

UExcel[®] Credit-by-Exam Program Candidate Registration Guide

Turn Knowledge into Credit with UExcel

What is UExcel?

UExcel is a convenient and cost-effective credit-by-examination (CBE) program. Credit-by-examination allows you to prove your knowledge, gained through independent study or prior knowledge, by taking an exam. Unlike other credit-by-examination options, when you pass UExcel exams, you earn college credit on a transcript from Excelsior College, a private, non-profit institution of higher learning, regionally accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

UExcel is a unique alliance between Pearson, the world's leading education company, and Excelsior College. It is the only lower-level CBE program developed and administered by a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.

UExcel exams provide candidates with distinct benefits:

- **Save time:** Reduce time to graduation by testing out of courses.
- **Save money:** Meet degree requirements more quickly while saving thousands of dollars on tuition.
- **No hidden costs:** UExcel exam fees are all-inclusive. There are no hidden 'seat fees' or other administration costs.
- **Prove you are prepared:** Demonstrate your mastery of post-secondary coursework.
- **Preparation resources:** UExcel offers a complete suite of resources including free content guides, recommended textbooks, practice exams and online tutorials.
- **Global reach:** UExcel exams are available at nearly 4,200 test centers around the world, making them convenient for everyone.
- **Convenient test times:** Take exams at a time that fits your schedule.
- **Earn college credit, not just a score:** When you pass UExcel exams, you earn college credit on a transcript that may be transferred to the institution of your choice. Other CBE programs award only a score – not an actual grade on a transcript. Furthermore, that score may only result in advanced placement.
- **Immediate test results:** Receive test results and a letter grade immediately after completing an exam.
- **Free transcripts:** Order unlimited free official transcripts from Excelsior College to send to the colleges or universities of your choice.
- **Integrated technology:** Allows for easy exam registration, either online or via phone. Your appointment is confirmed immediately, and you can sit for your exam within minutes of scheduling.
- **Enhanced customer service:** Centralized service centers provide convenient answers all your questions. Whether you want to schedule a test or have questions about transcripts, we offer a single source to assist you.

Who can benefit from taking UExcel exams?

- **International students** can take UExcel exams before leaving their home country to demonstrate their ability to succeed at a U.S.-based university.
- **Homeschooled students** can validate the knowledge they have acquired and prove to admission departments that they are capable of college-level work. They may even earn credit toward general education requirements or achieve advanced placement at colleges and universities nationwide.
- **High school students** can demonstrate academic preparation at the post-secondary level, setting themselves apart from other applicants and proving they have college-level knowledge. They may earn college credit or advanced placement by passing exams.
- **Adult learners** can save money on college tuition, bypass general education requirements and validate knowledge they have previously acquired.
- **Military service members** can meet degree requirements while on active duty by taking a UExcel exam at or near their military installation.

Section 1 – Before You Take a Test

Getting Started

1. Determine which exam you want to take.

The UExcel program currently offers eight exams in the following subject areas: Calculus, College Writing, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish Language, and Statistics. Short descriptions and the amount of equivalent credit are provided below. For more detailed information about the exams, specific content areas, study resources, and sample items, you can download the exam content guides from

www.uexceltest.com/exams.

2. Register for a UExcel exam

The easiest way to register is to go online at www.uexceltest.com. From here you can create your student profile, find a test center most convenient for you, and register for an exam. The process is simple and takes only minutes. During the registration process you will be asked to pay the \$95 testing fee using a Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or JCB credit card. Once you have completed the registration process you will receive an e-mail confirming the date, time, and location of your test.

You may also register for a test by calling a Pearson VUE call center:

888.224.6383 (in the Americas)

00.6038319.1085 (in the Asia Pacific Region)

44.161.855.7455 (in Europe, Middle East, and Africa)

NOTE: You will have a six-month eligibility window in which you may schedule and take your exam.

List of UExcel Exams

The following UExcel exams are currently available.

