



**American Board
of Ophthalmology®**
ADVANCING EXCELLENCE IN EYE CARE

September 2024 Written Qualifying Examination Results Report

The September 2024 Written Qualifying Examination (WQE) was administered at Pearson Vue testing centers across the United States, Canada, and abroad to 660 candidates. All candidates who sat for the examination submitted a completed test. There were no breaches of exam security. Candidates were notified about their examination results on November 1, 2024.

Results

- 488 of 660 candidates passed for an overall passing rate of 73.9%.
- 529 candidates took the exam for the first time. The passing rate was 80.2% for this group, which accounted for 80.2% of all September candidates.
- 131 candidates repeated the exam. The pass rate for repeat takers was 48.9%. Repeat test-takers accounted for 19.8% of all candidates.

About Scoring & Results

Results are typically released 6-8 weeks following the administration of each WQE. Extensive post-examination quality assurance checks take place to ensure that results are fair and accurate. This includes a re-review and potential removal from scoring of any potentially flawed questions in accordance with psychometric standards.

On the WQE, raw scores are transformed into scaled scores before being released to candidates. The ABO does not release the minimum raw score needed to pass; however, the minimum scaled score needed to pass is 700. Scaled scores may range from 200-1000. The average scaled score achieved on this exam form was 734.

The passing standard is determined by a standard-setting methodology which requires a group of peers to estimate the minimum level of clinical decision-making and medical knowledge an ophthalmologist requires to practice competently. The examination employs a criterion-referenced passing standard, which means scoring is not done “on the curve,” i.e., that a certain percentage of candidates will pass or fail. For every administration, it is possible for all examinees to pass if they achieve a score at or above the passing standard.

Because we employ an equating procedure, we are assured that the performance standard on each exam form is consistent since the last passing standard study, which occurred in 2018. In

other words, the pass rate on this exam compared to all exams administered since 2018 simply reflects the percentage of candidates able to meet that standard. Differences in the difficulty level of each test form is taken into account in scoring, so candidates are not disadvantaged if their test form is more or less difficult than the previous year's form.

Test-takers also receive information about their performance level in each subject area tested on the WQE. A rating of Level 1 indicates performance in that subject area performance was at or above the minimum proficiency level; a Level 2 rating indicates performance in that subject area performance was below the minimum proficiency level.

Percentile ranks are not released to candidates because an individual's performance on this examination in relation to peers is not being assessed and does not affect candidate scores.

Next Steps

Eligible candidates who must repeat the WQE may register online in April 2025. Requests for reverification, which is limited to confirming that no errors have been made in the calculation of candidate scores, must be submitted in writing to the Board Office.

Candidates who passed the WQE may immediately register for the May 2025 Oral Examination, the only oral examination opportunity to be offered in 2025.