



Adult Basic Education/GED

## Frequently Asked Questions about GED Testing in Minnesota

The Official GED credential recognized by postsecondary institutions, employers and the military is from the GED Testing Service® only and cannot be taken online. Check with the state GED office (651-582-8446) or an Official GED Testing Center for more information.

### Find an Official GED Testing Center

- [View the Official GED Testing Center Directory](#)
- [Visit the Minnesota Literacy Council's Adult Literacy website](#)
- Call the Hotline at 1-800-222-1990

### I've heard the current tests will change soon. What do I need to know?

The current tests are the 2002 Series. In Minnesota, they are available in both paper and computer-based testing (CBT) versions. Paper testing is available only at Official GED Testing Centers.

The CBT Version of the 2002 Series is available only at certain Pearson Vue Testing Centers (PVTCs). [Find a Pearson Vue Testing Center](#)

Testing via computer with the 2002 Series costs more than testing on paper at most Minnesota PVTCs, and is available at only a few locations; however, more are being added. Some advantages to CBT are faster turn-around time for scores and greater availability or convenience for registering, scheduling and testing.

Registration, scheduling and payment for CBT are done online in most cases; however, the testing itself is not available using the Internet. Testers must use a computer at a Pearson Vue Testing Center. [Begin the Registration Process](#). Select "Test Takers" and follow the prompts. Be sure to mark the box labeled "Test on Computer."

## **The 2002 Series Ends December 31, 2013 For All English-based Tests**

Starting January 2, 2014, anyone who has not completed all GED tests with passing scores and the required overall point total will have to start the entire test battery over. The next series of tests will be administered using computer-based testing (CBT) only, no pencil-and-paper tests will be given after this date.

## **What About the New Test That Will Start in 2014?**

[Visit the GED Testing Service's® website](#) for information on the 2014 tests. Select “Educators” and select the “2014 GED® Test” in the menu bar near the top of the page.

## **Is Computer-Based Testing (CBT) of the GED Available in Minnesota Now?**

Yes. It is available at selected testing centers, called Pearson Vue Testing Centers (PVTCs). The CBT Version of the 2002 Test requires test takers to use the keyboard and a mouse to navigate through the test.

## **Are There Practice Tests Available for the 2002 GED Via CBT?**

Yes. In addition, there are Official Practice Tests available in paper formats. All Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs in Minnesota offer these paper practice tests **free** to registered students.

Computer-based versions of the Official Practice Tests are available online for \$10 per test or \$50 for the complete practice battery. These online tests are identical in content to the free ones available on paper from Minnesota Adult-Basic Education (ABE) programs.

[Optional Online CBT Practice Test: \\$10/test, \\$50/battery.](#) (Note free paper option above.)

There is also a practice-using-the computer tutorial available from the GED Testing Service for the 2002 GED. This tutorial gives practice in navigating the test. The content of the tutorial questions is not intended as representative of questions from the actual tests. The purpose of this tutorial is to help you practice using the computer for testing. [Practice Using the CBT 2002 Tutorial.](#)

There are many other practice materials including “practice questions” available at libraries, book stores and online. Some are high quality, but many are not. Please be a

conscientious consumer and make sure any test materials you purchase are Official GED Testing Service® materials.

## **What are the GED Tests and What Do They Cover?**

The tests of General Educational Development (GED) assess competence levels in five academic areas:

- Language Arts – Reading
- Language Arts – Writing
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

The items in each of the five test areas require the demonstration of general knowledge and thinking skills. A few ask for definitions or recall of specific factual information.

Even though the GED candidate has not completed a high school diploma program, she or he has likely obtained knowledge and skills through experiences and informal training. The GED Tests are designed to measure those skills in relation to the performance of current high school seniors on the same test instrument.

With the exception of Part II of the Language Arts – Writing test, which requires production of an essay, and 10 items on the Mathematics test, the GED test battery consists of standard multiple-choice questions. [See explanation/description of the 10 math items at the end of this answer.] Questions on each test range from easy to difficult and cover a number of aspects of each subject.

