HESI Admission Assessment (HESI A2)

About
The College of Nursing utilizes the HESI Admission Assessment (HESI A2) in the application process for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Master’s Entry for the Profession of Nursing (MEPN) professional programs. The College of Nursing only requires four sections of the HESI A2: Math, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Grammar.

- **Sections**: Math, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Grammar
- **Minimum Score**: must score 75% or higher in the combined score of all four sections
- **Scores Valid**: scores are valid for one year, the highest average score will be used
- **Time Limit**: 4 hours to take the exam

Preparation
The examination is designed to be taken without preparation – as a test of general knowledge necessary to be successful in a nursing program. It is designed to be taken while a student is nearing completion of their required Nursing Prerequisite coursework. If you would like to prepare in advance, an examination preparation guide is available for purchase through Elsevier: Evolve or you may access a preparation guide through the UA Health Sciences Libraries, which has several copies on reserve. Elsevier: Evolve also provides test remediation after a first attempt for future test attempts.

Testing
Testing is only available through two proctoring options: University of Arizona Testing Center in Tucson, AZ or via any Prometric Testing site for locations outside Tucson, AZ. To explore Prometric potential test sites, follow the link and click locate. After setting up an account in the Evolve (HESI A2 test registration system), please contact your chosen testing site for test proctoring requirements, accommodations, costs, and reservation information. Individual arrangements may be made for exceptional situations only on a per-case exception basis. To take the test at a local college or university, please contact Nursing Admissions for more information at 520.626.3808 or admissions@uanursing.arizona.edu.

Signing Up through Evolve
The links below will take you directly to the page where you will make an electronic payment for the HESI A2 examination. If you are having any difficulty with the link, just follow the steps below and use the attempt codes listed below. Attempt codes are unique to each institution and testing attempt – students must ensure they are using the correct code so results are reported to the right location. Each attempt requires a different testing code for the Evolve. Please only select the appropriate code based on the number of attempts and do not register for a second attempt until after you have taken the first attempt.

The following codes are valid for all attempts from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019:

- To set up a **first attempt test**: [https://hesistudentaccess.elsevier.com/payments.html?PaymentID=12248](https://hesistudentaccess.elsevier.com/payments.html?PaymentID=12248)
  - First attempt Payment ID code: 12248
- To set up a **second attempt test**: [https://hesistudentaccess.elsevier.com/payments.html?PaymentID=12249](https://hesistudentaccess.elsevier.com/payments.html?PaymentID=12249)
  - Second attempt Payment ID code: 12249
- To set up a **third attempt test**: [https://hesistudentaccess.elsevier.com/payments.html?PaymentID=12250](https://hesistudentaccess.elsevier.com/payments.html?PaymentID=12250)
  - Third attempt Payment ID code: 12250
  - 3rd attempt distance (Prometric) testers need to email the College of Nursing (entry@nursing.arizona.edu) to receive further instructions.
1) **How To Create an Evolve Account**

a. Under the box that says HESI Secured Exams, click on the link “Register for Results and Remediation”

b. Next, click on the orange “Register” button
c. Now click on the orange “Redeem Checkout” button

d. Fill in your information to create a new account and click “Continue”. If you already have an Evolve account, use the blue box the on right hand side of the page.
e. Select “Yes, I accept the Registered User Agreement” and click “Submit”

f. This completes your Evolve account set up. Please read below to identify your next step.
Testing Site
For the second phase of registration for the HESI Admission Assessment, you will need to select where you are taking the examination. Please only follow the instructions indicated below based on your intended testing site.

Option 1: Testing in Tucson, AZ
If you are testing at THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA TESTING CENTER in Tucson, AZ, please proceed to Step Two on the next page and then contact the UA Testing Center for an appointment.

