

## **4. General Educational Development - GED**

### **Program Summary**

The tests of General Educational Development (GED) tests are developed by the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education (ACE). GED tests are designed to provide an opportunity for adults who have not graduated from high school to earn a high school level educational diploma by measuring the major academic skills and knowledge associated with a high school program of study that graduating seniors should know and be able to do, with increased emphasis on workplace and higher education.

GED programs are conducted in accordance with (1) policies and procedures developed by the GED Testing Service and (2) policies and procedures established by the respective jurisdictional agency. This policy is agreed to in the original letter of agreement between the jurisdictional officer in charge of the agency that administers the GED tests and the GED Testing Program, and the annual contract between testing centers and the GED Testing Service. GED Testing Service has the authority to suspend operations in a jurisdiction or terminate the jurisdictional GED Program if violations of the annual contract are not readily resolved.

Individuals who pass the GED test are awarded a GED certificate, often called a high school equivalency certificate, which is accepted and recognized as equivalent to a high school diploma by 90% of employers (Society for Human Resource Management: 2002), and 97% of colleges and universities (College Board: 2001). The GED testing program is administered nationally by the Commission on Education Credit and Credentials of the American Council on Education. A GED examiner's manual, published by the GED Testing Service, describes policies and procedures for operating a GED testing center and administering the exam. A copy of this manual is on file with each official GED testing center within the state and is also on file at the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Office of Adult Education.

### **Federal Requirements**

See the Program Eligibility chart in the Executive Summary tab of this guidebook.

### **State Eligibility/Funding Requirements**

See the Program Eligibility chart in the Executive Summary tab of this guidebook.

### **AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

The current policies for GED testing are:

- Age Limitation: The GED tests shall not be administered to persons less than 16 years of age.
- Residence: Each jurisdiction develops its own policies to determine how long a qualified individual must reside in that jurisdiction before GED tests shall be administered.
- Educational Limitations: Only persons who do not hold a traditional high school diploma are eligible to take the GED tests. Persons who have been awarded a high school equivalency diploma or who earned scores sufficient to qualify for a high school equivalency diploma are eligible to retest under certain conditions.
- Enrollment Limitation: The GED tests shall not be administered to candidates who are enrolled in an accredited high school. Any exceptions to the policy shall be approved by GEDTS.

### **Initial Testing Policies**

Candidates taking the GED tests for the first time shall be given the opportunity to complete the entire test battery before they are retested on any of the five tests. All GED official testing centers shall order all available forms of each edition of the test that they administer during each contract year.

### **Policies for Retesting**

Retesting shall be permitted on the entire battery or on certain test(s) in the battery based on the number of standard forms available each contract year. In all cases of retesting, the Examiner shall administer a different form of the test(s).

No test form shall be designated exclusively for retesting use. Each candidate shall have the opportunity to test as many times during each contract year as there are standard test forms available that year. Specific provisions (i.e., length of time between testing events or how long partial scores are maintained) for retesting are established by the jurisdiction but are not limited to the minimum length of time that shall elapse between testing and the type of additional study (if any) required before retesting.

GED graduates who have earned a high school equivalency diploma or earned scores sufficient to qualify for a high school equivalency diploma but who need to earn higher GED test scores to meet an admission requirement for postsecondary education or training or to meet employment requirements are eligible to retake the GED tests. GED graduates who have earned a credential based on passing the Spanish-language edition of the GED tests and need to pass the English-language version to qualify for employment or postsecondary admission are also eligible to retake the GED tests.

## **Test Score Requirements**

Each jurisdiction shall meet or exceed the minimum test score requirements as established by the GED Testing Service and other qualifications for issuing a high school diploma based on the GED tests. The GED Testing Service recommends that the minimum test scores and other qualifications required for candidates who take the English-language editions of the GED tests also be used for candidates who take the French-language edition, Spanish-language edition, and special editions of the tests.

The GED Testing Service recommends that state, provincial, or territorial departments of education, or other approved jurisdictional agency shall issue a high school credential to eligible persons on the basis of the results of the tests of General Educational Development. In addition to ensuring that jurisdiction eligibility requirements have been met, states, territories, and provinces must require that at least one of the following conditions be met: (1) the candidate earns a standard score of 410 or above on each of the five tests in the battery; and (2) the candidate earns an average standard score of 450 or above on the five tests in the battery. In issuing high school credentials, jurisdictions are permitted to require standards higher than but not lower than the above.