The emphases of each content area for the 2002 Series GED Tests are:

### **Language Arts Reading** – time allowed: 65 minutes

- Literary (drama, poetry, prose) 75%
- Non-fiction (prose, critical reviews and business documents) 25%

### **Language Arts Writing\*** – time allowed: 120 minutes

- Part I – sentence structure 30%
- Usage 30%
- Mechanics 25%
- Organization 15%

### **Mathematics\*\*** – time allowed: Part I - 45 minutes; Part II - 45 minutes

- Number Operations and Number Sense 20% - 30%
- Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability 20% - 30%

- Algebra, Functions, and Patterns 20% - 30%
- Measurement and Geometry 20% - 30%

**Science** – time allowed: 80 minutes

- Life Science 45%
- Physical Science 35%
- Earth and Space Science 20%

**Social Studies** – time allowed: 70 minutes

- History 40%
- Civics and Government 25%
- Economics 20%
- Geography 15%

\*The Language Arts Writing Test has two parts. The first part is a multiple-choice section asking questions about grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage, etc. You may work 75 minutes on this part. If you haven't finished with this part after 75 minutes, the examiner should instruct you to begin working on the essay. You may work 45 minutes on the essay. However, should you finish the first part early, you may begin working on the essay at that point and will be able to keep and work on both parts for as long as you need until the full 120 minutes have passed.

\*\*The Mathematics Test is also in two parts. You will have a calculator for the first part. You may have up to 45 minutes with the calculator. After 45 minutes, the calculator will be collected and you will be given Part II. You will then have up to another 45 minutes to complete Part II and do further work on Part I if you choose, but without the calculator. If you decide to start on Part II before 45 minutes have passed, you may do so but the calculator will be collected and you will not be able to get it back again.

There are also two kinds of “alternate format” questions on the math test. One requires the test taker to decide the answer and write it in boxes provided and then fill in appropriate circles for the answer. The other type requires the test taker to fill in a circle on a coordinate plane grid.

Examples and instructions are provided prior to testing or you may find them at the GED Testing Service's website in the sample questions section. [View the Math Alternate Format Question](#). Look for the section on Mathematics for examples, instructions, and information on calculator use. Calculators are provided by the Official GED Testing Center. You may not use your own. You may also select Information for **Test Takers > Prepare > Practice Makes Perfect**.

For the 2002 Series GED Math Test via CBT, there are two options for the calculator. The first is to use a virtual calculator onscreen. The second is for a test taker to bring a

calculator to the Pearson Vue Testing Center. However, it must be identical to those used for paper testing. [Go to Calculator Information to learn more.](#)

## Who is Eligible to Test?

You are eligible to test in Minnesota if you are not enrolled in high school and have not already received a high school diploma. You must also:

- Be at least 19 years of age OR be at least 16 years of age with an approved age waiver. [Download the Age Waiver Form and Instructions](#)
- A Minnesota resident (see below for exceptions).
- Have a valid, current, government-issued photo ID such as a driver's license. Other examples of acceptable ID include Minnesota Government ID, passports, U.S. Military ID, certain Tribal ID, and Mexican Consular ID.
- Pay the required testing fee.

Exceptions to residence requirement: Under certain, unusual circumstances, a non-resident may be allowed to test in Minnesota. Non-residents wishing to test in Minnesota should contact the Chief Examiner at an Official GED Testing Center in Minnesota for more information. If the Chief Examiner can't help, have her/him contact the GED Administrator for Minnesota, Jim Colwell. GED Testing Centers are available throughout Minnesota.

## May Foreign Exchange Students or Other Non-U.S. Residents Test?

Foreign exchange students are not eligible to test since they are currently enrolled in school. Once they are no longer enrolled, they may be eligible to test. Check with an Official GED Testing Center for more information. Other non-U.S. residents, such as someone in the United States on a visa, may test as long as they otherwise qualify (i.e., are residing in Minnesota, have proper ID, meet the age requirements, and can pay the fee.)

## How Should I Prepare for the GED® Tests?

### **Go to an Adult Basic Education Program and take GED Preparation Classes.**

There is no charge for classes, although a few programs charge nominal registration fees. The Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs also offer Official GED Practice Tests. These tests are approved by the GED Testing Service®. Some are about half as long as the regular tests and can give you a pretty good idea of how you likely will do on the actual tests. [Find an ABE Class near you.](#)

**Prepare using i-Pathways, Minnesota's online GED preparation program.** This instructional program helps prepare individuals online for the GED test battery. It's free;

however it's not the right "fit" for everyone. Research and experience have shown that success with this and other online learning depends upon at least these four things: reading level, computer/e-mail skills, reliable Internet access, and personal discipline.

