



Scoring and the Exam Development Process

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To educate our candidates and stakeholders about NBEO's exam scoring process, we would like to provide insight into how our exams are scored to uphold the high standards of the optometric profession.

NBEO works tirelessly to ensure each exam sets a consistent standard that is fair to candidates and protects the interests of future patients. Prospective optometrists invest significant time, energy, and resources into their future career, and NBEO exams represent a final step to prove to licensing boards across the country that candidates are prepared.

NBEO exams are designed differently than most tests Americans take in school – they must measure whether a candidate achieved a specific level of knowledge or skill, not how they performed relative to others.

For a more in-depth look at how exam content is determined, this [video](#) will provide more information, and this [video](#) will provide an overview of the item development and review process.

Exam Forms

NBEO creates multiple versions, or forms, of each exam to maintain the integrity of the testing process. After all exams are completed, our testing professionals (also referred to as psychometricians) and our panel of experts analyze the results.

Practicing optometrists serve as subject matter experts to ensure exam questions accurately reflect the procedures, scenarios, and elements optometrists will encounter in their work.

Sometimes, different forms of a test may have slightly different levels of difficulty. To address this, the raw scores are equated and scaled to account for these differences.

NBEO does not grade on a curve or guarantee a certain number of candidates pass or fail. Anyone who meets the minimum standard will pass.

To learn more about the process for determining exam passing standards, watch this [video](#).

Equating

NBEO uses equating to ensure that a candidate's score accurately reflects their performance, regardless of the specific form of the exam they took.

Equating is a method used to adjust raw exam scores (the number of correct answers) to account for differences in difficulty across different forms of an exam. This process ensures fairness and consistency in scoring, regardless of which form of the exam a candidate takes.

For a more in-depth look at how NBEO ensures fairness for candidates when using multiple exam forms, watch this [video](#).

Score Scaling and Reporting

The final step in the exam process is to ensure candidates understand if they passed or failed the exam. Before the NBEO publishes exam scores, it converts or “scales” the scores to a scale from 100 to 900. Anything above 300 is a passing score.

Our exam processes coincide with our mission to protect the public by developing, administering, scoring, and reporting results of valid examinations that assess competency in optometry. For more information regarding the NBEO's exams, please visit our [website](#).

About NBEO — Established in 1951, NBEO is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit organization whose examinations are universally accepted for optometric licensure in the United States and accepted internationally. NBEO's mission is to protect the public by developing, administering, scoring, and reporting results of valid examinations that assess competency in optometry.