

American Board of Family Medicine Certification Examination Performance Prediction Worksheet

The American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) created this worksheet to provide program directors and residents with information to help them understand what a resident's performance on the In-Training Examination (ITE) implies regarding how they might perform on the ABFM certification examination the following summer. Regardless of whether the resident is in their third year, this is a useful benchmark for comparison. This information is based on data derived from the 2008 ITE results and the 2009 summer administration of the ABFM certification examination. Please keep in mind that these tables reflect what has happened in the past, but do not constitute a promise of what will happen in the future.

Table 1 was created by selecting the cohort of 2008 third-year residents and examining their 2008 ITE score and their summer 2009 ABFM certification examination score. Using this data, the pass rate on the certification examination was computed for every possible ITE scaled score. It is important to note that some of the scaled-score values were unpopulated and others were based on a very small sample size. Please keep this in mind when assessing a resident's probability of passing. For example, if a candidate earned a score of 290, it is doubtful that this person actually would have a near 100% chance of passing, despite the value shown in the table, because it is based on only one person. Scores over 440 are reassuring, but it is important that residents not consider a high score as a guaranteed pass or license to slack off on exam preparation.

Table 2 was created using the same cohort as Table 1, but employs a different analytical approach. The mean ITE score was computed for each certification scaled score from 300 to 550. Using this table, it may be helpful for residents to see how previous residents with ITE scores closest to their score performed on the certification examination the following summer.

As the ABFM collects more data over the next few years, we expect that these predictions will become more accurate. We also expect to be able to aggregate data to make the results more stable and to eliminate most of the instances in which the results are not monotonically increasing. (Note that in Table 1 the pass rates for the ITE scores that range from 290 to 320 do not make sense. In Table 2, the same issue occurs in column 3 for certification examination scores from 360 to 390. These are examples of results that violate our expectations of a monotonically increasing function.)

If you have questions regarding this worksheet, please contact the ABFM psychometrics department at (888)995-5700 and ask to speak with Dr. Kenneth Royal, at extension 1226, or Dr. Thomas O'Neill, at extension 1225.

Table 1. Observed pass rates for candidates for initial certification on the 2009 summer examination grouped by 2008 ITE score

Score	N	N Passing	% Passing	Score	N	N Passing	% Passing
200	0	0		520	46	46	100
210	0	0		530	34	34	100
220	0	0		540	37	37	100
230	0	0		550	22	22	100
240	0	0		560	16	16	100
250	1	0	0	570	19	19	100
260	0	0		580	13	13	100
270	0	0		590	17	17	100
280	0	0		600	6	6	100
290	1	1	100	610	6	6	100
300	4	1	25	620	3	3	100
310	5	4	80	630	3	3	100
320	6	3	50	640	2	2	100
330	10	9	90	650	3	3	100
340	16	9	56	660	1	1	100
350	14	10	71	670	0	0	
360	39	29	74	680	0	0	
370	53	42	79	690	1	1	100
380	47	39	83	700	2	2	100
390	98	83	85	710	0	0	
400	104	96	92	720	0	0	
410	85	79	93	730	0	0	
420	130	122	94	740	0	0	
430	90	87	97	750	0	0	
440	139	138	99	760	0	0	
450	84	83	99	770	0	0	
460	139	137	99	780	0	0	
470	81	81	100	790	0	0	
480	112	112	100	800	1	1	100
490	57	57	100				
500	66	66	100				
510	92	92	100				

Note: These results do not include results from repeat test takers or diplomates attempting to recertify. The minimum passing standard on the 2009 primary certification examination was 390.

Table 2. Is the resident on the path to passing?

ITE Score PGY1 Mean (SD) -N	ITE Score ² PGY2 Mean (SD) -N	ITE Score ^{1,3} PGY3 Mean (SD) -N	2009 Certification Score
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	340.00 (0.0) – 1	300
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	360.00 (0.0) – 1	310
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	373.33 (11.547) – 3	320
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	340.00 (52.440) – 5	330
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	373.33 (21.602) – 6	340
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	381.43 (49.135) – 7	350
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	371.25 (43.30) – 16	360
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	395.91 (26.843) – 22	370
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	385.00 (30.368) – 28	380
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	393.78 (52.459) – 37	390
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	404.20 (32.519) – 50	400
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	408.79 (39.872) – 58	410
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	412.08 (33.762) – 53	420
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	413.43 (38.331) – 70	430
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	410.00 (36.324) – 68	440
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	420.41 (37.210) – 73	450
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	430.29 (38.309) – 69	460
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	430.12 (49.123) – 85	470
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	436.46 (41.269) – 96	480
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	440.84 (40.731) – 83	490
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	444.53 (37.382) – 95	500
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	456.41 (35.747) – 78	510
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	453.00 (40.487) – 90	520
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	472.72 (55.385) – 81	530
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	468.87 (41.937) – 71	540
-- (--) – 0	-- (--) – 0	476.76 (47.140) – 74	550

Note: To use this table, find the score closest to the resident's score in the column that represents their year of training. The aligned score in the 2009 Certification Score column to the far right is their expected score on the certification examination.

1. In fall 2009, only the comparisons of 2008 PGY3 residents to their summer 2009 certification examination score were available. Only summer examination results are used so that variance related to time lag is reduced.
2. In fall 2010, comparisons of 2008 PGY2 residents to their 2009 PGY3 scores and their summer 2010 certification examination scores will be available for this chart. In fall 2011, comparisons of 2008 PGY1 residents to their 2009 PGY2 scores, their 2010 PGY3 scores and their summer 2011 certification examination scores will be available.
3. Next to each mean ITE score the standard deviation (SD) of that mean is in parentheses and is followed by the number of observations on which it is based. The Certification Score is a grouping variable, not a mean, and consequently does not have a standard deviation.