To take advantage of this program, you must enroll through an Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program first. Your initial in-person visit will include an orientation during which you will be asked to take a reading test to determine in part if the i-Pathways program using online learning, working primarily on your own, is right for you. If you qualify, you will be connected with a licensed, skilled ABE teacher trained to guide your progress via the Internet and by e-mail. Once you are registered and enrolled, you can work from home, a public library or anywhere you can get reliable Internet access.

It is also possible to combine online work with in-class work. Your orientation will help determine the best approach for you.

Note: i-Pathways is only a GED test **preparation** program. The actual GED tests must be taken at an Official Testing Center in pencil/pen-and-paper format or at selected Pearson Vue Testing Centers via computer.

**Prepare entirely on your own.** There are countless materials available commercially at libraries, bookstores and online. The Minnesota Department of Education asks you to use caution when purchasing study help-products or services. Be especially wary of online offers for a GED or GED testing not connected to the GED Testing Service®!

**Other Preparation Resources.** [Visit the GED Testing Service website](#) for reliable testing information, sample questions and more.

## What IDs are Accepted?

You will need a valid, current, government-issued, photo ID in order to test. The ID must contain your name, date of birth, signature, address and photo, such as a driver's license, Minnesota Government ID, passport, certain tribal ID's, military ID, and Mexican Consular ID. Other forms of government-issued ID or those from a postsecondary educational institution are acceptable if they meet the description set forth above. Note: If you have an expired driver's license, you must bring in the expired license along with the completed application/receipt showing you've applied for the new one. Check with the local Chief Examiner at an Official Testing Center if you have questions about IDs.

## What Does It Cost to Test?

### For Paper-based Testing:

Paper-based fees are established by the individual Official Testing Centers. Most paper-based centers in the Twin Cities, metropolitan area currently charge between \$75 and \$140 dollars for the complete battery of tests. Most paper-based Official Testing

Centers outside the metropolitan area charge between \$50 and \$100 for the full battery. If you have to re-take part of the test, most paper-based centers charge between \$10 and \$25 for each test that is re-taken.

Check with paper-based, Official Testing Centers about partial or full scholarships that may be available. Some agencies, such as Workforce Centers, may offer assistance with GED fees for qualifying individuals.

### **For Computer-based Testing (CBT):**

The cost for the 2002 Series GED via CBT throughout Minnesota is \$120 or \$24 per test. Re-takes are also \$24 per test. In most cases, payment is made at the time of registration using a credit or debit card and/or some form of subsidy, such as a voucher.

Vouchers and other forms of subsidy are payments made by others for a part or all of a test so the cost to a test taker is less. Vouchers can be purchased by family members, agencies, charitable organizations, etc. [Read more about vouchers.](#)

## **What Happens if I Schedule a Test and Then Don't Show Up?**

Be sure to check with your paper-based Official Testing Center about cancellation procedures and any consequences.

For CBT Testing, there is a 24-hour cancellation rule or you may forfeit your fee.

The Official GED credential recognized by postsecondary institutions, employers, and the military is from the GED Testing Service® only and cannot be taken online. Check with the state GED office (651-582-8446) or an Official GED Testing Center for more information.

## **May I Just Go Take the Test?**

If you have decided you are ready to test, are eligible, have the proper ID, have an Age Waiver if required, and can pay the fee, you can contact any of the Official Test Centers to arrange for paper-based testing. Each testing center establishes its own schedule and has its own registration process. Please check with the center of your choice before showing up to test without an appointment; there may be registration or scheduling information that will be important for you to know ahead of time.

Registration, payment (in most cases) and scheduling for CBT takes place online prior to testing. **You may not just show up for CBT.**

You are not required to take more than one test at a time, but many centers allow you to take more than one test per day. Only a few centers offer enough testing time in a

single session for you to complete all of the tests in one sitting. Some offer only certain tests on certain days or times of day.

## **What is the GED Credential called in Minnesota?**

State of Minnesota GED Diploma.

## **What are the Minimum Score Requirements in Minnesota to Receive a Credential?**

There are five tests in the GED Battery. An individual must score at least 410 on each of the five, but must also score at least 2250 overall. That's an average of 450 for each test, so you could get a minimal score of 410 on one test but then would have to score a 490 or higher on another of the tests to have the average be at least 450 for the two. Five scores of 410 on each of the tests WOULD NOT result in qualifying for a credential because the overall score of 2040 (i.e., five tests X 410), is below the required overall score of 2250.

## **If I don't get a 410 on a test or need higher scores than I achieved, may I retest?**

Individuals not earning the minimum score on individual tests may re-take them using a different form of the test each time but only two re-takes of each test are allowed in a calendar year. You must take each of the five different tests once before retaking any, in most cases.

