

Basic Skills Policy

General Requirements

22 Pa. Code § 49.18 (Assessment) requires an assessment of basic skills, professional knowledge and practice and subject matter knowledge. The basic skills assessment is comprised of three individual tests covering reading, writing and mathematics.

Non-vocational candidates entering Pennsylvania approved baccalaureate preparation programs on or after August 1, 2015 must pass the basic skills tests prior to formal entry into the program.

Basic Skills Assessment Policy Changes

- Effective March 2016, candidates may combine individual tests from different vendors to meet the basic skills requirement. The policy is retroactive for all open applications.
- The GPA-Scaled Score Chart does not apply to the basic skills assessments.
- We provide a composite score for the PAPA and CORE assessments.
- Candidates electing to use tests from different vendors cannot use a composite score. They must meet the qualifying score for each individual test.
- We added a separate ACT writing score to reflect the change in ACT score reporting effective September 2015.
- We eliminated the 1550 SAT composite score to provide an equitable score for those completing the entire SAT vendor's tests and those mixing different vendor's tests.

Basic Skills Assessment Policy

Approved Basic Skills Assessments

- The Pre-service Academic Performance Assessment (PAPA) modules in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.
 - Visit www.pa.nesinc.com to register for test code PA701.
 - Scores must be electronically submitted directly to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality, from the test vendor.
 - A minimum score of 220 is required on each module. A composite scoring option is available.
- The Core Academic Skills for Educators (CORE) modules in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.
 - Visit www.ets.org/praxis/pa to register for test codes 5712, 5722 and 5732.
 - Scores must be electronically submitted directly to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality, from the test vendor.
 - A minimum score of 156 (Reading), 162 (Writing) and 150 (Mathematics) is required. A composite scoring option is available.

- The Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) score of 500 or higher in each individual section – Critical Reading, Writing, Mathematics. There is no composite scoring option.
 - Submit official test scores in the vendor-sealed envelope and a TIMS application cover sheet to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality. Scores may also be verified from an official score report by (1) the Pennsylvania Approved Preparation Programs through TIMS; or (2) sent directly from the high school to the Bureau.

- The American College Test (ACT) Plus Writing. There is no composite scoring option.
 - Tests taken prior to September 2015 require a composite score of 23 accompanied by a combined English/Writing score of 22 or higher and a Math score of 21 or higher.
 - Tests taken after September 2015 require separate scores of Reading - 22; Mathematics - 21; and Writing - 21.
 - Submit official test scores and a TIMS application cover sheet to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality, in an envelope sealed by the test vendor. Scores may also be verified from an official score report by (1) the Pennsylvania Approved Preparation Programs through TIMS; or (2) sent directly from the high school to the Bureau.

- Older basic skills tests, such as the PPST Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, are accepted if taken at the time they were required in Pennsylvania. Refer to the testing [CSPG 21](#) for more information about replaced tests.

Basic Skills Assessment Exceptions

1. The basic skills assessment requirement is waived for all certificates as of November 1, 2014 if the applicant completed an approved post-baccalaureate certification program.

2. Experienced Out-of-State Instructional Certificate Exception: As of July 1, 2011, applicants submitting a copy of a current and valid out-of-state instructional certificate that is comparable in grade and content area, plus verification of two years of full-time teaching experience, are not required to take the basic skills assessments.

3. Vocational Certificate Exception: Effective July 1, 2014, candidates in **post-baccalaureate vocational instructional** programs are not required to take the basic skills assessment in reading and writing. The basic skills mathematics assessment is still required for vocational level II certification.