regular mail or registered mail?

*When your portfolio is ready please send **two complete single documents in loose leaf folders/binders by regular or by registered mail** to the ECHT coordinator. At this time is not possible to send in your portfolios by email!*

Does it really have to be a paper submission?

Yes. Portfolios consist of many pages, letters, and appendixes. The assessors spend a significant amount of time examining them and making notes to provide to the applicant. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide a well-organized portfolio in a paper format.

Do I need to keep a copy of the portfolio for myself?

Yes. This is something you will want to keep as a record for yourself and to show others. It will be useful when you come to re-certify in 7 years' time. Additionally in the event that something is lost in the postal system you will be asked to provide a copy of your portfolio so that the assessment process can continue.

6. Requesting an ECHT Advisor

How do I get an advisor?

If you think you need an advisor, please contact the ECHT coordinator and request one. The ECHT coordinator will investigate if there is an advisor available for you. It is also possible to ask somebody from your own country who has already received there ECHT to give you advise.

What can I expect from an advisor?

An advisor will answer questions, read parts of the portfolio and give initial feedback and suggestions for improvement. Note: an advisor is never a guarantee that your portfolio will meet the ECHT standards!

7. Duration of the ECHT Award

How long is an ECHT certification valid?

The ECHT certification is valid for 7 years, therapists who have been awarded the ECHT are required to re-certify after 7 years to maintain the title.

Why is the ECHT not valid forever?

Recertification is an important quality assurance measure. Therapists, who have achieved the ECHT, must provide proof every seven years that they remain up to date and active. Thus the public, other therapists and doctors that interact with Therapists having the ECHT title are assured that the therapist is up to date and offering a quality service.

When can I recertify?

It is the responsibility of an ECHT to re-certify after 7 years. All documents for re-certification can be found on the EFSHT website.

Does re-certification require a new portfolio?

Information about the recertification process can be found on the EFSHT website. Candidates must provide proof of continued professional activity a new portfolio is not required.