

## Frequently Asked Questions Related to End of Course Assessments

**Question 1: What was the Theory of Action in developing the End of Course (EOC) assessments, or to what purpose do the EoC assessments serve?**

**Answer 1:** The Theory of Action underscores that EOC assessments should be developed in a manner that *allows New Mexico educators to make curricular decisions that improve achievement outcomes for students.*

The EoC assessment results are used to: establish a measure of teacher effectiveness; create common measures for course contact; and to determine if a student has met the requirements for graduation through an alternate demonstration of competency (ADC). The EOC Theory of Action can be found in Appendix A at the end of this document.

A small subset of EOCs were first developed in 2012, and the number of available EOCs have grown in number over the last six years. Since 2014, passing the EoC assessments have been the primary way in which students can demonstrate competency in social studies and writing. The EoC assessments in other subjects offer an alternative demonstration of competency (ADC) for students who do not show competency by achieving passing scores on the primary assessments for reading, math, or science, or on College and Career Readiness (CCR) indicators delineated in the ADC manual. The full ADC manual can be found at the link:

[https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018-2019-ADC-Manual\\_final.pdf](https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018-2019-ADC-Manual_final.pdf)

**Question 2: Which EoC assessments are required to be administered?**

**Answer 2:** All teachers are expected to administer EoCs for courses that are not linked to PARCC, SBA, or Istation—and for which there is an existing EOC aligned to the course. For teachers that teach courses that *are* linked to PARCC, SBA, or Istation, there is no state requirement to administer EoCs in those courses. However, the EoC may still need to be given for some high school classes for the purposes of demonstrating competency. Please refer to the course code linkage document to determine which EoCs must be administered:

[https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/EOC\\_Course\\_Assessment\\_Linkages\\_SY1819.xlsx](https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/EOC_Course_Assessment_Linkages_SY1819.xlsx)

\*Please refer to question #30 for courses given to students in multiple school years (e.g., music, physical education).

**Question 3: What EoC assessments do students have to pass for graduation?**

**Answer 3:** For the most current requirements, please refer to the most recent PED Graduation Requirements by cohort and Checklist found at the following link:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/college-career-readiness/graduation/>

**Question 4: Are the EoC assessments the final exam?**

**Answer 4:** The EoC assessments may be used by classroom teachers to either replace their final exams or in addition to their final exams. All students will need to take the social studies EOCs to meet high school graduation requirements. While not all students will need to use the EoC assessments as an ADC (e.g., math, ELA) for their other classes, we recommend that they take an EOC at the completion of each course. This way, students can bank passing EoC assessment scores which they can use as ADCs should they not pass their primary reading, math, or science on

the PARCC or SBA. Grades on the EoC assessments may or may not be included in students' course grades based on teacher discretion. The state recommends that the EOC **not** be counted for more than 10-15% percent of the overall course grade. A student's EOC score should not be the sole determining factor of a final course grade.

## Question 5: When is the PED approved administration window for EoC assessments?

**Answer 5:** There are two (2) primary testing windows per year — at the end of the fall semester and at the end of the spring semester. The EoC assessments should be administered during the last (3) three weeks of the semester. Because schools are on different schedules, these testing windows may vary between districts. The windows can be found on the PED Assessment Calendar at:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-2019-Assessment-Calendar-1.pdf>

## Question 6: How does a district make a request for administering EoC assessments outside of the normal window?

**Answer 6:** Districts can request non-traditional EoC administration windows. *The Non-Traditional EoC Administration Window Waiver Form* can be found at:

<http://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Request-Form-to-Administer-EoC-Outside-Assessment-Calendar-Dates.pdf>

Students should take the EoC assessments during the testing window closest to the completion of the courses for which they are being tested. The **only students who should be tested in the fall** testing window are those on semester block schedules, those in self-paced courses, or students taking the EoC assessments (initial or retakes) from courses they previously completed.

## Question 7: What EoC assessments are currently available and how were they produced?

**Answer 7:** The current list of EoC assessments can be found at the following link:

[https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/end-of-course-exams/eoc-blueprints/.](https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/end-of-course-exams/eoc-blueprints/)

Since the summer of 2012, EoC assessments have been developed by New Mexico educators. That summer, PED worked with committees of teachers to create six EoC assessments in algebra II, biology, chemistry, integrated math III, English III, and U.S. History. There are currently 79 EOC assessments available and they have expanded to several other subject areas starting at grade 4. PED plans to continue creating EoC assessments for other course areas in the near future.

## Question 8: Can districts develop their own EOC assessments?

**Answer 8:** In 2012, PED had a policy that did allow Districts to develop their own EoC assessments based on a fixed protocol. Please note the **original** policy has been phased out and all Districts are required to utilize the state developed EoC assessments.

