

High School Equivalency Exams

Options for Texans

Prior to January 1, 2014, only one test was available for students who needed a high school equivalency credential – the GED®. Today, three options are available for students who lack a high school diploma: the Pearson GED®, the HiSet and the TASC. In Texas, the *only* test available for adults who lack a high school diploma is the Pearson GED®. However, twenty (20) states have already adopted something other than or in addition to the Pearson GED® and several other states are in the process of considering the adoption of something else.

Here is some information about each test:

Pearson GED®

- Computer based, no paper/pencil version available for students (unless the student is incarcerated in prison/jail – in which case he/she is entitled to take the *old* version of the GED®, which does have a paper/pencil version)
- Has four sub-tests: Mathematical Reasoning, Science, Social Studies and Reasoning Through Language Arts
- Cost is \$33.75 per sub-test; \$135 for the entire battery of tests (which includes the state administration fee). Two free re-tests per subject are offered (students must pay the state administration fee, which is \$10 per subject).
- Registration is done online and requires a credit or debit card
- Because the test is computer based, students must have reasonable mastery of basic computer skills. We consider this to be a typing speed of 20-25 words per minute; mastery of the mouse, to include click and drag, opening multiple screens at one time, etc.
- English and Spanish versions available.
- Students must create an online “profile” at GED.com prior to taking the online practice test (“GED® Ready”) and/or registering for any of the actual GED® exams.
- Scoring of the entire test is done by a computer; results are generally available within 2-24 hours of taking the test.
- Only two versions of the Pearson GED® Ready practice tests are available for each sub-test; cost to a student to take the practice test is \$6 per subject, each time the test is taken. After taking the practice test twice, there are no other practice options available for the student.
- Pearson is a British owned company that provides assessments and other educational products worldwide.
- The passing rate for the Pearson GED® exam dropped by about 90% in Texas in the first year of the new 2014 GED® exam. In addition, the number of incarcerated students who received the GED® certificate in Texas in 2014 was *more than double* the number of adults who passed the new 2014 GED® computer based test. As of April of this year, more than 1 ½ times as many incarcerated adults have passed the old GED® exam as those who are taking the new 2014 GED® exam in our communities.
- www.ged.com

Educational Testing Service HiSet (High School Equivalency Test)

- Offers both paper/pencil and computer based versions.
- Has five sub-tests: Math, Science, Social Studies, Language Arts Reading, and Language Arts Writing
- Cost is \$50 for the full battery of tests (which includes the state administration fee); \$15 per subject for re-tests. Two free re-tests per subject are offered (students must pay the state fee, which is \$10 per subject)
- The state has the *option* of allowing students who took the old (2002) version of the GED® to combine *those* scores with scores obtained on the HiSet.
- Registration is done online and payment may be made with a credit or debit card, PayPal or GreenDot prepaid money card or via an electronic check (checking account).
- Because the test offers a paper/pencil version, students are not required to have mastery of computer skills prior to taking and passing the test.
- English and Spanish versions of the test are available.

- Students create an online account; written portions of the exam are scored by trained adults. Results of the tests that require human scoring are available within 6 days. Multiple-choice test scores are available within two days.
- Written practice tests (for all subjects) are available for instructors at low cost (less than \$50) with unlimited reproductions allowed.
- ETS is a non-profit organization with more than 65 years of experience providing large scale assessments and has recently been awarded the contract to provide K-12 assessments statewide in Texas.
- The following states/territories have adopted the HiSet: California, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, North Mariana Islands and Palau.
- The HiSet is accepted and approved by all federal education lending organizations, US Military, etc. to the same degree as the GED®
- www.hiset.ets.org

McGraw-Hill Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)

- Offers both paper/pencil and computer based versions.
- Has five sub-tests: Math, Science, Social Studies, Reading, and Writing
- Cost is \$67 for the full battery of tests (which includes the state administration fee); two free re-tests are available for test takers.
- The state has the *option* of allowing students who took the old (2002) version of the GED® to combine *those* scores with scores obtained on the TASC.
- Scheduling for the tests is done through the testing centers; payment is done at the testing center and any form of payment that the testing center(s) will take is acceptable (note: under the 2002 GED® test, some testing centers accepted money orders for those students who did not have credit/debit cards).
- Because the test offers a paper/pencil version, students are not required to have mastery of computer skills prior to taking and passing the test.
- English and Spanish versions of the test are available. Large print, audio and Braille versions are also available.
- In order to register for the TASC, students typically create an online account (TASC does allow for telephone registration, but some states do not allow this); written portions of the exam are scored by trained adults. Results of the tests that require human scoring are available within 10 days. Multiple-choice test scores are available within 3 to 24 hours.
- Written practice tests (for all subjects) are available for instructors at low cost (less than \$50) with unlimited reproductions allowed.
- McGraw-Hill is a for-profit publisher that also owns the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) which is one of the few adult ed assessment tools currently approved by the Texas Legislature for programs that are receiving state and federal funding for adult education classes.
- The following states have adopted the TASC: California, Illinois, Indiana, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Wyoming, and West Virginia.
- The TASC is accepted and approved by all federal education lending organizations, US Military, etc. to the same degree as the GED®.
- www.tasctest.com