MAT150 Calculus 4 credits

The UExcel examination in Calculus measures knowledge and understanding of material typically taught in the first semester of a lower-level sequence in Calculus. The content of the examination corresponds with course offerings commonly called Calculus I. The examination assumes a familiarity with Precalculus topics including algebra, trigonometry, and functions. It tests for a knowledge of facts and terminology, an understanding of concepts and theories, and the student's ability to apply this knowledge and understanding in an analysis of problems in business, the sciences, and engineering. (Multiple-choice examination.)

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ENG110 College Writing 3 credits

The UExcel examination in College Writing corresponds to an introductory, one-semester course in College Writing. It measures the ability to persuade a reader to pursue a specified course of action, using personal knowledge and experience to support a proposal and to analyze and respond appropriately to written text that represents opposing viewpoints, using the Modern Language Association (MLA) style of citation. In general, the examination measures the ability to organize knowledge, ideas, and information; to adopt rhetorical strategies such as narration, illustration, explanation, and description in appropriate ways; to adopt and maintain a tone and point of view appropriate for a specified audience and rhetorical situation; to develop and maintain a controlling idea and a coherent organization; and to write within the rhetorical, syntactic, and mechanical conventions of Standard Written American English. (Extended response examination.)

PHY140 Physics 6 credits

The UExcel examination in Physics measures knowledge and understanding of material typically taught in a two-semester, lower-level (lecture only) algebra/trigonometry-based Physics course sequence. The content of the examination corresponds with course offerings commonly called Physics I & II. The examination assumes a familiarity with units and conversion; scientific notation and orders of magnitude; algebra, trigonometry, and graphing techniques. The examination tests for a comprehensive knowledge of facts and terminology, an understanding of physical concepts and theories, and the student's ability to apply this knowledge and understanding to analyze and solve a variety of practical problems. (Multiple-choice examination.)

POL170 Political Science 3 credits

The UExcel examination in Political Science measures knowledge and understanding of the material typically taught in a one-semester, three-credit, lower-level course in Political Science. The content of the examination corresponds with introductory course offerings such as Introduction to Political Science, Comparative Law, and International Relations. It tests for a knowledge of facts and terminology, an understanding of concepts and theories, and the student's ability to apply this knowledge and understanding in an analysis of politics, government, and world affairs. (Multiple-choice examination.)

PSY101 Introduction to Psychology 3 credits

The UExcel examination in Introduction to Psychology measures knowledge and understanding of the material typically taught in a one-semester, three-credit, lower-level Psychology survey course. The examination measures knowledge and understanding of the theories and principles of general psychology and the ability to apply this information to examples from everyday life. The content of the examination consists of 11 major categories: The Science of Psychology, Biological Influences on Behavior, Sensation and Perception, Consciousness, Learning and Memory, Motivation and Emotion, Cognition and Intelligence, Human Development, Personality, Psychological Disorders and Therapy, and Social Psychology. No prior course work in psychology is assumed. (Multiple-choice examination.)

SOC105 Introduction to Sociology 3 credits

The UExcel examination in Introduction to Sociology measures knowledge and understanding of the material and skills typically taught in a one-semester, undergraduate survey course in a baccalaureate program. The examination content reflects common knowledge drawn from courses with such titles as Introduction to Sociology or General Sociology. No prior knowledge or understanding of sociology is assumed. The examination tests for a knowledge of facts and terminology, an understanding of concepts and forms, and for the student's ability to apply the concepts learned in an introductory sociology course. (Multiple-choice examination.)

SPA102 Spanish Language 6 credits

The UExcel examination in Spanish Language measures knowledge and understanding of material typically taught in a two-semester, six-credit elementary course in Spanish. The content of the examination corresponds with course offerings such as Elementary Spanish. The examination assesses basic Spanish language proficiencies in the areas of receptive skills, expressive skills, and cultural skills (applying language proficiencies within authentic cultural contexts), through four question types: listening comprehension (using audio stimuli), reading comprehension, verbal communication, and structures: grammar. (Multiple-choice examination.)

