

10 THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE ASWB EXAMINATIONS

1. All of the ASWB examinations have the same format, meaning that each has the same number of questions that each test-taker is given the same amount of time to complete. There are **170 multiple-choice questions** and you will have **4 hours** from the time that you start answering the questions. You can take a brief restroom break or stand to stretch, but the clock does not stop and these activities will be included in your 4-hour limit, so you want to be judicious with your time.
2. Although you will be answering a total of 170 questions, **20 of these questions are non-scored items** that are being piloted for possible inclusion as scored questions on future ASWB examinations. Thus, only 150 questions will determine whether you pass or not. However, you will never know which 20 are pilot items because they are mixed in with scored items, so you will need to try to select the right answers on all 170 questions.
3. You **do not want to leave any questions blank**; answer all 170 questions in the 4 hours.
4. The examination is **computerized**, but requires no specialized computer knowledge. There is a brief computer tutorial that will assist you when you first sit down and look at the screen, and spending time getting to feel comfortable with the device at that time is a good idea, since it will not count toward your 4-hour time limit.
5. You will be taking your examination at a **testing center with others who are being tested in different disciplines** and may be taking shorter or longer examinations, so do not be concerned if they finish before or after you.

6. Testing center activities are **closely monitored**, and you will need to leave all of your belongings, including your watch, in a provided locker. You can ask for earplugs, scrap paper, or a pencil, but will not be able to bring anything into the room with you. The room may be hot or cold, so you should dress in comfortable layers. All testing accommodations related to documented disabilities must be approved by your state licensing board and arranged in advance with ASWB. Some states allow for extra time or foreign language dictionaries as accommodations for those who do not have English as a first language.

7. You will leave the testing center with an unofficial copy of your examination results. It will tell you how many questions you were asked and how many you got correct in each of the four areas or domains. You will never know which specific answers were correct and incorrect. You will also not find out the correct answers for those that you answered incorrectly. **The exam is pass/fail**, and a passing score can be used for certification or licensure in any state.

8. Although the KSAs are in four content areas and you may structure your studying to learn all the related material in a given domain before moving on to the next, **the questions on the examination are in random order** and skip across topics. There is not a separate section of questions labeled Human Development, Diversity, and Behavior in the Environment, or so on. You may have a human behavior question followed by one on ethics, so you really need to clear your head between questions and avoid trying to relate them to one another in any way. Each question stands alone as a way to assess knowledge related to a distinct KSA.

9. Social workers always want to know how many questions of the 150 scored items they will need to answer correctly to pass the exam. Although this sounds like an easy question, it is not! Not all questions on the ASWB examinations are the same level of difficulty as determined by the pilot process, so individuals who are asked to answer harder questions that have been randomly selected from the test bank will need to answer fewer questions correctly than those who were lucky enough to have easier questions randomly assigned. This method ensures that the examination is fair for all those who are taking it, regardless of which questions were chosen. **The number of questions that you have to get correct generally varies from 93 to 106 of the 150 scored**

items. You will find out how many needed to be answered correctly only after you are finished with your examination and it is immediately scored electronically. When you examine your unofficial test results, which are provided in a printout prior to leaving the testing center, you will be able to gauge the difficulty of your examination. If you needed to get closer to 93 correct, you had a harder combination of questions, and if you needed to get 106 or above correct, you had an easier combination.

10. **If you do not pass the examination, you will not have the same questions repeated on any of your examinations in the future.** Other questions in the four areas will be selected from the test bank. As the four domains are so broad, you may find that the topics of the questions may be quite different than those on a previous examination. To be adequately prepared, it is best to go back and study all the KSAs listed for a content area and not just those that may have caused you problems. If you do not pass, you will have to wait 90 days before taking the examination again.

11. If you have questions about the examination or scoring, such as the process for sending your passing exam score to another state in which you want to be licensed, visit the ASWB website at www.aswb.org for additional information and necessary forms. The ASWB Examination Candidate Handbook, which is free and located on this website, provides additional information about registering for the examination that may be useful.