

# Pathways to Graduation 4+1 Option

## Frequently Asked Questions

*(Updated April 8, 2015)*

At the January and March 2015 Regents meetings, the Board approved regulatory amendments to provide assessment pathways to graduation. These regulatory provisions allow students to meet the assessment requirements for earning a diploma utilizing a 4+1 assessment option.

See: <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2015Meetings/January/115p12a2.pdf>  
<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2015Meetings/March/315p12a1.pdf>

Students who first enter grade nine in September 2011 and thereafter or who are otherwise eligible to graduate in June 2015 or thereafter, have the following options available in order to meet the assessment requirements leading to a Regents or Local diploma:

**Required four (4):** ELA Regents exam, 1 math Regents exam, 1 science Regents exam, 1 social studies Regents exam (or a [Department Approved Alternative](#) for any of the four required exams)

**Plus any one (1) of the following assessments:**

- Additional math Regents exam in a different course or Department Approved Alternative; or
- Additional science Regents exam in a different course or Department Approved Alternative; or
- Additional social studies Regents exam in a different course or Department Approved Alternative ; or
- Additional English assessment in a different course selected from the Department Approved Alternative list; or
- A Department approved CTE pathway assessment, following successful completion of an approved CTE program
- A Department approved pathway assessment in the Arts
- A Department approved pathway assessment in a Language other than English (LOTE)

This document contains Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Pathways to Graduation 4+1 Option. Questions fall into the following categories:

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## **Graduation Requirements**

**1. *What cohorts of students are eligible to use the 4+1 Pathway option?***

Any student who first entered grade nine in September 2011 and thereafter or who is otherwise eligible to graduate in June 2015 or thereafter, may use the 4+1 Pathway option to meet the assessment requirements for graduation.

**2. *Is there an application process students must use in order to utilize the pathways assessment options?***

No. The pathways assessment option is not subject to application on the part of the student and is available to all students who first entered grade nine in September 2011 and thereafter or who are otherwise eligible to graduate in June 2015 and thereafter.

**3. *If a student was unable to graduate in the past because the student did not pass a second social studies Regents exam, can the student graduate now or in the future under a 4+1 Pathway Option?***

Any student who first entered grade nine in September 2011 and thereafter or who is otherwise eligible to graduate in June 2015 or thereafter, may utilize the 4+1 Pathway option to meet the diploma requirements.

**4. *What courses must a student complete in order to meet the pathway requirements?***

The pathway regulations address assessment requirements only. Generally, with the exception of credit by exam outlined in [Commissioner's regulations 100.5\(d\)](#), a student must complete the course designed to culminate in the assessment they wish to take. For example if the student wishes to use Geometry for the +1 pathway assessment, s/he must complete the Geometry course before being allowed into the examination.

**5. *What is meant by in a "in a different course" in the description of the +1 pathway assessment?***

The +1 pathway assessment in math, science, social studies or English must measure different content than the assessment the student used in one of the 4 required exams. For example: If the student uses the Chemistry Regents exam as the one required science exam in the series of 4, the student may use another science assessment that measures a different science course, e.g., Living Environment, as the +1. If, for example, a single course culminates in multiple exams (e.g., the Regents exam chemistry and the AP Chemistry exam), the student may not utilize the Regents exam in chemistry for one of the 4 required assessments and the AP Chemistry exam for the +1 pathway assessment.

**6. *May a student use a +1 pathway assessment in the same discipline but a different course as one of the exams s/he used in the 4 required assessments? For example: Chemistry and AP Chemistry or ELA and AP English?***

If a course culminates in a different exam than that used for one of the 4 required exams, it may be used as a +1 pathway option. For example, a student passes a Regents level Chemistry course and passes the Chemistry Regents exam for the required science assessment, then takes a separate AP Chemistry course and passes the AP Chemistry exam with a score of 3 or higher. The AP Chemistry exam can be used to fulfill the +1 pathway option.