MAT210 Statistics 3 credits

The UExcel examination in Statistics is based on material typically taught in an introductory, one-semester course in Statistics. It measures knowledge and understanding of the fundamental concepts of descriptive and inferential statistics and is designed to correspond to a service course applicable to many majors. A basic knowledge of algebra is assumed. Questions about the meaning and application of basic statistical ideas are included. (The on-screen calculator is provided as a button in the upper left-hand corner of each question screen. Multiple-choice examination.)

Preparing for UExcel Examinations

Preparing for UExcel Exams

Each UExcel examination is a means to document that you have learned material comparable to the content of one or more college-level courses. UExcel exams are developed in cooperation with college faculty, and you should plan to allot the same amount of time for preparation and study as you would if you were taking a college course. These college professors advise that you should plan on spending three hours a week studying for every semester hour of credit you expect to earn. For example, for a three-credit course, you can expect to study nine hours each week for 15-weeks, the length of a typical semester.

Online Practice Exams Available for All UExcel Examinations

One of the most popular study resources, the online UExcel Practice Exams, enable you to:

- Review the types of questions you may encounter on the actual exam.
- Practice testing on a computer in a timed environment. Practice whenever and wherever it is convenient for you.
- Receive your score immediately after you complete the practice test.
- Receive valuable feedback. After testing, you can check online to see how you performed on each question and why your answer was right or wrong. Feedback is not intended to predict your performance on the actual UExcel examination you will take for credit; rather, it will help you to improve your knowledge of the relevant subject and upgrade your test-taking skills.

Online Writing Help

MY Access![®] College: UExcel[®] Edition is a valuable online learning tool that can help students improve their academic writing skills. It provides writing assignment topics, feedback in five categories, and a complete suite of writer's tools, including grammar and spelling checkers, a thesaurus, and a writing portfolio. MY Access![®] College: UExcel[®] Edition uses the same scoring engine — called IntelliMetric[™] — used to score a College Writing exam at Pearson VUE testing centers. Use it as many times as you wish to practice different aspects of writing and receive detailed feedback.

If you wish to use the MY Access![®] College: UExcel[®] Edition learning tool, you may purchase a 90-day subscription for \$30.

To find out more about this service, visit www.uexceltest.com and click on the Resources link at the top of the page.

Additional Study Resources

We have a variety of other study resources available to help you prepare for your UExcel exam. In addition to the resources below, we continue to explore additional learning activities that will help you prepare for the exam. For the latest list of study resources, please visit www.uexceltest.com/resources.

• Exam Content Guide

Each exam has a free Content Guide that provides general information about the exam, including an examination description, recommended textbook(s), and learning outcomes. Download the free content guides by visiting www.uexceltest.com/exams. We strongly advise you to prepare for your examination(s) by studying from the resources recommended in each content guide.

• Sample Questions

Toward the back of each content guide you will find sample questions that will help you prepare for the exam. The sample questions are representative of the types of questions you will find on the actual exam.

• Online Tutorial

We encourage you to use the online tutorial prior to taking your exam. If you wish to access the tutorial, go to www.uexceltest.com/resources and click on the Computer-Based Testing Tutorial link. A tutorial will not be available at the test center.

• Order Textbooks Online

You can order the recommended textbooks from our bookstore. You may contact the bookstore by calling **800.325.3252** (US toll-free) or through the Web at www.uexceltest.com/bookstore.

• Free Online Courseware and Tutorials

Availability of good quality free, noncredit online courses in college subjects is increasing rapidly. Check out one of the following sites for material related to your chosen exam topic.

- OpenCourseWare: www.ocwconsortium.org
- NIXTY: www.nixty.com
- Khan Academy: www.khanacademy.org

Registering for a Practice Exam

To register for and take UExcel Practice Exams:

1. Check the most up-to-date list of practice exams (available through the Practice Exams link located on www.uexceltest.com/resources).
2. Register and pay the \$18 fee for the practice exam (visit www.uexceltest.com/resources).