## **Test Score Requirements in Other Languages**

The GED Testing Service recommends that the minimum test score requirements and other qualifications required for candidates who take the English-language editions of the GED tests shall also be used for candidates who take the French-language, Spanish-language, and accommodated editions of the test.

## **Reciprocity of Official Transcript of GED Tests Results**

Reports of scores achieved on the tests of GED are official only when reported by DLEG, a ministry/province, an approved jurisdictional agency, official GED testing center; the Educational Testing Service (as the repository of score reports issued by the United States Armed Forces Institute), or the GED Testing Service. Reports from all of the above shall be accepted by all participating jurisdictions.

The GED Testing Service recommends that adults who earn GED certificates be considered high school graduates for the purpose of college admissions.

## **Administering the GED Tests under Standard Conditions**

All Chief Examiners and Examiners shall administer the GED tests in strict adherence to the instructions and procedures disseminated by the GED Testing Service.

## GED Policy on Accommodations in Testing

Not all individuals can be fairly tested under standard administration of the regular print editions of the GED tests. In such cases, accommodated administration may be arranged at the request of the candidate with appropriate documentation and approval of the GED administrator or the GED Testing Service. In these instances, use of accommodated editions of the standard administration procedures shall be permitted in accordance with guidelines developed by the GED Testing Service.

### Verification of Need and Approval of Nonstandard Testing Accommodations

Any candidate wishing to take the GED tests or editions of the tests under accommodated conditions shall provide the Chief Examiner with written verification, by a certified professional, that documents how the candidate's disability substantially limits the candidate's ability to take the GED tests under standard conditions.

### Anatomy of the GED Tests

The following five subject tests cover academic knowledge and skills in core areas required in a traditional high school curriculum: ***Language Arts, Writing; Social Studies; Science; Language Arts, Reading; and Mathematics.***

The following table provides the number of questions and time limits on the GED tests.

| TEST                            | ITEMS  | TIME LIMIT |
|---------------------------------|--|------------|
| Language Arts, Writing, Part I  | 50 questions                                   | 75 minutes |
| Language Arts, Writing, Part II | Essay  | 45 minutes |
| Social Studies                  | 50 questions                                   | 70 minutes |
| Science                         | 50 questions                                   | 80 minutes |
| Language Arts, Reading          | 40 questions                                   | 65 minutes |
| Mathematics, Part I             | 25 questions with optional use of a calculator | 45 minutes |
| Mathematics, Part II            | 25 questions without a calculator              | 45 minutes |

***Except for Part II of the Language Arts, Writing Test, which requires an essay, and the Mathematics Test, which requires the girding of some answers, questions are provided in multiple-choice format. Each multiple-choice question lists five possible answer choices; test takers must select the best answer.***

## **MICHIGAN'S ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

GED tests shall be administered exclusively by an official testing center. Any school district that wishes to be considered as a designated testing center should contact DLEG's Office of Adult Education. Policies and procedure for establishing and operating a GED testing center are identified in the GED Examiner's Manual published by the American Council on Education. Testing fees may be assessed to students and the fee amount is determined by each testing center. There are no state regulations regarding GED fee maximum or minimum requirements.

In Michigan, students must achieve a minimum standard score of 410 on each test and an average standard score of 450 for all five tests (a total of 2250).

Test scores from partially completed 2002 series tests are valid until another series test is developed and put into effect. Scores are generally sent from testing center to testing center, however, statewide adult education programs can request scores for the student.

Any part of the test may be re-taken after a certain amount of time has elapsed or after a preparation course has been completed. The better of the two scores on any part of the test will be used.

GED preparation courses may count for credit. GED test scores may **not** be used for credit.

GED testing centers are authorized to issue official GED transcripts to individuals who have successfully passed the GED tests. GED testing centers are **not** authorized to issue GED certificates. Certificates are issued **exclusively** by the state and forwarded to the recipient's last known address by first class mail two to four weeks after confirmation of their passing scores.

