

**Virginia**  
**Profile of State High School Exit Exam Policies**

<b><i>State exit exam policy</i></b>	All students must pass the Standards of Learning (SOL) end-of-course exams in order to earn a standard or advanced Virginia high school diploma.
Type of test	End-of-course
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the end-of-course assessments is to measure the achievement of students on the standards of learning adopted by the Virginia Board of Education for specific high school courses and to ensure that students graduating from Virginia schools have attained certain knowledge and skills. In Virginia, students must acquire a certain number of verified credits to earn a standard or advanced studies diploma. Students who pass a class and associated SOL end-of-course test are said to have earned a “verified” credit. For more specific information on graduation requirements and diploma options, visit:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/index.shtml">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/index.shtml</a> <a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/accreditation/index.shtml">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/accreditation/index.shtml</a></p> <p>In addition, end-of-course assessments in reading, mathematics, and science are used to meet the assessment and accountability requirements of NCLB.</p>
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for financial reasons	None
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for <i>other</i> reasons	New history & social science standards of learning adopted by the Virginia Board of Education in 2008 were fully implemented in 2010-11, and all history and social science end-of-course tests (world history and geography to 1500 A.D., world history and geography: 1500 A.D. to the present, Virginia and United States history, and world geography) have been revised to measure the new content. Because the history and social science tests contain new content, standard setting was conducted and new cut scores for the end-of-course tests were adopted by the Virginia Board of Education in January 2011.

Year first administered	1998
Year diplomas first withheld	2004
Subjects tested on exam	English: reading, English: writing, Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, biology, earth science, chemistry, world history and geography to 1500 A.D., world history and geography: 1500 A.D. to the present, Virginia and United States history, and world geography
Subjects required for graduation	English: reading English: writing, At least one mathematics At least one science At least one history and social science At least one additional test: may be mathematics, science, or history and social science
Grade exam first administered	Varies. Tests are administered whenever students complete the associated course. For example, a student who takes Algebra I in middle school would take the Algebra I end-of-course test at that time.
Grade(s) exam aligned to	The SOL tests are aligned to content standards for specific tested courses.
Number of retakes allowed <i>before</i> the end of grade 12	At least three retake opportunities are available each year. In addition, students who fail the exam with a score of 375-399 do not need to wait for the next regularly scheduled retest but may retake the test immediately using an alternate form (expedited retake policy).
Number of retakes allowed <i>after</i> grade 12	Students who have completed all graduation requirements except passing an end-of-course exam may continue to retake the needed exam(s) during each test administration. These students' tests are coded with a special designation that removes them from state accreditation calculations and NCLB reporting.
Is the exit exam used for No Child Left Behind	End-of-course assessments in reading, mathematics, and science are used to meet the

(NCLB) accountability purposes?	assessment and accountability requirements of NCLB.
Is the same cut score used for graduation and NCLB accountability purposes?	Yes
Considerations given to changing the cut score needed to pass the exam for graduation purposes in the past year	No
Alternate paths to graduation for students other than English language learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities	<p>Students may earn verified credits by taking substitute tests. The substitute tests include the Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, SAT II, TOEFL, APIEL, Cambridge International Examination, ACT, and CLEP tests. More information is available at <a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/substitute_tests_verified_credit.pdf">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/substitute_tests/substitute_tests_verified_credit.pdf</a></p> <p>Typically, less than 1% of end-of-course tests are substitute tests.</p> <p>Students who do not meet the requirements for a standard diploma or advanced diploma may receive a certificate of program completion, a general achievement diploma (GAD), or earn a GED</p> <p>All students are expected to demonstrate attainment of the content of a course in order to earn a verified credit for graduation.</p>
Determination of eligibility to pursue these alternate paths to graduation	Not applicable
Number and percentage of students who used alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	Not applicable

Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners	<p>No. Students who do not meet the requirements for a standard diploma or an advanced diploma may receive a certificate of program completion, a general achievement diploma, or earn a GED.</p> <p>There are, however, accommodations for English language learners taking the exit exams. For more information visit <a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/lep_guidelines.pdf">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/lep_guidelines.pdf</a></p>
Number and percentage of ELL students using alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	Not applicable
Alternate paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities	<p>Students with disabilities who do not meet the requirements for a standard or advanced diploma but meet the credit and literacy and numeracy requirements established by the state board of education may receive a modified standard diploma.</p> <p>Students with disabilities who do not meet the requirements for other diplomas but have completed the requirements of their individualized education program (IEP) may receive a special diploma.</p> <p>Accommodations are available for students with disabilities taking the exit exam. For more information visit: <a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/participation_va_accountability_system.pdf">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/participation/participation_va_accountability_system.pdf</a></p>
Number and percentage of students with disabilities using alternate paths in 2010-11 school year	Data not yet available
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for undergraduate admission purposes?	No

Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for placement purposes?	No
Are students who meet a certain standard on the state exit exam granted exemptions on college placement exams?	No
Can students receive any form of postsecondary education course credit for their performance on the exit exam?	No
Access to initial and cumulative pass rates on high school exit exams	The pass rates for high school end-of-course assessments may be found at: <a href="http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/school_report_card/index.shtml">http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/school_report_card/index.shtml</a> The pass rates for 2010-11 are not yet available.
State participation in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	Virginia has decided not to adopt the CCSS in either subject.
CCSS testing consortia membership	Virginia is a member of neither state consortium.
Impact of adoption of the CCSS on high school exit exam policies	Not applicable
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in English language arts with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Not applicable
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in	Not applicable

math with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	
Plans to maintain current exit exams in subjects other than English language arts and math once the Common Core State Standards are fully implemented	Not applicable
Will changes in state exit exams mentioned above make the exams more rigorous, less rigorous, or about the same?	Not applicable
Preparation for students and teachers to transition to new exam	Not applicable