### **Safety Nets and Appeals**

- 7. *May a student with a disability use the low pass safety net (55-64 on all Regents exams) and the compensatory safety net (45-54 on Regents exams other than ELA and math) in conjunction with the 4+1 Pathway option in order to earn a local diploma?***

Yes. However, these safety net provisions may only be applied to Regents examinations and not to Department-approved alternatives.

- 8. *How is the low pass safety net option applied when a student with a disability chooses a 4+1 pathway option?***

A student who chooses the 4+1 pathway may graduate with a local diploma using the low pass safety net option if s/he receives a score of 55-64 on each of the four required Regents examinations in (ELA, mathematics, science and social studies) and on the one additional Regents examination. Students relying on the Department-approved alternative assessment in the pathway of his or her choice must achieve at least the minimum acceptable passing score for that examination.

- 9. *How is the compensatory safety net option applied when a student with a disability chooses a 4+1 pathway option?***

The student may use a score of 65 or higher on one Regents examination to compensate for a score of 45 to 54 on a Regents examination other than ELA and math. A score of at least 55 must be earned on the ELA Regents examination and on at least one mathematics Regents examination. High scores on a Department-approved alternative assessment may not be used to compensate for a lower score on a Regents examination. Likewise, a high score on a Regents examination (65 or more) cannot be used to compensate for a lower score on a Department-approved alternative assessment.

- 10. *Students with disabilities using the compensatory safety net option must score at least 55 on the mathematics and ELA Regents examinations. If a student wishes to satisfy the +1 pathway assessment with an additional mathematics Regents exam, must s/he score a 55 on that additional mathematics Regents exam?***

No. Students using the compensatory safety net must have a 55 or better on at least one mathematics Regents exam. A student scoring between 45-54 on a second mathematics Regents exam may use a score of 65 or higher on another required Regents exam to compensate for the 45-54 score on the second mathematics exam.

**11. If a student with a disability scores 65 or higher on two Regents examinations in the same subject area (e.g., math), may each of these scores be used to compensate for scores of 45 to 54 on two other required Regents examinations?**

If the student scores 65 or higher on two of the Regents examination needed to fulfill the assessment graduation requirements under the 4+1 option, either of these examinations may be used to compensate for a score of 45 to 54 on another required Regents examination. However, a score of 55 or higher is required for one mathematics Regents examination and the ELA Regents examination.

**12. May a student use the appeals process outlined in Commissioner's Regulations §100.5(d)(7) in order to graduate with a lower score on a Regents Exam in conjunction with the 4+1 Pathway option?**

Yes. A student who meets the criteria set forth in §100.5(d)(7) may utilize the appeals process to appeal scores of 62-64 on any Regents exam used to meet the diploma requirements.

**13. May a student identified as an English language learner utilize the ELA Regents examination appeal process outlined in Commissioner's Regulations §100.5(d)(7) in conjunction with the 4+1 Pathway option?**

Yes. A student identified as an English language learner who is eligible to appeal a score of 55-61 on the ELA Regents exam required for graduation may also meet the diploma requirements using a 4+1 Pathway option.

**14. May a student with a disability who entered grade 9 prior to September 2011, and as such still has access to Regents Competency Tests (RCTs), exercise the 4+1 Pathway option to meet the diploma requirements?**

In certain circumstances, students with disabilities may use the 4+1 Pathway Option in conjunction with RCTs to meet diploma requirements. Please note that an eligible student can only use the RCT for purposes of meeting diploma requirements if the student is unable to pass a Regents exam in a subject area. The following outlines what is allowable for such students in the various pathways:

- STEM Pathway: If the student passes a Regents exam in math (science) as part of the 4 required assessments s/he **may use** an additional Regents exam in Math as the +1 pathway. If an eligible student uses a Regents exam in mathematics (science) as part of the 4 required examinations, s/he **may not use** an RCT in mathematics (science) as the +1 pathway option because the RCT can only be used if the student is unable to pass a Regents exam in a subject area.
- CTE, Arts, Humanities, LOTE Pathway: A student may use any combination of RCTs and Regents examinations to meet the 4 required assessments plus an approved assessment in the CTE, Arts, Humanities or LOTE Pathway to meet the diploma requirements.

