

Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board Announces Scaled Scores
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The Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing Certification Board (WOCNCB) is excited to announce the transition to reporting candidate scores on a common scale, or scaled scoring. Many test candidates have expressed a desire for scaled scoring, and this development is the culmination of years of planning by the WOCNCB. This scoring mechanism will allow test candidates the ability to make comparisons from test form to test form within a program.

Certification exams for all WOCNCB programs will use scaled scores. Scaled scores are a mathematical conversion of the number of items that a candidate correctly answers so that there is a consistent scale used across all forms of a test. A relevant example is the process of converting pounds to kilograms. The weight of the object has not changed, only the units being reported.

Previously, scores were reported as the raw number of items correct. This was confusing to candidates because the standard for passing would change from test form to test form. Like most testing programs, the WOCNCB uses multiple test forms to ensure test security and to update items as changes to the profession take place. While all forms conform to the same examination specifications, the difficulty level of the forms might vary slightly due to the different questions used. In order to ensure that candidates are neither penalized nor rewarded for variations in examination difficulty, the number of items a candidate needs to answer in order to achieve a passing score fluctuates from form to form. The number of items a candidate needs to answer correctly in order to pass is determined either through a criterion-referenced standard-setting procedure or through a statistical process known as equating.

The passing standard reported for scaled scores always will remain the same. This consistency will allow for direct comparisons across different test forms. Previously, with raw passing scores, a fair comparison was not possible across the different test forms. Candidates still will be able to compare and differentiate their strengths and weaknesses.

The use of scaled scores instead of raw or percent scores is encouraged by multiple testing standards, including the accreditation standards for the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification (ABSNC), the independent organizations that accredit the CWCN, COCN, and CCCN exams. Scaled scores also are recommended by the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. Many programs, including the ACT® and SAT®, use scaled scores.

The scales for each WOCNCB exam are outlined below:

Program	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Passing Score
WTA-C	200	800	500
CWCN	200	800	500
COCN	200	800	500
CCCN	200	800	500
CFCN	200	800	500
AP-CWCN	200	800	500
AP-COCN	200	800	500
AP-CCCN	200	800	500

Scaled scores do not change individual pass or fail decisions. The pass/fail decision is always made by comparing the number of items correctly answered to the number of items required to pass the test form. The initial passing score will continue to be established using the criterion-referenced process. All test forms are built using the exam content outline. This content outline determines what candidates will be tested on, no matter which test form the candidate is given. Each test form, however, has its own passing score depending upon the form's difficulty.

The benefit of scaled scores is that candidates will be able to compare their performance to other candidates. The WOCNCB will provide information on how other test takers did on the examination. Candidates who are retaking the examination also will be able to make appropriate comparisons between different testing cycles. When scores are reported, they will continue to be broken down by content areas in the exam content outline.