The practice exam test site is designed to support all major platforms.

Re-Registering for a Practice Exam

If you re-register for a practice exam, you will receive a different form than the one you were originally given.

Note: The practice exams can be only taken once with an option of taking one or two hours to complete. You should plan to complete the practice exams within a single, continuous one- or two-hour period. Once you click the Begin Assessment button, the timer will start. If you do not submit your practice exam within the allotted time chosen, your answers will not be scored and you will forfeit the opportunity to retake this practice exam.

Registration Policies

Rescheduling or Canceling an Exam

You may access the details of an existing exam appointment by logging into your online account at www.pearsonvue.com. Once you log in, you can verify the date and time of your appointment as well as details about the test center and directions to it.

You may also reschedule or cancel an exam online, or by calling the UExcel registration line. The request to cancel/reschedule must be made 3 business days (a minimum of 72 hours) in advance of your scheduled appointment time. You will be charged \$15 each time you reschedule an appointment to test. If your request is made less than 3 business days (72 hours) before your scheduled time, you will not be entitled to a refund.

Refunds for UExcel Examinations

If you decide not to take an examination for which you are registered and wish to receive a refund, you will need to cancel your examination appointment at least 3 business days (a minimum of 72 hours) in advance of your scheduled appointment time with UExcel online at www.uexceltest.com or by contacting a UExcel call center representative at one of the following numbers:

888.224.6383 (in the Americas)

00.6038319.1085 (in the Asia Pacific Region)

44.161.855.7455 (in Europe, Middle East, and Africa)

Either one of these actions will automatically apply a credit (minus a \$15 cancellation fee) to the credit card used to register for the exam.

Note: If you fail to arrive for your appointment, or fail to reschedule or cancel without giving 3 business days' notice (a minimum of 72 hours prior to your scheduled test time), you will forfeit your examination fee and be required to register and pay the examination fee again.

Requests for Accommodations

Accommodations will be considered for examinees requesting reasonable accommodation(s) due to a disability. Contact UExcel at **888.224.6383** if you are requesting an accommodation.

Reasonable accommodations provided for computer-delivered testing include:

- Additional time (double time/time and a half)
- A reader
- A recorder of answers
- Scheduled break
- Separate room
- Special mechanical devices (limited)

Limit on Retaking UExcel Examinations

A candidate may retake a UExcel exam 60 days after the first attempt, and 120 days after the second and subsequent attempts. A single exam can only be taken 3 times in a given year and a maximum of 4 times overall. You may not retake an exam if you received a grade of "A" on a previous attempt.

Section 2 - On the Day of the Test

Admission to the Examination

Be sure to arrive at the Pearson VUE testing center 30 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures. You will be asked to store all of your personal belongings, and you will not be allowed to study while in the waiting area at the Pearson VUE testing center.

You are required to bring one (1) valid form of identification with you to the Pearson VUE testing center. Your ID must be current (dated and not expired), must bear your name as it appears on your confirmation letter, and must include your signature and a recent recognizable photograph. In case your photo ID is questioned by the test administrator, please be prepared to present a second current ID bearing your signature and a recent, recognizable photograph. If you do not have the proper ID, you will not be allowed to test.

Following are the acceptable forms of photo ID which must be current (dated and not expired):

- Driver's license with signature
- Driver's permit with photo and signature
- Employee ID card (signature should be clearly displayed and legible)
- Military ID card with signature
- Passport
- State/federal government ID card (to include naturalization card with photo and signature)
- Student ID card (with photo and signature which should be clearly displayed and legible)
- Voter ID card with photo and signature

We cannot accept these forms of ID:

- Check cashing card
- Credit card of any kind
- Classification card
- Green card (Permanent Resident Card)
- Military Common Access card (CAC)
- Social Security card

You will be asked to read and complete the Candidate Rules Agreement policy and return it to the Test Administrator. In addition, the Test Administrator will take your digitized photo, signature, and palm vein scan.

