

# Understanding Your Texas Educator Certification Program Test Scores

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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 the Texas Education Agency (TEA) by contract with Educational Testing Service (ETS). These tests include the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards™ (TExES™), 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 interpretation of scores on the various tests required for Texas educator certification.

**NOTE:** Candidates are limited to five attempts to take a certification test. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the examination and four retakes. Each testing session counts as one attempt for the 291 or 211 Core Subjects test, whether it be the overall test or an individual subject area test. The five attempts include any of the test approval methods (PACT, EPP, out of state, charter and CBE), and all attempts taken before September 1, 2015 count as one attempt. If you choose to register again for the same test after completion of the fifth testing attempt, your scores will not be counted towards certification and you will assume responsibility for test fees paid. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) implemented this change to Texas Education Code §21.048 in response to HB 2205, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015.

## 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 [tea.texas.gov](http://tea.texas.gov).

## 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. The score scales and passing scores for the TASC and TASC–ASL tests are shown in the table on page 4 of this publication.

## How Scores are Reported

Your score report is available to you via your testing account on the ETS TExES website at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org). It is recommended that you save or print a copy of your score report for your records.

Score reports may show as many as 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 the TEA, SBEC and, if applicable, your Educator Preparation Program (EPP).

### **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 test's scaled score range and the minimum passing score 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 reflects the minimum level of knowledge required for effective performance by beginning educators in Texas public schools. Further information about scoring is provided later in this publication. Summary statistics are available in the Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) section of the ETS TExES website at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org).

### **THE CORE SUBJECTS TESTS**

To earn an overall status of Passed on the Core Subjects EC–6 (291) and Core Subjects 4–8 (211) tests, each individual subject test must be passed by earning a scaled score of 240 or higher. The Core Subjects informational flyer contains detailed information about these tests, including how scores are reported for the overall tests and for their component subject tests, as well as sample score reports. You can find this flyer on the Core Subjects Tests web page, which is located under the TExES Test Preparation Resources section of the ETS TExES website at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org).

### **Performance by Domain and Competency**

For most tests, information is provided about your performance in major content areas, called domains. For many tests, information is also provided about your performance in specific content areas within domains, called competencies. For each domain, and each competency where applicable, 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/competencies do not have passing scores.

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 in the Test Preparation Resources section of 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, especially, by competency. The reliability of data based on a small number of questions, generally fewer than 10, is insufficient to make meaningful interpretations. Competency scores are provided only to show the number and variety of content areas represented in the total test and to show the number of correct answers used in calculating your total test score. 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 shown in the table below, holistic scores are provided for the constructed-response components. Each point on the holistic score scale represents the degree to which the required performance characteristics were demonstrated in your response(s).

<b>Tests for Which Holistic Scores are Provided</b>	<b>Thorough Knowledge</b>	<b>General Knowledge</b>	<b>Limited or No Knowledge</b>	<b>Unscorable*</b>
<i>TASC and TASC-ASL</i>	A (Passing)	B, C (Passing)	D, E	U

	Tests for Which Holistic Scores are Provided		Thorough Knowledge	General Knowledge	Limited or No Knowledge	Unscorable*		
TExES	Braille	Transcription Assignments	4	3	2-0	U		
	English Language Arts and Reading 7-12	Literary Analysis	8	6	4-1	U		
		Writing Assessment and Pedagogy	12, 11	10-7	6-0	U		
	Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT) Spanish	Oral Expression	Simulated Conversation	9-7.5	6-4.5	3-0	U	
			Question & Answer Part 1	9-7.5	6-4.5	3-0	U	
			Question & Answer Part 2	9-7.5	6-4.5	3-0	U	
			Oral Presentation	9-7.5	6-4.5	3-0	U	
			Support a Situation or Opinion	9-7.5	6-4.5	3-0	U	
		Written Expression	Response to Letter, Memo or E-mail	12-10	8-6	4-0	U	
			Lesson Plan	12-10	8-6	4-0	U	
			Opinion or Position Essay	12-10	8-6	4-0	U	
		Languages Other than English (LOTE) (Except Latin)	Interpersonal & Presentational Writing	Email/Memo/ Letter	6-5	4-3	2-0	U
				Opinion/Position Essay	6-5	4-3	2-0	U
	Integrated Writing			6-5	4-3	2-0	U	
	Interpersonal & Presentational Speaking		Integrated Speaking	6-5	4-3	2-0	U	
			Oral Presentation or Situation/Opinion Essay	6-5	4-3	2-0	U	
			Simulated Conversation	6-5	4-3	2-0	U	
	Instructional Practices (Pedagogy)		Lesson Plan	6-5	4-3	2-0	U	
			Essay	6-5	4-3	2-0	U	
	Languages Other than English Latin		Pronunciation Skills		48-33	32-17	16-0	U

