

**Q1: Did the cut scores change from 2015 to 2016?**

**A:** The cut scores did not change from 2015 to 2016. See the posted cut scores at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math> (the "Scale Score to Performance Level Conversion Charts" for 2015 and 2016).

**Q2: What is "equating" and why did the State participate in equating in 2016?**

**A:** Equating is a standard process that is followed in every state almost every year in every assessment program.

The purpose of the 2016 equating was to maintain the level of difficulty established by the standard setting process in 2013, when 95 teachers from across the state recommended the level of difficulty necessary to achieve proficiency (Level 3) and partial proficiency (Level 2).

Based on student performance on common anchor test questions (the same items used on different years' tests), the raw scores needed for each performance level were adjusted slightly to ensure that scale scores and performance levels are comparable from year to year. If the test is slightly easier, the number of raw score points needed to earn a performance level may increase slightly in order to maintain the performance standard. If the test is slightly harder, the number of raw score points needed to earn a performance level may decrease slightly in order to maintain the performance standard.

As you know, equating occurs each year with Regents Exams, where the cut score needed for passing (65) remains the same, but the raw score needed to achieve a cut score of 65 changes from year to year.

A good document that helps explain this can be found at [http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RD\\_Connections16.pdf](http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/RD_Connections16.pdf).

**Q3: Why did the raw scores change?**

**A:** The raw scores that map to each of the scale score cut scores often change with each subsequent test administration. See the "Raw Score to Scale Score Conversion Charts" at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math>. The number of raw points necessary to achieve each performance level change due to several factors. These factors include equating and changes in number of raw points available on each test. For instance, the total number raw scores for ELA and Mathematics went down this year in all grades due to the shortening of the tests (i.e., removal of one reading passage and items).