## Transfer Students

**15. *May students who transfer to a New York State school for the first time in grade 11 or 12 still be exempt from the Global History and Geography Regents exam?***

Yes. Students who enter a NY State school for the first time in grade 11 or 12 may be exempt from the Global History and Geography Regents exam, but must still pass the US History Regents exam. Students in this situation may not choose an alternate pathway assessment in lieu of the US History Regents exam.

## Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation

**16. *What are the requirements for the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation? Have they changed as a result of the 4+1 pathway option?***

Students may earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation and also avail themselves of the Pathway assessment option. In all cases, students must pass a total of 8 Regents exams or Department approved alternative assessments where applicable in order to earn the Regents diploma with advanced designation.

Students may meet the assessment requirements in order to earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation by passing any one of the following combinations of Regents examinations and/or Department approved alternatives if applicable:

- a. Traditional Combination:** ELA, Global History and Geography or Global II, US History and Government, 1 mathematics, 1 science, **plus** 2 additional math and 1 additional science (for a total of two science; 1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science) = 8 Assessments
- b. Pathway Combination** (other than STEM): ELA, 1 science, 1 social studies, 1 math, 1 pathway (other than science or math), **plus** 2 additional math and 1 additional science (for a total of two science; 1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science) = 8 Assessments
- c. STEM (Mathematics) Pathway Combination:** ELA, 1 science, 1 social studies, 1 math, 1 math pathway **plus** 2 additional math (for a total of 4 math) and 1 additional science (for a total of two science, 1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science) = 8 Assessments
- d. STEM (Science) Pathway Combination:** ELA, 1 science, 1 social studies, 1 math, 1 science pathway, **plus** 2 additional math (for a total of three math) and 1 additional science (for a total of three science, 1 must be life science and 1 must be physical science) = 8 Assessments

**17. *The Department only offers three Regents examinations in mathematics. How will a student complete a STEM (mathematics) pathway and earn the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation if they have to pass a total of 4 mathematics examinations?***

Students wishing to pursue the STEM (mathematics) pathway and meet the requirements for the Regents diploma with advanced designation must pass the 3 Regents examinations offered by the Department or the Department Approved Alternatives, plus an additional

examination from the list of Department Approved Alternatives in mathematics following a 4<sup>th</sup> course in mathematics.

### **Pathways Assessments**

**18. *What assessments, other than Regents exams, can students use for the 4+1 Pathway Option?***

The list of approved CTE pathway assessments is available online at:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/multiple-pathways/>

**19. *Will the Department be adding more approved assessments for the 4+1 Pathway Option?***

The Department will consider approving additional assessments for the +1 pathway option. New approved assessments will be published online with the current approved assessments.

**20. *What if one course culminates in multiple exams? Can one exam be used for one of the 4 required assessments, and one be used for the +1 pathway assessment (e.g., a US History course that culminates in the US History Regents exam and the AP US History Exam).***

No. If a course culminates in more than one examination, a student may not fulfill both the required assessment and a +1 pathway assessment with two assessments at the end of one course. See question #4

**21. *Can the Department approved alternatives for ELA found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/hsgen/archive/list.pdf> be used to fulfill the +1 pathway assessment?***

The Department approved alternatives for ELA can be used as the +1 pathway assessment if the student has passed the ELA Regents Exam and then goes on to take an additional examination in a different course in English selected from the list of Department approved alternative exams.