Taking the Examination

Completing the Examination

UExcel multiple-choice examinations consist of approximately 60 to 120 objective questions, some of which are unscored, pretest questions. You will have (2) hours to complete your UExcel examination and should have ample time to answer all questions within this time frame. Pretest questions will not affect your score on the examination.

Simply enter your answers on the computer using either the keyboard or the mouse. When you have finished the exam, you may review all items in sequence or only those you marked for review or purposely left unanswered. However, be aware that if you press the Finish button and exit the review, you will end the exam and not be allowed to return to the questions.

The UExcel examination in College Writing consists of two questions and you will have two (2) hours within which to complete this exam. You will be required to use the computer to answer the questions. Certain basic editing features are available, including cut, copy, and paste.

Use the scroll bars. A scroll bar appears when a question does not fit on a single screen. Scroll bars may be horizontal or vertical. To scroll through the screen contents for a short distance, click the scroll arrow that points in the appropriate direction or press an arrow key on the right side of your keyboard. To scroll up or down one screen at a time, click within the scroll bar above or below the scroll box.

Note: If the examination title on the screen is not the examination you have been scheduled to take, please notify the Test Administrator immediately, before beginning the examination. In addition, should you experience any technical problems with the computer, the Test Administrator should be notified immediately.

Breaks

You may take unscheduled breaks during the examination. During these breaks; however, testing time will continue to elapse; as a result, you will have less time to complete the exam.

After a break, you may not be admitted back into the testing room immediately. Instead, you must wait your turn while the Test Administrator checks in other examinees who have taken breaks. You will be required to provide a palm vein scan each time you enter and exit the testing room.

Under no circumstance will you be allowed to go to your locker or leave a test center during a break. If you do leave the testing center, you may not be allowed to complete your examination, and your grade will be invalidated.

Grades

After you complete an examination, you will be handed a detailed grade report before you leave the testing center. You can also check your grade on the Pearson VUE Web site. To access this information, go to www.pearsonvue.com and log in to your online account.

Academic Honesty and Test Security

We strongly recommend that you review the following policies and procedures relating to the testing process. If you have any questions about these policies, please contact UExcel at www.uexceltest.com/contact.

Academic Honesty

All test takers must agree to abide by the terms of the UExcel Nondisclosure Agreement before taking an examination. This agreement will be presented on screen at the Pearson VUE testing center prior to the start of your examination. Only by accepting the terms of the agreement will you be able to proceed with your examination. If you choose not to accept the terms of this agreement, your examination will be terminated and you will be required to leave the testing center. Refer to www.uexceltest.com for complete policy information.

Student behavior will continue to be monitored post-administration, and electronic measures are used to monitor the security of test items and scan for illegal use of intellectual property on the Internet. This monitoring includes surveillance of Internet chat rooms, Web sites, and other public forums. Violators may be prosecuted by Pearson VUE or Excelsior College.

Contact Pearson VUE Test Security

UExcel places a high value on test security, and Pearson VUE has a Web site where test takers can report any cheating they may have observed during a test session. The site can also be used to report misconduct by a test center employee. This form is located at www.pearsonvue.com/contact/security.

Rules of Conduct and Behavior

Plan to arrive at least 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for your appointment, you may not be allowed to take the exam.

The Test Administrator will provide you with an erasable note board that will be collected before you are allowed to leave the testing room. Removal of the erasable note board from the testing center may result in the invalidation of your examination.

No testing aids are permitted in the testing room. This includes beepers, calculators, books, pamphlets, rulers, cellular phones, dictionaries, translators, National Technology Services (NTS) hand-held computers, iPods, personal digital assistants (PDAs), a FLY Pentop computer, bags, and notes. Attempting to tamper with the operation of the computer can result in your dismissal from the examination.