Also, in some cases a postsecondary institution or an employer requires higher scores for admission or employment than are required to receive a credential. Upon documentation of this requirement, an individual will be allowed to re-test to attempt to reach that higher score. Test takers must pay the usual fees charged for these re-takes.

## **How Am I Notified of Scores—How Long Does It Take?**

The Official Testing Center where you take your tests will notify you of your scores. Each Center has its own procedures. It usually takes 1-7 days to get a multiple-choice score and up to two weeks to get a score on the Language Arts—Writing test because it takes longer for the essay to be scored.

You will be notified of your unofficial, multiple-choice scores for the 2002 Series GED via CBT almost as soon as you have finished testing. The essay scores will take 3-5 days. All of your scores will be viewable using the account you create during registration.

## What is the Difference Between My Score and My Transcript? How Do I Get a Copy of Them?

A transcript is a record of the best scores earned for each of the GED tests you have taken. Most records of individuals who took the test in Minnesota from 1970 forward are maintained at the Minnesota Department of Education, with a majority in an electronic database. Some records from earlier than 1970 are maintained at the Minnesota Department of Education and others by local testing centers still in operation. It is recommended to begin a request for a record for a GED earned in Minnesota at the Minnesota Department of Education.

You should be able to get copies of your scores from the Official Testing Center where you took your paper-based tests, and most can provide you with a locally generated transcript or record of the scores. Many employers and postsecondary institutions will accept these.

CBT Scores will be available using the account you create at registration.

Transcripts and GED Diplomas for CBT will be issued only from the Minnesota Department of Education.

However, should you need an **official transcript** of your scores issued by the Minnesota Department of Education for an employer, a postsecondary institution, the military, or other reason, contact the Minnesota Department of Education – GED Office for an **official transcript**. There is no charge but you must use our form. [Records Request Form and Instructions](#)

## Must I Take All of The Tests in One Sitting?

No. In fact, only a few of the Official Testing Center have testing periods that would allow a person to finish all five tests in a single sitting. You may take one test at a time or several, depending on the center's schedule and your preference.

## Must I Take All of My Tests at the Same Center?

No. However, it will be very important that each new paper-based center you go to is informed about the previous testing you have done. If you re-take the exact same test during one calendar year, the re-taken test would not count. Also, any fees paid at one center may be non-refundable, so check carefully on the rules and procedures at the centers you decide to use.

CBT Testing can be scheduled at any participating Pearson Vue Testing Center.

## How Often Can I Take the Same Test Subject?

There are five individual tests in the 2002 Series GED Test Battery. You must get a minimum score of at least 410 on each test but you must also get a total score of at least 2250. If you do not get a minimum score on a particular test or you need to get higher scores on one or more tests to reach 2250, you may take each test subject up to three times in each calendar year.

If you do not obtain the necessary score(s) in that calendar year after three tries, then you must wait until the next calendar year to try again on those test(s).

## **Are Tests Available in Other Languages?**

In Minnesota, all Official Testing Centers offer the paper-based, 2002 GED tests in English. Many, but not all, centers also offer the paper-based tests in Spanish, French or Braille. Check with the paper-based Official Testing Center of your choice for more information. Versions other than English may take some time for the Testing Center to obtain from the GED state office and/or from the GED Testing Service.

The 2002 Series GED via CBT is currently available only in English, but a Spanish version is being worked on.

## **What If I've Taken Some Tests using Paper and Now Want to Finish via CBT?**

Currently, if you started or start with paper, you must finish with paper and vice-versa: if you start with CBT, you must finish with CBT.

## **What If I've Taken Some Tests in Another State but Want to Finish in Minnesota?**

Only GED tests taken since the 2002 Series began may be used toward a current GED credential. If you took one or more GED tests in another state since 2002 and now reside in Minnesota, contact the testing center in the state where you took the tests and ask for an official partial transcript. Give the transcript to the personnel at a Minnesota Testing Center when you register to take the test. Provide the name of the testing center in the other state, a telephone and fax number, and an e-mail address so the center can confirm the transcript information. There is also a way for a Testing Center in Minnesota to contact the GED Testing Service directly about tests taken in states outside of Minnesota since 2002.