## Question 9: Who should administer the EoC assessments?

**Answer 9:** The EoC assessments should be administered by professionally-licensed educators and those who qualify

as Test Administrators based on 6.10.7 NMAC. They may be administered by classroom teachers in the same way final exams are administered. We understand that this might not adhere to the 25:1 ratio for standardized test administration, but it is allowed because of the class-specific nature of these assessments. For paper-based testing, EOCs should NOT be administered or graded by the students' teacher.

Directions for administration can be found on the PED's End-of-Course website:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/end-of-course-exams/>

## Question 10: How do we access the Secure EoC documents?

**Answer 10:** The EoC assessments and scoring keys are only available to District Test Coordinators (DTCs) and Charter School Test Coordinators (STCs) who have an approved CBT waiver. Once the waiver is approved, PED will provide the district with the passwords to open the requested documents.

Assessments and scoring keys, along with scoring rubrics, are available through a password protected portal on the New Mexico Exam Platform for Informing Curriculum (NMEPIC). Logins to NMEPIC are provided. DTCs can access the Repository by logging into NMEPIC at the following link: <https://www.nmepic.com/ACE/Index>

## Question 11: Are classroom teachers allowed to see the EoC assessments before administering them?

**Answer 11:** No teachers or school staff other than the DTCs and STCs are permitted to review the EoC assessments prior to their administration. These assessments are secure and should be treated in the same manner as other high-stakes assessments.

## Question 12: How do we access the answer keys to score the paper-based EoC assessments?

**Answer 12:** The EoC scoring keys for the assessments are available through password protected access on the New Mexico Exam Platform for Informing Curriculum (NMEPIC) Repository. Schools are in charge of scoring the exams according to those rubrics. Raw scores for paper & pencil administration should be reported to the PED via an upload to STARS during the upload period following the testing session.

## Question 13: Who can score the paper-based EoC assessments?

**Answer 13:** Any licensed school staff may grade the EoC assessments. A grader should be an expert in the content area, should be trained with the scoring rubric, and - if possible - should **not** be the current teacher of the students whose tests they grade. Please see the EOC Directions for Administration.

## Question 14: How do we report EoC Paper-Based Test scores to the PED?

**Answer 14:** Paper delivered EoC assessment scores are due to the PED regularly during the district reporting window via an upload into STARS. Districts submitting paper based EoC assessment results should use the EoC Submission Naming Conventions (EoC Course Assessment Linkages) posted and available for download at:

[https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/EOC\\_Course\\_Assessment\\_Linkages\\_SY1819.xlsx](https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/EOC_Course_Assessment_Linkages_SY1819.xlsx)

## Question 15: What accommodations exist for English Language Learners (ELLs)?

**Answer 15:** New Mexico’s statewide student assessment program, as codified in statute (22-2C-4E-F NMSA) and regulation (6.29.1.9M(2)(a) NMAC), allows for accommodating *eligible* ELLs by providing the assessment in the home language *of Spanish*, when approved by the Secretary. Statute and regulation allow for an ELL to take an assessment, where appropriate and available, in Spanish for up to the first three years the student has attended a U.S. school. Further, there is a waiver that can be requested annually for an additional two years for *eligible* ELL students, which must be approved the Secretary. Currently, this waiver process includes all assessments that are part of the state’s assessment program, including EoC assessments.

For more information regarding allowable ELL accommodations and waiver eligibility for Spanish language assessment accommodations, please refer to the New Mexico *Student Assessment Accommodations Manual*. The most recent version is located on NMPED’s Assessment Website under District Test Coordinators:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/assessment/district-test-coordinator/>

All other allowable accommodations in the *New Mexico Accommodations Manual* are available, including read-aloud accommodations.

## Question 16: Are there EoC assessments provided in Spanish, large print, or Braille?

**Answer 16:** Districts are responsible for producing large print and Braille EoC assessments for students who require those accommodations. Districts are allowed to provide oral or written translations in Spanish.

## Question 17: Does every student have to take an EoC assessment at the end of a course for which we offer an EoC assessment? For example, if a student passed the PARCC in Mathematics and/or English Language Arts.

**Answer 17:** If a student already has a passing score on PARCC Geometry, Algebra II, or ELA 11 or SBA Science for their junior year, the student does not need to take the EoC assessment for the purpose of alternative demonstration of competency.

## Question 18: How often can students retake an EoC assessment?

**Answer 18:** Following the rules outlined in the ADC manual, students have two chances to pass an ADC. Therefore, for subjects assessed on the PARCC and SBA (math, reading, and science) students may take the EoC assessment as an ADC twice - once initially and once as a retake. For subjects not assessed on PARCC and SBA (social studies) students may take each EoC assessment two times—once as an initial assessment and once as a retake. Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may take all the EoC assessments one additional time and the initial test may be used to establish a cut score that defines a passing grade for that student.

## Question 19: What accommodations are available for students with disabilities (SWDs) for the EoC assessments?

**Answer 19:** A student with a disability who is receiving special education services should be offered all accommodations as provided for in the student’s IEP, as long as they are allowable accommodations as described in the *New Mexico Assessment Accommodations Manual*, including an additional testing opportunity and individualized cut scores.

