Understanding Your Texas Educator Certification Program Test Scores

Last Updated on March 21, 2011

Texas educator certification is governed by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). The tests required for educator certification are administered under the authority of Texas Education Agency (TEA) by contract with Educational Testing Service (ETS). These tests include the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards™ (TExES™), the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET), the Texas Examinations for Master Teachers™ (TExMaT™), the Texas Assessment of Sign Communication™ (TASC™) and the Texas Assessment of Sign Communication–American Sign Language™ (TASC–ASL™). The intent of this publication is to explain the reporting and the interpretation of scores on the various tests required for Texas educator certification.

APPLYING FOR TEXAS EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

Once you pass the required tests and meet all requirements for a Standard Certificate, **YOU MUST APPLY ONLINE** and pay the appropriate fee. Please refer to the TEA website at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us).

Score Scales

Total test performance scores for all tests in the TExES and TExMaT series are reported on a scale of 100 to 300, with a score of 240 established as the passing score required for certification. Total test performance scores for the ExCET Latin test are reported on a scale of 0 to 100, with a score of 70 established as the passing score required for certification. The score scales and passing scores for the TASC and TASC–ASL tests are shown in the chart on page 3 of this publication.

How Scores are Reported

Score reports are posted in the online registration system on the ETS TExES website at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org). They are viewable for 90 days from the score reporting dates listed in the Registration Bulletin and on the website. Each score report contains scores for one test. You should save or print a copy of your score report for your records. Score reports may show up to four types of information. Numbers 2, 3 and 4 are not applicable to every test.

1) Total Test Performance  
2) Performance by Domain  
3) Performance by Competency  
4) Holistic Scores
Your test results are automatically added to your certification file and made available to TEA, SBEC and, if applicable, your recommending Texas Educator Preparation Program (college, university or alternative certification program).

**Total Test Performance**

Your score report shows your Passed/Not Passed status. Your Total Scaled Score shows how you performed on the test as a whole and determines whether or not you passed the test. Scaled scores are comparable across all versions of the same test. The scaled score range and the minimum passing score for the test you took are shown in this area of the score report.

Minimum passing standards were established by SBEC with input from committees of Texas educators. The passing scaled score for each test is designed to reflect the minimum level of knowledge required for effective performance by a beginning educator in Texas public schools. The minimum passing score for the test you took is shown in this area of the score report. Further information about scoring is provided later in this publication. Summary statistics are available in the Test Results and Score Reporting sections on the ETS TExES website at [www.texes.ets.org](http://www.texes.ets.org).

**Performance by Domain and Competency**

For most tests, information is provided about performance in major content areas, called domains. In many instances, information is also provided about performance in specific areas within the domains, called competencies. For each domain and competency, the number of scored questions on the test and the number you answered correctly are indicated. These counts are provided for informational purposes only. Individual domains and competencies do not have passing scores and are not used in determining total scaled scores. Passing status is based only on the test’s total scaled score.

To more fully understand your performance within specific areas covered by the test, refer to the list of domains and competencies provided in the test preparation manual for the test you took. Test preparation manuals are available on the ETS TExES website at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org).

It is important to use caution when interpreting data reported by domain and competency. The reliability of data based on a small number of questions, generally fewer than 10, is insufficient to make meaningful interpretations. Note that the number of scored questions within a given domain or competency may vary across different versions of a test.
Holistic Scores
For those tests included in the table below, holistic scores are provided. Each point on the scale represents the degree to which the required performance characteristics were demonstrated in your response(s).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests for Which Holistic Scores are Provided</th>
<th>Thorough Knowledge</th>
<th>General Knowledge</th>
<th>Limited or No Knowledge</th>
<th>Unscorable*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TASC/TASC–ASL</td>
<td>A (Passing)</td>
<td>B, C (Passing)</td>
<td>D, E</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TExES Braille Transcription Assignments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2, 1</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Lang. Arts and Reading 8–12 Essay</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2, 1</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all TExMaT tests except those below**</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2, 1</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Science Teacher 4–8 Essay</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3, 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Technology Teacher Case Study Assignment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Assessments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Constructed responses may be unscorable for a variety of reasons, e.g., blank, too short, illegible, off topic, off task.
** Note that the TExMaT Master Reading Teacher test has an additional passing requirement; a minimum score of 3 on the essay component is required in order to pass.

If you receive a holistic score indicating that you demonstrated limited or no knowledge on a constructed-response component (as identified in the table above), your score report will contain additional information regarding your performance.

