The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Albany, New York 12234

REGENTS COMPETENCY TEST IN SCIENCE

Restricted English and Alternative Language Editions
Directions for Administering and Scoring

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Regents Competency Test in Science is provided in English and alternative language editions. All editions are provided in *restricted form*. Only students actually taking the test may read the questions in the test booklet. School personnel are ***not*** permitted to open an envelope containing a test booklet or to examine a test booklet for any reason other than to read the test to students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Programs call for this accommodation. **All test booklets, both used and unused, and all scrap paper must be returned to the Department. Student answer papers should be kept on file in the school for one year. Photocopying and/or retaining copies of the test booklet are strictly prohibited.**

The principal must certify that the restricted editions of the Regents Competency Test in Science were administered in strict conformity with the rules for their administration. Each teacher or proctor employed in the conduct of this test must, therefore, read with care the instructions for administering examinations contained in the current edition of *Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests and Proficiency Examinations: School Administrator's Manual*. In addition, each teacher or proctor administering restricted forms should become thoroughly familiar with the directions below.

The Regents Competency Test in Science contains a total of 70 questions. There are 69 multiple-choice questions for which the student is to select the correct answer from among the four choices given and one completion question for which the student is to provide the answer.

Although the Regents Competency Test in Science is scheduled for administration during a 3-hour examination session, there is no time limit for the test. For most students, the working time for the test will be less than three hours. However, students should be given as much time as necessary to answer as many questions as they are capable of answering.

Proctors must not permit students to leave the testing room before the Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines:

Uniform Statewide Admission Deadlines

	Morning Examinations	*Afternoon Examinations*
January/June	10:00 a.m.	2:00 p.m.
August	9:15 a.m.	1:15 p.m.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING RESTRICTED EDITIONS

1. *Sealed Envelopes:* Each restricted test booklet will be enclosed in a sealed envelope, which must be distributed to the student with the seal intact. Each student is to break the seal of the envelope at the time designated. **Deputies, proctors, and teachers are *not* permitted to open a test envelope or to read the questions in a test booklet for any reason except as described in these directions.**

   A gummed blue label is included in each restricted test envelope for use in resealing the envelope. As each student finishes the test, he or she should be told to:

   a. Put all scrap paper inside the front cover of the test booklet.

   b. Place the test booklet (but not the answer sheets) in the envelope so that the booklet number printed in the lower left corner of the test booklet appears in the window of the envelope. The student's answer sheets should be kept outside of the envelope so that school personnel may score them.

   c. Remove the backing from the gummed label and apply the label across the flap in the space outlined by dotted lines.

   d. Sign his or her name across the label and onto the envelope.

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2. *Answer Sheets for the English Language Edition*: The Department provides a separate hand- or machine-scorable answer sheet on which students are to record their answers to the 69 multiple-choice questions. In addition, a hand-scorable-only answer sheet is printed as a detachable last page of the test booklet. Students are to record their responses to completion question 70 on the detachable answer sheet.

   Instruct students to use a No. 2 pencil for recording their responses on the machine-scorable answer sheet. The answer sheet may be either hand scored or scored on NCS equipment. For purposes of machine processing, one side of the answer sheet includes several grids for recording various types of student identification information.

   If the answer sheets are to be machine scored, the school must develop uniform written instructions about the completion of these grids and provide the instructions to all proctors administering the test. Such instructions should be based upon careful consideration of the types of student and score information the school needs, as well as upon the processing requirements of the scoring center that the school is using. This answer sheet is not suitable for use with the alternative language editions of the test.

3. *Answer Sheet for the Alternative Language Editions*: For these editions, an answer sheet is printed as a detachable last page of the test booklet. *This answer sheet must be hand scored*. Students record their responses to the 69 multiple-choice questions on Side A and to completion question 70 on Side B of the answer sheet.

   At the end of the test, collect the answer sheets separately from the test envelopes. Scoring the answer sheets is a responsibility of the school.

4. *Safeguarding Test Booklets:* Take extreme care that all copies of the restricted test can be accounted for at all times. If necessary, make a written record of individual booklet numbers to accompany the transfer of the test envelopes from the principal to the principal's deputies. **Do not leave test booklets unattended *under any circumstances!***

5. *Use of Scrap Paper:* Students must record all answers to the test questions on the appropriate answer sheet. However, they may use scrap paper as well as the blank spaces of the test booklet to work out the answers to the questions. The student's name and test booklet number must appear on each sheet of scrap paper. The school is responsible for providing scrap paper for the test takers.