**Question 20: May students use the CCR indicators to demonstrate competency in social studies and writing instead of taking an EoC assessment?**

**Answer 20:** Yes, students may use the CCR indicators listed in the ADC manual as an initial demonstration of competency for social studies and writing. Students who demonstrate competency through one of these routes are not required to take the respective EoC assessment.

**Question 21: Do the EoC assessments need to be printed and/or copied in color?**

**Answer 21:** No, the EoC assessments may be printed and copied in grayscale. Although some pictures and diagrams are in color, neither their meaning nor readability is diminished when printed in black and white.

**Question 22: May districts reuse old test booklets?**

**Answer 22:** No. Due to changes made to revise content, the EoC assessments must be printed fresh each year. District should always use the EOC labeled with the current academic year.

**Question 23: Some students take courses through a college or community college as a substitute or dual-credit for their high school credits. Do these students take the state assessments or does their college final count as the exam? What about students taking social studies courses through a college or community college?**

**Answer 23:** These students are still required take PARCC, SBA, and/or EoC assessments to demonstrate competency because we have no control over the rigor, breadth, depth, or alignment of final exams in these other courses. In fact, students must take PARCC, SBA, or EoC assessments in any course for which they receive high school credit if these assessments are needed to demonstrate competency in a particular subject.

**Question 24: Will teachers who are scoring tests receive some sort of standardized rubric training from the PED or do we develop this training in our school or district?**

**Answer 24:** Districts or schools are responsible for training teachers and staff to score the EoC assessments according to the rubrics provided by the PED.

**Question 25: Do students taking courses like distance learning have to take the EoC assessments?**

**Answer 25:** Students must take EoC assessments in any courses for which they receive high school credit if they are to be used to demonstrate competency in a particular subject.

**Question 26: How are EOC scores used for EES purposes, and specifically used to determine a teacher's VAS?**

**Answer 26:** Like all Value-Added Scores, students are placed into academic peer groups based on two prior years of performance in math and reading. There are exceptions to this at certain grade levels, but for grades 5-12, this is the constant rule. As an example, a student is taking a 10<sup>th</sup> grade World History EoC in Spring 2018. To calculate VAS, NMPED looks at his/her performance on PARCC 2017 (reading/math) and PARCC 2016 (rdg/math). Based on his/her performance on the prior year exams (their scale score translated into a z score for normalizing), the student is placed into an academic peer group (the data places them in the peer group). The peer group's performance on the World History Spring 2018 EoC is then ascertained. The average outcome of the peer group becomes the

expected performance of that student. Students that perform above the peer group exceed expectations and generate a high VAS (the further above the average score the higher the VAS). Students who do not meet the expected growth generate a negative VAS (the further below the average the greater the negative VAS).

**Questions 27:** If a school had a program (typically, courses such as art, music, keyboarding, etc.) in which there is very limited contact hours (e.g., 45 minutes of keyboarding per week, music every 2 weeks)—do those students take the EOC assessment?

**Answer 27:** Offering programs or courses of study assumes that the course has sufficient time and resources to provide all required standards for students to obtain mastery. The EoC assessment is developed as a test of achievement for the course it is linked to; thus, it is important to assess the outcomes of students in all courses. If the district does not feel that the course provides enough time for a student to achieve the required standards, then it must re-evaluate how it is scheduling. If the course is important enough to be offered, then it should be assessed. Blueprints for music, art and PE in the lower grades have fewer standards identified to be measured on the EOC. Educators who worked on the fine arts EOCs limited the standards intentionally with the understanding that instructional contact time may be minimal.

**Question 28:** It had been the state policy that those classes such as PE, ART and Music are given in one grade vs all three grades (e.g., 6<sup>th</sup> graders take art EOC, 7<sup>th</sup> graders take music EOC, etc.) so that students do not see the same EOC for 3 years in a row. Will this also be allowed at the High School level? For example, PE at high school--does a student taking 2 years of PE take the same EOC both years or could a high school simply assign all freshmen to take the PE EOC assessment alone and not administer to sophomores?

**Answer 28:** It is recommended that the assessment for PE be administered for 9<sup>th</sup> grade, as this is the traditional required grade. If a school requires it at a different grade, then that would be the appropriate grade to test.

**Question 29:** Some students who are graduating and took U.S. History last year or the year before. Are these students still expected to pass this EoC?

**Answer 29:** Students who took U.S. History in previous years must still pass an EoC in social studies to demonstrate competency in this subject.

**Question 30:** How are the EoC assessments administered?

**Answer 30:** EoC assessments are administered online through the New Mexico Exam Platform for Informing Curriculum (NMEPIC). Starting SY 2018-19, a Computer Based Testing (CBT) Waiver form will need to be submitted for administering Paper-Based Tests. For additional information and access to practice items on NMEPIC, go to: <https://www.nmepic.com/ACE/GuestUser>



## Theory of Action

### *For what purposes and uses do End of Course Assessments Serve?*

