


2005 Explanation of Scores for Examinees

Enclosed is a report of your MCAT® scores. You are strongly urged to discuss your test results with your health professions advisor, who can help you interpret your scores and provide you with valuable counseling.

The sample test report below and the following explanatory material will help you and your college advisors interpret your MCAT scores as wisely and realistically as possible.

Sample Test Report

APRIL 2005			
TEST (SCALED) SCORES			
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	VERBAL REASONING	WRITING SAMPLE	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
07	08	N	08
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		TOTAL SCORE	
377-58-1994		23N	
SEX	DATE OF BIRTH	STATE OF RESIDENCE	
F	04/10/79	NJ	



MCAT Program Office
P.O. Box 4056
Iowa City, Iowa 52243
Telephone: (319) 337-1357

EXAMINEE'S REPORT OF SCORES

SAMPLE

DOE, JANE Q
PO BOX 12805
ANYTOWN, NJ 50821

This report will not be accepted by a medical school. You must have an official AAMC MCAT test report forwarded to the medical school by AMCAS.

©2005 Association of American Medical Colleges

Skills Assessed by the MCAT

A general description of the skills assessed by each section of the MCAT appears below:

Physical Sciences—a measure of the ability to understand basic concepts and to solve problems in the areas of physics and physically-related chemistry.

Verbal Reasoning—a measure of the ability to understand, evaluate, and apply information and arguments presented in prose texts.

Writing Sample—a measure of skill in developing a central idea; synthesizing concepts and ideas; presenting ideas cohesively and logically; and writing clearly, following accepted practices of grammar, syntax, and punctuation consistent with timed, first-draft composition.

Biological Sciences—a measure of the ability to understand basic concepts and to solve problems in the areas of biology and biologically-related chemistry.

Scaled Scores for Multiple-Choice Sections

The two-digit numbers in the upper boxes on the left-hand side of your MCAT Report of Scores are the scaled scores that you achieved in each of the multiple-choice sections. The score scale for each section ranges from 1 (low) to 15 (high). The standard error of measurement for each section is one scaled score point.¹ Conversion of your raw scores (the number of correct answers recorded in each section of the test) to the 15-point scale serves to help minimize differences in test scores due to factors unrelated to your skill or knowledge. Two candidates of equal ability would be expected to achieve the same scaled score, even though there might be a slight difference in the raw scores which each of them obtained for the test.

Scaled Scores for the Writing Sample

The letter score in the upper box on the left-hand side of your MCAT Report of Scores is the scaled score you achieved on the Writing Sample. The score scale ranges from a low of J to a high of T. Each of your responses to the Writing Sample items was read and scored by at least two different readers. The letter score represents your combined

scores from all readers on both Writing Sample items. A score of “X” is assigned when either (or both) Writing Sample response is blank, illegible, written in a language other than English, or written on a topic other than the one assigned. You can see how your Writing Sample performance compares with that of other examinees by using the percentile rank ranges provided in Table 1, on a separate sheet.

Scores Obtained Under Nonstandard Conditions

When an asterisk is included on an MCAT score report, it indicates that nonstandard procedures were employed during the administration of the exam. Neither a description of the nonstandard testing condition nor the reason for test accommodations are reported to score recipients. In evaluating the scores obtained under nonstandard testing conditions, admission officials are encouraged to view them in conjunction with other information on academic achievement, for example, grade point averages, letters of recommendation, or accounts of research participation. Test score users are reminded that consistencies and disparities in the information provided by multiple sources of data help provide a more complete picture of the applicant’s qualifications. See the section entitled “How Scores Are Used by Medical Schools.”

Score Reporting

All 2003 and later MCAT scores will automatically be released to AMCAS and included in an examinee’s MCAT Testing History Report (THx Report—formerly known as Additional Score Report). THx Reports may be sent, at no cost, to non-AMCAS institutions (as well as anyone else that requires a copy of MCAT scores) at the examinee’s request. Scores from 1991–2002 will be included in the THx Report, but an applicant may still withhold previously unreleased scores by deselecting them in the THx Report request. The THx system is online at www.aamc.org/mcat.

¹The 15-interval scale was designed so that one scaled score point will represent an interval approximately one standard error of measurement wide.