A calculator will be available on screen at the test center for examinations requiring one. If at any time during the test you have a problem with your computer or need the Test Administrator for any reason, raise your hand to notify the Test Administrator.

Cancellation of Test Grades

UExcel exams are delivered in a proctored environment. If you are suspected of giving or receiving any assistance with the test, you may be dismissed from the examination room without being allowed to complete the test.

UExcel reserves the right to cancel test grades when there is reason to believe the grades are invalid. Cases of irregularities in the test administration process, falsifying one's identity, impersonating another examinee (proxy testing), or other student misconduct may result in UExcel cancelling your test grades. When an examinee's test grade(s) is cancelled, the examinee is always notified prior to UExcel taking this action.

Section 3 – After the Test

Grade Reports and Transcripts

Interpreting your Grade Reports

A detailed grade report will be handed to you as you leave the testing center. It will identify the percentage of test items that you answered correctly in each content area. If you wish to retake a failed exam or enhance your performance in a particular content area, you should plan to focus especially on those areas where your level of performance, as indicated by the percentage correct in the content area, is 75% or lower. Please see the information in this document related to Limits on Retaking UExcel Exams. After completing the College Writing examination, you will receive your actual test results or information on when you can expect to receive your results before you leave the test center.

Official Examinations Transcript

UExcel reports the results of the examinations with a letter grade on an official Excelsior College transcript. Transcripts are released in compliance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, with the condition that no third party may be given access to this information without the written consent of the student.

If you would like an official transcript listing your UExcel examination(s) sent to an institution, employer, regulatory board, or other organization, you may place an online request by going to www.uexceltest.com/credit.

For questions regarding the transcript service, please contact Test Administration at Excelsior College at testadmn@excelsior.edu. If you have taken UExcel exams only, and have no academic history with Excelsior College, your transcript is free. Candidates with an Excelsior College history must pay the standard \$12 transcript fee because both UExcel and Excelsior College Examinations grades are reported on the transcript. Your request will be processed within 5–7 business days.

Transcript Rush Fee

A Transcript Rush Fee of \$30 will be charged for **all rush requests**. Your rush request will be processed within two-to-three business days of our receipt of your request. If you require a faster turnaround, we can fulfill this requirement if you provide a charge card authorization to have your transcript sent via overnight mail. The charge for overnight mail is \$11.

Using UExcel Examinations at Other Colleges and Universities

UExcel examinations are an efficient and affordable way to earn credit, waive degree requirements, or assign placement for successful completion of one or more of these exams. The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated and made college credit recommendations for UExcel examinations.

The ACE CREDIT by Examination review is a thorough process by a team including faculty from relevant academic disciplines and a psychometrician that reviews exams, testing protocols, and procedures to ensure that learning outcomes align with courses currently being taught at accredited institutions. The team also recommends the equivalent amount of academic credit that may be transferable to a college or university.

For more information visit www.acenet.edu/credit.

Before registering for your exam, verify with your academic department/advisor that their institution will accept the UExcel examination you have selected, since acceptance policies will vary by department within individual institutions.

Ask your academic advisor to consider UExcel examinations as a credit-earning option for you and your degree completion plan. You can also address any questions regarding the minimum required grade and/or the amount of credit awarded for the examination. Colleges are not required to grant the amount of credit recommended by the American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) or the UExcel credit-by-exam program.

If your desired institution does not yet accept UExcel examinations, ask your academic advisor to consider this credit-earning option. Your advisor may contact the Assessment Unit at Excelsior College at **888.647.2388 (ext. 166)** for additional information regarding the ACE CREDIT-evaluated UExcel examination series. Should you or your advisor wish to learn more about the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service, visit the ACE Web site at www.acenet.edu, then click on the following:

- Programs & Services
- College Credit Recommendation Service
- College & University Services

The ACE College Credit Recommendation Service office, located in the Center for Lifelong Learning, may also be reached by email at credit@ace.nche.edu or by phone at **866.205.6267**.