   After finishing the test, each student must put all scrap paper (used and unused) inside the front cover of the test booklet before putting the booklet inside the envelope. No scrap paper should be left on any desks. Proctors must take special care to see that no student leaves the examination room with scrap paper in his or her possession.

6. *Replacement of Defective Booklets:* If a student receives a defective test booklet, the proctor should provide the student with a new envelope, if one is available. (If no extra envelope is available, please call 518-474-8220 for instructions.)

   After receiving the new envelope, the student should break the seal and write the new test booklet number on the answer sheet above the old number. The student should then seal the defective test booklet in its original envelope. The proctor should write "Contains defective booklet" on the sealed envelope. Report all defective booklets in writing to the State Education Department. Include the name of the student and the booklet number.

7. *Errors in Envelope Procedures:* If a student inadvertently seals an answer sheet in the envelope or seals the envelope without enclosing the test booklet and/or scrap paper, the proctor should have the student open the envelope and remove the answer sheet or enclose the test booklet and scrap paper. The student should then reseal the envelope with tape. The proctor should note on the front of the envelope the reason for reopening the envelope.

   Report all errors in envelope procedure in writing to the State Education Department. Include the name of the student, the booklet number, and the reason for the irregularity.

8. *Test Materials to be Returned to the Department:*

   a. **Test Booklets**—All test booklets must be returned to the Department, unused booklets in the sealed envelopes and used booklets in envelopes with the gummed label properly attached and signed.

   b. **Scrap Paper**—Each student should place his or her scrap paper inside the front cover of the test booklet before placing the test booklet in the test envelope.

9. See page 9 of this booklet for detailed instructions that must be followed to ensure that students do not use communications devices while taking this test.

SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING RESTRICTED EDITIONS

Follow the procedures below when administering restricted editions to students. For the alternative language editions, explain the procedures to the students in the appropriate alternative language, if possible. If you do not speak the alternative language, describe each step slowly and clearly in English, demonstrating whenever possible.

1. Make sure that the desks have been cleared of books and papers and that each student has a No. 2 pencil and scrap paper.
2. Distribute one test envelope to each student. Hand the test envelope to each student individually to be sure that each student receives only one envelope. Distribute one answer sheet to each student taking the English edition of the test.
3. Hold up an envelope and show the students where they should print their name and the name of the school.
4. Show the students how to open the envelope by sliding a pencil under the sealed flap. The students should take out the test booklet and place the envelope (containing the blue label) on one side of their desk.
5. Ask students to check the front cover of their test booklet to ensure that they have the correct examination title. For the English language edition only, ask the students to check that the day, date, and time are correct for this examination session.
6. Instruct the students to open their test booklet to the last page, which is a detachable answer sheet, and to detach this answer sheet from the booklet.
7. Show the students the test booklet number in the lower left corner of each test booklet. Instruct the students to write their test booklet number on the heading of the detachable answer sheet and to fill in the rest of the heading. In addition, have them write their name and test booklet number on each sheet of scrap paper.
8. For the English language edition only, give students detailed directions concerning completion of the heading of the separate multiple-choice answer sheet and, if necessary for machine scoring, the marking of student identification grids. The proctor should check to be sure that all documents are properly identified.
9. Ask the students to read the information on the front of the test booklet. After they finish reading the information, instruct them to turn to page 3 and read the directions and sample question on that page. For students using an alternative language edition, the instructions to students may begin on page 2 rather than 3. As an aid to proctors, printed on page 8 of this publication is the English translation of the "Directions to Students" that appear inside the test booklet.
10. Make sure that each student understands the directions, the sample question, and how to mark the answer sheet. Remind the students that while they may use scrap paper and the blank spaces of the test booklet to work out answers to the questions, they must record all answers on the answer sheet.
11. Tell the students that they will have as much time as they need to finish the test and that they should raise their hand for help when they finish. Ask the students if they have any questions. After all questions have been answered, tell the students to turn to page 4 and begin working.
12. As the students work on the test, check to see if they appear to understand all directions and are marking their answer sheets properly.
13. **No one, *under any circumstances*, may interpret or explain examination questions to students, nor may anyone review or comment on the answer paper of a student while an examination is in progress.** In response to questions by students concerning the meaning or interpretation of examination questions, proctors should advise students to use their own best judgment.
14. As each student finishes the test and before he or she seals the envelope, make sure that the student has:
    a. Completed the heading on the answer sheet correctly.
    b. Signed the declaration on the answer sheet.
    c. Written his or her name and test booklet number on all scrap paper.
    d. Placed the scrap paper inside the front cover of the test booklet.
    e. Placed only the test booklet and scrap paper in the envelope so that the booklet number appears in the window of the envelope.
    f. Written his or her name and the name of the school on the appropriate lines on the envelope.
15. After each student has sealed the envelope securely, make sure that the student places the blue label across the flap in the outlined space and signs his or her name across the blue label and onto the envelope.

