

Recommended Passing Score Range for the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination (NextGen UBE)

Frequently Asked Questions

The National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) has developed this Frequently Asked Questions document to accompany the release of the Guidance Brief on the Recommended Passing Score Range for the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination (NextGen UBE). The goal is to provide jurisdictions, examinees, law schools, and other stakeholders with additional background on how the recommended range was determined and what evidence supports it.

1. What does NCBE recommend?

NCBE is recommending that jurisdictions adopting the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination (NextGen UBE) consider setting their passing scores within the range of 610–620 on the new 500–750 scale. This range aligns with the current UBE passing score range of 260–270 on the 200–400 scale and permits mapping of scores achieved on the NextGen UBE to the legacy UBE passing score range.

2. Does this mean NCBE is setting a national passing score?

No. Each jurisdiction retains full authority to determine its own passing score. NCBE's role is to provide jurisdictions with evidence-based recommendations that promote fairness, consistency, and transparency as they transition to the NextGen UBE.

3. Does this mean NCBE requires jurisdictions to accept portable scores?

No. Each jurisdiction retains full authority to determine whether to accept legacy or NextGen UBE scores achieved in other jurisdictions. However, more than forty jurisdictions are already committed to score portability through use of the legacy UBE. The mapping of legacy and NextGen UBE scores will enable those jurisdictions to maintain their commitment to score portability, should they choose, as they transition from the current exam to the NextGen UBE. The mapping also provides a helpful tool for jurisdictions that have not previously offered portability to do so in the future, if they choose.

4. How did NCBE determine the 610–620 range?

NCBE triangulated multiple sources of evidence—data from the October 2024 prototype administration, psychometric scaling and concordance studies, and the May 2025 standard-setting panel—and then considered that synthesis in the context of policy considerations that are of importance to the jurisdictions.

The range was reviewed by the Passing Score Advisory Panel, the Board of Trustees, and shared with all jurisdictions for feedback.

5. Why is the recommendation expressed as a range rather than a single score?

Because jurisdictions have the authority to set their own passing standards, NCBE sought to provide a range supported by the most evidence rather than a single score. This permits jurisdictions to select a passing score along a supported range while also weighing policy considerations of importance to the jurisdiction.

6. Is this a statistical concordance?

No. This is a mapping based on multiple pieces of evidence, including—but not limited to—statistical concordance. Concordance was one important input, but NCBE also incorporated standard-setting results, prototype analyses, and policy modeling to ensure a well-rounded recommendation grounded in best practice.

7. Why didn't NCBE just use statistical concordance?

A statistical concordance provides only one view of the relationship between two exams. As a best practice, NCBE triangulated that evidence with standard-setting outcomes and policy considerations to produce a statistically based and stable recommendation. This multi-method approach is consistent with the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*, particularly given the material difference in item types on the legacy and NextGen UBE exams.

8. Why was this methodology used?

NCBE's methodology follows best practices in high-stakes testing, grounded in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*, and reviewed by external measurement experts. The approach combined quantitative evidence (scaling, concordance, reliability) with expert judgment (standard setting, policy analysis) to ensure a transparent outcome.