NextGen UBE Blueprint

July 2026–February 2027

Prepared by the National Conference of Bar Examiners

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This set of exam specifications covers the July 2026 and February 2027 administrations of the NextGen UBE. Any changes to the Blueprint for future exams will be published one year prior to the date that they take effect.

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Uniform Bar Examination

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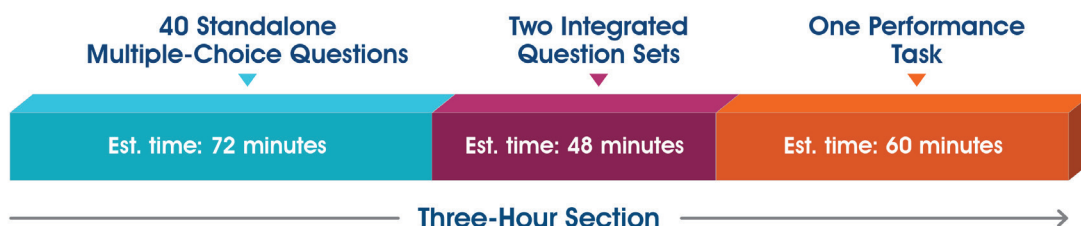/ncbexaminers
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Introduction

The NextGen Uniform Bar Examination is a summative exam, administered following completion of the examinee's legal education and prior to licensure as a practicing attorney. It is designed to assess the examinee's overall competency in the legal knowledge and skills expected of a newly licensed lawyer (defined as a lawyer within the first three years of practice). For information on the research underpinning the development of the NextGen UBE, visit the NextGen Bar Exam Research and Development website at nextgenbarexam.ncbex.org.

Exam Structure

The NextGen UBE is made up of three sections of three hours each, administered over one and a half days, with the second day occurring on the last Wednesday of February and July and the first day occurring on the Tuesday prior to that.[1] The dates for the July 2026 and February 2027 administrations are July 28–29, 2026, and February 23–24, 2027.

Tuesday

- Morning **3**-hour Section
- Afternoon **3**-hour Section

Wednesday

- Morning **3**-hour Section

Each NextGen exam section contains a combination of standalone multiple-choice questions, integrated question sets, and performance tasks. In each three-hour section, the questions will be arranged in the following order:

40 Standalone Multiple-Choice Questions	Two Integrated Question Sets	One Performance Task
Est. time: 72 minutes	Est. time: 48 minutes	Est. time: 60 minutes

Three-Hour Section

Based on research to date, the expectation is that examinees will take on average 1.8 minutes per standalone multiple-choice question; 24 minutes per integrated question set; and 60 minutes per performance task. Questions within each three-hour section may be answered in any order.

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1 Examinees receiving test accommodations should check with their jurisdictions about the schedule established for extended-time administration.

Question Types

Samples of each question type are available on the NCBE website at ncbex.org/exams/nextgen/sample-questions.

Standalone Multiple-Choice Questions	• Multiple-choice questions in two formats: Select one of four options (select-one multiple-choice questions) and select two of six options (select-two multiple-choice questions) • 40 questions per section, 120 questions total • Test eight Foundational Concepts and Principles, presented in approximately equal numbers • Some questions may test more than one of the Foundational Concepts and Principles • Questions are independent from each other; the answer for any one question does not rely on information from any other question • Expected time: approximately 1.8 minutes per question • Partial credit is available for select-two multiple-choice questions • Standalone multiple-choice questions make up 49% of the total exam score
Integrated Question Sets	• Question sets based on a common fact scenario, appearing in two formats: drafting sets and counseling sets. Drafting sets contain medium-answer questions; counseling sets contain multiple-choice and short-answer questions • Two question sets per section, six sets total • Require examinees to demonstrate their ability to use Foundational Skills in realistic situations, completing tasks that a beginning lawyer should be able to accomplish • May feature areas of doctrinal law, with accompanying legal resources, not included in the Foundational Concepts and Principles[2] • May test more than one of the Foundational Concepts and Principles and/or non-Foundational area of doctrinal law; the Foundational Concepts and Principles are not equally distributed among the integrated question sets • May include legal resources (e.g., excerpts of statutes or judicial opinions) and/or supplemental documents (e.g., a police report or excerpt from a deposition)

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2   An explanation of these other areas of doctrinal law is found in the Exam Content section.