- For the TASC, TASC–ASL, TExES English Language Arts and Reading 8–12 and all TExMaT tests (with the exception of the performance-assessment components of the Master Technology Teacher test) your score report will contain analytical feedback indicating areas for improvement.

- For the four transcription assignments on the TExES Braille test and the two performance-assessment components on the TExMaT Master Technology Teacher test, in lieu of analytical feedback, your score report will show the individual holistic score you received for each assignment.
**Bilingual Target Language Proficiency (BTLPT) Spanish**

Domains I and II contain only multiple-choice questions. In these domains, the number of Points Possible equals the number of scored multiple-choice questions. The number of Points Earned equals the number of those questions you answered correctly.

Domain III consists of five spoken-response questions. Each response can earn as many as 3 raw score points from each of its two scorers. So, with 6 raw score points possible for each response, the total number of raw score points possible for all five responses in this domain is 30. The number of raw points possible is then weighted to reflect the contribution of this portion of the test to the total score. The 30 possible raw score points in this domain are weighted by multiplying them by 1.5 to yield the number of weighted Points Possible (45) shown on your score report. The total number of raw score points your responses actually earned are similarly multiplied by 1.5 to yield the number of Points Earned shown on your score report.

Domain IV consists of three written-response questions. Each response can earn as many as 3 raw score points from each of its two scorers. So, with 6 raw score points possible for each response, the total number of raw score points possible for all three responses in this domain is 18. The number of raw points possible is then weighted to reflect the contribution of this portion of the test to the total score. The 18 possible raw score points in this domain are weighted by multiplying them by 2.0 to yield the number of weighted Points Possible (36) shown on your score report. The total number of raw score points your responses actually earned are similarly multiplied by 2.0 to yield the number of Points Earned shown on your score report.

In each domain, the Scaled Score provides an indication of overall performance within that domain on the same 100 to 300 scale used in reporting total test performance.

**Languages Other Than English (LOTE) French, German and Spanish**

Domains I through IV contain only multiple-choice questions. In these domains, the number of Points Possible equals the number of scored questions. The number of Points Earned equals the number of those questions you answered correctly.

Domain V consists of three written-response questions. Each response can earn as many as 3 points from each of its two scorers. So, with 6 points possible for each response, the total number of Points Possible for all three responses in this domain is 18.

Domain VI consists of three spoken-response questions. Each response can earn as many as 3 points from each of its two scorers. So, with 6 points possible for each response, the total number of Points Possible for all three responses in this domain is 18.
The final sub-area, "Instructional Practice: Integrated Skills," consists of two written-response questions. Each response can earn as many as 3 points from each of its two scorers. So, with 6 points possible for each response, the total number of Points Possible for the two responses in this domain is 12.

Note that, in calculating scores for these three LOTE tests, there is no weighting of some scores (as there is in calculating scores for the BTLPT and LOTE Latin tests.)

In each domain, the Scaled Score provides an indication of overall performance within that domain on the same 100 to 300 scale used in reporting total-test performance.

**LOTE Latin**

Domains I through III contain only multiple-choice questions. In these domains, the number of Points Possible equals the number of scored multiple-choice questions. The number of Points Earned equals the number of those questions you answered correctly.

Domain IV consists of twelve pronunciation questions that are scored. There are three types of pronunciation questions, with four questions of each type scored. Note that a fifth question of each type is included in the test as an unscored, pretest question.

- Each of the four Word-pronunciation responses can earn up to 1 raw score point from each of its two scorers (for a total of 8 raw score points possible for the four responses).
- Each of the four Phrase-pronunciation responses can earn up to 2 raw score points from each of its two scorers (for a total of 16 raw score points possible for the four responses).
- Each of the four Sentence-pronunciation responses can earn up to 3 raw score points from each of its two scorers (for a total of 24 raw score points possible for the four responses).

The total number of raw score points possible for the twelve pronunciation questions is 48. Note that, in calculating the total test score, the raw score points earned from the pronunciation questions receive less weight than the points earned from multiple-choice questions. However, it is the raw (unweighted) points that are shown as Points Possible and Points Earned on score reports.

In each domain, the Scaled Score provides an indication of overall performance within that domain on the same 100 to 300 scale used in reporting total test performance.
How the Tests Are Scored

Multiple-Choice Questions
Multiple-choice answer sheets are scanned and scored by computers. On all TExES, ExCET and TExMaT tests, each four-choice question answered correctly is worth one raw score point. The total raw score is the number of scored questions answered correctly on the entire test.

