



Kentucky's High School End-of-Course Assessments: Answers to Parents' Most Frequently Asked Questions

The state of Kentucky is focused on making college and career readiness a reality for every Kentucky student. With this focus, Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) was enacted in 2009. This legislation allowed, with approval by the Kentucky Board of Education, an End-of-Course (EOC) assessment program at the high school level. ACT, Inc. will provide its *QualityCore*® Instructional Program for the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP) EOC examinations for English II, Algebra II, Biology, and U.S. History. The EOC assessments are part of Kentucky's Unbridled Learning: College/Career Readiness for All.

Q: What are End-of-Course assessments?

A: End-of-Course assessments, or EOCs, are tests given to public high school students when they complete a course to assess their knowledge of important course concepts. They are similar to a final exam, except that they are created and scored by an outside testing company, ensuring that the tests are both rigorous and aligned with state and national college readiness standards.

Q: What testing company is Kentucky using as the EOC provider?

A: ACT, Inc. has been awarded the contract to provide EOC assessments for Kentucky. The name of the EOC program is ACT *QualityCore*®. This program has been developed based on research in high-performing classrooms that focus on the essential standards for college and career readiness.

Q: Are students required to take EOC assessments at the end of every high school course? If not, which courses are assessed with EOCs?

A: No. Currently, four courses will be assessed through EOCs--English II, Algebra II, Biology and U.S. History. These courses were chosen since they are part of state graduation requirements for all students. In future years, the Kentucky Department of Education may consider adding EOC assessments for other courses.

Q: Who takes the EOC assessment?

A: Any student completing the *QualityCore*® courses shall take the state-required End-of-Course assessments. Students are tested once at the completion of **all** coursework. School staff will determine when the student is at the end of the course. Middle school students receiving high school credit must take the EOC exam.

Q: When do students take the EOC assessment?

A: If a student is enrolled in one of the four EOC assessed courses at a traditional high school, typically the EOC assessment is given during the last few weeks of their enrollment in the course. Students enrolled in online, alternative or credit-recovery programs, work with their instructor to schedule the EOC as soon as possible following completion of the course work.

Q: What is the format of the test?

A: In the state-required assessment, there are two multiple-choice sections to each test. Each section consists of 35-38 questions and is 45 minutes in length. In addition, ACT *QualityCore*® provides, through a Formative Item Pool, constructed response (essay-type) questions for school-level use, although these would be scored at the school level and not by ACT.

Q: Are the tests taken on a computer or are they paper-pencil?

A: The choice is up to each school. The multiple-choice sections can be taken either with a computer or paper-pencil. Each school decides whether to test with computer or paper-pencil based on their available resources and timelines.

Q: Will the EOC assessment take the place of a final exam?

A: It could. This decision is ultimately up to the teacher and school. It is possible that teachers may choose to give a separate final exam or additional constructed response questions in addition to the EOC to ensure that students demonstrate mastery of the entire course content, which may go above and beyond what is assessed by the EOCs.

Q: Will the material assessed on the EOC be taught in the course?

A: Yes. ACT *QualityCore*® provides instructional resources including, an *Educator's Guide*, an ACT Course Standards, a Course Description and Syllabus, a Course Outline and Instructional Unit Plan, and Test Blueprints to all Kentucky teachers. These resources can be utilized as teachers develop instructional plans to ensure that the EOC standards are incorporated in the lessons and units of study for the course.

Q: If a student is repeating a course, does he/she have to take the EOC assessment?

A: No. For state accountability purposes, students are only expected to take the four EOCs one time each throughout their high school career.

Q: If a student withdraws before successfully completing the course, does he/she have to take the EOC assessment?

A: No. The student would only take the EOC upon completion of all coursework.

Q: If a student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan, or Program Services Plan (PSP) that includes testing accommodations, are these accommodations permitted for the EOC assessment?

A: Yes. Testing accommodations listed on the student's plan and consistent with Kentucky state regulations are allowable on the EOC assessments as long as the student has been using the accommodations regularly throughout the year.

Q: Will the EOC score count in the final course grade? How much will it count?

A: Each school's School-Based Decision Making Council makes this decision. Each school will share the final decision with parents and students. The Kentucky Board of Education has recommended the EOC count 20% of the final course grade.

Q: If a student does not pass the EOC assessment, does this mean he/she will fail the course?

A: Not necessarily, but it is a possibility. Since the EOC score counts for only a portion of the student's final grade, students may do poorly on the EOC assessment and still earn a passing grade for the course if they have done well on other course work throughout the year. The EOC score may also help boost a low grade if the student performs extremely well on the EOC assessment.

Q: If a student does not score well on the EOC assessment, can he/she retake it for a better grade?

A: No. Since this is a purchased assessment that is part of our state assessment and accountability system, the exam can only be taken one time per student per course.

Q: If a student is absent on the day of a scheduled EOC assessment, will he/she be allowed to make up the test?

A: Yes. Schools schedule a window of time to complete the EOC assessments, including time for make-up tests. The state of Kentucky requires that all students who are enrolled in an EOC course take the EOC assessment, so if the student is absent, the school's Building Assessment Coordinator will contact the student about scheduling a time to make up the missed assessment.

Q: When is the schedule for the EOC assessments posted?

A: Each school determines their own schedule for administering the EOC assessments. Each school will post and communicate their EOC schedule once the schedule has been finalized.

Q: Will students still take the state KCCT or CATS tests in the spring like they have in the past?

A: No. The EOC assessments replace the former KCCT tests. Students in Grades 10 and 11 will also be required to take an on-demand writing test at the end of the school year. These on-demand writing tests, the ACT and PLAN tests, and the EOC assessments are the tests that comprise the state academic testing requirements for high school students.

Additional Resources

The following links provide additional information about End-of-Course assessments:

<http://www.act.org/qualitycore/about.html>

<http://education.ky.gov/AA/distsupp/Pages/EOC.aspx>

Questions

If you have additional questions about End-of-Course assessments, please contact your child's teacher or the Building Assessment Coordinator.