



NBME[®] National Board of Medical Examiners Subject Examination Program

Score Interpretation Guide for Students

NBME[®] Comprehensive Basic Science Examination

The enclosed Performance Report lists your Subject Test score on the Comprehensive Basic Science Examination and provides a Performance Profile to aid in self-assessment. The content covered on the Comprehensive Basic Science Examination (CBSE) is based on the United States Medical Licensing Examination[®] (USMLE[®]) Step 1. The CBSE is basically a shorter version of Step 1 that covers material that is typically learned during basic science medical education. Subject test scores are scaled so that a score of 70 on the CBSE is approximately equivalent to a score of 200 on USMLE Step 1. The vast majority of scores range from 45 to 95, and although the scores have the "look and feel" of percent-correct scores, they are not. Because the Comprehensive Basic Science Examination and Step 1 cover similar content, this scale provides a useful tool for comparing your performance with that of a large, nationally representative group taking the licensing exam at the end of the second year of medical school. Additional information about the relationship between CBSE scores and Step 1 scores is provided in the table below.

Precision of Scores

Measurement error is present on all tests, and the standard error of measurement (SEM) provides an index of the (im)precision of scores. The SEM indicates how far the score a student earns on the examination is likely to stray from his/her "true" proficiency level. The SEM is approximately 3 points for the CBSE Subject Examination scores. Using the SEM, it is possible to calculate a score interval that indicates how much a score might vary across repeated testing using different sets of items covering the same content. An interval that will encompass about two thirds of the observed scores for a given true score may be found by adding the SEM to a score and subtracting it from that score. For example, if a student's true proficiency on the Subject Examination is 60, the score he/she achieved on the examination will usually (two times out of three) fall between 57 and 63 (60 - 3 and 60 + 3).

Approximate USMLE Performance Equivalents

The table to the right provides approximate performance equivalents for USMLE Step 1, making it possible for you to translate your Subject Test score to the scale used for Step 1. *Specific information on Step 1 and the current minimum passing score is available on the web site for USMLE (<http://www.usmle.org>).*

To use the table, locate your Subject Test score in the associated column and note the entry in the column headed "Step 1 Equivalent". For example, if your score is 62, the corresponding entry of 180 indicates that your performance on the Subject Test is approximately equivalent to a Step 1 score of 180.

NOTE: This examination is not intended to predict performance on USMLE. Rather, it is intended to be used as a tool to determine your relative areas of strength and weakness in general topic areas.

Approximate Step 1 Equivalents

Score	Step 1 Equivalent	Score	Step 1 Equivalent
≥ 94	≥ 260	68	195
94	260	66	190
92	255	64	185
90	250	62	180
88	245	60	175
86	240	58	170
84	235	56	165
82	230	54	160
80	225	52	155
78	220	50	150
76	215	48	145
74	210	46	140
72	205	≤ 46	≤ 140
70	200		



Examinee Performance Profile

Comprehensive Basic Science

#000000 - Generic Medical School

ID: 000000000
Name: Student A

Test Date(s): MM/DD/YYYY
Total Scaled Score: 62

The score you received on this examination is shown above. This Performance Profile is provided to aid in self-assessment. The shaded area defines a borderline level of performance for each content area; borderline performance is comparable to a HIGH FAIL/LOW PASS on the total test of USMLE® Step 1. (See NOTE on Page 1.)

Performance bands indicate areas of relative strength and weakness. Some bands are wider than others. The width of a performance band reflects the precision of measurement: narrower bands indicate greater precision. A ◀◀◀ or ▶▶▶ symbol indicates that your performance band extends beyond the displayed portion of the scale. Small differences in the location of bands should not be over-interpreted. If two bands overlap, performance in the associated areas should be interpreted as similar. Because CBSE is designed to be integrative, many items contribute to more than one content area. Use caution when interpreting differences in performance across content areas.

Additional information about the topics covered in each content area can be found in the *USMLE Step 1 Content Description and Sample Test Materials* at www.usmle.org. An explanation of your score along with a table of approximate USMLE Step 1 performance equivalents for CBSE scores is included in the *Score Interpretation Guide for Students*.

	Lower Performance	Borderline Performance	Higher Performance
Physician Task			
Applying Foundational Science Concepts	██████████	██████████	
Diagnosis	◀◀◀		
Management		██████████	██████████
Discipline			
Behavioral Sciences		██████████	██████████
Biochemistry and Nutrition	◀◀◀		
Gross Anatomy & Embryology		██████████	██████████
Histology & Cell Biology	██████████	██████████	
Microbiology & Immunology	◀◀◀		
Pathology	◀◀◀		
Pharmacology	██████████	██████████	
Physiology		██████████	
System			
General Principles	██████████	██████████	
Blood & Lymphoreticular and Immune Systems	◀◀		
Behavioral Health and Nervous Systems/Special Senses	◀◀◀	██████████	
Musculoskeletal, Skin, & Subcutaneous Tissue	◀◀◀		
Cardiovascular System		██████████	██████████
Respiratory and Renal/Urinary Systems		██████████	██████████
Gastrointestinal System	◀◀◀	██████████	
Reproductive & Endocrine Systems		██████████	
Multisystem Processes & Disorders	◀◀◀	██████████	
Biostatistics & Epidemiology/Population Health			██████████▶▶▶