

**Regents Examination and Graduation Requirements Questions  
Related to COVID-19 Closure**

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**REGENTS EXAM AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Are students exempt from Regents Examination they were planning on taking during the June 2020 test administration?**

Students who meet one of the following eligibility requirements are exempt from Regents Examinations they were planning to take in June 2020:

- The student is currently enrolled in the course of study culminating in a Regents Exam and by the scheduled date of the June 2020 Regents Examination will have earned credit in such course of study;
- The student is in grade 7, is enrolled in a course of study leading to a Regents Examination, and has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework;
- The student is currently enrolled in a course of study culminating in a Regents Examination and has failed to earn credit by the end of the school year. Such student returns for summer instruction to make up the failed course credit and is subsequently granted diploma credit in August 2020; or
- The student was previously enrolled in the course leading to an applicable Regents Examination, has achieved course credit, and has not yet passed the associated Regents Exam but was intending to take the test in June to achieve a passing score. (See FAQ #5 for more information).

**2. How will students earn credit in courses that were interrupted due to the COVID-19 closures preventing them from completing the unit of study requirements in Commissioner's Regulations?**

[Department Guidance issued March 13, 2020](#) outlined the requirements for granting diploma credit for courses interrupted by the COVID-19 closures. In the event that extended closure interferes with a school or district's ability to provide the full unit of study by the end of the school year, either in face-to-face instruction or through other methods, the student should be granted the diploma credit as long as the student has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework.

**3. In order for a student to be exempt from a June 2020 Regents examination, must the student have earned a unit of credit in the course?**

Yes, unless the student is in grade 7 and is not eligible for diploma credit. In such cases the student has to have met the standards addressed for the provided coursework, in order to be eligible for an exemption.

**4. If a student fails a course leading to a Regents examination and enrolls in a summer school make up program in summer 2020 and subsequently earns diploma credit, is s/he eligible for an exemption to such examination?**

Yes. As long as the student successfully makes up the credit in summer of 2020, the student can be considered exempt from the culminating Regents Exam.

**5. Question 1 above states that a student is eligible for an exemption if s/he “was intending to take the test in June to achieve a passing score.” How do I know if a student “intended” to take a Regents Examination?**

Schools can apply the “intended to take a Regents Examination” eligibility requirement under one of the following circumstances:

- the student informed the school that s/he wished to retake the examination; or
- the student was receiving academic intervention, supplemental instruction or tutoring of some kind in preparation to take the examination; or
- the student took the examination in June 2019, August 2019, or January 2020 in an attempt to pass or better his/her score.

**6. How will students who are granted exemptions to exams meet assessment requirements for graduation?**

Students granted an exemption from any examination are not required to pass such specific examinations to meet the assessment requirements for any diploma type (local, Regents, or Regents with advanced designation). For example, a student that was enrolled in ELA 11 and was scheduled to take the examination in June 2020, does not need to meet the ELA assessment requirement for a local, Regents, or Advanced Regents diploma.

**7. Do students need to complete 1,200 minutes of satisfactory laboratory experiences in order to be exempted from a science Regents Exam?**

No. Hands on laboratory experiences missed because of extended school closure or student absence due to COVID-19 does not preclude a student from being exempt for the corresponding Science Regents Examination.

**8. Can a district exempt a student from the locally developed Checkpoint B LOTE examination in order for students to meet the requirements of the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation?**

A district may exempt a student from the locally developed Checkpoint B examination if the student will have earned at least 3 diploma credits in the LOTE subject by the end of the 2019-20 school year.

**9. May a student who is exempted from a Regents examination due to COVID-19 be admitted to future administrations of the Regents exam?**

Yes. Schools/districts shall provide opportunities for students to attempt Regents exams in subsequent administration periods, if students so choose. If the student's educational entitlement has ended, please refer to question 35 (post-graduation section).

## **EARNING COURSE CREDIT**

**10. Can students earn credit for courses that did not meet the unit of study (180-minute/week) requirement outlined in Commissioner's Regulation 100.1(a)?**

Yes, per [Guidance #2: Additional Guidance to Schools from NYSED](#), any student who achieves the learning outcomes for a course of study should earn the applicable course/diploma credit without regard to the 180-minute/week unit of study requirement in Commissioner's Regulations Part 100.1.

Further, in the event that extended closure interferes with a school's or a district's ability to provide the full unit of study by the end of the school year, either in face-to-face instruction or through other methods, as long as the student has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework, the student shall be granted the diploma credit.