	Tests for Which Holistic Scores are Provided		Thorough Knowledge	General Knowledge	Limited or No Knowledge	Unscorable*
TExMaT	All TExMaT tests except those below**	Essay	4	3	2, 1	U
	Master Science Teacher 4–8	Essay	4	3, 2	1	U
	Master Technology Teacher	Case Study Assignment	4	3	2, 1	U
		Performance Assessments	3	2	1	U

\* Constructed responses may be unscorable for a variety of reasons, e.g., blank, illegible, off topic.

\*\* Note that the TExMaT Master Reading Teacher test has an additional passing requirement; a minimum score of 3 on the essay component is required to achieve a passing score.

If you receive a holistic score indicating that you demonstrated Limited or No Knowledge on a constructed-response component, your score report will contain additional information regarding your performance.

- For the TExES Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT) Spanish; English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) 7–12; Languages Other Than English (LOTE) French, German, Latin and Spanish; TASC, TASC–ASL; and all TExMaT tests (with the exception of the performance-assessment components on the Master Technology Teacher test), your score report will contain analytical feedback indicating areas for improvement.
- For the two performance assessments 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/assessment.
- The TExES Braille (183) score report will show the individual score you received for each of the four transcription assignments. The new TExES Braille (283) score report will contain analytical feedback indicating areas of improvement.

## **Scoring and Score Reporting for the Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT) Spanish and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) EC–12 Tests**

Each of these tests contains both selected-response (multiple-choice) and constructed-response sections/domains. Those domains that are assessed through constructed-response questions are described in detail below. All other domains are assessed through selected-response questions. For these domains, the number of Points Possible equals the number of scored selected-response questions and the number of Points Earned equals the number of those questions that were answered correctly.

### ***BTLPT Spanish***

Domains III and IV consist of constructed-response questions. In each of these domains, the number of raw score points earned is weighted (as described in detail below) to reflect the relative contribution of constructed-response questions versus selected-response questions to the total test score.

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, for a maximum of 6 raw score points per question. The number of raw score points for each response is then weighted through multiplication by 1.5, resulting in up to 9 (weighted) Points Possible for each of the five questions and a total of 45 (weighted) Points Possible for the entire domain. For example, if your score report shows that you earned 7.5 points for a response in this domain, that response received a total of 5 raw score points from its two scorers (i.e., 2 points from one scorer and 3 from the other).

In Domain III, when the sum of the Points Earned for all five questions includes a half point, that sum is rounded up to the next whole number. For example, if you earned a total of 39.5 points for the five questions, that sum would be rounded up and your score report would show that you earned a total of 40 points for the entire domain.

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, for a maximum of 6 raw score points per question. The number of raw score points for each response is then weighted through multiplication by 2.0, resulting in up to 12 (weighted) Points Possible for each of the three questions and a total of 36 (weighted) Points Possible for the entire domain. For example, if your score report shows that you earned 10 points for a response in this domain, that response received a total of 5 raw score points from its two scorers (i.e., 2 points from one scorer and 3 from the other).

### ***LOTE French EC–12, German EC–12 and Spanish EC–12***

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 Practices (Pedagogy)” 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.

### ***LOTE Latin EC–12***

Domain IV consists of twelve Pronunciation tasks that are scored. There are three types of pronunciation tasks, with four tasks of each type that are scored. A fifth task of each type is included in the test for pretesting purposes and is not scored.

- 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 tasks of this type).
- 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 tasks of this type).
- 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 tasks of this type).

The total number of raw score points possible for the twelve pronunciation tasks is 48. In calculating the total test score, the raw score points earned from the twelve Pronunciation tasks receive less weight than the points earned from the selected-response questions. It is the raw (unweighted) points that are shown as Points Possible and Points Earned for Domain IV on score reports.

