

# ABP Policy on Fairness in Examining and Exam Use



The ABP is committed to providing certification examinations that are fair to all candidates regardless of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, linguistic background, or other personal characteristics. Careful standardization of examinations and administration conditions helps to ensure that all candidates are given a comparable opportunity to demonstrate what they know, and how they can perform in the areas being examined. Fairness implies that every candidate has the opportunity to prepare for the examination and is informed about the general nature and content of the examination, as appropriate to the purpose of the exam. Fairness also extends to the accurate reporting of individual and group examination results.

With respect to the certification examination, the ABP will:

- Indicate what the examination measures, its recommended uses, the intended candidates, and the strengths and limitations of the examination.
  - Describe how the content and skills to be examined were selected and how the examinations were developed.
  - Communicate information about an examination's characteristics at a level of detail appropriate to the intended candidates.
  - Provide guidance on the levels of skills, knowledge, and training necessary for appropriate review of the examinations.
  - Provide evidence that the technical quality, including reliability and validity, of the examinations meet their intended purposes.
- Provide to qualified candidates representative samples of examination questions or practice tests, directions, answer sheets, manuals, and/or score reports.
  - Avoid potentially offensive content or language when developing examination questions and related materials.
  - Make appropriately modified forms of examinations available for candidates with disabilities who need special accommodations.
  - Obtain and provide evidence on the performance of candidates of diverse subgroups, making significant efforts to obtain sample sizes that are adequate for subgroup analyses. Evaluate the evidence to ensure that differences in performance are related to the skills being assessed.

With respect to examination administration and scoring, the ABP will:

- Provide a clear description of detailed procedures for administering examinations in a standardized manner.
- Provide guidelines on reasonable procedures for accommodating candidates with disabilities who need special accommodations.
- Provide information to candidates on examination formats, including information on the use of any needed materials and equipment.
- Establish and implement procedures to ensure the security of examination materials during all phases of development, administration, scoring, and reporting.
- Implement procedures that eliminate all information that can identify the candidate during examination scoring.
- Monitor procedures, materials, and guidelines for scoring examinations, and for assessing the accuracy of the scoring process. The ABP will ensure adequate training of examiners scoring the exam.

- Correct errors that affect the interpretation of the scores and communicate the corrected results promptly.
- Develop and implement procedures for ensuring the confidentiality of scores.

With respect to reporting and interpreting examination results, the ABP will:

- Provide information to support recommended interpretation of the results, including the nature of the content, norms or comparison groups, and other technical evidence.
- Specify appropriate uses of examination results and warn candidates of potential misuses.
- Provide the rationale, procedures, and evidence for setting performance standards for establishing passing scores.
- Provide information that enables accurate interpretation and reporting of examination results.
- Provide examination results in a timely fashion (within 6 weeks for Section A and C exams, and within 4 weeks for Section B and D exams).

The information indicated above will be provided to test applicants on the ABP webpage ([www.abpros.org](http://www.abpros.org)), at the annual ABP Board Preparation course (held at the ACP annual session), and at the Advanced Program Directors meetings in the spring and during the annual ACP session.

Ref: This policy was modified from the CODE of Fair Testing Practices in Education. Joint Committee on Testing Practices (2004). American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC. 20002-4242.

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