Question Types *continued*

Integrated Question Sets *continued*

- Expected time: approximately 24 minutes per question set
- Partial credit is available for short- and medium-answer responses and for select-two multiple-choice questions
- Integrated question sets make up 21% of the total exam score

Performance Tasks

- Performance tasks in two formats: standard performance tasks focus on a single longer writing assignment; legal research performance tasks include several multiple-choice and short-answer questions followed by a medium-answer writing assignment
- One performance task per section, three tasks total
- Require examinees to demonstrate their ability to use Foundational Skills in realistic situations, completing tasks that a beginning lawyer should be able to accomplish
- Legal resources, in the form of a case file and library, are provided within each task
- Expected time: approximately one hour per task
- Partial credit is available for short-, medium-, and longer-answer responses and for select-two multiple-choice questions
- Performance tasks make up 30% of the total exam score

Pretest Questions

- Pretest questions comprise 20 of the 120 standalone multiple-choice questions and one of the six integrated question sets[3]
- Pretest questions do not contribute to the examinee's score
- Pretest questions are not identified as such and are indistinguishable from the scored items

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3   Performance tasks are pretested independent of the live NextGen exam.

Exam Software

The NextGen UBE will be administered on examinees' own laptops using a secure testing browser. Examinees will have access to the following tools within the platform:

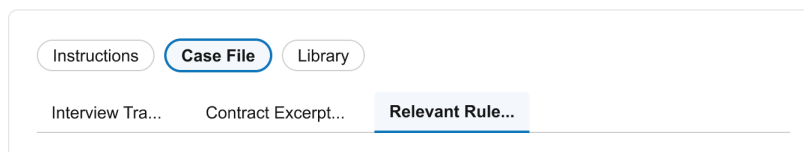| All Questions	• Section countdown timer with five-minute warning (timer may be toggled off by examinee until the five-minute warning)
	• Exam navigation tool, which shows which questions are answered, partially answered, unanswered, or marked for review, and provides easy navigation to each question in the section
	• Highlighting in four colors
	• Color scheme adjustment (light/dark and differing background and text colors)
	• Zoom (resize text)
	• Mark questions for review
Multiple-Choice Questions	• Answer choice strike-through
Integrated Question Sets and Performance Tasks (written responses)	• Split-screen feature that allows examinees to view question and answer at the same time; mid-screen pull bar can be used to adjust size of question and answer views
	• Notepad (text in notepad is not graded)
	• Spell check
	• Copy-paste from the provided documents to the answer fields and both copy-paste and cut-paste within and between the answer fields and notepad
	• Undo/redo
	• Bulleted and numbered lists, indent, bold, italics, underline, tab
	• Sample toolbar:

• Legal resources, including libraries and case file materials, are presented in-screen in tabbed sections

• Sample document navigation:

In addition, the following assistive technologies are supported by the secure testing browser:[4]

Built-In Tools for Test Accommodations	
	• E-reader integration
	• Voice-to-text integration

Laptop technical specifications will be provided to examinees prior to each exam administration. Before exam day, examinees must download the secure testing browser onto the laptop that they will use during the exam and complete a pre-exam tutorial.[5] The tutorial serves two functions: it confirms that laptops meet the technical specifications for the exam and familiarizes examinees with the exam features and functionalities.

Exam Content

Content scope outlines covering the following periods are available on the NCBE website at ncbex.org/exams/nextgen/content-scope. Updates to the content scope are published no later than one year before the administration in which those updates will first appear.

July 2026–February 2028

From July 2026 to February 2028, the NextGen UBE will test the following Foundational Concepts and Principles and Foundational Skills:

- **Foundational Concepts and Principles:** business associations, civil procedure, constitutional law, contract law, criminal law, evidence, real property, torts
- **Foundational Skills:** legal research, legal writing, issue spotting and analysis, investigation and evaluation, client counseling and advising, negotiation and dispute resolution, client relationship and management

Other areas of legal knowledge will also appear on the NextGen UBE to provide the context for testing one or more Foundational Skills, but examinees are not expected or required to develop a base of knowledge in those areas. For those questions, examinees will be provided with the necessary legal resources (e.g., statutes, regulations, and case law) to demonstrate the skills being tested. **From July 2026 through February 2028, family law and trusts and estates will appear in these skills-focused questions on every exam.**

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4   All test accommodations are made upon application to and grant by the individual testing jurisdiction.

5   Examinees receiving certain test accommodations requiring physical media, such as braille, will not be required to complete the pre-exam tutorial.

Starting July 2028

Starting in July 2028, the NextGen UBE will test the following Foundational Concepts and Principles and Foundational Skills:

- **Foundational Concepts and Principles:** business associations, civil procedure, constitutional law, contract law, criminal law, evidence, family law, real property, torts
- **Foundational Skills:** legal research, legal writing, issue spotting and analysis, investigation and evaluation, client counseling and advising, negotiation and dispute resolution, client relationship and management

Other areas of legal knowledge will also appear on the NextGen UBE to provide the context for testing one or more Foundational Skills, but examinees are not expected or required to develop a base of knowledge in those areas. For those questions, examinees will be provided with the necessary legal resources (e.g., statutes, regulations, and case law) to demonstrate the skills being tested.

