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Frequently Asked Questions:

Preparing for the test:

1. How long will it take me to complete the GED/HSED?

There is no set timetable for completing the GED/HSED. It may be different for each individual, depending on how much high school the student completed, how long he/she has been out of school, and what he/she has been

doing in that time. Being evaluated by a counselor and taking Official GED Practice tests can help determine how long it may take

2. What is the GED Orientation? How long does it take? How much does it cost?

The GED Orientation is a preparatory session required by the State of Wisconsin for its residents. For those wishing to test in the Western Wisconsin District, this session must be completed at one of the Western Campuses. The Orientation session and GED study labs are provided with no charge to the student.

3. Why can't I just walk in and take the test?

The State of Wisconsin requires the GED Orientation to be completed before testing. Also, it has been shown that those examinees who do preparatory study and take the practice tests are much more likely to be successful in testing, with much higher scores. It is a difficult test! After all, it takes four years to obtain a high school diploma.

4. What is the difference between the GED and the HSED?

The **GED Exam (General Educational Development)** is a nation-wide credential, with minimum standards being set by the GED Testing Service in Washington DC. The **HSED (High School Equivalency Diploma)** is unique to Wisconsin, and is obtained by completing Health, Civics and Employability Skills in addition to passing the GED.

5. What is included on the test?

The GED includes the five subject areas: Writing, Social Studies, Science, Reading, and Math. The two-part English test includes multiple choice questions and a written essay. Health and Civics tests are also available for those seeking the HSED.

6. I work odd hours or days. Can I still schedule GED orientation and preparation classes?

Yes, students can set up individual schedules during any of the times or days Western is open for classes. [See listing of District GOAL Programs for contact information](#)

7. What should I do if I can't make it to a scheduled class?

If you are unable to come to class, a phone call to the office is appreciated. If you will be out for an extended time, please let us know.

8. I would like to get my GED, but I'm older and have been out of school for a long time. Won't I feel out of place at Western?

It's never too late to get your GED Certificate! We have had students in their 60's, 70's and 80's study and pass the test! Most of our students are adults, who appreciate the relaxed, friendly atmosphere of our facilities.

9. I took parts of the test outside the Western Wisconsin District. Can I finish the test at Western?

Yes, completed parts of the GED test are valid nationwide if you tested since 2002. You will need to contact the center at which you tested to have an official transcript of your scores sent to Western.

Taking the test:

1. How often is the test given?

At the La Crosse Campus, the test is given once a month. We also test at

our Regional Learning Centers at certain times of the year. Contact your local GOAL Program for test dates and information.

2. How much will it cost to take the test?

Western charges a fee of \$100 for the complete test battery, including Health and Civics tests if needed. For retests, there is a charge of \$17 per test section.

3. Do I have to take the whole test at once?

No, although you may if you wish to. Many students, however, like to concentrate on studying for one or two test sections at a time.

4. If I am studying for the GED at a certain Western campus, can I only take the test at that campus?

While we recommend testing at your own site, your instructor can register you for test sessions at all campuses if necessary.

5. How long will it take to get my scores after testing?

Most often the scores are available online after 2:00 PM the first business day after the testing session (exception: the Writing Test may take up to a week longer). To log on to your account, see instructions. [GEDWizard instructions](#)

Scores will also be made available to your instructor. When you have completed, an official transcript and congratulatory letter will be sent from our office in La Crosse.

6. How are the tests scored?

All tests are scanned locally and submitted electronically to Oklahoma Scoring Service to be scored. Once you have completed and passed all tests for the GED (and Health and Civics if taking the HSED), your record will be downloaded by the Department of Public Instruction in Madison. From there you will be sent your official credential within two to four weeks. It is important to keep your address up to date until then. You can either make changes online yourself, or notify your examiner when testing.

7. What do I do if I fail a part of the test?

You must retest until you achieve a passing average and passing minimum. You can take up to two retests of a test section per year. There is a \$17 charge for each part of the test retaken.

8. I live in Minnesota. Can I come to Western to take the GED?

Yes, Minnesota residents may test at Western. They must follow the Minnesota age guidelines and meet Minnesota scoring standards.

9. I live in Wisconsin. Can I take the test in Minnesota?

Yes, but as above, you must follow the guidelines and standards for the state in which you live. For example, you would have to complete the Wisconsin GED Orientation before testing.

After testing:

1. I passed my test before December 2001. Will my GED certificate or HSED Diploma still be valid now that the new test was introduced in 2002?

Yes, all GED and HSED certificates are valid for your lifetime and cannot be revoked.

2. Do I have to wait until the GED graduation to get my diploma?

The GED graduation is simply a ceremony to honor people who completed the GED in the last year. Your diploma or certificate should be sent to you

by the Department of Public Instruction four to six weeks after you pass all the tests, and your “graduation” date will be the last date you tested.

3. I think I passed the test, but I never got my diploma. What should I do?

Call the GED office at 608-789-6202, and we will determine what the problem is. Most often, it is due to an address change; credentials are not forwarded to a new address but are returned to Madison until called for.

4. I passed the GED. Can I upgrade it to the HSED?

Yes, completing the Health and Civics can convert your GED to the HSED. You would also need to pay a fee of \$15 for the additional credential.

5. How do I get a copy of my GED transcript? How much does it cost?

Transcripts are available from our office on the La Crosse Campus.

Complete the GED Transcript Request Form ([link](#)) and submit:

1. In person in the GOAL office, Academic Resource Center, Western Technical College, 400 North 7th Street
2. By fax: 608-789-6206
3. By mail: Attn: ISS, Western Technical College, 400 North 7th, La Crosse WI 54602-0908
4. Requests may also be made at Western’s Regional Learning Centers, who will forward the request to the La Crosse office.
5. For tests taken after January 2002, you may print your own unofficial transcript from the GED Wizard site. [Log in to your account using these instructions](#): Transcript fees are listed at the top of the attached [Transcript Request Form](#).

6. What if I didn't take the test at a Western Campus?

We have GED records for only those who were tested by Western, at the Main Campus or an outreach campus. If you have taken the GED in another district, then that district should be contacted for the records.

7. What's the difference between a GED/HSED credential and a GED/HSED transcript?

- The **GED Certificate** and the HSED Diploma are sent from the Department of Public Instruction in Madison, Wisconsin, upon completion of your tests. Many people frame theirs. Additional copies may be obtained from [DPI](#) for a fee.
- The **GED transcript** is an official list of your test scores, signed and sealed by Western Technical College. This is the document required when applying for a job or to school. You can request copies of this document from the GOAL Office. See attached [Transcript Request Form](#) for current fees.

8. Will the GED/HSED qualify me for things that require a high school diploma?

Most institutions or employers that require a high school diploma will also accept the GED/HSED. There may be individual exceptions.