16. After all students have handed in their test materials, put the envelopes in numerical order and return ***all*** of them to the principal. The principal should then store all envelopes in locked Regents boxes.

NOTE: No one, *under any circumstances*, including the student, may alter the student's responses on the test once the student has handed in his or her test materials. Teachers and administrators who engage in inappropriate conduct with respect to administering and scoring State examinations may be subject to disciplinary actions in accordance with Sections 3020 and 3020-a of Education Law or to action against their certification pursuant to Part 83 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING RESTRICTED EDITIONS

Restricted editions of the Regents Competency Test in Science must be scored without reference to the test booklet. The scoring materials provided for the test and the directions below contain all information necessary for scoring the test.

Take care that the correct scoring key is used. The key provided for the English edition ***cannot*** be used to score the restricted alternative language editions.

A student's raw score on the Regents Competency Test in Science is the total number of questions that the student answers correctly. **The minimum passing score is 65%, which is a minimum of 46 correct answers.** Page 6 of these directions contains a table for converting the number of correct answers to the percent correct.

Hand Scoring the Answer Sheet

The scoring key for the English edition has been printed on translucent paper in the same format as the answer sheet. This key is labeled "Use for Scoring Restricted English Edition Only." **This key is appropriate for scoring *only* the English edition of the test.** The scoring key for the alternative language editions has also been printed on translucent paper in the same format as the answer sheet. This key is labeled "Use for Scoring Restricted Alternative Language Editions Only."

The scoring keys contain correct answers for completion question 70. For an answer requiring a table or graph, accept only those variations given on the scoring key.

- Indicate that credit has been given for a correct answer to completion question 70 by darkening the circle for choice 1.
- Indicate an incorrect answer (no credit) by darkening the circle for choice 2. If the student has not answered a question, leave the circles blank.

After coding the answer for completion question 70, scan each answer sheet to make certain that the student has marked only one answer for each question. If a student has marked two or more answers, draw a line with colored pencil through all the answer circles so that no credit will be allowed for that question in scoring. Place the scoring key over the answer sheet so that the box indicating the correct answer for each question corresponds to the row of answer circles for that question. When the key is aligned properly with the answer sheet, each correct answer will be visible in a box.

To obtain the total raw score, count the number of correct answers for multiple-choice questions and for completion question 70. Record the student's total raw score (total number correct) in the box provided in the upper right corner of the answer sheet.

Machine Scoring the Separate English Edition of the Answer Sheet

Before the answer sheet for the English language edition can be machine scored, the answer to completion question 70 must be coded as right or wrong by filling in the appropriate circle for the question. If the student has answered the question correctly, the circle containing the number 1 should be filled in. If the student has answered the question incorrectly, the circle containing the number 2 should be filled in. If the student has not answered the question, the circles should be left blank. Use a No. 2 pencil for all coding.

In addition to coding the answers for completion question 70, each answer sheet should be scanned to be sure that the student information grids and the answer circles for the multiple-choice questions have been filled in with heavy pencil marks and that all stray marks have been erased.

For the convenience of scoring centers, a list of correct answers is printed on the scoring key. Schools should be sure to check with their scoring center concerning the procedures to be followed in preparing the answer sheets for scoring.

When the teacher scoring is completed, test scores must be considered final and must be entered onto students' permanent records.