Model Rules of Professional Conduct

Issues related to the rules of professional responsibility frequently arise in the context of certain Foundational Skills. Select Model Rules of Professional Conduct will be tested in the context of client counseling and advising, negotiation and dispute resolution, and client relationship and management. Knowledge of those rules (found on pp. 2–3 of the Content Scope Outline) will be assessed with the expectation of recalled knowledge and understanding on the part of the examinee.

Starred and Unstarred Topics

Within the content scope outlines, there are two types of topics:

Topics with a star symbol ★

Topics followed by a star symbol require an examinee to rely solely on recalled knowledge and understanding of the topic; they will be tested without provision of legal resources. **Note:** Select Model Rules of Professional Conduct are included in the starred category.

Topics without a star symbol

Topics without a star symbol may be tested with or without provision of legal resources. When these topics are tested without legal resources, the examinee is expected to rely on recalled knowledge and understanding that will enable the examinee to demonstrate recognition that the topic is at issue in the fact scenario.
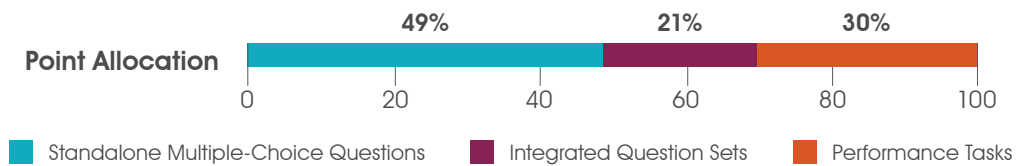
Scores and Grading

Score Scale and Point Values

Official NextGen UBE scores are reported as a single number on a scale from 500 to 750. Each jurisdiction establishes its own passing score within this range.

Standalone multiple-choice questions make up 49%, integrated question sets 21%, and performance tasks 30% of the overall exam score.

Point values for each question type are:

Standalone Multiple-Choice Questions

- Select one of four options: 0–1 points
- Select two of six options: 0–2 points
- Partial credit is available for select-two multiple-choice questions

Integrated Question Sets: Drafting Sets

- Medium-answer responses: 0–8 points
- Partial credit is available for medium-answer responses

Integrated Question Sets: Counseling Sets

- Select one of four options: 0–1 points
- Select two of six options: 0–2 points
- Short-answer responses: 0–2 points
- Partial credit is available for short-answer responses and select-two multiple-choice questions

Standard Performance Tasks

- Longer-answer responses: 0–24 points
- Partial credit is available for longer-answer responses

Legal Research Performance Tasks

- Select one of four options: 0–1 points (double weighted)[6]
- Select two of six options: 0–2 points (double weighted)
- Short-answer responses: 0–2 points (double weighted)
- Medium-answer responses: 0–8 points
- Partial credit is available for short- and medium-answer responses and for select-two multiple-choice questions

Where partial credit is available, credit is given in full-point increments.

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6 Double weighting refers to the weight of the question within the performance task as a whole. For example, one point earned on a double-weighted question will count as two points toward the total performance task score.

Scoring, Grading, and Equating

Scoring and grading of the NextGen UBE will be performed as follows:

Multiple-Choice Questions	• Scored by NCBE
Integrated Question Sets and Performance Tasks (written responses)	• Graded by jurisdiction-appointed graders on a common grading platform using detailed, uniform grading rubrics provided by NCBE • Grader training provided by NCBE • Graders assign points to each response based on guidelines provided by the grading rubrics; responses will not be graded or ranked relative to other examinees' responses • Jurisdiction graders assess written responses only from examinees within their own jurisdiction • Monitoring for grading consistency provided by jurisdiction administrators and grading leads • Responses are dual graded, with grade reconciliation performed by jurisdiction grading leads
Final Score Calculations	• All scaling and equating performed by NCBE • Final scores calculated by NCBE and reported to examinees by jurisdictions • Official NextGen UBE scores are portable • Transfer of official NextGen UBE scores performed by NCBE

Since jurisdiction rules and policies change, NCBE strongly advises consulting the jurisdiction's bar admission agency directly for the most current information on acceptance of transferred NextGen UBE scores.

Online Resources

- NextGen UBE on the NCBE website: ncbex.org/exams/nextgen
- NextGen adoption and portability information: reports.ncbex.org/comp-guide/charts/chart-17
- Content Scope outlines: ncbex.org/exams/nextgen/content-scope
- Sample questions: ncbex.org/exams/nextgen/sample-questions
- Official study aids: ncbex.org/study-aids
- NextGen research reports: nextgenbarexam.ncbex.org

Upcoming Resources

- Official Examinees' Guide to the NextGen UBE – August 2025
- Exam software tutorial – August 2025
- Sourcebooks of Law – 2025 to 2026