

# Keystones

The Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments designed to assess proficiency in three subjects:

- Algebra I
- Literature
- Biology

The Keystone Exams are one component of Pennsylvania’s system of high school graduation requirements. In February of 2016, Governor Tom Wolf signed Senate Bill 880 into law which delays the graduation requirement associated with the state’s end-of-course tests, known as the Keystone Exams, for two years, until the 2019-2020 school year.

## Keystone Exam Scale Score Ranges

Content Area	BELOW BASIC	BASIC	PROFICIENT	ADVANCED
Algebra I	1200–1438	1439–1499	1500–1545	1546–1800
Biology	1200–1459	1460–1499	1500–1548	1549–1800
Literature	1200– 1443	1444–1499	1500–1583	1584–1800

## Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT)

A good way to practice for the SAT tests. Students will take the PSAT at Rustin in the fall of their sophomore and junior years. The test also serves as a qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Corporation’s scholarship programs for juniors. The PSAT measures skills in critical reading, mathematics, and writing. Check out detailed information about the PSAT, including preparing for the SAT and qualifying for scholarships.

## SAT

The SAT is a test student’s take for college admissions. The SAT measures your **ability rather than knowledge**. The 3 ¼-hour test contains three sections: writing, critical reading, and math. Most of the questions are multiple-choice. **We recommend students take the SAT during the spring of their junior year into the fall of their senior year.**

Some colleges (not all) may also require you to take an SAT Subject Test or SAT II’s. SAT Subject Tests measure your knowledge in specific subjects within five general categories: English, mathematics,

history, science, and languages. Specific subjects range from English literature to biology to Modern Hebrew. SAT Subject Tests are primarily multiple-choice, and each lasts one hour.

Both the SAT and SAT Subject Tests are offered several times a year at locations across the country. The College Board provides detailed information about the SAT and SAT Subject Tests, including information about preparing to take the test, what to take with you on test day, and understanding your scores.

## ACT

Like the SAT, the ACT is accepted by almost all colleges and universities for admissions. But instead of measuring how you think, the ACT measures what you've learned in school.

The ACT consists of four multiple-choice tests: English, reading, mathematics, and science. If your college requires a writing test, you can take the ACT Plus Writing, which includes a writing test in addition to the other four tests. These tests are offered several times a year at locations (usually high schools and colleges) across the country.

## Advanced Placement (AP) exams

You usually take AP exams after you've completed an AP course in the relevant subject at your high school. A good grade on an AP exam can qualify you for college credit and/or "advanced placement" in that subject in college. For example, if you score well on the AP English Literature exam, you may not have to take the college's required freshman-level English course. If you are interested in taking an AP class at your school, talk to your high school counselor.

Most AP exams last two to three hours, and include essay questions and possibly multiple-choice questions. The tests are offered each spring. Each test is offered only once, with a makeup day a few weeks later. Check out detailed information about AP exams, including courses and exams.

Sources: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/prepare-for-college/tests>

<https://www.pdesas.org/Page/Viewer/ViewPage/8>

[http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/Keystone\\_Exam\\_Scale\\_Score\\_Ranges.pdf](http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/Keystone_Exam_Scale_Score_Ranges.pdf)

<http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Pages/Keystone-Exams.aspx#tab-1>