Principals and other administrative staff in a school or district do not have the authority to set aside the scores arrived at by the teachers and rescore student test papers or to change any scores assigned through the procedures described in these directions and in the scoring materials provided by the Department. Any principal or administrator found to have done so, except in the circumstances described below, will be in violation of Department policy regarding the scoring of State examinations. Teachers and administrators who violate Department policy with respect to scoring State examinations may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Sections 3020 and 3020-a of Education Law or to action against their certification pursuant to Part 83 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

On rare occasions, an administrator may learn that an isolated error occurred in a final score for a student or in recording students' scores in their permanent records. For example, the final score may have been based on an incorrect summing of the student's raw scores for parts of the test or from a misreading of the conversion chart. When such errors involve no more than five students' final scores on any test and when such errors are detected within four months of the test date, the principal may arrange for the corrected score to be recorded in the student's permanent record. However, in all such instances, the principal must advise the Office of State Assessment in writing that the student's score has been corrected. The written notification to the Department must be signed by the principal or superintendent and must include the names of the students whose scores have been corrected, the name of the examination, the students' original and corrected scores, and a brief explanation of the nature of the scoring error that was corrected.

If an administrator has substantial reason to believe that the teachers scoring this test have failed to accurately score more than five student answer papers, the administrator must first obtain permission in writing from the Office of State Assessment before arranging for or permitting a rescoring of student papers. The written request to the Office of State Assessment must come from the superintendent of a public school district or the chief administrative officer of a nonpublic or charter school and must include the examination title, date of administration, and number of students whose papers would be subject to such rescoring. This request must also include a statement explaining why the administrator believes that the teachers failed to rate appropriately and, thus, why he or she believes rescoring the examination papers is necessary. As part of this submission, the school administrator must make clear his or her understanding that such extraordinary re-rating may be carried out only in accordance with the scoring guidelines presented above and fully utilizing the scoring materials for this test provided by the Department.

The Department sometimes finds it necessary to notify schools of a revision to the scoring key and rating guide for an examination. Should this occur after the scoring is completed, the principal is authorized to have appropriate members of the scoring committee review students' responses only to the specific question(s) referenced in the notification and to adjust students' final examination scores when appropriate. Only in such circumstances is the school not required to notify or obtain approval from the Department to correct students' final examination scores.

RETURNING MATERIALS TO THE DEPARTMENT

After the scoring has been completed and an accurate record has been made of all students' scores, return all envelopes containing test booklets (both used and unused) and all scrap paper to the Department in the Regents box. Arrange the envelopes in numerical order. **Note that photocopying or retaining test booklets is strictly prohibited.**

Keep student answer sheets on file in the school for one year.

CONVERSION TABLE: NUMBER OF CORRECT ANSWERS AND PERCENT CORRECT

Number Correct	Percent Correct	Number Correct	Percent Correct	Number Correct	Percent Correct	Number Correct	Percent Correct
70	100%	52	74	34	49	16	23
69	99	51	73	33	47	15	21
68	97	50	71	32	46	14	20
67	96	49	70	31	44	13	19
66	94	48	69	30	43	12	17
65	93	47	67	29	41	11	16
64	91	46	66	28	40	10	14
63	90	45	64	27	39	9	13
62	89	44	63	26	37	8	11
61	87	43	61	25	36	7	10
60	86	42	60	24	34	6	9
59	84	41	59	23	33	5	7
58	83	40	57	22	31	4	6
57	81	39	56	21	30	3	4
56	80	38	54	20	29	2	3
55	79	37	53	19	27	1	1
54	77	36	51	18	26	0	0
53	76	35	50	17	24		

Regents Competency Test in Science—Restricted English Edition

Directions on Page 3 of Student's Test Booklet

DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS

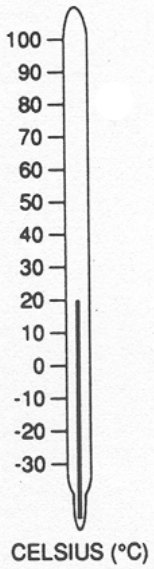
Questions 1 through 69 on this test are multiple-choice questions. Read each question carefully. Decide which of the choices given is the *best* answer, based on science principles. On the separate answer sheet, mark your answer in the row of circles for each question by filling in the circle that has the same number as the answer you have chosen.

Read the sample question below.

Sample Question

What temperature reading is shown on the thermometer?

