

Your HESI Exit Exam Results and Success on NCLEX®: Are They Related?



You have taken a big sigh of relief. You passed your HESI Exit Exam with a 900, meeting your school's requirement to progress in your nursing program. Great job! You might now be wondering: "Can I take it easy until my NCLEX exam? Do I have to keep studying and reviewing? What does the HESI Exit Exam score mean anyway?"

Here are the answers to some of your most pressing questions.

What does the HESI Exit Exam score mean anyway?

HESI exams and products are tools to help you succeed throughout your nursing program. For example, during your program, there are HESI Specialty Exams and HESI Case Studies. Toward the end of your program there is the HESI Exit Exam. HESI will help you gauge how well you are predicted to perform on your board exams.

There is solid science behind your HESI exams. Research shows that the HESI Exit Exam has a 96-99% estimated prediction of success on the NCLEX exam. That means that most students who score 900 or above are likely to pass the NCLEX exam. Most students – not all. That is an important distinction. HESI cannot guarantee that even with a high HESI Exit Exam score that you will pass NCLEX.

There are still many factors that must come together for NCLEX success. Here are a few questions to consider:

- Have you reviewed your weak areas as outlined in your HESI Exit Exam report?
- How long will you wait after graduation to take the NCLEX?
- Are you accumulating work experience before you take the NCLEX?
- How confident are you in taking exams?
- How much have you practiced taking NCLEX-type questions?
- How are you feeling on exam day (Rested? Confident? Stressed? Hungry?)

Is it possible to fail NCLEX even with a high HESI Exit Exam score?

While it is possible, the research suggests that the odds are in your favor that passing the HESI Exit Exam with a 900 or higher is strongly associated with passing NCLEX. However, there is no 100% guarantee that passing a HESI Exit Exam will assure passing NCLEX.

I have a high HESI Exit Exam score. Can I take it easy until my NCLEX exam? Do I have to keep studying and reviewing?

Think about the many factors listed above that will help you answer this question. Review and practice continue to be some of the best ways to both increase your confidence and your skill at test-taking.

You have learned so much in your nursing program. That knowledge can become stale and your memory foggy the longer you wait to take the NCLEX exam. Having an ongoing review and practice plan, even after graduation, is a great way to keep your thoughts focused on passing this very important, career-changing exam.

While a strong result on your HESI Exit Exam is something to celebrate, here are some tips to keep that winning edge as you wait to take your NCLEX:

- Enhance your test-taking skills by taking practice tests.
- Review your basic curriculum content. Start with your weak content areas. Review and practice.
- Organize what you know. Consider passing NCLEX your job. Organize your work space. Organize your reference materials. Organize the order of what you will review and study.
- Identify your content weakness. Review your reports from your HESI exams. Areas of weakness are identified and review materials are suggested.
- Know what to expect in the exam. Review the student materials on the NCLEX website. Understand what type of questions you will encounter. Some are multiple choice; some are alternate formats such as audio questions.
- Establish a solid study plan. Plan your work and work your plan. Schedule study and review time in small, frequent chunks. You will remember more that way.
- Manage anxiety. Build your confidence with practice and review. Use stress-busting techniques such as meditation and reflection.
- Celebrate your previous successes. Anticipate NCLEX success. Visualize your life as a nurse!