Constructed-Response Questions
Responses that are produced by the test taker (including those that are written, typed, brailled, spoken or signed) are scored by Texas education professionals who are experts in the appropriate content areas. These individuals are carefully trained and supervised to assure that they apply standardized scoring methods in a fair and accurate manner. Additional statistical checks may be made to account for differences in difficulty across versions of a test.

The TExES English Language Arts and Reading 8–12, TExES Braille and all TExMaT tests use the same scoring model for each constructed response. This scoring model requires two scorers to independently rate your response to each question. If the two ratings disagree by more than 1 point on a 0 to 4 scale, a third scorer rates the response. For TExMaT tests with very low volumes, a consensus-scoring model (in which at least three scorers reach consensus on each score) may be used in lieu of independent double scoring. Under no circumstances does your total score depend entirely on a single scorer.

On the BTLPT and LOTE tests, each written and spoken response is independently rated on a 0 to 3 scale by two scorers. If the two ratings vary by more than 1 point, a third scorer rates the response. Under no circumstances does your total score depend entirely on a single scorer.

The TASC and TASC–ASL tests consist of a 20-minute videotaped interview. At least three scorers reach consensus on the single holistic score assigned to the entire interview. Under no circumstances does your total score depend entirely on a single scorer.

Mixed-Format Tests Consisting of Multiple-Choice and Constructed-Response Questions
Your total raw score for tests that consist of multiple-choice sections and constructed-response sections is a weighted sum of scores on all sections.

Unscored (Pretest) Test Questions
The total number of questions indicated on your score report is typically less than the total number of questions on the test. All tests that contain multiple-choice questions contain embedded multiple-choice pretest questions. These questions are not considered in calculating your scores. Pretesting allows for the evaluation of examinee responses to test questions before they are included as scored items in future versions of the test.
A Word of Caution
The adjustment for difficulty makes it possible to give the same interpretation to identical scores on different versions of the same test. For example, a score of 250 on the TExES History 8–12 test will reflect approximately the same level of knowledge, regardless of which version of the test was administered.

However, identical scores on different tests do not necessarily have the same meaning. A score of 250 on the TExES History 8–12 test, for example, does not reflect the same level of knowledge as a score of 250 on the TExES Mathematics 8–12 test.

Frequently Asked Questions About Test Scores

Q Did I pass?
A Your score report will indicate a PASSED or NOT PASSED status for the total scaled score earned on each test taken.

The passing scores shown in the score reports are the passing scores in effect, according to our records, at either the date the test was taken (test date) or at the time the score reports are produced (reporting date). The State of Texas sets the passing score.

Q How many questions do I need to get right to pass the test?
A Unfortunately, there is no way to predict this. There are several versions of each test, and each version contains different questions. The questions on one version may be slightly more or less difficult than those on another version. To make all versions of a test comparable, conversion tables adjust for difficulty among versions. There is no way to predict which version of the test you will take.

Q Do all of the questions on the test count toward my final score?
A The total number of questions indicated on your score report is typically less than the total number of questions on the test. All tests that contain multiple-choice questions or a combination of multiple-choice and constructed-response questions contain embedded multiple-choice pretest questions. These questions are not considered in calculating your scores. Pretesting allows for the collection and evaluation of examinee responses to test questions before they are included as scored items in future versions of the test.

Q Who receives a copy of my score report?
A Your test results are automatically added to your certification file and made available to TEA, SBEC and, if applicable, your recommending Texas Educator Preparation Program (college, university or alternative certification program). Your score report is for your information only; you should not submit it with your application for certification. Application for certification does not proceed automatically based upon receipt of your scores by TEA. To apply for certification, you must go to the TEA website at www.tea.state.tx.us and follow the application for certification instructions.
Q Why didn’t I receive scores for all the tests I took on a particular day?
A Some tests, particularly those including constructed-response sections, take longer to score than others.

Q Can I have my multiple-choice, essay or constructed-response test score verified?
A Yes. With the exception of the multiple-choice sections of tests taken by computer, score verification is available. This service is described in the Registration Bulletin and on the ETS TExES website at www.texas.ets.org.

Q How do I register to retake a test if I did not pass?
A In most cases, if you are approved to retake a test that you did not pass, you can register via the online registration system on the ETS TExES website at www.texas.ets.org. Consult the current Registration Bulletin and the website for test dates and registration procedures. Registration Bulletins can be downloaded from the website.

Q What should I study to improve my score?
A The best preparation for taking any Texas Educator Certification Program test is the knowledge and experience you acquired in college. The detailed information on your score report may help you identify the content categories that offer the greatest opportunity to improve your score. Test preparation manuals are available for many of the tests on the ETS TExES website at www.texas.ets.org.