

# The CCN Announces Scaled Scores

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Effective with the spring 2013 testing cycle, certification exams for both the CPCS and CPMSM will convert from raw to scaled scores. Scaled scores is a mathematical conversion of the number of items that a candidate correctly answers transformed so that there is a consistent scale used across all forms of the test. A relevant example is the process of converting pounds to kilograms. The weight of the object has not changed, only the units being reported.

The passing standard reported for scaled scores will always remain the same. This will allow for direct comparisons across different test forms.

The Certification Commission of NAMSS (CCN) has had scaled scores as a strategic goal for the last five years. The National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA), the body that accredits both the CPCS and CPMSM exams, encourages the use of scaled scores rather than raw and percent scores. Many programs use scaled scores, including the ACT® and SAT®.

Scaled scores do not change individual pass or fail decisions. The pass/fail decision is always made by comparing the number of items correctly answered to the number of items required to pass the test form.

The passing score will continue to use the criterion-referenced process. Each exam has its own passing score depending upon how hard or easy it is. All test forms are built using the exam content outline. This content outline determines what candidates will be tested on, no matter which test form the candidate is given. Therefore, the criterion-referenced process for determining the passing score will remain the same and is also required by the NOCA standards.

The scales for each exam are outlined below:

PROGRAM	MINIMUM SCORE	MAXIMUM SCORE	PASSING SCORE
CPCS	300	500	400
CPMSM	200	700	450

The benefit of scaled scores is that candidates will be able to compare their performance

to other candidates. The CCN will provide information on how other test takers did on the examination. Candidates who are retaking the examination will also be able to make appropriate comparisons between different testing cycles. When scores are reported, they are broken down by “domains” in the exam content outline. For example, the three domains in the new CPMSM exam content outline are: 1) Credentialing and privileging: Manage, conduct, participate in and maintain credentialing and privileging processes [38-44 percent]; 2) Compliance: Ensure compliance with accreditation standards and regulatory requirements (24-30 percent); and 3) Medical services management: Manage departmental operations and facilitate medical staff functions (29-35 percent). As a result, each exam will contain a different number of questions for each domain in the exam content outline. With scaled scores, the candidates will be able to assess their strengths or weaknesses by comparing their scaled scores to other candidate data on their score report.

The candidate score report will be updated to allow for more comparisons of how the candidate’s scores compare to the scores of test takers who have previously taken the CPMSM and CPCS. It will also include brief descriptions of the purpose of the exam, the score scale and how to compare the candidate’s scores with other test taker scores will be provided on the score report. ■



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