Option 2: Testing Outside Tucson, AZ
If you are testing through PROMETRIC testing outside of the Tucson, AZ area, please skip Step Two and proceed directly to Step Three. To view Prometric testing site locations, follow the link and select the ‘locate’ option. If this is not available, proceed to the Prometric homepage, select ‘Elsevier’ as the test company, and then the ‘Admissions Assessment’. This will bring up a list of available testing sites in your area.
STEP TWO

2) Exam Registration for the HESI Admissions Assessment (UA Testing Center Instructions)
   a. Click on the “My Evolve” link in the green box to go to your HESI Student Access

   ![My Evolve Link]

   You are now registered for a student HESI account. You can renew your account by clicking My Account and selecting Account Settings. If you return to My Evolve, you will see a HESI Assessment section in your Content List. Click on the link for Student Access to get started.

   ![Student Access Link]

   b. Click on the ‘Student Access’ link

   ![HESI Assessment]

   c. To complete the order, fill out the information on the Payment form and click “proceed to checkout.”
      
      Note: the payment due date is auto-populated; however this is not a mandatory payment date.

      If you do not see this screen, click the ‘Payments’ tab in the top menu and enter the Payment ID code to match your testing attempt. Payment ID codes are listed on page one of this document.
d. Fill out your payment information on the screen below and you will receive a confirmation order receipt.

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Cards Accepted: Visa - Discover - American Express - MasterCard

Card Type: Discover

Exp Date: 02 2018

*Required Field

Please note that we only support the US-English character set. In order to ensure that your transaction is processed correctly, please refrain from using International Characters.

Continue  Confirm

Norton

e. Payment is now complete. Please contact the [UA Testing Center](#) to register for a testing appointment.
STEP THREE

3) Exam Registration for the HESI Admissions Assessment (Prometric Testing Sites)
   a. Click the Distance Testing link from your Elsevier: Evolve account to register for a non-Tucson exam through Prometric Testing.

   b. Enter your information in the ‘Register For a Distance Testing Exam’ section, enter a Dept. ID of 202257 and select submit.

   Make sure your name matches exactly to your government-issued identification. You name information must match throughout the system.

   c. After submission, please wait 3 business days for an email from Elsevier Evolve. The email will contain your eligibility ID.

   d. Proceed to the Prometric site. Select “Elsevier” in the Test Sponsor section.

   e. Select ‘Schedule’. Choose the ‘Admissions Assessment’ and your site location. Enter your Eligibility ID from the Evolve email. Proceed to payment and select your a distance test through the Prometric site. Prometric can be reached at 1.800.853.6769.
Distance Testing Troubleshooting:

Department ID: 202257

1. Do not use your school NetID or student ID as your student ID when creating your student Evolve account.

2. The first and last name on your Evolve account must be the same as it appears on your government issued photo ID with signature (i.e. Driver’s License or Passport). You will not be admitted into the testing lab if there is any discrepancy between what is listed on your Evolve student account and what is presented on your ID.

3. Your government-issued ID must include your signature and a photo that resembles your current appearance to gain admittance into the testing center (your middle name/initial is not required).

You will receive an email Confirmation Notice indicating that you may schedule your exam. Please carefully review the information contained in your Confirmation Notice. If name is not correct, or has been changed, please contact Elsevier HESI Assessment at exameligibility@elsevier.com. Failure to do so could result in forfeiture of your testing appointment and associated fees.

PLEASE NOTE:

You will receive your Eligibility ID within 1-3 business days from our receipt of your eligibility request. Please add the following email address to your email’s safe sender list to avoid delays: exameligibility@elsevier.com. If you do not see the notification, please check your spam/junk folder.

Support/Questions:

Evolve/HESI A2 System Sign Up: If you have questions or difficulty with the Evolve system, please contact the Evolve support office at 1.800.950.2728.

Nursing Admissions: If you have questions or concerns about the College of Nursing admissions process, please contact the College of Nursing at 520.626.3808 or at admissions@uanursing.arizona.edu.

Proctoring: Proctoring will take place via two options: UA Testing Center in Tucson or through the Prometric Test proctoring. See contact information below for the two options.