## **How the Tests Are Scored**

### ***Selected-Response (Multiple-Choice) Questions***

Selected-response answer sheets, for paper-based tests, are scanned and scored by computer. For computer-administered tests, selected-response questions are scored by the computer immediately after the test is completed. On all TExES and TExMaT tests, each selected-response question that is answered correctly earns 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 scorers are carefully trained and monitored to assure that they consistently apply standardized scoring methods in a fair and accurate manner.

For many tests, an independent double-scoring model — in which two scorers assign initial ratings to each response — is used. In this model, if the two initial ratings differ by more than an acceptable amount, typically 1 point, additional ratings are obtained.

For some tests, a consensus-scoring model — in which at least three scorers, including a scoring leader, review together each constructed response and reach consensus on its score — is used.

The TExES Braille test uses a modified double-scoring model, in which the second scorer is typically the test's scoring leader.

The TExMaT tests use an independent double-scoring model, except when extremely low volumes warrant the use of a consensus-scoring model.

The ELAR 7–12 test uses an independent double-scoring model. For the Literary Analysis constructed response, additional ratings are obtained when the initial ratings are not in exact agreement. For the Writing Assessment and Pedagogy constructed response, additional ratings are obtained only when the initial ratings differ by more than 1 point.

The BTLPT and LOTE tests use an independent double-scoring model. See more Information about the scoring of the BTLPT and LOTE tests on the preceding pages.

The TASC and TASC–ASL tests use a consensus-scoring model.

### ***Mixed-Format Tests Consisting of Selected-Response and Constructed-Response Questions***

The total raw score for tests that include both selected-response and constructed-response sections is a weighted sum of each section's raw score.

### ***Pretest Questions***

The total number of questions indicated on your score report is typically lower than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. Pretesting allows for the analysis of actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions in determining whether to include them in future versions of the test.

### **A Word of Caution**

Statistical adjustments for differences in difficulty make 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 7–12 test reflects approximately the same level of knowledge, regardless of which version of that test was administered.

Similar scores on *different* tests, however, do not necessarily have the same meaning. A score of 250 on the TExES History 7–12 test, for example, does not reflect the same level of knowledge as a score of 250 on the TExES Mathematics 7–12 test.

## Frequently Asked Questions About Test Scores

### **Q Did I pass?**

**A** Your score report will indicate a PASSED or NOT PASSED status. For more details, see “Total Test Performance” on page 2 of this publication.

### **Q How many questions do I need to get right to pass the test?**

**A** There is no way to predict the exact number of correct answers needed to pass any given test. 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. Therefore, the number of correct answers needed to pass one version of a given test might vary slightly from the number needed to pass another version.

### **Q Do all of the questions on the test count toward my score?**

**A** Most tests include pretest questions that are not scored. For more information about these questions, see “Pretest Questions” on page 8 of this publication.

### **Q What does a score of zero (0) for a constructed response on a BTLPT or LOTE test indicate?**

**A** A score of zero (0) indicates that you received no points from either of the two scorers for that response. This could be because the response fell into the Low category as defined in the pertinent scoring rubric (which can be found in the Preparation Manual for the test you took) or because the response was blank, too short, not in the target language or off topic.

### **Q Who receives my score information?**

**A** Your test results are automatically added to your certification file and made available to TEA, SBEC and, if applicable, your EPP. 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 when TEA receives your passing scores. To apply for certification, you must go to the TEA website at [tea.texas.gov](http://tea.texas.gov) 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 score reviewed?**

**A** With the exception of the selected-response sections of tests administered by computer, score review is available. This service is described in the *Registration Bulletin* and on the ETS TExES website at [www.texas.ets.org](http://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](http://www.texas.ets.org). Consult the *Registration Bulletin* and/or the website for test dates and registration procedures.

**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 acquired through training and preparation in a college, university or alternative certification program. The detailed information on your score report may help you identify the specific content areas that offer the greatest opportunity to improve your score. Free test preparation materials are available for download from the ETS TExES website at **[www.texas.ets.org/prepmaterials](http://www.texas.ets.org/prepmaterials)**. Included in these materials are a *Test at a Glance* and a preparation manual for each test. The preparation manuals include test frameworks, detailed breakdowns and descriptions of the test, sample questions with answers and rationales and test-taking strategies. Supplemental preparation materials and other resources are also listed in most preparation manuals.