(1) –30°C
(2) 20°C
(3) 70°C
(4) 100°C



The correct answer is **20ºC**, which is choice number **2.** On your answer sheet for the multiple-choice questions, look at the box showing the row of answer circles for the sample question. Since choice number **2** is the correct answer for the sample question, the circle with the number **2** has been filled in.

Answer questions 1 through 69 on this test in the same way. Mark only one answer for each question. If you want to change an answer, be sure to erase your first mark completely. Then mark the answer you want. You may use scrap paper and the blank spaces on this test booklet to work out the answers to the questions, but be sure to mark all your answers for questions 1 through 69 on the separate answer sheet.

Answer question 70 in the space provided on the last page of this test booklet. Do not make any marks for question 70 on the separate answer sheet. Specific directions for answering this question are given in the test booklet.

When you are told to start working, turn the page and begin with question 1. Work carefully and answer all the questions. Your score will be the number of questions you answer correctly.

English Translation of "DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS"
(may begin on page 2 or page 3 of student's test booklet)

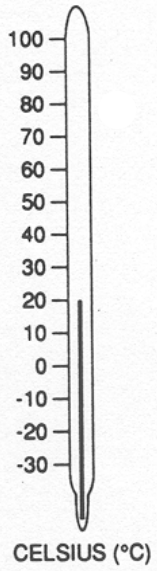
Questions 1 through 69 on this test are multiple-choice questions. Read each question carefully. Decide which of the choices given is the *best* answer, based on science principles. On Side A of the detachable answer sheet, mark your answer in the row of circles for each question by filling in the circle that has the same number as the answer you have chosen.

Read the sample question below.

Sample Question

What temperature reading is shown on the thermometer?

(1) –30°C
(2) 20°C
(3) 70°C
(4) 100°C



The correct answer is **20° C**, which is choice number **2**. On Side A of your answer sheet, look at the box showing the row of answer circles for the sample question. Since choice number **2** is the correct answer for the sample question, the circle with the number **2** has been filled in.

Answer questions 1 through 69 on this test in the same way. Mark only one answer for each question. If you want to change an answer, be sure to erase your first mark completely. Then mark the answer you want. You may use scrap paper and the blank spaces of this test booklet to work out the answers to the questions, but be sure to mark all your answers for questions 1 through 69 on Side A of your answer sheet.

Do not make any marks for question 70 on Side A of your answer sheet. Answer question 70 in the space provided on Side B of your answer sheet. Specific directions for answering this question are given in the test booklet.

When you are told to start working, turn the page and begin with question 1. Work carefully and answer all the questions. Your score will be the number of questions you answer correctly. The passing score is 46 correct answers.

Use of Communications Devices

At the beginning of each test administration, proctors must read the following statement to all students taking secondary-level State examinations:

> You may **not** use any communications device while taking a State examination, either in the room where the test is being administered or while on a supervised break (such as a restroom visit). Such devices include, but are not limited to, cellular telephones, pagers, CD and audiocassette players, radios, MP3 players, Personal Digital Assistants, video devices, and associated headphones, headsets, microphones, or earplugs.
>
> If your cell phone rings or vibrates, you may not look at or answer it. You may not send, receive, or look at text messages. If your pager beeps or vibrates, you may not look at it. You must therefore turn these and other such devices **OFF right now and secure them underneath your desk** [or in the location specified by the principal]. You must not turn such devices back on until you have completed your examination, handed it in, and left the examination room. Your examination will be invalidated and no score will be calculated for you if you use any such device or related communications technology for any reason under any circumstances, or if you wear headphones while in the testing room.

For Principals and Proctors:

Any student observed to be using any communications device while taking a State examination must be directed to turn it off and put the device away immediately. In order to allow for all possible outcomes of procedural due process, the student should be allowed to complete the examination.

The incident must be reported promptly to the school principal. If the principal determines that the student was using a communications device during the test administration, the student's test must be invalidated; no score may be calculated for that student.

The incident must be reported in writing to the Office of State Assessment, as is the case for all testing irregularities, misadministration, or other violations of State testing policy and procedures.

Note: Some students with disabilities may use certain recording/playback devices **ONLY IF** this accommodation is specifically required as a provision of the student's Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Accommodation Plan. If not, the general policy on communications devices as provided above is in effect, and the school may not allow the use of any such equipment.