Keystone Exams: Civics and Government
Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content

Pennsylvania Department of Education

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General Introduction to the Keystone Exam Assessment Anchors

Introduction

Since the introduction of the Keystone Exams, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has been working to create a set of tools designed to help educators improve instructional practices and better understand the Keystone Exams. The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, are one of the many tools the Department believes will better align curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices throughout the commonwealth. Without this alignment, it will not be possible to significantly improve student achievement across the Commonwealth.

How were Keystone Exam Assessment Anchors developed?

Prior to the development of the Assessment Anchors, multiple groups of PA educators convened to create a set of standards for each of the Keystone Exams. Enhanced standards, derived from a review of existing standards, focused on what students need to know and be able to do in order to be college and career ready.

Additionally, the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content statements were created by other groups of educators charged with the task of clarifying the standards assessed on the Keystone Exams. The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, have been designed to hold together or *anchor* the state assessment system and curriculum/instructional practices in schools.

Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, were created with the following design parameters:
- ➢ **Clear:** The Assessment Anchors are easy to read and are user friendly; they clearly detail which standards are assessed on the Keystone Exams.
- ➢ **Focused:** The Assessment Anchors identify a core set of standards that could be reasonably assessed on a large-scale assessment, which will keep educators from having to guess which standards are critical.
- ➢ **Rigorous:** The Assessment Anchors support the rigor of the state standards by assessing higher-order and reasoning skills.
- ➢ **Manageable:** The Assessment Anchors define the standards in a way that can be easily incorporated into a course to prepare students for success.

How can teachers, administrators, schools, and districts use these Assessment Anchors?

The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, can help focus teaching and learning because they are clear, manageable, and closely aligned with the Keystone Exams. Teachers and administrators will be better informed about which standards will be assessed. The Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content should be used along with the Standards and the Curriculum Framework of the Standards Aligned System (SAS) to build curriculum, design lessons, and support student achievement.

The Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content are designed to enable educators to determine when they feel students are prepared to be successful in the Keystone Exams. An evaluation of current course offerings, through the lens of what is assessed on those particular Keystone Exams may provide an opportunity for an alignment to ensure student preparedness.

How are the Assessment Anchors organized?

The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, are organized into cohesive blueprints, each structured with a common labeling system that can be read like an outline. This framework is organized first by module, then by Assessment Anchor, followed by Anchor Descriptor, and then finally, at the greatest level of detail, by an Eligible Content statement. The common format of this outline is followed across the Keystone Exams.

Here is a description of each level in the labeling system for the Keystone Exams:

➢ **Module:** The Assessment Anchors are organized into two thematic modules for each of the Keystone Exams. The module title appears at the top of each page. The module level is important because the Keystone Exams are built using a module format, with each of the Keystone Exams divided into two equally-sized test modules. Each module is made up of two or more Assessment Anchors.

➢ **Assessment Anchor:** The Assessment Anchor appears in the shaded bar across the top of each Assessment Anchor table. The Assessment Anchors represent categories of subject matter that anchor the content of the Keystone Exams. Each Assessment Anchor is part of a module and has one or more Anchor Descriptors unified under it.

➢ **Anchor Descriptor:** Below each Assessment Anchor is a specific Anchor Descriptor. The Anchor Descriptor level provides further details that delineate the scope of content covered by the Assessment Anchor. Each Anchor Descriptor is part of an Assessment Anchor and has one or more Eligible Content unified under it.

➢ **Eligible Content:** The column to the right of the Anchor Descriptor contains the Eligible Content statements. The Eligible Content is the most specific description of the content that is assessed on the Keystone Exams. This level is considered the assessment limit and helps educators identify the range of the content covered on the Keystone Exams.

➢ **Enhanced Standard:** In the column to the right of each Eligible Content statement is a code representing one or more Enhanced Standards that correlate to the Eligible Content statement. Some Eligible Content statements include annotations that indicate certain clarifications about the scope of an eligible content.

What impact will the implementation of the K–12 Common Core Standards have on the content of this document?

It is anticipated that there will be significant alignment between PA's Academic Standards and the Common Core. Every effort will be made to ensure that the alignment of the standards to the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content is maintained. As more information becomes available, PDE will inform state educators.

