



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for NBME® Self-Assessments:

Updated Nov. 11, 2020

What do all the acronyms stand for?

- **CBSSA:** Comprehensive Basic Science Self-Assessment (*Correlates to Step 1 content*)
- **CCSSA:** Comprehensive Clinical Science Self-Assessment (*Correlates to Step 2 Clinical Knowledge content*)
- **CCMSA:** Comprehensive Clinical Medicine Self-Assessment (*Correlates to Step 3 content*)
- **Step 2 CK:** Step 2 Clinical Knowledge of the United States Medical Licensing Exam®
- **USMLE®:** United States Medical Licensing Examination®

Answer Explanations

Which Self-Assessments currently have answer explanations?

Medicine forms 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Surgery forms 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Clinical Mastery Series currently have answer explanations.

Will more self-assessments eventually contain answer explanations?

You can look forward to all self-assessments eventually containing answer explanations over the next 18 months.

Which forms will contain answer explanations next, and when will they be made available for purchase?

- Obstetrics/Gynecology forms 3, 4, 5 and 6: Nov. 13, 2021
- Pediatrics forms 3, 4, 5 and 6: available Jan. 4, 2021
- Clinical Neurology forms 3, 4, 5 and 6: available Feb. 19, 2021
- Comprehensive Basic Science Self-Assessment (CBSSA) new forms: available March 2, 2021
- Comprehensive Clinical Medicine Self-Assessment (CCSMA) form 5: March 4, 2021
- Psychiatry forms 3, 4 and 5: March 8, 2021

How do I access the answer explanations?

You can view the answer explanations immediately after you complete your self-assessment. If you exit the assessment, you can log on to MyNBME and view the answer explanations in the interactive score report by clicking “View Your Results Interactively”. Regardless of whether you choose to review the answer explanations immediately following the self-assessment or later by logging on to MyNBME, there are 3 options:

1. **Review All Items** – This will allow you to review the question, answer options, your answer selection, and answer explanations for each question in the order it appeared on the self-assessment.
2. **Review Incorrect Items** – This option will allow you to only review answer explanations for the questions that you answered incorrectly.
3. **Detailed Analysis by Content** – This provides the ability to view questions and answer explanations by content category.



I purchased and/or completed my self-assessment prior to the addition of answer explanations. Will I still be able to get the answer explanations?

You will have access to answer explanations if you purchased your assessment up to 90 days prior to the date the answer explanations became available for the particular self-assessment.

Free NBME Self-Assessments (Available April-September 2020)

Which self-assessments were available for free?

From April 3, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2020, NBME offered the following free self-assessments:

- CBSSA forms 13, 15, 16, 17 and 19
- CCSSA form 7
- CCMSA form 5

How much time did examinees have to complete free self-assessments?

Examinees had 90 days to complete free self-assessment(s) after ordering.

How long were the free self-assessments made available?

The free self-assessments were available for ordering from **April 3, 2020** through **Sept. 30, 2020**. Examinees had 90 days to complete their free self-assessments after they placed their orders.

Were free self-assessments made available with answer explanations?

No, the free self-assessments did not have answer explanations.

At this time, the self-assessments that contain answer explanations are Medicine exam forms 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Surgery forms 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Clinical Mastery Series. You can look forward to all self-assessments eventually containing answer explanations over the next 18 months.

Why are the seven select self-assessments no longer free?

Complimentary self-assessments were made available in an effort to provide students with additional resources while testing was suspended and backlogged due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the summer, USMLE testing opportunities expanded at Prometric test centers and through event-based tests at medical schools across the United States.

What resources are available to continue my learning and enrich my knowledge?

Today, students can continue to enrich their knowledge by:

- Watching [three episodes of Unlocking Assessment](#), a free new web series designed to help students better understand NBME-created test questions.
- Reviewing [practice materials](#) for USMLE® Step 1, Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK), and Step 3.
- Purchasing or reviewing previously ordered Clinical Science Mastery Series Self-Assessments including Medicine forms 3, 4, 5 and 6 and Surgery forms 3, 4, 5 and 6 to learn from added answer explanations.

Were expiration dates for previously purchased exam forms extended during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes, examinees were able to request an extension of the expiration date for previously purchased exam forms by contacting support@nbme.org.



Why did the score reports for the free forms I ordered look different from the score reports for the test forms available for purchase?

On Jan. 23, 2020, new score reports were implemented for CBSSA exam forms 18, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 and CCSSA forms 5, 6 and 7. Because some of the free exam forms were discontinued in 2019, updates were not made to those score reports. You can learn about the differences in the score reports [here](#).

What is the difference between the old CBSSA score reports and the new ones?

You can learn about the differences in the score reports [here](#).

Have questions or other feedback about NBME Self-Assessments?

Contact us at support@nbme.org, on Twitter [@NBMENow](https://twitter.com/NBMENow) or on Facebook [@NBME.org](https://www.facebook.com/NBME.org).

