

## CANDIDATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MARCH 2020 PART I (ABS) EXAMINATION

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Total Number of Items</i>	<i>Exam Segments and Length</i>	<i>Test Time</i>
March 17, 2020 or March 18, 2020 or March 19, 2020 or March 20, 2020	370 items (350 scored items and 20 non-scored pre-test items)	NDA & Tutorial: 15 minutes Session 1: 4 hours Break: up to 45 minutes Session 2: 4 hours	Start and end time varies based on appointment at Pearson VUE

### WHERE / WHEN TO REPORT

All candidates received a verification email from Pearson VUE indicating the date, time, and location of the examination. Please confirm that all the information in the verification email is correct. Candidates will take the exam on one of the following four dates: March 17, 18, 19, or 20, 2020. The starting time for the exam varies depending on the appointment you scheduled with Pearson VUE. Candidates should **arrive at the test center 30 minutes prior to their scheduled appointments** to allow adequate time for the check-in procedures. Candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes after their scheduled appointment times may be denied admission (and are not eligible for a refund of the exam fee).

The test center location is indicated in the verification letter; directions and telephone contact information are also included.

### WHAT TO BRING TO THE EXAM

You will be required to show two (2) valid forms of personal identification. In order to be considered valid, the ID must match the name used to register for the exam. Both forms must contain your signature and must be current (not expired). At least one form must be a government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's license, a passport, or a military ID. The other ID may be a student identification card, a credit or debit card, or other card that has your name and signature. Candidates who do not have proper ID may be denied admission to the exam and are not eligible for a refund of the exam fee.

No personal items may be taken into the testing room. This includes all bags, books, notes, phones, pagers, watches and wallets. Lockers are provided for storage of personal belongings. Food and drink are not permitted in the exam room, but may be consumed during breaks.

### WHAT TO EXPECT ON TEST DAY

Candidates are encouraged to log on to the Pearson VUE website at <http://www.pearsonvue.com/nbeo/> and click on the Pearson Professional Center Online Tour link. This brief video will familiarize candidates with the test center and what to expect on exam day.

During check-in at the center, candidates will have a digital photograph and palm vein scan taken (candidates assigned to test centers other than Pearson Professional Centers may have a fingerprint scan in lieu of a palm vein scan).

## WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE EXAMINATION

Information regarding the format and content of the ABS examination may be found under the Part I (Applied Basic Science) tab (under the NBEO Exams tab) on the NBEO's website at <http://www.optometry.org>. There are also links to sample items, as well as an interactive tutorial designed to familiarize candidates with the computer-based testing format. Candidates are strongly encouraged to thoroughly review all of these resources prior to the exam. The tutorial will also be available for candidates to view just prior to taking the actual exam. However, candidates will only have 10 minutes to view the tutorial at the test center, and many candidates may have difficulty completing the tutorial in that amount of time.

The tutorial includes a short (4-item) sample test. Candidates should be aware that the layout of items on the sample test for the downloadable tutorial is somewhat different than the layout that will be used on the actual exam. On the actual exam, the items will be approximately centered on the screen; on the tutorial, the items are left-aligned. This difference is necessary to allow candidates to view the items on the tutorial regardless of the screen size or resolution they may be using.

*There are also some minor differences between the downloadable tutorial and the actual exam regarding how the drug list can be adjusted on the screen. Further, for 2020, the on-screen calculator will initially appear in the center of the screen for all items, and there are some very minor changes, not included in the tutorial screen shots, to the appearance of the strikethrough and highlight buttons.*

### CALCULATOR

An on-screen scientific calculator (TI-30XS) will be available to candidates throughout the ABS exam. Candidates should note, however, that all Optics items on the exam are designed such that the correct answer can be determined without the use of trigonometric functions. The scientific calculator is provided to give candidates the option of using trigonometric functions should they choose to do so.

### SCRATCH PAPER

A marker and a booklet of pages that can be used as "scratch paper" will be given to each candidate. If a candidate uses up all of the booklet pages, the booklet can be turned in for a new booklet.

### RESTROOM BREAKS

Candidates are allowed restroom breaks during the examination although no additional testing time is allotted. If you need a break, raise your hand and a test administrator will escort you out of the testing room. Additional instructions will be reviewed at the testing center prior to the exam.

### BREAK BETWEEN SESSIONS

The Part I (ABS) exam consists of two (2) sessions. At the end of the first session, candidates may take a break of up to 45 minutes, or may choose to take a shorter break. Following this break, candidates will not be able to return to Session 1.

## IRREGULARITIES

Collaboration, pirating, copying, talking (even to oneself), and other disruptive behavior during an examination is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary actions.

**Any Candidate found guilty of cheating on any National Board examination will receive a score of zero (0) on the examination Part(s) in which the cheating occurred, or otherwise have their score(s) canceled. Further, the Candidate may be prohibited from taking future National Board examinations.**

In the event of an emergency (e.g., fire, electrical blackout, weather), candidates are required to follow the directions of the test administrator. Not following such directions will be considered disruptive behavior.

## TEST CRITIQUES

During the examination, a “Comment” button can be found on every screen. If you have a critique regarding an item, click on the Comment button on that screen. This will open a Comment box, which provides a space for typing in your critique. Please be as specific as possible and substantiate your comments. For example, if you feel that options a and b are both correct for a particular item, instead of making a comment that says only “a and b are both correct,” you should explain in your critique why you feel that a and b are both correct. Your comments will be returned to the National Board office and sent to the members of the Examination Council for review.

Upon completion of Session 2, space is provided to inform the NBEO staff of any unusual occurrences during the computer administration of the examination. You may also email the NBEO within 72 hours after the completion of the exam to report an unusual occurrence. Emails received more than 72 hours after the examination will not be considered.

## SCORES

Once scores are released and available to be viewed online (<https://www.optometry.org/scores/>), we will immediately post an announcement on our homepage (<http://www.optometry.org/>) under “News and Notes”; scores are not available until this announcement is made. Scores will be available for Candidates to view no later than **May 8, 2020**. Candidates are urged not to call the NBEO office to inquire about score release; rather, they are encouraged to check the NBEO homepage for an announcement.

## COLLEGE LIAISONS

All questions regarding policies and practices of the National Board are to be directed to the College Liaison Administrator on your campus. Their names can be found on the NBEO website <https://www.optometry.org/liaisons.cfm>. If this person is unable to answer your questions, (s)he will contact the National Board office for clarification.

## **THE 2020 NATIONAL BOARD EXAMINATIONS**

The 2020 National Board examinations are the culmination of many hours of work by hundreds of people, including the faculty, state board members, and private practitioners who originally submitted items; Examination Development Committee and Council members; National Board staff; and the Board of Directors. Every attempt has been made to present a relevant and valid examination based on the Content Matrix and Content Outline as published on the NBEO website (<http://www.optometry.org/>).

Pass/fail standards on National Board examinations are set by criterion-referenced procedures. Consequently, you will be assessed on the knowledge base that you have developed, rather than on your performance compared to the other people taking the examinations at the same time.

**Everyone involved in the preparation of these examinations extends their collective best wishes for your success.**