Standards Aligned System — http://www.pdesas.org/   **Pennsylvania Department of Education —** www.education.state.pa.us

MODULE 1—Government: Forms and Functions   **Draft—October 12, 2011**

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.1.1 Purpose and Functions of Government		

Anchor Descriptor		Eligible Content		Enhanced Standard
C.1.1.1	**Evaluate the development and impact of domestic policy.**	**C.1.1.1.1**	Assess the social and economic impact of various forms of revenue collection and government spending.	5.3.C.I; 6.3.C.I; 6.3.C.C
		C.1.1.1.2	Analyze the role of the federal government in creating, approving, and implementing domestic policy.	5.4.W.C; 5.1.C.D; 5.4.12.C
		C.1.1.1.3	Define the purposes and functions of governmental and non-governmental organizations in implementing domestic policy.	5.3.C.B; 5.3.C.C; 5.3.C.G; 6.3.C.B
		C.1.1.1.4	Analyze how the opinions and beliefs of various groups influence policy making at the federal, state, and local levels.	5.3.C.G; 5.3.C.H; 6.5.U.B; 8.2.U.A; 8.3.C.A; 8.3.U.A
C.1.1.2	**Explain how U.S. foreign policy is developed and analyze its domestic and global impacts.**	**C.1.1.2.1**	Analyze the role of the federal government in creating, approving, and implementing foreign policy.	5.3.C.B; 5.4.C.A; 5.4.C.B; 5.4.W.C; 6.4.C.C; 8.3.C.A
		C.1.1.2.2	Explain the purposes and functions of governmental and non-governmental organizations.	5.4.C.A; 5.4.C.B; 6.3.C.D; 8.3.C.A
		C.1.1.2.3	Evaluate how continuity and change in U.S. foreign policy influences international relationships and domestic issues.	5.4.C.E; 8.4.C.D; 8.4.C.A; 8.4.C.C; 8.1.C.B; 6.3.C.D; 6.3.C.C; 5.4.C.B; 7.1.C.A; 7.3.C.A; 5.4.C.A;

C.1.1.3	Analyze the evolution of civil and human rights and explain the role that governments play in protecting those rights.	C.1.1.3.1	Analyze the development of historic and contemporary human and civil rights.	5.1.C.A; 5.1.C.C; 5.1.C.D; 5.1.C.E
		C.1.1.3.2	Analyze the protection of civil and human rights by federal and state governments by explaining the sources, purposes, and scope of those rights.	5.1.C.A; 5.1.C.C; 5.1.C.D; 5.1.C.E
		C.1.1.3.3	Evaluate how civil and human rights are exercised, protected, or curtailed by governments, individuals, or organizations.	5.1.C.A; 5.1.C.C; 5.1.C.F; 5.2.C.A

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR			
C.1.2 Forms of Government/Significant Documents			
Anchor Descriptor		**Eligible Content**	**Enhanced Standard**
C.1.2.1	**Analyze the characteristics of and methods employed by various systems of government to achieve their goals.**	**C.1.2.1.1** Compare and assess how various governments are organized and operate and assess citizen access to political participation within the various forms of government.	5.2.C.A; 5.3.C.C; 5.3.W.J; 8.1.C.B
		C.1.2.1.2 Analyze how power is transferred in various forms of government and the level of democracy indicated by the transfer of power in a government.	5.3.C.E; 5.3.W.J; 8.1.C.B
		C.1.2.1.3 Compare the legal structure of various types of government and analyze the level of citizen participation in the development and enforcement of the laws of each type of government.	5.3.C.F; 8.1.C.B
		C.1.2.1.4 Evaluate how governments and political figures use media to promote their policies.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.H
C.1.2.2	**Describe and analyze local, state, and federal roles in policy making by citing evidence of their authority to do so.**	**C.1.2.2.1** Appraise the principles and ideals expressed in historical documents and determine how they impact the actions of the contemporary U.S. government.	5.1.C.D; 5.1.C.E; 8.2.C.C; 8.3.C.B; 8.4.C.B
		C.1.2.2.2 Analyze the principles, ideals, and constitutional foundations that impact the actions of the contemporary Pennsylvania state and local governments.	5.1.C.C; 5.1.C.D; 5.3.C.F; 8.2.C.C; 8.3.C.B; 8.3.C.C
		C.1.2.2.3 Apply arguments about the role of government to local, state, and national issues of governance.	5.1.C.B; 5.1.C.C; 5.3.C.B; 8.1.C.B

