

ALASKA STATE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, AND LAND SURVEYORS

FE/FS COMPUTER BASED TESTING

NCEES is scheduled to complete the transition of the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) and Fundamentals of Surveying (FS) exams to computer-based testing (CBT) on January 1, 2014. The transition to CBT involves significant changes to the format of the exams and the procedures for administering them. NCEES Exam Development Policy 9 requires that member boards be formally notified one year in advance of any change in exam administration procedures or format that requires dissemination to applicants. Those changes are outlined below.

In 2010, the Council approved a motion that NCEES prepare and administer the FE and FS exams via CBT at the earliest feasible date. Since that action, NCEES has worked with our selected CBT vendor, Pearson VUE, to complete the transition of these exams from a pencil-and-paper format to a CBT delivery system. A content review has been completed for the FE and FS exams, which resulted in new specifications for each exam:

- [FE exam specifications for 2014](#)
- [FS exam specifications for 2014](#)

The transition to CBT involves significant changes to the format of the exams and the procedures for administering them. The following information concerning the conversion of the FE and FS exams is provided for your information and dissemination as appropriate:

- The October 2013 exam administration will be the last administration of the FE and FS exams in pencil- and-paper format. Effective January 1, 2014, the FE and FS exams will only be offered via CBT.
- The Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) and Principles and Practice of Surveying (PS) exams will continue to be offered twice each year (April and October) in pencil-and-paper format, pending further action by NCEES exam committees.
- Computer-based FE and FS exams will be administered only at approved Pearson VUE testing centers.
- Registration for all exams will open Monday, November 4, 2013. The first available seating at a Pearson VUE testing center for the FE and FS exams will be Thursday, January 2, 2014. Registration for the PE and PS exams in pencil-and-paper format will be for the April 2014 administration.
- There will be four testing windows for the FE and FS exams annually. Each of these windows will last two months, with a month between them. Therefore, exam appointments will be available in January and February, with no exams offered in March; exam appointments available in April and May, with no exams offered in June, etc.
- Candidates for a CBT exam may take the exam only one time per testing window and no more than three times in a 12-month period.
- Effective with the opening of registration on November 4, 2013, candidates registering to take the FE or FS exam will be required to pay NCEES directly for all exam-related fees. This will be included as a part of the online registration process and will require payment with MasterCard or Visa.
- The FE and FS exams will be six hours in length, which will include a tutorial, breaks, the exam, and a brief survey at the conclusion of the exam.
- The FE and FS exams will continue to be closed book. Supplied reference material for the exams will be electronic and will be available on the NCEES website.
- Examinees will be allowed to bring and use NCEES-approved calculators on CBT exams.
- Sample exams for the computer-based FE and FS will be available for purchase after the October 2013 exam administration.

The NCEES Committee on Member Board Administrators has worked with the NCEES staff to develop two options to register candidates for the FE and FS exams, effective with the opening of registration on November 4, 2013:

Option 1: Automatic—

Examinees will be required to attest to the following statement:

“Passage of the FE/FS exam alone does not ensure certification as an engineer/surveyor intern or engineer-/surveyor-in-training in any U.S. state or territory. To obtain certification, you must file an application with an engineering/surveying licensing board and meet that board’s requirements.”

Once examinees attest to this statement, they are automatically approved to take the exam. Examinees are notified directly of their results and can typically log in to retrieve them within 48 hours of taking the exam. When a board receives an application for intern certification, the board would then verify the FE/FS results. (Several NCEES member boards already use this option.)

Option 2: Manual—The board must manually approve examinees for each exam attempt. Once approved by the board, examinees register with NCEES. Results can be released to boards or directly to the examinees, typically within 48 hours. **Note: The Alaska State Board of Registration for Architects, Engineers, and Land Surveyors is currently using this manual option.**

The NCEES exam committees, Computer-Based Testing Implementation Task Force, and NCEES staff continue to work to finalize details related to this significant change in the future delivery system of the FE and FS exams. We are also working with Pearson VUE to identify potential sites for new testing centers to ensure there is adequate seating capacity at locations convenient to our candidate population centers.

See also:

[What is CBT?](#)

[Which exams are transitioning?](#)

[Where will I take my exam?](#)