

# Guidelines TAKING THE GED®TEST

International Grade 12 Equivalent





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#### Who should be thinking about taking the GED<sup>®</sup> Test?

If you are not in possession of a National Senior Certificate, commonly referred to as a Matriculation- or Matric Certificate, then this is an option for you to consider. So, whether you have failed matric, or never had the opportunity to write matric, then consider the GED<sup>®</sup> as a great alternative. It should also be considered by those who already have a matric but want to compete in the international market for working abroad.

#### What is the GED<sup>®</sup> Test?

The term "GED" is a registered trademark of the American Council on Education ("ACE"), which is part owner of the GED Testing Service, who administers the GED<sup>®</sup> Testing Programme globally. A GED<sup>®</sup> Test credential shows that you have the same general level of academic achievement as a typical high school graduate in the US.

The GED<sup>®</sup> Test is accepted as an equivalent to a high school diploma by approximately 98% of colleges and universities in the U.S. and 95% of employers because they recognise the GED<sup>®</sup> Test as a rigorous examination equal to or exceeding high school proficiency. The GED<sup>®</sup> Test is aligned to the career and college readiness content standards in use throughout the US, and the Test is standardised and normed using a national sample of recent high school graduates. Also, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education in Washington DC has reviewed the Test and determined that it meets their requirements to be granted a High School Equivalency Credential from Washington DC.

#### What do you get when passing the GED® Test?

On successful completion of the GED<sup>®</sup> Test, you will be issued a GED<sup>®</sup> High School Equivalency Credential issued by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education for Washington DC in the US. You will receive a transcript from the GED<sup>®</sup> that will list all the subjects you have completed and the scores you have obtained in each. The status of each subject will reflect whether you have passed the subject or not. There are various performance levels indicated on the transcript, but this will be explained under another section.



#### Is the GED<sup>®</sup> recognised in South Africa?

Please refer to the regulations posted on the USAf website.

#### http://mb.usaf.ac.za/united-states-of-america/

It is your responsibility to apply for the letter of admission from an appropriately accredited US university and a letter of Foreign Conditional Exemption from USAf.

There is no guarantee that you will be issued with a letter of Foreign Conditional Exemption from USAf, nor that a university will accept your application.

#### Which subjects will you be required to write?

The GED<sup>®</sup> curriculum consists of four test subjects. Each test can be scheduled and taken separately – there is no need to take all four tests in one sitting.

Tests are computer-based and include written responses that assess your thinking and writing skills, known as "constructed response" items. To ensure the GED<sup>®</sup> continues to measure the content and skills included in the current high school curriculum, the GED<sup>®</sup> Test undergoes regular review and revision.

The subjects include:

- Reasoning through Language Art
- Mathematical Reasoning
- Social Studies
- Science







# Which different question types are in the GED® Test?

The GED<sup>®</sup> Test is made up of the following types of questions:

- Multiple choice
- Drag and drop
- Hotspot (select an area)
- Fill in the blank
- Short answer
- Extended response

#### How long does it take to complete a GED<sup>®</sup> Test?

When all the subjects are added together, the GED<sup>®</sup> Test will be about seven and a half hours long, but each subject is taken separately.

The timing for each subject area is as follows:

Reasoning through Language Art				
	Section 1	35 minutes*	Tests all the content	
	Section 2	45 minutes	The Extended Response portion of the test	
Reasoning through	Student break	10 minutes		
Language Art (150 Minutes)	Section 3	60 minutes*	Tests all content	

\*The time allocated for sections 1 and 3 may vary slightly, but the total allocated time will always be 150 minutes.

In alignment with career and college readiness standards, the GED<sup>®</sup> RLA Test focuses on three essential groupings of skills:

- The ability to read closely.
- The ability to write clearly.
- The ability to edit and understand the use of standard written English in context.

The Test includes texts from both academic and workplace contexts. These texts reflect a range of complexity levels, related to ideas, structure, and style. The writing tasks, called Extended Response (ER) items, require test-takers to analyse given source texts and to use evidence drawn from the texts to support their written analysis.