UA Testing Center, Tucson location
Website: https://testing.arizona.edu/Phone: 520.621.7589
Email: test@email.arizona.edu

Prometric Testing, Outside Tucson
Website: https://www.prometric.com/en-us/contact-us/pages/default.aspx
Phone: 1.800.853.6769
Q: WHAT IS THE HESI ADMISSION ASSESSMENT (A²) EXAM?
A: The HESI A² exam is designed to assess the academic and personal readiness of prospective students for higher education. It is particularly well suited for prospective students in the health science fields, though it is applicable for basic skills for all potential students. The A² consists of nine different exams, seven of which focus on academic subject areas and two on personal assessment. A composite score is provided for the total number of academic exams that are administered. These academically oriented subjects include: Basic-Math, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary and General Knowledge, Grammar, Chemistry, Biology, and Anatomy and Physiology. To meet the needs of Radiography (Radiation Technology or Imaging Sciences) programs that include a basic physics course as a pre-requisite, a Physics subject exam is also available for institutions ordering the Health Professions (HP) version of the HESI A². The Learning Style and Personality Profile exams are available for the purpose of offering insights about student study habits, learning preferences, and dispositions as they relate to academic achievement.

Q: ARE THERE TWO SEPARATE SCORES, LIKE A MINIMUM PASSING SCORE AND A RECOMMENDED SCORE?
A: Each institution can select the HESI A² exams to be administered to their applicants. After the test has been administered to all prospective students, the institution receives results that provide a percentage-based score for each exam (for example, Basic-Math, Reading Comprehension, Anatomy & Physiology, etc.) administered, in addition to the overall composite score that incorporates scores from all exams administered.

There is no official minimum passing score established by Elsevier as each individual program may choose different criteria for program acceptance. However, research has shown, and a majority of institutions have agreed, that the level of student ability necessary for successful program completion for RN & HP program applicants is a 75% minimum cumulative score over the academic subject areas tested, and a 70% minimum cumulative score for applicants to LPN/LVN programs. For a complete listing of the recommended scores for each of the HESI A² academic subject exams, please refer to the HESI A² Scoring Guide.

Q: SHOULD STUDENTS BE ALLOWED TO RE-TAKE THE TEST TO IMPROVE THEIR SCORES?
A: Student performance on the HESI A² provides a useful snapshot of current student ability in each of the subject areas tested. A² testing should be used as just one component of the admission decision, along with transcript review, including assessment of the overall GPA and science GPA; performance during interview; and/or prevalence of repeating courses in order to achieve a passing score. Elsevier provides two versions of the HESI A² examination should the faculty allow students to re-take the exam to attempt an improvement in their performance. The second version of the exam is based on the same blueprint as the first version, but is comprised of different test questions. Elsevier recommends re-testing with the second version of the exam rather than presenting the first version again to any student so that reliability and validity of the exam can be preserved, as the use of the second version ensures that the student’s performance reflects application of the concepts being tested. The HESI Admission Assessment Exam Review provides a content review of topics typically covered on admission exams, practice questions and is useful in preparing for either version of the exam.
Q: ARE THE HESI A² EXAM SCORES USEFUL FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME, OR SHOULD THEY BE CONSIDERED USEFUL FOR A DEFINED TIME FRAME ONLY?

A: HESI A² exam scores provide a “snapshot” of the individual’s ability in a variety of content areas. As such, there is really no specific timeframe after which a score becomes invalid because the score reflects the student’s ability at only one point in time -- the day the test was taken. Therefore, a student’s scores could be reviewed at any point in time as evidence of his/her general knowledge and academic abilities relevant to admission. If the scores were over a year old, then it may be important to review a more recent assessment, and consider repeating the administration of the HESI A² if the applicant had not been admitted to the program within that year.

Q: IF SOMEONE TOOK THE HESI A² EXAM TO GET INTO ANOTHER SCHOOL A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, SHOULD WE ACCEPT THOSE SCORES?

A: Institutions may adopt that policy if they wish; however the test measures knowledge at a specific point in time, and older scores may not be as relevant to the student’s knowledge at a later date. Please see the above answer regarding this topic.

Q: IS IT BEST TO BENCHMARK WITH THE COMPOSITE SCORE OR A SCORE IN EACH AREA?

