



Common Questions about CBSE/CBSSA Score Report Changes

For Educators

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COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SCIENCE EXAM (CBSE) COMMON QUESTIONS

NBME's Medical School Services team explored how scores from our Comprehensive Basic Science Subject Exams could best support educator's needs to understand learner readiness for USMLE® Step 1, which will move to pass/fail reporting starting from January 26, 2022. Answers to common questions asked about our recent announcement are available below to help with the CBSE score reporting transition planned for February 23, 2022.

What is changing on the CBSE score reports?

Score Reports for Examinees

The overall, 3-digit score is being replaced by an equated percent correct score that represents the percentage of content mastered. In addition, the report will show a student's probability of passing if they take USMLE Step 1 within one week (i.e., with a similar level of knowledge as when they took CBSEs). This probability will be calculated based on a large group of examinees who tested within one week of taking Step 1 for the first time.

For each content area, the new report will include an equated percent correct score and the average equated percent correct score for a Step 1 comparison group. The boxes indicating whether content area performance was lower, the same, or higher than one's overall performance are going away.

What's not changing?

- There will still be a histogram depicting overall performance. It will show the distribution of equated percent correct scores for a national cohort, with lines indicating the student's specific score and the low-pass range for Step 1, which corresponds to performance that is above but near the passing standard.
- All content areas are staying the same. The percentage of the test comprised by each content area will continue being reported.
- The boxes indicating whether performance was lower, average, or higher in relation to a Step 1 comparison group will still be provided.

Providing an equated percent correct score for CBSEs along with a probability of passing Step 1 was a way to continue reporting a score while staying aligned with the Step 1 move to pass/fail. We heard from students that receiving an overall CBSE score was important, and we selected equated percent correct scores based on the familiarity of the 0-100 scale. Like the previous 3-digit scores, equated percent correct scores can be used to track performance over time for students who take CBSEs more than once.

The new equated percent correct scores that will be reported for each content area can help provide more detail about areas of strength and weakness, and the boxes that will continue being reported are designed to help students interpret their results as accurately as possible.

Score Reports for Schools

NEW: When the new CBSE Examinee Report is released, the Roster Report and downloadable roster file will also be updated to show total equated percent correct scores instead of 3-digit scores.

What else will change?

The School Summary Profile Report, which shows a visual summary of group-level performance using profile bands, will be discontinued.

What's not changing?

Between now and mid-April, the Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report and the Content Area Item Analysis Report (Keyword Report) will continue being provided with no changes. As a

reminder, the Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report offers a statistical summary of group-level performance. There will be no changes to the item-level information reported.

Some additional changes will be implemented in mid-April to provide educators with improved content area feedback in a more convenient format.

- The Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report will be updated and renamed to Content Area Summary Report. For each content area, it will display the average equated percent correct score and standard deviation for the current administration, the Step 1 comparison group average equated percent correct score and standard deviation, the difference in the two averages, and the percentage of items on the test that contribute to the content area (as a range).
- The downloadable roster file in MyNBMESM Services Portal will be updated to include content area equated percent correct scores for each student. A key advantage of content area equated percent correct scores is that they are comparable regardless of which CBSE form students take, supporting more accurate comparisons of content area performance over time and across groups. The content area p-values provided on the current Content Area Item Analysis Summary Report are not directly comparable across forms.

When will the new CBSE score reports be released?

The new score reports with equated percent correct scores will be released on February 23, 2022.

Will CBSEs still report a 3-digit score? If not, why are CBSEs no longer reporting a 3-digit score?

No, the 3-digit score corresponding to the USMLE Step 1 score scale will not be reported because Step 1 scores will no longer be reported. The USMLE program views the transition to Step 1 pass/fail reporting as an important first step toward facilitating broader, system-wide changes to improve the transition from undergraduate to graduate medical education. In support of this decision, reference to the USMLE Step 1 3-digit score scale will be removed from the supporting documentation of all NBME assessments. Staff worked directly with medical school faculty and students to develop alternate score reporting for CBSEs to ensure the reporting would still meet the needs of score users. We recognize that for a period of time this change may present challenges, but we will continue to do what we can to support you and other stakeholders during this transition.

Will CBSEs still report a numeric score?

CBSEs will soon provide an equated percent correct score that represents the percentage of content mastered. Equated percent correct scores are statistically adjusted to account for slight variations in exam form difficulty, so they can be used to track performance over time if your students take CBSEs more than once. In addition, the CBSE report will provide their probability of passing if they take Step 1 within one week (i.e., with a similar level of knowledge as when they took CBSEs).

Why will CBSEs still report numeric scores after Step 1 changes to pass/fail only reporting?

Ongoing market research has demonstrated that students and faculty value numeric scores on CBSE score reports, and NBME will continue to provide this information along with a probability of passing Step 1 to help gauge readiness for the examination.

Will we be able to locate our school's minimum passing score on the new equated percent correct score scale?

NBME will provide instructions on how schools can locate their minimum passing score on the new equated percent correct scale.

Will I be able to compare my students' equated percent correct scores to 3-digit scores?

You will be able to compare your students' performance on CBSEs to a range representing low passing performance on Step 1. You will also be able to compare their content area performance to the performance of a Step 1 comparison group based on content area equated percent correct scores (new) and boxes indicating whether their performance was statistically lower, about the same, or higher than the performance of the comparison group. A direct comparison of their previous 3-digit score to the new equated percent correct score scale will not be possible due to the elimination of the 3-digit scores on Step 1.

What does equated mean?

Equating is a statistical procedure that adjusts scores for slight variations in exam form difficulty so all scores are comparable regardless of which exam form is taken.