25% of texts in the Test are literature texts and 75% are from informational texts (including non-fiction texts drawn from science and social studies, as well as a range of texts from workplace contexts).

Mathematical Reasoning					
X+Y <sup>2</sup> Mathematical Reasoning (115 Minutes)	Section 1 Only 45% - Quantitative problem solving 55% - Algebraic problem solving	115 minutes	Tests all content Part 1: No calculator (5 test questions) Part 2: *Calculator allowed (41 test questions)		

\*Candidates are provided with an on-screen calculator, the Texas Instruments TI-30XSMultiview Scientific calculator, for use on most of the items on the GED<sup>®</sup> Mathematics Test.

The Test assesses key science reasoning, balancing conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and the application of reasoning skills to realistic situations. Each test item is aligned to one science practice and one content topic.

The Test includes items that assess textual analysis and understanding, data representation and inference skills, as well as problem-solving with science content. Problem-solving skills are measured in both academic and workforce contexts. The Test also measures statistics and data interpretation skills.

The GED<sup>®</sup> Mathematical Reasoning Test focuses on two major content areas:

- Quantitative problem solving (45%)
- Algebraic problem solving (55%)

Procedural skill and fluency as well as problem-solving skills are assessed. Problem-solving skills are measured in both academic and workforce contexts. Approximately 30% of the Test items are aligned to a mathematical practice standard in addition to a content indicator.

Science				
Science (90 Minutes)	Section 1 Only: 40% - Life Science 40% - Physical Science 20% - Earth & Space Science	90 minutes Students are expected to manage their time and spend about 10 minutes on each of the Short Answer questions	There are two Short Answer questions included on the test, but they are not timed separately	

The Test assesses critical reasoning skills, balancing conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and the application of reasoning skills to realistic situations. Each test item is aligned to one social studies practice and one content topic.

The practices are skills that are vital to both textual and quantitative social studies reasoning. The Test also measures statistics and data interpretation skills.



# How do you apply to USAf?

#### To start the application process for Foreign Conditional Exemption, please follow these guidelines:

- 1. Ensure that you have the following documents in PDF format before moving onto the online application form:
  - Proof of Payment
  - Certified copy of your South African ID Document
  - Acceptance letter from a US University
  - GED<sup>®</sup> Credential
  - GED<sup>®</sup> Transcript
  - Complete the online form: <u>http://mbit-apply.hesa.org.za/applicant/add</u>
- 2. Ensure you select USA HIGH SCHOOL DIPL when selecting the Name/Type of certificate. There is no need to complete the section asking for the subjects.
- 3. You also need to post copies of all the documents listed under point 3 above to the following address:

Universities SA (Matriculation Board) PO Box 3854 Pretoria 0001 South Africa

Should you not receive a response email from Universities SA (USAf) within 3 working days, call 010 591 4401/2 and follow the prompts to enquire whether they have received all your documentation.

#### Where will you write the GED® Tests?

Boston City Campus & Business College VUE Testing Centres are exclusively authorised to offer the GED<sup>®</sup> Tests within South Africa. There are currently over 40 Testing Centres nationwide.

In accordance with the Immigration Act, only students who have a South African ID or Passport, a valid study permit or who have refugee status will be allowed to write the GED<sup>®</sup> Test at one of the Boston City Campus & Business College VUE Testing Centres. On arrival at the Testing Centre, you must provide one of the documents indicated above to be allowed to write the Test. Birth certificates are not accepted.

To apply for disability accommodations, you need to contact the Pearson VUE International GED<sup>®</sup> Testing Service Booking Line in the United Kingdom. You can dial this local Johannesburg number, 011 083 6433, and you will be redirected to the UK. This service is only available during UK office hours, which are 9am to 5pm (UK time).