**11. Can students earn diploma credit in Languages other than English (LOTE) prior to grade 9 without successfully passing a locally developed Checkpoint A exam?**

If the principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, determines that the student has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework leading to the Checkpoint A LOTE exam, the district may choose to waive the exam requirement and grant the student their first unit of diploma credit in LOTE.

**12. Can students earn credit by examination through the Regents examination exemptions?**

No. Students cannot earn credit by examination using the exemptions due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

**13. Do Regents Examination exemptions apply to students earning diploma credit through accelerated coursework in grade 8?**

Yes. Any student in grade 8 enrolled in a course culminating in a Regents examination who has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework shall be granted an exemption from the examination and shall be granted the applicable diploma credit.

**14. Do Regents Examination exemptions apply to students in grade 7 who are taking a course culminating in a Regents exam but cannot earn diploma credit?**

Yes. A student in grade 7 enrolled in a Regents level course who has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework is eligible for an exemption of the culminating Regents Exam. While this student is not eligible for diploma credit as they are not yet in grade 8, the student is considered exempt from the assessment for the purpose of fulfilling an assessment requirement.

**15. If a district includes Regents exam scores in the calculation of the final course grade, what does the Department recommend districts use in lieu of the Regents exam score?**

The NYSED does not encourage the use of Regents Examination grades in final course grades as Regents Exam scores are scaled scores and not percentage scores typically used for course averages. [See the 2019 Edition School Administrator's Manual for Regents Examinations](#) page 32. Grading policies are determined by each local Board of Education. This includes any decisions to use Regents examination scores in final course grade calculations. Districts may need to amend local grading policies if they use Regents examination grades as part of students' final grade average.

**PATHWAYS, DEPARTMENT APPROVED ALTERNATIVE EXAMS & TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS**

**16. Can exemptions to +1 Pathway Assessments be granted?**

Yes. Any student preparing to take a +1 Pathway Assessment in June 2020 shall be granted an exemption to such assessment for the purposes of meeting diploma requirements. In order to qualify for the exemption to the graduation assessment requirement, students must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- The student is currently enrolled in the course of study leading to the +1 Pathway assessment and will have earned credit in such course of study by the end of the 2019-20 school year;
- The student was previously enrolled in the course of study leading to the +1 Pathway, has achieved the applicable course credit and has not yet passed the associated +1 Pathway assessment, but was intending to take the test in June to achieve a passing score. (See FAQ # 5 for additional information);
- The student is currently or was previously identified as an English Language Learner whose home language is one of the languages that is tested by the NYSED-approved Languages Other Than English (LOTE) +1 Pathway Assessments (Chinese, French, Italian, Korean, or Spanish), or a student who was deemed qualified by the principal in consultation with relevant faculty, and was intending to take the LOTE +1 Assessment in June 2020 to achieve a passing score; or
- A student who was deemed qualified by the principal in consultation with relevant faculty in the use of American Sign Language (ASL) and was intending to take the LOTE +1 Pathway Assessment in ASL in June 2020 to achieve a passing score.

**17. Can a student be exempt from the Department-approved CDOS assessment (CDOS, option 2)?**

An exemption from the CDOS +1 pathway assessment can be given if a determination has been made that the student has otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills outlined in the commencement level CDOS learning standards, and the student is meeting or has met the expectations of the course taken in preparation for such examination.

**18. Can a student be exempt from the graduation assessment requirement of a Department-approved alternative examination?**

All Department-approved alternative examinations are also considered +1 Pathway exams. Students can be exempt from such examination requirement if one of the following conditions have been met:

- The student is currently enrolled in the course of study culminating in a Department-Approved Alternative Exam and by the end of the 2019-20 school year will have earned credit in such course of study; or
- The student was previously enrolled in the course leading to an applicable examination, has achieved course credit, and has not yet passed the associated exam but was intending to take the test in June to achieve a passing score. (See FAQ #5 for more information).

**19. Can a student be exempt from the graduation assessment requirement for the three-part CTE Technical Assessment leading to the CTE+1 Pathway?**

Yes. Students enrolled in NYSED approved CTE programs culminating in a CTE pathway who have will have earned the applicable program credit by the end of the 2019-20 school year and intended to take the CTE +1 pathway assessment are exempt from the assessment for graduation purposes.

**20. If a student is exempt from the three-part CTE Technical Assessment for graduation purposes, will such student still get the technical endorsement on his/her diploma?**

In the case of the CTE Technical Endorsement, districts may grant an exemption of the three-part technical assessment for students scheduled to complete their technical studies and who have been successful thus far in their coursework. Consideration should be given to length of program, percent of program unfinished, and whether the student has demonstrated the technical skills and knowledge to warrant such endorsement.

