NCLEX® is a Computerized Adaptive Test (CAT)

How Does It Work?
AKA “State Boards” (CAT-Computer Adaptive Testing);

Very secure exam you will sign a ‘confidentiality clause’ prior to testing

All candidates will have different question depending on how they answered the previous question

Administered by Pearson Vue testing centers
State boards are the ONLY agencies that can license a graduate of a PN program & release the test results to them.

Do NOT contact Pearson Vue testing sites for test results, they will not release results directly to you.
Question Types

- Multiple Choice (Majority of questions)
- Fill in the blank
- Prioritizing
- Figure or illustration (‘hot spot’)
- Chart/Exhibit questions
- An on-screen optional calculator will be available to you
- No partial credit given
Sequence of Events regarding NCLEX-PN

After graduation (once you have completed all graduation requirements) transcript will be sent to MoSBON.
MoSBON will notify Pearson Vue if you are eligible to take boards.
If you are, you will receive an ATT (Authorization to Test); (approx. 2-3 weeks after graduation).
Call the # on the ATT to schedule exam.
Authorization to Test (ATT)

Must have your ATT to schedule an appointment

The name on your ATT must match exactly what is on your photo ID

If you provided an email address when we registered, you will receive your ATT by email only

ATT will have a time limit & will not be extended for any reason (may be 60-365 days)

Call # on ATT to actually schedule your date & location for your test (St. Louis, MO; Memphis, TN; Marion, IL and Evansville, IN)
Take With You to Test

MUST have all of the following with you:
- ATT (Authorization to Test)
- Photo ID (Drivers license, U.S. state ID, or Passport)

Arrive at least 30 minutes early (if late they probably won’t let you test)

Do NOT bring children or family with you (unless they stay in the car). They will not be allowed to wait inside the testing center
Testing Security

- You must provide your signature
- They will take a digital fingerprint & photograph (no hats, scarves, or coats)
- You will be directly observed by the proctor
- You will be video taped & audio taped (no talking to oneself or lip moving)
- Personal belongings will not be allowed in test room; no cell phones, no watches, purses, etc.
- You will only be able to leave for breaks @ designated times & w/ an escort (fingerprinted again upon return)
Testing Time

- You will have 5 hours available
- You’ll start w/ a short tutorial
- There are 2 pre-programmed breaks
- You must leave the test room @ break & it counts toward your 5 hours
- Always remain in your seat; any disturbance will cause you to be dismissed from the test
- Raise your hand if you need assistance or are finished
Reducing Test Anxiety

- Be prepared
- Get there in plenty of time. (Get a room in a hotel the night before if you have an AM test time)
- Schedule your test when you feel you are at your prime & dress comfortably
- Be prepared
- Get plenty of rest the night before
- Don’t Cram the night before
- Be prepared
Every time the examinee answers a question, the computer re-estimates the examinee’s ability.

With every additional answer, the ability estimate gets more precise.
Based upon the most recent, revised ability estimate, the computer selects the next item to be presented, such that the examinee will find it challenging. (Not too hard, Not too easy)
This way an adaptive test presents the examinee with the items that will be the most informative for measuring ability.

Each test is tailored to the examinee.
Tailoring a Test with CAT…

- Reduces the number of easy items that high-ability examinees receive.
  - Easy items tell little about a high performer’s ability

- Reduces the number of difficult items that low-ability people receive.
  - People guess on items that are too difficult for them.
The item selection algorithm selects which item the examinee will see next.

Items are selected for examinees from a large pool of items using three criteria.
First, the algorithm excludes any item that the examinee has seen in the last year.
Selection Criteria Two

Second, the algorithm limits the selection to items from the content area (sub-need) that will produce the best match to the test plan percentages.

The algorithm ensures that each person’s test has enough questions from each content area to match the test plan.
Third, the algorithm selects an item that the examinee is expected to find challenging.

Based upon the examinee’s answers up to that point, the computer estimates the examinee’s ability and selects an item that the examinee should have about a 50% chance of getting right.
When is the Test Over?

The NCLEX has a minimum and maximum number of items that can be asked.

- RN: 75 – 265
- PN: 85 – 205

The test ends when the computer determines with 95% certainty that the examinee’s ability is either above or below the passing standard.
When is the Test Over?

The test can also end if the examinee runs out of time or answers the maximum number of questions.

- RN: 265
- PN: 205
Did I Pass or Fail?

These decisions are governed by three rules. They are evaluated in this order:

- **Rule #1**: the 95% confidence rule
- **Rule #2**: the maximum-length test rule
- **Rule #3**: the ran-out-of-time rule
Rule #1: 95% Confidence

This rule governs most (90%+) of the cases.

The computer will stop administering questions when it is 95% certain that the examinee’s ability is either above or below the standard.
Ability estimates below the standard are failures.

Ability estimates above the standard are passers.
Rule #2: Maximum Length Test

If the **maximum** number of items have been answered, and the computer still isn’t 95% certain of whether the examinee’s ability is above or below the passing standard, then the 95% certainty requirement is dropped.
Ability estimates at or below the standard are failures.

Ability estimates above the standard are passes.
Rule #3: Ran Out of Time

The computer stops administering questions after the allotted time has passed.

If fewer than the minimum number of items were answered, the examinee fails.
If at least the minimum number of items were answered and the examinee’s ability estimate was consistently above the standard over the last 60 items, then the examinee passes.

If the minimum number of items were answered but the examinee’s ability estimate dropped below the standard even once over the last 60 items, then the examinee fails.
This does *not* mean that you must get the last 60 *correct* to pass.

In fact, the adaptive nature of the test almost ensures that you will only get about half of the questions correct.
Rule #2 (maximum length tests) & Rule #3 (ran out of time) are essentially “second chances” to pass.

These rules are only invoked because the person’s status was ambiguous (less than 95% certain)
Questions About How CAT works?

Please Contact

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