

Basic Skills Assessment Requirement for All WA State Teacher Preparation Programs

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do I have to take basic skills assessment tests?

On April 24, 2019, Governor Inslee signed [HB 1621](#)—a bill designed to help admit more candidates into the teaching profession by removing the requirement of meeting a specific score on the WEST-B (Washington Educator Skills Test - Basic) exam. Under the new policy, which went into effect on **January 1, 2020**, teacher candidates must now take a basic skills assessment or approved equivalent for admission to a teacher preparation program and CTE certification. Candidates are not required to meet a specific passing score on these exams, nor do the results of these exams expire. However, CTE programs can use the results of these assessments in a diagnostic and formative way to design and provide support for teacher candidates.

2. What tests will qualify to meet the basics skills testing requirement?

Candidates must take sub-tests in reading, writing, and mathematics from one of the exams below.

- ❖ [WEST-B](#) (Reading, Math, and Writing tests)
- ❖ [ACT](#) (Reading, Math, and Writing tests)
- ❖ [Praxis Core](#) and [Praxis 1](#) (Reading, Math, and Writing tests)
- ❖ [SAT](#) (Reading, Math, and Essay tests).

Note: Not all SAT English tests include the essay writing portion. For more information, see faq #3.

If you are a current NBCT (National Board Certified Teacher) in any subject, you do not need to provide proof of having taken these exams. You must, however, provide proof of your NBCT certification. For a complete list of acceptable basic skills tests, visit [PESB's webpage for basic skills](#).

3. I am not sure if I took the essay portion of the SAT Exam, what should I do?

Your SAT test documentation should reflect if an essay portion has been taken. If you're unsure, please feel free to ask Olympic College CTE Staff. If you haven't taken it, you will need to take the WEST-B writing subtest only. You will not need to take all three of the WEST-B tests if you have taken the SAT Math and English portions. For more information on the WEST-B see faqs #6 and #7.

4. By when must I take a basic skills assessment OR submit my test scores?

Evidence of having taken a basic skills test (WEST-B, ACT, or SAT) is required for admission to Olympic College's CTE Teacher Preparation Program. Although you may take our courses, you will not be considered a teacher candidate, and, therefore, ineligible for certification until documentation has been supplied.

5. What documentation must I provide to prove that I've taken a basic skills assessment?

At this time, you may send unofficial documentation verifying that you've taken these exams to the Olympic College CTE inbox (monitored by CTE Staff): TeacherCTECert@olympic.edu.


6. I have not taken the SAT, ACT or WEST-B, which test should I take to complete the basics skills testing requirement?

For current/aspiring teachers, we strongly suggest that you take the WEST-B exam, which can be taken at the Olympic College Testing Center. Please visit the following link to register for and schedule an appointment to sit for the WEST-B exams: <https://home.pearsonvue.com/west>.

7. What is the WEST-B and what does it cost to take?

Source for the information below:

http://www.west.nesinc.com/TestView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/WA095_TestPage.html.

Format	Computer-based test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: 60 multiple-choice questions • Writing: 50 multiple-choice and 2 constructed-response questions • Mathematics: 60 multiple-choice questions
Time	CBT tutorial and nondisclosure agreement: 15 minutes Reading: 2 hours testing time Writing: 3 hours testing time Mathematics: 2 hours testing time All 3 subtests: 5 hours testing time
Test Dates	By appointment, year round. Test appointments are available on a first-come, first-served basis.
Test Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single subtest: \$75 (includes \$40 subtest fee and \$35 registration processing fee) • All 3 subtests: \$155 (includes \$120 test fee and \$35 registration processing fee)
Reference Materials Provided for this Test	Mathematics: A Mathematical Symbols, Abbreviations, and Formulas document is available on-screen during testing. Review it now  . <i>Reference materials are provided on-screen as part of your test.</i>
Prepare	View the preparation materials available for this test.

8. I have more questions regarding teacher certification options, who can I contact?

For questions regarding teacher certification options, individuals must contact the WA Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Certification Office at cert@k12.wa.us or (360) 725-6400.

9. I have more questions regarding the Olympic College CTE Program, who can I contact?

Please contact the OC CTE Staff at TeacherCTECert@olympic.edu.

10. I have questions regarding this legislative change, who can I contact?

For questions regarding this legislative change, please contact the State of WA Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) at pesb@k12.wa.us.