



Guidance Brief on the Recommended NextGen UBE Passing Score Range

Introduction

As part of its commitment to supporting jurisdictions through the transition to the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination, NCBE has established a recommended passing score range for the new exam. In addition, NCBE has developed a recommended mapping between the legacy UBE passing score range and the corresponding passing score range for NextGen. Jurisdictions will continue to establish their own passing scores.

Consistent with best practices in assessment, the recommended range is based on multiple sources of evidence: data from the 2024 prototype exam, psychometric scaling, a statistical concordance study, standard-setting outcomes, and passing rate outcome analyses.

Evidence Gathering

1. Base Scale: 500–750

Results from the multiple-choice, counseling-set, drafting-set, and performance-task items were combined—using appropriate weighting—to create overall composite scores on the NextGen UBE scale. The scale ranges from 500 to 750. The minimum and maximum points of the scale were established to accommodate future administrations without compromising the integrity of the score distribution. As with the legacy exam scale, the new base scale will ensure consistency across administrations.

2. Concordance Study

As jurisdictions prepare to transition from the current bar exam to the NextGen UBE, NCBE conducted research on examinee performance on the July 2024 bar exam and NextGen prototype exam to inform the development of a concordance between the two. This tool used data from examinees who took both exams and helped NCBE understand how performance on one exam compares to the other.

National Conference of Bar Examiners Recommended Passing Score Mapping from Legacy UBE to NextGen UBE

This recommended passing score mapping was developed by NCBE’s psychometric experts through a process that combined multiple pieces of evidence including results from statistical setting of the base scale; a concordance study; a large-scale, national, standard-setting study; and passage-rate outcome analyses.

Legacy UBE Passing Score Range	NextGen UBE Passing Score Range (Recommended)
260	610
261	611
262	612
263	613
264	614
265	615
266	616
267	617
268	618
269	619
270	620

The information in this table is for use by jurisdictions that currently participate in the legacy UBE program; other jurisdictions should reach out to NCBE with any questions about the relevance of this table to their own passing score decisions.

3. Standard-Setting Study

To support a valid standard setting process, NCBE convened a diverse panel of over 80 participants from 43 jurisdictions. Panelists received two days of training to understand the characteristics of a “minimally qualified candidate” and were given early access to the digital delivery platform to familiarize themselves with the test experience. Their judgments helped identify a passing-score range for the NextGen UBE.

4. Outcome Analysis

As jurisdictions make passing score decisions for the NextGen UBE, they may wish to understand how different passing score options could affect bar passage outcomes. NCBE conducted an outcome analysis using data from the prototype exam to model how various passing standards might influence pass rates. While prototype data will not perfectly reflect operational performance, the analysis gives jurisdictions insight into how higher or lower passing score decisions could impact candidate performance. This analysis helps support informed, evidence-based policymaking.

Passing Score Recommendation Development

To support jurisdictions in setting policy, NCBE convened a national panel of experts from across the legal and bar administration community to review the full body of evidence. This included psychometric research, prototype data, and policy considerations. The Passing Score Advisory Panel helped synthesize these inputs into a recommended passing score range that reflects professional expectations and supports a fair and evidence-based transition to the NextGen UBE. The recommended passing score range and mapping to the legacy UBE were also reviewed and approved by the NCBE Board of Trustees.



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