**22. *What are the approved pathway assessments in the Arts and languages other than English (LOTE)?***

The Department is working to identify examinations in the Arts and LOTE that can be used for the +1 pathway assessment. When tests are identified and approved, the field will be notified and the list of assessments will be published online at:

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/multiple-pathways/>

### **Career & Technical Education**

**23. *What are the Department approved CTE assessments that can be used to meet the 4+1 Pathway option in CTE?***

All CTE assessments that are approved as the +1 pathway option are posted at the following site: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/multiple-pathways/>  
As new assessments are reviewed and approved they will be published on this site.

**24. *What courses must a student complete to be allowed access to the CTE pathway assessments?***

In all cases a student must successfully complete a Department approved program in CTE in order to gain access to a CTE technical assessment. See the following link for more information on the CTE approval process <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/cte/ctepolicy/>

**25. *Do all Department approved CTE programs culminate in an approved +1 pathway assessment?***

No. The Department has approved certain CTE assessments as a +1 pathway assessment. Additional assessments may be added to this list. The list of all approved pathways assessments is available online at:  
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/multiple-pathways/>

**26. *A student is enrolled in a Department approved CTE program that culminates in an approved CTE Pathway assessment. Does the student have to successfully complete the 3 part technical assessment included in the approved program in order to exercise the +1 pathway option?***

Yes. A student must successfully complete all components of the CTE approved program which includes the 3 part technical assessment in order to utilize the CTE Pathway assessment option.

**27. *May students substitute an approved CTE assessment for the one required science assessment needed for graduation?***

No. All students must take one Regents exam in science or a Department approved alternative to a science Regents exam found at  
<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/hsgen/archive/list.pdf>

**28. *Local Education agencies can opt to offer industry credentials that stipulate requirements beyond the scope of the NYSED CTE approved program. For example, the ProStart National Certificate of Achievement requires 400 hours of mentored work in order to earn the industry credential. Do students have to complete requirements that go beyond the Department approved CTE program in order to exercise the +1 pathway option?***

No. Students must successfully complete all components of the CTE approved program but they are not required to meet additional industry expectations beyond the scope of the approved program in order to exercise the 4+1 option.

**29. *Some industry developed technical assessments are multipart exams. For example the ASE technical assessment has multiple parts. Do students need to pass all of the parts to exercise the +1 Pathway Option?***

The CTE Blue Ribbon Panel evaluated technical assessments and recommended certain assessments for approval. The approved technical assessment document found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/multiple-pathways/> provides more specificity regarding each exam and requirement.

**30. *Are testing accommodations allowable for the industry-based technical assessments for the CTE pathway?***

Testing accommodations for State and local assessments must be provided as documented in a student's individualized education program (IEP) consistent with section 200.4(d)(2)(vi) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education and in accordance with Department guidelines in the Test Access and Accommodations Manual for Students with Disabilities

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/policy/testaccess/policyguide.htm>.

However, the use of testing accommodations allowable for CTE industry-based assessments, and the types of testing accommodations provided, is determined by the entities creating those assessments.

## **Data & Reporting**

**31. *How are schools required to record students' use of the 4+1 Pathway Option on transcripts and permanent records?***

Pathway options are a part of regulatory provisions outlining what students must do to earn a high school diploma. Districts should record all assessments a student uses to meet the diploma requirements on transcripts and all commencement-level state assessments must be recorded on students' permanent records. There is no additional notation necessary on transcripts to indicate that a student met requirements using a pathway option.

**32. *Do we have to report pathways to NYSED on Level 0?***

No. You do not have to report the 4+1 Pathway Option in Level 0 in the 2015-16 school year. The Department is currently working on reporting requirements for the future and will communicate requirements to the field when they are available.

**33. *What kind of tracking procedures do districts have to put into place for June?***

The Department may ask districts how many students graduated using the 4+1 Pathway Option and which pathways students pursue, but districts will not be reporting information through the Student Information Reporting System.

**34. *What kind of recordkeeping and data reporting procedures do districts have to put into place for 2016-17 and beyond?***

Districts should expect to report students' use of the 4+1 Pathway Option, the assessment students used, and the pathway students pursued. Details and full requirements will be provided to the field as soon as they are available.