Understand that the 3-part technical assessment shall be exempted for the purpose of meeting the +1 pathway to a diploma; however, districts must make an individual determination of knowledge and skill attainment in granting the Technical Endorsement.

**21. Can a student be exempt from the unfinished requirements for the CDOS credential and the CDOS +1 Pathway?**

Students who are otherwise eligible to exit from high school in the 2019-20 school year and have not met all of the requirements due to COVID-19 may be granted the CDOS Commencement Credential and fulfill the CDOS +1 Pathway, provided that the school principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, has determined that the student has otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills in the commencement level CDOS learning standards.

**22. Can a student be exempted from the CDOS credential requirements if students are continuing their high school education beyond the 2019-2020 school year?**

Students may be exempted from requirements that were missed due to COVID-19 closures; however, students must fulfill any requirements scheduled or planned for subsequent school years.

**23. Will Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) exams be administered this spring?**

AP: The College Board plans to offer an online exam that students can complete at home. If students need mobile tools and/or connectivity to review AP content and to take the exam, they can reach out directly to the College Board to [Request Student Access to Remote AP Learning and Assessments](#). Additional information on the administration of AP exams can be referenced on the [College Board's](#) website.

IB: May 2020 IB exams have been cancelled. May session students have the option to sit for the IB exams in November 2020. Additional information on the administration of IB exams can be referenced on the [International Baccalaureate Organization's](#) website.

**ADVANCED DESIGNATION & ENDORSEMENTS**

**24. Can students exempted from Regents exams still earn a Regents diploma with Advanced Designation?**

Yes. Any students who have Regents Exams exempted due to the cancellation of the June 2020 examination administration are not required to pass such Regents exams necessary for the Regents with Advanced Designation. Example: A student is scheduled to take the Algebra II Regents examination and the ELA Regents examination in June 2020. S/he have passed all other examinations necessary for the Regents with Advanced Designation. Such student will not be required to pass ELA and Algebra II but will still earn the Regents with Advanced Designation diploma.

**25. If students were unable to take a locally developed Checkpoint B exam to complete the LOTE sequence toward advanced designation, can the student be exempt from the assessment?**

The school or district may grant an exemption to the LOTE checkpoint B examination requirement for any student scheduled to take such examination in June 2020 in order to meet the requirements for an advanced diploma as long as the student will have earned at least 3 diploma credits in the LOTE subject prior to the end of the school year.

**26. Can students earn the mastery endorsement(s) in math and or science if they are exempt from a Math or Science Regents Examination needed for such endorsement.**

Yes. While no actual score would be given, students who are exempted from a math and/or a science Regents examination, and pass at least two additional Regents exams in math with scores of 85 or above or 2 additional Regents Exams in Science with an 85 or above would be entitled to a mastery in math and/or science on their diploma.

Example 1: A student has taken Algebra I and earned a 90, Geometry and earned an 87 and received an exemption to the Algebra II Regents Exam. This student has 2 exams with an 85 or above and a third exam exemption and would qualify for a mastery in mathematics.

Example 2: A senior was enrolled in physics and has successfully earned course credit. She received a Regents exam exemption. She earned a 90 on her Living Environment

Regents exam, a 96 on her Earth Science Regents exam, and an 84 on her Chemistry Regents exam. Since this senior had two science Regents exam scores above 85 and the physics exam score waived, she is deemed to have met the requirements for the mastery endorsement.

Example 3: A student has passed the Algebra 1 Regents examination with an 85 and is now enrolled in Geometry and will be exempt from the examination in June 2020. This student will go on to Algebra II in the next school year. If she earns an 85 or above on Algebra II, she will have 2 exams in math with an 85 or better and 1 exemption and will be entitled to the Mastery in Mathematics endorsement when she graduates.

**27. Can students earn the honors endorsement if they are granted examination exemptions?**

Yes. While exempted exams may be used to meet assessment requirements for any diploma type, they would be removed from the calculation of the honors endorsement.

For example, a student meets assessment requirements for a Regents diploma with the following exam scores:

- English Regents, 89
- Algebra I Regents, 92
- Living Environment Regents, 90
- US History Regents, waived (COVID-19 Exam exemption)
- Earth Science Regents, 89 (+1 pathway)

Since the average of the Regents exam scores required for the diploma type (not including the waived exam) equals 90, the student is entitled to the honors endorsement.