## **What If I Don't Know How to Contact the Testing Center in the Other State?**

Explain the situation to the testing center personnel at the Official Testing Center in Minnesota and they may be able to help you to get in touch with the other center(s). If they aren't sure how to proceed, have them contact Jim Colwell, the Minnesota GED Administrator, at 651-582- 8437. There is a way for Testing Centers in Minnesota to contact the GED Testing Service directly about tests taken in other states since 2002.

## **Can a Non-Resident from a Bordering State Test in Minnesota?**

Under certain unusual circumstances, a non-resident may be allowed to test in Minnesota. Contact the Chief Examiner at a Minnesota Official Testing Center to see if you are eligible.

## **Are There Any Other Resources that May Be Helpful to Me?**

The GED Testing Service offers an Information Bulletin in print form for the current 2002 Series. It is available from most Official Testing Centers and ABE programs. Request a copy by e-mailing [alice.smith@state.mn.us](mailto:alice.smith@state.mn.us) or call 651-582-8446.

## **Are There Provisions for Individuals with Disabilities?**

Yes. GED candidates with documented disabilities may be eligible for special testing accommodations. Available special accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Extended time.
- A private room.
- Supervised breaks.
- A scribe.
- Audiocassette version.
- Braille version.
- Use of a calculator on Part II of the Mathematics test.
- Talking calculator.

Certain request forms must be completed and submitted, and documentation must be provided, before the accommodations set forth above can be approved, allowed or used.

Additionally, there are some accommodations available that do not require forms and documentation. These include but are not limited to:

- Graph paper.
- Scratch paper.
- Straight edge.

- Ear plugs.
- Clear plastic overlays.
- Highlighters used with clear plastic overlays.
- Large print version – this must be requested in advance, but no special documentation is needed.

Eligibility for and availability of the above accommodations—those not requiring forms and documentation for paper-based testing, are at the discretion of the Official Testing Center’s Chief Examiner. Be sure to check with her or him in advance.

## **How Do I Request Testing Accommodations For Paper-based Testing?**

Application forms for requesting special testing accommodations for paper-based testing are available through all Official GED Testing Centers in Minnesota. Contact the Chief Examiner for more information.

There are five categories of disabilities identified by the GED Testing Service. Each one requires a separate form and specified documentation:

1. Learning and Other Cognitive Disabilities.
2. Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.
3. Physical Disorders and Chronic Health Conditions.
4. Emotional/Psychological/Psychiatric Disabilities.
5. Intellectual Disabilities.

### [Access Information and Forms Required for Special Testing Accommodations.](#)

Each form includes information that must be completed by the Chief Examiner at an Official Testing Center. An Adult Basic Education teacher, some other advocate or a professional treating your disability also can provide help in completing the form(s).

In addition to the required form, there must be documentation provided by a “professional diagnostician” such as a medical doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist or other qualified/authorized professional. Ideally, it will contain a diagnosis of the disability and recommended accommodations with a rationale for each one.

Documentation is usually in the form of a letter or a formal report on the professional’s letterhead and must be signed and dated by the professional. Teachers or others may submit additional supporting evidence but they do not generally meet the definition of a professional diagnostician recognized by the GED Testing Service and therefore will not be accepted “alone” as the person establishing eligibility.

For approval of some special testing accommodations—especially those based on learning/cognitive disabilities and intellectual disabilities—assessments of intelligence

and/or achievement are required. The acceptable assessment instruments are listed on the application/request forms for the categories of Cognitive and Other Learning Disabilities and Intellectual Disabilities. Sometimes tests must be conducted with and without time limits.

- A limited number of state-subsidized learning disability assessments, including both intelligence and achievement tests, are available each year. Only learners enrolled in Adult Basic Education Programs in Minnesota and meeting certain criteria are eligible. Contact an ABE Program to find out more.
- Once an application for GED Testing Accommodations is complete, it is submitted BY THE CHIEF EXAMINER to the Minnesota GED Administrator for a decision. Applications can be approved in part or whole, sent back for more information, or denied. Decisions are communicated directly to the Chief Examiner via e-mail, usually within 1-3 days of receipt. All decisions made by the State GED Administrator may be appealed to the GED Testing Service. In rare cases, applications/requests for paper-based testing must be sent directly to the GED Testing Service and then initial decisions take longer.

## **How Do I Request Testing Accommodations for 2002 Series GED via CBT?**

All requests for accommodations for the 2002 Series GED via CBT will be handled by the GED Testing Service. You will receive information about the process during and after the online registration process.

## **Where Can I Get More Information?**

Contact the State GED Administrator at 651-582-8437.