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR			
C.1.3 **Processes of Government**			
Anchor Descriptor		**Eligible Content**	**Enhanced Standard**
C.1.3.1	**Analyze the structure, organization, and operation of various levels of government as they relate to the creation of legislation and the enforcement of laws.**	**C.1.3.1.1** Evaluate the structure of the government of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with the structure of the U.S. government and compare the process of amending the Pennsylvania Constitution with the process of amending the U.S. Constitution.	5.1.C.D; 5.1.C.E; 5.3.C.B; 8.1.C.B; 8.2.C.B
		C.1.3.1.2 Analyze the specific duties of each branch of government at all levels of government and examine the process of checks and balances among the three branches of government.	5.1.C.D
		C.1.3.1.3 Summarize the legislative process in the Pennsylvania General Assembly and the U.S. Congress.	5.3.C.A; 8.2.C.B
C.1.3.2	**Analyze and describe election processes.**	**C.1.3.2.1** Describe and compare election processes in the United States and in Pennsylvania.	5.3.C.E
		C.1.3.2.2 Analyze the effectiveness of election processes to support democratic ideals.	5.2.C.A; 5.2.C.D; 5.3.C.E
		C.1.3.2.3 Evaluate influences on election processes and the actions taken to address them.	5.2.C.D; 5.3.C.E
		C.1.3.2.4 Analyze historic barriers to voting rights and analyze actions taken to expand suffrage at the state and national levels.	5.3.C.E; 8.3.C.D; 5.1.C.F

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ASSESSMENT ANCHOR			
C.1.4 **Interpretation and Application of Law**			
Anchor Descriptor		**Eligible Content**	**Enhanced Standard**
C.1.4.1	**Analyze the powers, influence, and limitations of government agencies in creating, amending, and enforcing policies.**	**C.1.4.1.1** Assess the role of agencies at the local, state, and national levels in promoting the general welfare.	5.3.C.C
		C.1.4.1.2 Compare the duties of the governor's cabinet with the president's cabinet.	8.1.C.B
C.1.4.2	**Analyze the interpretation of the U.S. Constitution and the Pennsylvania Constitution by the courts.**	**C.1.4.2.1** Analyze court decisions that affect the ideals, principles, and functions of government.	5.3.C.A; 5.3.C.F
		C.1.4.2.2 Analyze court decisions that support or weaken civil rights and liberties.	5.3.C.F
		C.1.4.2.3 Analyze court decisions that demonstrate the concepts of judicial review and legal precedent.	5.3.C.A

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.2.1 Role of Individual Citizens		

Anchor Descriptor	Eligible Content		Enhanced Standard
C.2.1.1 **Analyze the civic roles, rights, and responsibilities of individuals in the United States.**	**C.2.1.1.1**	Explain and assess the process by which individuals participate in political parties, campaigns, and elections.	5.1.C.F; 5.2.C.C; 5.2.C.C; 6.5.U.B; 8.3.C.D
	C.2.1.1.2	Analyze civic rights, responsibilities, and duties of the individual in local, state, and national governments.	5.2.C.A; 5.2.C.C; 6.5.U.B; 8.3.C.D
	C.2.1.1.3	Describe citizenship and how it is obtained.	5.2.C.C
C.2.1.2 **Evaluate the factors that make competent and responsible citizens.**	**C.2.1.2.1**	Explain the necessity of an educated citizenry in guiding decisions that support the ideals, roles, and functions of society.	5.1.C.C; 5.2.C.D
	C.2.1.2.2	Analyze the societal and legal consequences of violating laws.	5.2.C.D; 5.3.C.F
	C.2.1.2.3	Evaluate the balance between individual freedoms and civic good.	5.1.C.C; 5.2.C.A; 5.2.C.D