A: The individual institution usually maintains a specific viewpoint regarding the minimum level of skills needed to be successful in that program.

Many programs have incorporated the use of awarding points (within a designated total point system used for admission decisions) that are specified for each area of the criteria reviewed. For example, a composite score in the 90-99 range would add 3 points to the applicants total admission points, a score of 80-89 would add 2 points, and so on. Below 75, however, the applicant would be awarded 0 points for the A² composite score. Similarly, GPA would also be ranked on a point system, etc. Faculty can then set a minimally acceptable accrual of points that would be required for admission to the program, and only those candidates that meet or exceed this level are actually admitted. If there are more candidates that exceed the minimal level of points, then the total number of points can make priority-setting easier to determine candidate admission.

If the institution is interested in a specific skill set (for example, if Basic-Math and Reading Comprehension alone are the most important, in your faculty’s opinion, to succeed in your program), then you may want to establish specific benchmarks (minimally acceptable scores) for those exams alone as part of your admissions policy.

Q: IS THE HESI A² EXAM AVAILABLE ONLINE?

A: Yes, all of HESI’s secure exams are web-deliverable, and more importantly, the results are also delivered online, making sorting, saving, and searching easier for faculty.

Q: WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF THE HESI A² EXAM OVER THE OTHER AVAILABLE TESTS?

A: The HESI A² offers a great deal of flexibility with testing. The institution, not the testing company, makes the decision to include or exclude components of the exam that are relevant for their particular program. For instance, if Chemistry is not a required pre-requisite subject, then the Chemistry component does not have to be administered to program applicants. There is no timed-testing involved, which accommodates English as a second language (ESL) student that might have some limitations when taking a test that requires a significant amount of reading. It is important to assess the actual
skill level of all candidates at the beginning of the program, including ESL students. The pressure associated with a timed test can negatively impact students causing increased anxiety, which may lead to lower test scores. In order to determine true reading ability, it is helpful to measure student performance without additional time pressure.

The exams available through the HESI A2 also exceed those available through comparable testing company tests, allowing the institution to measure a greater number of basic skills than they might measure through another test. Studies have shown that Vocabulary, for example, is the greatest single indicator of program success and adult IQ measurement. Without a vocabulary component, this skill would never be measured prior to acceptance into the program.

The results reporting, as mentioned previously, is also an advantage of the HESI A2. Most testing companies will offer only a printout of student results, sorted alphabetically by student name. HESI offers online reporting, with online reporting, the institution is able to sort by any exam score, composite score, or name in order to rank students in each area. These results can be saved as they are sorted, providing you with an easier point of comparison in making admission decisions.

Because Elsevier is the market leader in Nursing and many of the Health Professions, it is also important to note the advantages to these specific markets. Online testing is, in itself, an advantage in the Nursing market. Students will face computerized testing throughout their educational programs, particularly Nursing students upon program completion and NCLEX® candidacy. It is important for institutions to administer computerized testing from the point of admission to (1) determine their students’ comfort levels with this type of testing and (2) introduce them as early as possible in the curriculum to computer-based testing formats. HESI exams are designed to simulate the NCLEX® keystrokes, mouse requirements, and screens. Therefore, Nursing students can actually prepare for the NCLEX® experience throughout their Nursing programs when standardized testing is used.

Finally, Nursing and Health Professions programs that have used more general assessments of reading, math, and general knowledge abilities have often voiced that these general assessments were not sufficient in providing an accurate picture of students’ academic abilities as they relate to the health sciences. While the HESI A2 does not include vocabulary terms from a medical dictionary, and the Reading Comprehension exam does not offer reading selections from an actual Nursing textbook, the terms and reading selections that are used often relate to medical scenarios, or include commonly used concepts in health sciences. For instance, a vocabulary term tested might include “ominous”. This is a standard English word, but it is used frequently in Nursing and Health Professions texts when referring to a patient condition, so it is important that students have an understanding of these types of words in order to be successful in reading their Nursing textbooks. The HESI A2 provides faculty with specific information about the student’s academic ability as it relates to nursing and health professions content.