Testing Centres are located here:

Testing Centres				
Alberton	Ladysmith	Richards Bay		
Bedfordview	Maponya Mall/Soweto	Roodepoort		
Benoni	Nelspruit	Rosebank		
Bloemfontein	Newcastle	Rustenburg		
Braamfontein	Orange Grove	Somerset West		
Cape Town	Paarl	Springs		
Durban (Central)	Pietermaritzburg	Stanger		
East London	Polokwane	Tzaneen		
George	Port Elizabeth	Umhlanga		
Germiston	Port Shepstone	Umtata		
Johannesburg (Central)	Potchefstroom	Vereeniging		
Kimberley	Pretoria Arcadia	Welkom		
Klerksdorp	Pretoria North			
Krugersdorp	Randburg			

#### What are the requirements to pass the GED® Test?

To graduate and earn the high school equivalency credential, you must pass all four subjects by earning a minimum score of 145 on each test and a total score of 580 across all four tests. Your minimum percentage to pass is therefore 72,5% in each subject.

#### What happens if you fail a GED® Test?

If you have failed your first Test, the GED<sup>®</sup> Testing Service allows for an additional opportunity to write the same subject at any time and without a delay, after which a 60-day waiting period is required between any further attempts. There is no minimum grade criterion to qualify for such a rewrite opportunity, but it will attract a testing fee. The GED<sup>®</sup> Test score report will provide you with detailed feedback to address the skills that you need to work on.

#### What happens when you have passed all four GED® Tests?

On successful completion of all four GED<sup>®</sup> Tests, you will be issued an electronic version of your GED<sup>®</sup> High School Equivalency Credential issued by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education in Washington DC in the US.



# Why is the GED® Test Credential accepted as a high school diploma or secondary leaving certificate equivalent?

The GED<sup>®</sup> Test is accepted as an equivalent to a high school diploma by approximately 98% of colleges and universities in the USA and by 95% of employers, because they recognise the GED<sup>®</sup> Test as a rigorous examination equal to or exceeding high school proficiency. The GED<sup>®</sup> Test is aligned to the career and college readiness content standards in use throughout the USA, and the Test is standardised and normed using a national sample of recent high school graduates. Also, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education in Washington DC has reviewed the Test and determined that it meets their requirements to be granted a High School Equivalency Credential from Washington DC.

### What is the GED® Test format?

The Test is completed on a computer that is connected to the Internet.

# Is there a typing speed requirement? How does this influence your GED®Test time?

There is no typing speed requirement. The time allocated is adequate to allow you to construct your answer and key in your response. Field testing has demonstrated that even test-takers with minimal keyboarding skills have sufficient time to complete the Test.

#### How difficult is the GED® Test?

The Test is aligned with today's high school standards. The difficulty level of the GED<sup>®</sup> Test is equal to that of a high school diploma or secondary leaving certificate.

## How is the GED® Test scored and what is the passing standard?

The GED<sup>®</sup> Test curriculum uses an automated scoring engine for scoring. The passing standard in each content area has been set at a score of 145 on a scale of 100 to 200 scaled score points for each of the four content areas.

## How long after completing each GED® Test will your scores be available?

Test scores will be returned within 24 hours of completion of each subject.

## How many questions will be asked in each GED® Test?

The Test forms do not specify numbers of test questions – they are based on raw score points instead, since items are not worth just one point each. The final raw score point totals are as follows:

- Reasoning through Language Art 65 raw score points
- Mathematical Reasoning 49 raw score points
- Science 40 raw score points
- Social Studies 30 raw score point

# What are the entrance requirements?

You need to:

- be at least 17 years of age when writing your test;
- be in possession of a valid South African Identity Document;
- have access to a computer or laptop with sound; and
- have internet access.

Foreign students must apply to the GED before enrolling and provide copies of passport and visa.

# What testing fees will you be required to pay?

Each Test will cost \$75, including those retests that may be required. The fees are only payable once you decide you are ready to write the Test.

#### Which procedures must you follow to book a GED® Test?

You follow the procedures on your online system to find the venue closest to you.

- Contact the Testing Centre who will make vouchers available to you so that you can proceed with your booking.
- You must produce a South African ID (Passports and Visa for foreign students) to be allowed to write the Test.
- To apply for disability accommodations you need to contact the Pearson VUE International GED Testing Service Booking Line in the United Kingdom. To assist you with this, we have setup a local Johannesburg number which redirects you to the UK number. The number is 011 083 6433.
- Testing Centres are open during office hours from 9am to 5pm (UK time).

We look forward to having you join our successful team that will assist you every step of the way.





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