Percentile Scores

So that each examinee may compare his or her performance on the MCAT with that of all individuals examined nationwide during the same test administration, the percentage of examinees receiving each scaled score (both numeric and alphabetic) and their percentile rank² ranges have been provided in Table 1, on a separate sheet. The scaled score mean and standard deviation for each multiple-choice section and the 25th, 50th (median), and 75th percentiles for the Writing Sample are also reported. The 25th percentile can be interpreted as the score level

below which 25 percent of examinees scored. The 50th percentile indicates the score level below which 50 percent of students scored. Likewise, the 75th percentile is the level below which 75 percent scored. This same information is also presented graphically in histograms. The four histograms display the score distribution for all examinees at a given administration for each section of the MCAT. The horizontal axis of the histogram displays the score levels. The vertical axis shows the percentage of examinees attaining each score level. You are encouraged to use that information to interpret your scores.

Hypothetical Examinee Score Distribution

Scaled Score	% Achieving Scaled Score	Range of Percentile Ranks
15	1.1	98.8 – 99.9
14	2.7	97 – 98.7
13	3.6	93 – 96
12	4.5	88 – 92
11	8.6	79 – 87
10	11.3	68 – 78
9	12.7	55 – 67
8	15.0	40 – 54
7	12.1	29 – 39
6	9.5	20 – 28
5	7.4	12 – 19
4	4.5	7 – 11
3	3.1	4 – 6
2	2.7	1.3 – 3
1	1.2	0 – 1.2

Scaled Score Mean – 8.0
Standard Deviation – 2.5

For each scaled score, a range of percentile ranks associated with that score is also presented. For a scaled score of 9, the hypothetical distribution indicates that while 12.7 percent of all examinees received this scaled score, individuals in that score interval performed better than 55 percent of all examinees. One may also infer from the range of percentile ranks associated with a scaled score of 9 that approximately 33 percent of examinees achieved a superior level of performance.

The mean scaled score or average level of performance for all examinees on the hypothetical distribution is 8.0. The standard deviation or measure of variability of scores around the mean is 2.5.

The figures given here are for illustration only. To arrive at similar interpretations for your test scores, you should use the current MCAT data provided in Table 1, on the separate sheet, to assess comparative levels of performance in each of the four areas of assessment.

²A percentile rank indicates the percentage of examinees falling at or below a given scaled score level.

How Scores Are Used by Medical Schools

In the selection process, most medical school admission committees give only moderate weight to the applicant's MCAT scores. Other factors considered include the applicant's college grades, breadth and difficulty of undergraduate coursework, letters of evaluation from undergraduate advisors, extracurricular activities, health-related work/research experience, and the personal interview. Information regarding academic accomplishments helps a committee determine whether an applicant is likely to complete the medical course of study successfully. In addition to scholastic achievements, an applicant's personal qualifications, such as responsibility, integrity, and motivation, are considered. Each admission committee tries to select from among its qualified applicants those who would benefit most from the type of medical education available at that particular school. For this reason, a medical school may sometimes select only one of two applicants who are apparently equally qualified. Because of the many factors on which selection is based, there is always an appreciable overlap in the distributions of MCAT scores of accepted and rejected medical school applicants.

Retaking the MCAT

If your performance on the MCAT is not to your satisfaction, you may wish to discuss the matter with your health professions advisor and consider retaking the test. When you apply to any medical school, your scores from all MCAT administrations are subject to being reported to the medical school as part of the admission information. Legitimate reasons for retaking the test include:

- Unusual discrepancy between college grades and MCAT scores
- Having taken the MCAT prematurely—that is, before the completion of most of the recommended introductory science courses
- Illness of more than a minor nature at the time of the test
- Recommendation by a member of the medical school admissions committee that the test be retaken
- Misunderstanding of the directions or incorrect recording of answers on the answer document

There is no limit to the number of times you may take the MCAT. However, if you have previously taken the MCAT three or more times, you must request and obtain special permission before taking the test again. This restriction applies even if the three or more times include instances when your answer documents were voided.

Other Sources of Information

For further information concerning the MCAT, the following sources are suggested:

- The MCAT section of *Medical School Admissions Requirements*, published annually by the AAMC,
- The *MCAT Essentials*, which is available online at www.aamc.org/mcat, and
- The MCAT Practice Tests, available online and in paper.

Copies of AAMC publications may be ordered from the AAMC Publications Section. The telephone number is (202) 828-0416. Publications may also be ordered online at www.aamc.org/mcat.

All questions concerning the distribution of official test reports to AMCAS participating medical schools should be directed to AMCAS. Call (202) 828-0600 or send an e-mail to amcas@aamc.org.

Questions concerning the distribution of official score reports to non-AMCAS schools should be directed to the MCAT office at AAMC via phone (202/828-0690) or e-mail (mcataamc.org).