MODULE 2—Citizenship in Modern Democracies   Draft—October 12, 2011

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR			
C.2.2 Functions of Groups and Organizations			
Anchor Descriptor		**Eligible Content**	**Enhanced Standard**
C.2.2.1	**Analyze the roles of political parties and special interest groups.**	**C.2.2.1.1** Explain and assess how political parties participate in the political process.	5.3.C.D
		C.2.2.1.2 Analyze activities that interest groups employ to affect the political process.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.G; 8.3.C.A
C.2.2.2	**Analyze the methods used to influence the political process, public policy, and public opinion.**	**C.2.2.2.1** Evaluate the influence of funding and regulation of campaigns on the political process.	5.3.C.E
		C.2.2.2.2 Assess the role of various community organizations and the methods they use in pursuit of their interests and the interests of their members.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.G; 8.2.U.A; 8.2.U.D; 8.3.U.A
		C.2.2.2.3 Draw conclusions regarding the purpose and effectiveness of political parties, interest groups, and other organizations in using the political process to influence change.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.G; 8.3.U.A
		C.2.2.2.4 Assess the role of the media and emerging technologies in the political process.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.H
		C.2.2.2.5 Analyze how economic interests influence public policy.	6.1.C.C

MODULE 2—Citizenship in Modern Democracies

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.2.3 Political Philosophies		

Anchor Descriptor		Eligible Content		Enhanced Standard
C.2.3.1	**Analyze the application of civic principles and ideals in contemporary life.**	**C.2.3.1.1**	Draw conclusions about how civic principles impact society.	5.1.C.A; 5.1.C.C; 5.2.C.D; 8.3.C.C
		C.2.3.1.2	Evaluate the impact of influential writings, speeches, and other communications on society in the United States and the world.	5.1.C.D; 5.1.C.E; 8.3.C.B
		C.2.3.1.3	Describe competing ideologies and explain their development and impact.	5.1.C.B; 5.2.C.A; 8.1.C.B; 8.3.C.C
C.2.3.2	**Examine arguments for the necessity of government.**	**C.2.3.2.1**	Compare theories of government and their role in modern society.	5.1.C.B; 5.2.C.A; 5.3.C.B; 5.4.C.B; 8.1.C.B; 8.4.C.C
		C.2.3.2.2	Recognize how public and private interests conflict and how they coordinate efforts in order to deal with issues.	5.4.C.E; 8.4.C.D; 8.4.C.A; 8.4.C.C; 8.1.C.B; 6.3.C.D; 6.3.C.C; 5.4.C.B; 7.1.C.A; 7.3.C.A
		C.2.3.2.3	Assess the role of government in providing citizens with essential services.	5.1.C.B; 5.1.C.E; 5.3.C.B; 6.3.C.B; 8.4.C.C

ASSESSMENT ANCHOR		
C.2.4 Competing Interests and Ideas		
Anchor Descriptor	**Eligible Content**	**Enhanced Standard**
C.2.4.1 **Critique the various roles that individuals, symbols, and symbolic events play in civic discourse.**	**C.2.4.1.1** Interpret the role of symbols, symbolic events, and individuals in civic discourse at the local, state, and national levels.	5.1.C.F; 5.2.C.C; 8.3.C.D
	C.2.4.1.2 Explain the various roles that political symbols, symbolic events, and individuals play in uniting groups and people in support of common causes.	5.1.C.F; 5.2.C.C
C.2.4.2 **Evaluate strategies used to avoid or resolve conflict in society and government.**	**C.2.4.2.1** Analyze how expectations for individual, group, and corporate behavior are established and enforced in order to avoid or resolve conflict.	5.1.C.A; 5.1.C.C; 5.1.C.E; 5.2.C.B; 5.3.C.A; 5.3.C.D; 8.4.C.D
	C.2.4.2.2 Examine how participation in law-making and judicial processes avoids or resolves conflicts.	5.1.C.C; 5.1.C.E; 5.2.C.B; 5.3.C.A; 5.3.C.D; 8.4.C.D
C.2.4.3 **Analyze the role of media on the creation or resolution of conflict in society.**	**C.2.4.3.1** Assess and analyze the effect of media on issues of interest to the general public.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.H; 6.2.C.C
	C.2.4.3.2 Describe how emerging technologies have influenced political opinions in the United States.	5.3.C.D; 5.3.C.H