

Examination Scoring

All Transportation Professional Certification Board Inc. examinations are in a 4-option, multiple-choice format. All questions carry equal weight and the examination is scored solely on the basis of correct selections. Since there is no “penalty” or sub-traction for an incorrect selection, it is in the candidate’s best interest to answer all questions.

The passing point for each examination is determined under the guidance of the Certification Board’s consulting psychometricians. The method followed is a criterion-referenced approach called the Angoff Modified Technique. This technique is currently considered by the testing profession to be one of the most defensible methods available for setting passing points.

The Angoff Modified Technique relies on a panel of content experts who judge each item on the test against the criterion “What is the probability that a minimally qualified candidate will answer this question correctly?” The pooled average of these probabilities is multiplied by the number of questions to arrive at a “minimally acceptable” score. The final passing point is determined by adjusting this “minimally acceptable” score by a statistical factor for testing error and by examination of the distribution of scores in the immediate vicinity of the tentative passing point to give the benefit of the doubt to candidates who score just below the tentative level.

This method of scoring is entirely independent of the number or percentage of candidates who perform above or below the selected passing point. Each candidate is assigned a “passing” or “not passing” score. No other numerical ranking or letter grade is assigned.

The examination content is revised on a regular schedule with the intent of a complete replacement on a four- to five-year cycle. Since the difficulty level could change, the passing point is reviewed to equate each new version of the examination to the initial or anchor version. This method of linear equating ensures that a candidate is neither rewarded nor penalized by more- or less-difficult versions of the examination.

The psychometric consultants to the Certification Board conduct all scoring functions, and a high level of security and confidentiality is maintained at all times. The examination answer sheets are scored by machine and each is scanned twice and manually examined by the scoring staff as necessary to assure accuracy. Although the possibility of an incorrect scoring is minimal, a candidate may request that his or her answer sheet be re-scored manually at any time with-in 90 days after being notified of a “not passing” result.