

Myths vs. Facts

Learn the Truth About the *PPAT*® Assessment

Built for the profession by professionals in the field, the new *PPAT*® assessment is a performance-based assessment developed for beginning teachers. Composed of four tasks, the *PPAT* assessment is designed to be integrated into the student teaching experience and provides ongoing feedback — allowing candidates to learn and improve their skills.

Questions we have received from educator preparation program (EPP) faculty and state officials indicate that there are some misconceptions about ETS’s new *PPAT* assessment. The chart below separates the myths from the facts.

MYTH	FACT
<p>The <i>PPAT</i> assessment doesn’t address content.</p>	<p>The <i>PPAT</i> assessment was <i>intentionally designed to provide flexibility and ensure that use of the assessment could address all required content areas.</i> The assessment tasks require candidates to model subject-specific academic language and to base lesson plans upon appropriate state and national content standards. Furthermore, tasks are scored by raters with expertise in the subject matter being taught so that they can adequately and fairly judge the quality of a candidate’s content-specific pedagogy.</p>
<p>The <i>PPAT</i> assessment doesn’t require candidates to complete a cohesive teaching cycle.</p>	<p>The <i>PPAT</i> assessment tasks are, by design, embedded in the clinical experience. For each task, the assessment asks candidates to provide contextual factors that are considered during instructional planning. Each task builds on the former instruction and learning, as well as on the background information and knowledge of students. Tasks 2 and 3 require direct emphasis on assessment and instructional delivery, while Task 4 requires candidates to put all the components of quality teaching together. The <i>PPAT</i> assessment was intentionally designed to pull out specific parts of the teaching cycle for focus and self-reflection, but it <i>ultimately measures a candidate’s ability to move through the cycle and master each phase.</i></p>
<p>The <i>PPAT</i> assessment was created by ETS alone.</p>	<p>The <i>PPAT</i> assessment was developed by a National Advisory Committee of 26 educators and teacher-educators from 16 states; it was developed by the profession for the profession. ETS test development experts guided the committee through an evidence-centered design process to ensure that the assessment tasks elicit evidence, predicated upon the InTASC standards and indicators, of the level of teaching proficiency appropriate for beginning teachers.</p>
<p>ETS has a limited history with performance assessments.</p>	<p><i>ETS has nearly two decades of experience in developing, administering and scoring portfolio-based performance assessments.</i> Our work in this area began in the mid-1990s and includes the <i>Praxis III</i>® assessments, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Assessment, the California Teaching Performance Assessment, the Washington ProTeach Portfolio, the Missouri Pre-Service Teacher Assessment and the newly launched <i>PPAT</i> assessment (one of two national performance assessments in the market).</p>

MYTH	FACT
<p>The Professional Growth Plan (PGP) measures only one area of growth.</p>	<p>The PGP is based on multiple observations by faculty and cooperating teachers and was designed to promote holistic professional reflection (of the whole teaching practice, not just a single part). Aligned to the teacher evaluation protocol of a candidate's district, the PGP helps candidates identify areas of strength, as well as areas that require more focus, and helps prepare candidates for real-world teaching experiences. The plan provides a tangible and tailored development plan for the candidate's first year of practice.</p>
<p>ETS offers only technical support for the PPAT assessment.</p>	<p>ETS provides the best support option that suits our customers' unique needs, whether they are a candidate, EPP, organization or state client. These options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation workshops (via webinar or on-site, as needed) and access to implementation experts • Policy and program support to states and EPPs using the PPAT assessment • Phone conferences and webinars with advisory committee members and faculty, as needed • An array of dedicated resources to support the teacher candidate through the entire experience
<p>Users of other work platforms (e.g., TK20™, LiveText™, Taskstream) cannot use the PPAT assessment.</p>	<p>Candidates can continue to use the systems they are familiar with, managing their portfolio of materials and evidence throughout their clinical practice. When they are ready, they can upload chosen materials to the PPAT assessment system for submission. ETS developed its own platform for the PPAT assessment to meet the timeliness of the need in the marketplace. Looking to the future, ETS will pursue collaborations to fully integrate the PPAT assessment with existing platforms to promote ease of use for faculty and candidates.</p>
<p>The PPAT assessment is scored by ETS.</p>	<p>The PPAT assessment is scored by a pool of certified raters (50% P–12 teachers and 50% teacher-educators) from around the country. Tasks 2–4 are scored by different raters, providing candidates with the benefit of feedback from a minimum of three expert educators.</p>

To learn more, visit www.ets.org/ppat or send an email to ppat@ets.org.

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