**28. Students cannot earn the honors endorsement if they use more than two Department-approved alternatives. Are exempted exams included in the number of “Department-approved alternatives”?**

No. Exempted exams are simply removed from the calculation for the honors endorsement. Students may still use a maximum of two Department-approved alternatives.

**29. How will students fulfill unfinished requirements for the Seal of Bi-Literacy?**

The department will issue separate guidance and a full set of FAQs to address flexibility in earning the seal.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES / ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

**30. For students with disabilities that meet the requirements to earn a Local Diploma through a Superintendent Determination and have been working toward earning a CDOS Credential, may a district waive the required 216 hours of CTE coursework and/or work-based learning (at least 54 hours of which must be work-based learning)?**

Yes. Students with disabilities who are otherwise eligible to exit from high school in the 2019-20 school year may be awarded the CDOS Commencement Credential without



having met all of the requirements, for purposes of eligibility for the superintendent determination option, provided that the school principal, in consultation with relevant faculty, has determined that the student has otherwise demonstrated knowledge and skills in the commencement level CDOS learning standards.

- 31. If a student with a disability is granted the CDOS commencement credential through such a waiver as described in question 30, can the credential be counted as the students +1 Pathway toward a Regents or Local Diploma.**

Yes.

- 32. If a student with a disability or English Language Learner has access to safety nets or appeals leading to a local diploma, should schools consider exempted exams to represent a score of 55 or 65?**

All waived exams for all students should be considered scores of 65 for the purposes of making diploma determinations. However, no score shall be reported on the student's transcript.

- 33. Students with a disability have access to the compensatory safety net option where a 65 or above on one exam can compensate for a 45-54 on another exam. Can an exempted Regents Exam be used to compensate a lower Regents exam score (45-54 on science and social studies Regents Exams only) using the compensatory safety net option?**

No. A Regents exam exemption cannot be used to compensate for the score of below 65 on a different Regents examination.

## **RECORDING STUDENTS SCORES**

- 34. How should schools reflect examination exemptions on a student's transcript?**

Student transcripts should not reflect a score for any examination where the student is granted an exemption.

- 35. How should exemptions be recorded in the student management system?**

NYSED will develop and disseminate guidance on how schools/districts should record the exemptions from examination requirements in their student management systems. The Department will develop new codes for reporting "COVID-19 Exemptions" and provide further guidance.

## **POST-GRADUATION OR EXITING HIGH SCHOOL**

- 36. Under current regulations, when a student(s) takes and passes a Regents exam but does not earn a High School diploma and then decides to obtain his/her High School equivalency diploma, they are exempt from the corresponding subject sub-test of the Test Assessment of Secondary Completion (TASC) exam. Given the changes that would exempt students from Regents exams, how will student(s) who are deemed to be exempt from one or more Regents exams but later seek their High School equivalency diploma be addressed?**



The Department will treat such students in the same way as any other student. Those students who produce a transcript showing that they were exempt from one or more Regents exams, will also be exempt from that section (sub-test) of the TASC. As with all students, those seeking their High School equivalency will always have to take and pass at least one sub-test of the TASC, regardless of the number of Regents exams they are given credit for.

**37. If for any reason, students leave school without earning a diploma, can they re-enroll in the future to attempt to complete any requirements needed?**

All students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) until either they receive a local or Regents Diploma, or until the end of the school year in which they turn 21 years of age.

**38. If a student is on track to take an industry credential examination in June 2020 and graduates due to an exemption to the diploma requirements, can that student return to school to complete his/her technical preparation and take such examination in the future?**

The Department will provide guidance to address these issues in the near future and will release additional information when available.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

**39. How will exemptions to Regents Exams for June 2020 impact school and district accountability?**

NYSED will not make high school accountability determinations for the 2019-20 school year based on the performance of the 2016 accountability cohort (i.e., the students who first entered grade 9 in September 2016). Instead all schools and districts will maintain in the 2020-21 school year the same accountability status that the school or district was assigned for the 2019-20 school year.

**40. How will a school or district's accountability status be determined for future graduation cohorts if students were exempted in June 2020 from examinations used as accountability measures?**

NYSED will work with the United States Department of Education to determine a methodology for meeting federal accountability requirements and making accountability determinations beginning with the 2017 accountability cohort (i.e., students who first entered grade 9 anytime between and including July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018). More information on this issue will be forthcoming

Any additional questions about the exemptions from examination requirements or the effect of such exemptions on student qualification for a diploma should be directed to [emscgradreq@nysed.gov](mailto:emscgradreq@nysed.gov).

**Note: As additional questions arise, they will be added to this document on an ongoing basis.**