What are the benefits of an equated percent correct score?

Equated percent correct scores tell you how much of the content your students mastered using the familiar 0-100 scale so you can easily understand their performance, including areas of strength and weakness. The 3-digit scores did not provide this type of criterion-referenced information. Like the 3-digit scores, equated percent correct scores can be used to track performance over time if students take CBSEs more than once.

How does equated percent correct differ from classic percent correct?

Equated percent correct scores are statistically adjusted to account for slight variations in exam form difficulty, so they can support more accurate comparisons than unadjusted percent correct scores.

Will the new CBSE score reports provide information on my students' readiness/likelihood of passing USMLE Step 1?

Yes, the new CBSE score reports will allow you to compare their score to a range representing low passing performance on Step 1 and will also provide an estimated probability of passing Step 1 if testing within one week of their CBSE attempt.

Will the normative information for CBSE change?

Norm tables will be provided for the existing norm groups based on equated percent correct scores instead of 3-digit scale scores.

COMPREHENSIVE BASIC SCIENCE SELF-ASSESSMENT (CBSSA)

COMMON QUESTIONS

NBME's Medical School Services team explored how scores from our Comprehensive Basic Science Self-Assessments could best support your needs to gauge learner readiness for USMLE® Step 1, which will move to pass/fail reporting starting from January 26, 2022. Answers to common questions asked about our recent announcement are available below to help with the CBSSA score reporting transition planned for February 23, 2022.

What is changing on the CBSSA score reports?

The overall, 3-digit score is being replaced by an equated percent correct score that represents the percentage of content mastered. In addition, the report will show a student's probability of passing if they take USMLE Step 1 within one week (i.e., with a similar level of knowledge as when they took CBSSAs). This probability will be calculated based on a large group of examinees who tested within one week of taking Step 1 for the first time.

For each content area, the new report will include an equated percent correct score and the average equated percent correct score for a Step 1 comparison group. The boxes indicating whether content area performance was lower, the same, or higher than one's overall performance are going away.

What's not changing?

- There will still be a histogram depicting overall performance. It will show the distribution of equated percent correct scores for a national cohort, with lines indicating the student's specific score and the low-pass range for Step 1, which corresponds to performance that is above but near the passing standard.
- All content areas are staying the same. The percentage of the test comprised by each content area will continue being reported.
- The boxes indicating whether performance was lower, average, or higher in relation to a Step 1 comparison group will still be provided.

Providing an equated percent correct score for CBSSAs along with a probability of passing Step 1 was a way to continue reporting a score while staying aligned with the Step 1 move to pass/fail. We heard from students that receiving an overall CBSSA score was important, and we selected equated percent correct scores based on the familiarity of the 0-100 scale. Like the previous 3-digit scores, equated percent correct scores can be used to track performance over time for students who take CBSSAs more than once.

The new equated percent correct scores that will be reported for each content area help to provide more detail about areas of strength and weakness, and the boxes that will continue being reported are intended to help students interpret their results as accurately as possible.

When will the new CBSSA score reports be released?

The new score reports with equated percent correct scores will be released on February 23, 2022.

Will CBSSAs still report a 3-digit score? If not, why are CBSSAs no longer reporting a 3-digit score?

No, the 3-digit score corresponding to the USMLE Step 1 score scale will not be reported because Step 1 scores will no longer be reported. The USMLE program views the transition to Step 1 pass/fail score reporting as an important first step toward facilitating broader, system-wide changes to improve the transition from undergraduate to graduate medical education. In support of this decision, reference to the USMLE Step 1 3-digit score scale will be removed from the supporting documentation of all NBME assessments. Staff worked directly with medical school faculty and students to develop alternate score

reporting for CBSSAs to ensure the reporting would still meet the needs of score users. We recognize that for a period of time this change may present challenges, but we will continue to do what we can to support you and other stakeholders during this transition.

Will CBSSAs still report a numeric score?

CBSSAs will soon provide an equated percent correct score that represents the percentage of content mastered. Equated percent correct scores are statistically adjusted to account for slight variations in exam form difficulty, so they can be used to track performance over time if your students take CBSSAs more than once. In addition, the CBSSA report will provide their probability of passing if they take Step 1 within one week (i.e., with a similar level of knowledge as when they took CBSSAs).

Why are CBSSAs still reporting numeric scores after Step 1 changes to pass/fail only reporting?

Ongoing market research has demonstrated that students and faculty value numeric scores on CBSSA score reports, and NBME will continue to provide this information along with a probability of passing Step 1 to help gauge readiness for the examination.

Will I be able to compare my students' equated percent correct scores to 3-digit scores?

You will be able to compare your students' performance on CBSSAs to a range representing low passing performance on Step 1. You will also be able to compare their content area performance to the performance of a Step 1 comparison group based on content area equated percent correct scores (new) and boxes indicating whether their performance was statistically lower, about the same, or higher than the performance of the comparison group. A direct comparison of their previous 3-digit score to the new equated percent correct score scale will not be possible due to the elimination of the 3-digit scores on Step 1.

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How does equated percent correct differ from classic percent correct?

Equated percent correct scores are statistically adjusted to account for slight variations in exam form difficulty, so they can support more accurate comparisons than unadjusted percent correct scores.

Will the new CBSSA score reports provide longitudinal feedback?

A longitudinal report will be available sometime in April 2022.

Will the new CBSSA score reports provide information on my students' readiness/likelihood of passing Step 1?

Yes, the new CBSSA score reports will allow you to compare their score to a range representing low passing performance on Step 1 and will also provide an estimated probability of passing Step 1 if testing within one week of their CBSSA attempt.