Upon request, DLEG's Office of Adult Education will issue letters of verification of successful completion of the GED examination before a certificate is issued for any student completing all requirements.

### **Requirements for GED Preparatory Programs and Preparatory Program Progress Assessment**

See the State School Aid Act, Sec. 107 tab of this guidebook.

### **Michigan GED Testing Jurisdictional Requirements**

1. ***Title of State Credential:*** High School Equivalency Certificate (GED)

2. **Requirements for Issuance of Certificate:**

A. **Minimum Test Scores:** Effective January 2004, all editions (English, Spanish, and French) of the GED test will require a standard score of 410 on each of the five tests and an average standard score of 450 for all five tests. **Starting in 2004, any candidate who takes the entire GED test battery in Spanish or French will receive a transcript that will indicate the language in which the tests were taken. If the candidate wishes to eliminate the language-edition from the transcript, the candidate must either:**

- 1) **Pass the ESL test. The Official Transcript of GED Test Results will report the ESL test score. If a candidate is unsuccessful on the ESL test, then the candidate will receive the appropriate Spanish or French-language transcript; or**
- 2) **Pass one or more content area tests in English language.**

**Candidates who take the entire GED test battery in English are ineligible to take the ESL test.**

B. **Minimum Age:** 18 years of age and the class of which applicant would have been a member must have graduated. Individuals who are graduates of the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, National Guard Michigan Youth Challenge Program qualify for a Michigan GED certificate if they are at least 16 years of age and successfully completed all GED tests in accordance with Michigan jurisdictional score requirements.

C. **Residence:** None

D. High Schools are authorized to issue high school diplomas or high school completion certificates on the basis of the GED test to adult residents provided applicants meet the following requirement:

- 1) **Minimum Test Scores:** A standard score of 410 on each of the five tests an average standard score of 450 on all five tests.
- 2) **Minimum Age:** None. Diplomas or certificates will not be granted ahead of the time applicants would have received the credentials had they remained in school, except for Michigan Youth Challenge Program graduates.

- 3) **Residence:** Must be a former student or present resident of the school district from which the diploma or certificate of equivalency is sought. Residents in a non-high school district may apply to the high school serving the particular district.
  - 4) **Previous High School Enrollment:** The local high school may require a year or more of previous high school enrollment in addition to attaining the minimum test scores on the GED test.
3. **Minimum Age for Testing:** Individuals who are at least 16 years of age and have been out of a regular K-12 school program for one calendar year may be tested. Michigan National Guard Youth Challenge Program graduates who are at least 16 years of age and no longer enrolled in high school are eligible for testing upon completion of the program.

Applicants for induction into the U.S. Armed Forces who are age 17 may be admitted to testing, provided a written request is made by the recruiting office of any branch of the Armed Forces stating that the applicant has met all military requirements for induction except for GED test scores, and provided the request is accompanied by letter or written statement signed by the local school official stating that the individual has left school and that it would probably be in the best interest of the person to be admitted to testing and, also a letter of permission for induction from the applicant's parent or guardian is furnished.

4. **Requirements for Retesting:** Retesting is at the discretion of Chief Examiners, however, applicants are counseled to enroll in preparatory programs and it is recommended that six months should have elapsed before retesting.
5. **Method of Applying:** No State applications are required. Testing scores and applicant information is obtained directly from GED testing demographic and answer forms completed by applicants, and GED High School Equivalency certificates are mailed when applicants meet all requirements. GED testing accommodations are available for individuals with physical or learning disabilities. Further information is available at each GED testing center.
6. **Official Transcripts:** Test scores are accepted as official only when reported directly by: 1) official GED testing centers; 2) Transcript Service of the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES); and 3) the GED Testing Service.
7. **Fees:**
  - A. Testing at official GED testing centers: (Varies)

- B. Issuance of GED Certificate: (No charge)
  - C. An official report of GED test scores may be obtained from the GED testing centers.
  - D. Duplicate GED certificates are **not** issued.
8. **Testing Center Locations:** Information on the location of Michigan GED testing centers is available on the internet at: [www.michigan.gov/adulteducation](http://www.michigan.gov/adulteducation) by following the links to “General Educational Development” which is a “Quick Link” on the right side of the computer screen.
9. **GED Administrator of the GED Testing Program:**

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