NC Check-Ins
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The following FAQ has been developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to assist districts/schools in the implementation of the NC Check-Ins. This information should be used in conjunction with any published supplements or updates. Additional information about NC Check-Ins may be found at http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/accountability/nccheckins.

Purpose and Participation

1. What are NC Check-Ins?
   NC Check-Ins are interim assessments developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) that are aligned to North Carolina grade-level content standards in English language arts (ELA)/reading for grades 4–8 and in mathematics for grades 3–8. In ELA, NC Check-Ins measure all grade-level content standards assessed and increase in text complexity. For mathematics, each NC Check-In focuses on a selected subset of grade-level content standards.

   The main purpose of NC Check-Ins is to provide students, teachers, parents, and stakeholders with immediate in-depth action-data and a reliable estimate of students’ current performance on the selected subset of content standards. Both the end-of-grade assessments (EOG) and the NC Check-Ins share a common item bank, which then exposes NC Check-In students to similar item types and rigor found on the EOGs.

2. What grade levels are NC Check-Ins available?
   For the 2018–19 school year, the following NC Check-Ins are available:
   - Grades 3–8 Mathematics
   - Grades 4–8 ELA/Reading

3. Are schools required to participate in the NC Check-Ins?
   School participation in the NC Check-Ins is voluntary and open to all local education agencies (LEAs) and charter schools.

Test Administration and Format

4. What are the assessment windows?
   Local education agencies (LEAs)/charter schools may determine the testing days for each NC Check-In within the NCDPI-designated assessment windows. The assessment windows for NC Check-Ins are as follows:
   - NC Check-In 1: October 15–November 30, 2018
   - NC Check-In 2: January 2–February 8, 2019
   - NC Check-In 3: March 4–April 12, 2019

5. Is it required to administer the NC Check-Ins to all students in the school on the same day?
   It is not required to administer NC Check-Ins to all students in the school on the same day, but the Check-Ins must be administered within the testing window.

6. What formats are NC Check-Ins administered?
   The NC Check-Ins are provided in paper/pencil and online formats.
7. **How much time will it take to complete the NC Check-Ins?**
   NC Check-Ins are not timed assessments. However, the time it takes for most students to complete an NC Check-In is about ninety (90) minutes. It is a local decision to provide additional time to students who need time beyond the ninety (90) minutes scheduled to complete the NC Check-Ins. If additional time is provided, the teacher must use professional judgement to determine what the appropriate length of time is for the student’s test administration.

8. **Do the NC Check-Ins have to be administered in one school day?**
   Test administrators have the option to administer the NC Check-Ins in one school day or over multiple school days. For multiple school days, the total test administration time can be divided into minisessions as determined by the LEA/charter school test coordinator.

9. **What are the item types on the NC Check-Ins?**
   - The NC Check-Ins do not contain sample items.
   - ELA/Reading NC Check-Ins contain multiple-choice items.
   - Item types for the Mathematics NC Check-Ins vary. The items include
     - Multiple-choice items (paper/pencil and online) and
     - Gridded response items (paper/pencil only).
     - Students at grades 5–8 may see gridded response items on their NC Check-Ins. The gridded response items require students to write and fill in numerical answers on their answer sheets rather than to select answers from several choices.
     - The Mathematics NC Check-Ins are in two parts: The first part is calculator inactive; the second is calculator active. For the calculator inactive part, students are not allowed to use a calculator. For the calculator active part, students can use a calculator. **Note:** The Grade 6 NC Check-In 1 contains calculator active questions only.

10. **Are proctors required?**
    A proctor is neither required nor should one be used for the administration of the NC Check-Ins.

11. **Must test administrators remove displays from their walls for the NC Check-Ins?**
    Teachers are not required to remove bulletin boards and instructional displays from walls.

**Accommodations and Alternate Assessments**

12. **Are instructional accommodations allowed for the NC Check-Ins?**
    Students with current Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, or English Learner (EL) Plans may use instructional accommodations for the NC Check-Ins except for the Test Read Aloud and Signing/Cueing accommodations for the grades 4–8 ELA/Reading. Reading aloud or signing/cueing the selections, questions, or answer choices on the ELA/Reading Check-In invalidates results because the Check-In measures reading skills.

13. **Is there an alternate assessment for the NC Check-Ins?**
    There is no alternate assessment available for the NC Check-Ins. Students with disabilities who, according to their IEP documentation, participate in the NCEXTEND1 alternate assessment in accordance with state policies do not participate in the NC Check-Ins.
Scoring, Reporting, and Accountability

14. What is the time schedule for scoring and returning NC Check-Ins results?
The LEA test coordinator, Regional Accountability Coordinator (RAC), or Technical Outreach for Public Schools (TOPS) will scan all NC Check-Ins on the day they are received. The score reports for these Check-Ins will be available to teachers within 5 school days, and individual student reports should be provided to parents within 30 calendar days.

15. What type of information will be provided to teachers? To parents?
Each NC Check-In will generate student-level reports indicating the number of items correct by content standard, item type, and selection type, and will report an overall score. Teacher-level reports will provide a summary with similar information. Parents will receive student reports with an overall score by standard and item number. Students will not receive achievement levels for the NC Check-Ins.

16. Will the NC Check-In items be available to teachers after each administration?
Following the administration of an NC Check-In, teachers have access to the Check-Ins for up to five weeks. Teachers may use the Check-Ins for reviews with students, and parents may view the Check-Ins, but only within the school setting. The teacher may share with parents their student’s scores on the items through customary communication (i.e., individual parent/teacher conferences at the school). Parents may not have copies of the NC Check-In items, nor take pictures of any part of the assessment.

17. Will district and state comparison data be reported for the NC Check-Ins?
District and state comparison data will be reported by student, teacher, and school. Comparing district-level results to state-level results is not particularly meaningful. Different schools and classes may be at different places in covering the content based on their testing windows and school calendars. The purpose of the NC Check-In is to provide individual and classroom-level formative feedback. Comparisons to other classrooms, schools, or LEAs are neither encouraged, nor advised. It would be a misinterpretation for an LEA/charter school to conclude that their students performed better or worse than another LEA/charter school or the state. The value in the NC Check-In results is for teachers to determine if their students have learned the content standards that were covered in their classroom prior to the assessments.

18. Will the NC Check-Ins “predict” performance on the EOG assessment?
The NCDPI does not have validity evidence to support using results from NC Check-Ins as a predictor of student performance on the EOG summative assessment. Even though there is evidence of a significant correlation between scores from NC Check-Ins and EOG, this correlation evidence by itself does not signify prediction. The overall value of NC Check-Ins is in the use of in-depth action-data for formative purposes throughout the year to help students and teachers adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ achievement of intended instructional outcomes.

19. Are the NC-Check-In scores included in accountability calculations?
NC Check-In scores are not included in accountability.

Other

20. Should districts/charter schools administering the Check-Ins continue to administer local benchmark assessments?
For best practices, the North Carolina Testing Program strongly recommends that schools administering NC Check-Ins do not additionally administer a local benchmark for the same subject (i.e., ELA/reading and/or mathematics). For example, a grade 3 student participating only in the mathematics NC Check-In may take a local benchmark for English language arts/reading but not for mathematics.