



# Overview of the NLN Nursing Entrance Exam (NEX)

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## PURPOSE OF THE NEX

The NEX measures your knowledge in three fundamental academic subjects that are crucial for success in a nursing program: verbal ability, mathematical skills, and knowledge of general science. The verbal ability section assesses your word knowledge and reading comprehension. The mathematics section assesses your ability to solve basic calculations and mathematics problems through high-school Algebra I. The science section assesses your knowledge of general principles of high-school or entry-level college general biology, human anatomy and physiology, chemistry, and health.

Each nursing program uses the results from the NEX according to their admission requirements. Check with your college to learn more about their requirements.

## TEST SECTIONS

The NEX delivers 163 items across three subjects. Each subject is a section test with the following number of items: Verbal Ability – 58; Mathematics – 45; Science – 60. Each section test includes items that are being pretested for future exams. These items are **not** used to compute your scores. Refer to the test summary table which delineates the number of items, both scored and unscored, in each test section. You will not know the difference between scored and unscored items to ensure you perform your best on all items you receive on test day.

The **Verbal Ability** test measures word knowledge and reading comprehension from the 9th to 14th grade levels. The *word knowledge* sub-section contains 28 items and tests five different dimensions: affixes (prefixes, suffixes, and roots), context clues, antonyms, synonyms, and words that are easily confused. An item might require you to identify the meaning of a word used in a sentence, identify a word's synonym or synonym word pairs, or identify a word's antonym or antonym word pairs. The *reading comprehension* sub-section contains 30 items and focuses on your ability to read, analyze, and interpret material presented in six short passages. Each of the passages include five questions that assess your ability to determine the main idea and supporting details, draw conclusions,

make inferences, and apply information to new situations. You have 60 minutes to complete this section. Eight of the 58 items in this section are unscored.

The **Mathematics** test measures your ability to solve basic mathematic problems from the 6th grade through Algebra I (9th/10th grade) that are often encountered in a nursing program curriculum. The forty-five items in this section include computational and word problems that require your logic and problem-solving skills. Items cover four content areas. These include *numbers and quantity* (operations with integers, fractions, decimals, and percentages), *measurement* (converting one form of measurement to another while maintaining proportion or ratio), *algebra* (basic algebraic manipulations learned in Pre-algebra through Algebra I), and *data and information* (computing values to describe data and interpreting graphical information). You have 60 minutes to complete this section. Five of the 45 items in this section are not scored.

The **Science** test measures your knowledge of high-school or early college level sciences in five content areas: biology, human anatomy, human physiology, chemistry, and health. The 60 items in this section assess your knowledge and comprehension, your ability to apply scientific principles or processes, and your ability to interpret graphs or diagrams.

*General Biology* includes topics such as cell structure and function (including levels of organization, osmosis/diffusion, meiosis/mitosis), evolution, microbiology, ecology, plants and photosynthesis, genetics, and laboratory procedures and research. *Human Anatomy and Physiology* includes eleven key systems of the human body (cardiovascular, endocrine, gastrointestinal, integumentary, lymphatic/immune, musculoskeletal, nervous, reproductive, respiratory, urinary, and senses). *Chemistry* covers properties of matter, periodic law, chemical and physical change, chemical bonding, acids/ bases (pH), and laboratory procedures and research. *Health* focuses on individual and community/population health and includes topics such as: substance use, physical health, growth and development, mental and emotional health, prevention and safety, and the physical environment.

You have 60 minutes to complete this section. Five of the 60 items in this section are unscored.

## NEX SUMMARY TABLE

Subject	Content Areas	Number of Scored Items	Number of Unscored Items	Total Time Allotment	Percent of Total Test
<b>Verbal</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>	<b>34%</b>
	Word Knowledge	25	3		17%
	Reading Comprehension	25	5		17%
<b>Math</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>	<b>28%</b>
	Numbers & Operations	12			8%
	Measurement	14			10%
	Algebra	7			5%
	Data & Information	7			5%
<b>Science</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>	<b>38%</b>
	Biology	20			14%
	Human Anatomy	11			8%
	Human Physiology	11			8%
	Chemistry	5			3%
	Health	8			6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>145</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>180 minutes</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

\*Due to rounding, percentages may not equal 100%.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEX

You will take the NEX on a computer in a proctored environment. It is a standardized test, which means each test administration follows specific guidelines for uniformity. For example, each exam delivers the section tests in the same order (verbal, math, science), has the same number of items, allocates the same amount of time to complete the test, requires a proctor (either in a testing center or remotely), and restricts the materials allowed in the testing area. The testing platform includes a built-in calculator for the mathematics and science section tests.

Items come from an item pool, randomly selected to meet the test blueprint. Each test contains the same number of easy, medium, and hard items. The NEX is a timed test; you have 60 minutes per subject test.

## ITEM FORMAT

All test items are multiple-choice with four response options and only one correct answer. There is no penalty for guessing; therefore, it is better to make a guess than leave an item unanswered.

## SCORE REPORT

Once you complete all test sections and click on the final **submit** button, the computer will score your responses. Your score report is immediately available from the Assessment Portal on the NLN Website.