Q: WHO WRITES THE HESI A2 EXAM, AND HOW OFTEN ARE THEY REVIEWED?

A: The items developed for the HESI A2 Battery were developed following the HESI item writing guidelines presented by Morrison, Smith, and Britt (1996) and Morrison, Nibert, and Flick (2006) and adhering to the Elsevier/HESI Testing and Remediation Style Sheet for Item Writers. The HESI A2 items were written by experts in the field of education, who have expertise in constructing standardized tests used to assess basic knowledge of English, mathematics, and the sciences at the secondary and post-secondary level.

Item writers were selected based on clinical expertise, recommendation of school administrators and faculty, and/or approval of senior level HESI personnel. Item writers attend an item writing conference conducted by the HESI item development team. This training includes instruction in constructing multiple choice items which measure higher levels
of cognitive taxonomy, aligning item content with the purpose of the examination, and recognizing and eliminating item bias. Item development is a continuous process. Approved item writers submit, via a secured electronic database, original items for review by the internal staff of HESI. Items approved by the internal review process are added to the item bank as pilot items and are available for inclusion in subsequent examinations for data acquisition purposes and further statistical analysis. Items meeting rigorous statistical guidelines established by HESI are moved to active status and are available for inclusion on active examinations developed by HESI.

Q: WHAT CURRENT RESEARCH VALIDATES THE USE OF THE HESI A² EXAM AS A PREDICTOR OF SUCCESS FOR NURSING STUDENTS?
A: Several multi-site studies are currently underway that focus on student success in the nursing and allied health programs as predicted by performance on the A². Studies that have been published in peer-reviewed nursing journals include those summarized below:

**STUDY #1:**

This study examined the value of the HESI Admission Assessment in predicting student success. Associate degree (N = 68) and baccalaureate (N = 69) nursing students took the Admission Assessment after acceptance into the nursing programs for the purpose of identifying their academic weaknesses and focusing their remediation efforts. Findings indicated that the Admission Assessment was a valid predictor of students’ academic ability to succeed in the nursing programs. In the associate degree nursing program, The Admission Assessment scores demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation with 88.90% of all nursing course grades in the program and 100% of the beginning-level course grades. In the baccalaureate nursing program. The Admission Assessment scores demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation with 50% of all nursing course grades in the program and 80% of beginning-level course grades.

Findings of this study indicate that the A² provides valuable information about a student’s academic ability to succeed in a nursing program. Based on the data obtained from this study, the faculty in the participating ADN program chose to use applicants’ A² scores as a criterion for selection with future applicants to the program. Further study is needed to examine the value of using the A² as an admission criterion and to determine if there is a relationship between using the A² as an admission criterion and prediction of success in the nursing program.

**STUDY #2:**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Health Education Systems, Inc., (HESI) exam scores and success within an associate degree (ADN) nursing program. A longitudinal, bivariant correlational design was used to measure the relationship among scores on the HESI Admissions Assessment (A²) exam, scores on a customized Mid-Curricular (MC) exam, and scores on the HESI Exit Exam (E²). The accuracy of the E² in predicting NCLEX-RN success was also examined.
The A² is comprised of nine different exams. Seven of these exams are academically oriented, consisting of math, reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, and biology. Only the math and reading comprehension exams were administered to the study population prior to admission into the nursing program. Scores on this exam were used as a component of the selection process. Faculty designated 850 as the benchmark score for the MC, administered halfway through the curriculum, and the E2, administered during the last semester of the curriculum. Students were permitted three opportunities to achieve the benchmark scores. A different version of the exams was used for re-testing.

Data were obtained from 139 students who took the A², MC, E², and NCLEX-RN® from August 2002 through October 2004. Findings indicated that the reading comprehension scores were significantly related to MC scores (P = .001) and to E2 scores (P = .05). MC scores were significantly correlated with E2 scores (P = .001). The E2 was 94.55% accurate in predicting NCLEX-RN® success; three students who scored above 900 on the E2 failed the NCLEX-RN® on their first attempt.