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## Reminders When Moving from Computer-Based Testing to Exams by Paper and Pencil and Vice Versa

By Arlene Woodruff

*Editor's Note: An earlier version of this article was published in the September 2010 issue of Future Fellows.*

Most candidates begin taking actuarial exams by computer-based testing (CBT). Currently Exams P/1, FM/2, and C/4 are administered by CBT. It is anticipated that Exam MFE/3F will move to CBT in 2011.

There are a few things to remember when taking an actuarial exam that is administered by paper and pencil.

- Read your confirmation notice so that you know where the exam will be administered. The paper and pencil exams are not administered at Prometric testing centers. Arrive 30 minutes prior to the published exam time.
- Bring a supply of number 2 pencils to the examination center to fill in the short answer card for SOA Exam MLC and CAS Exam MLC 3L. Pens may be used for the exams that require narrative/essay style responses.
- For Exam MLC (and MFE/3F in November 2010), candidates must present a valid Letter of Admission that will be sent from Preliminary Actuarial Examinations/SOA.
- For upper-level exams: Candidates should submit at least one answer page for each question—even if they did not answer each question. This is important in the grading process when the graders must receive an essay page for each question from every candidate. At the top of each page, candidates should include their exam number, question number, and candidate number. Time is given prior to the exam to write this information in the boxes at the top of the essay sheets. If more than one page is used to answer a question, indicate this by writing "1 of 2" on the first page and "2 of 2" on the second as appropriate for the number of pages.

There are some similarities to the CBT administration. Candidates are reminded to bring the following to the test center:

- Photo ID: To be admitted into an examination center, each candidate must

present a positive government issued identification with a signature and a photograph (e.g., driver's license, passport, etc.). Each candidate will be required to sign in at the examination center. A candidate who does not present positive identification or who refuses or is unable to provide a matching signature will not be permitted to write the examination.

- **Authorized Calculator:** Only authorized calculators will be permitted at the examination center. All unauthorized calculators brought to the exam will be confiscated for the duration of the exam. A list of approved calculators is provided in the online syllabus for each exam. Use of an unauthorized calculator may result in the disqualification of the candidate's examination.

Vice Versa: From P/P to CBT

For those who are in a situation of taking their first exam(s) in the paper and pencil format, there are a few things to remember when transitioning to CBT for the first time.

- After you register for the exam, you will receive an acknowledgement letter by e-mail that includes your unique candidate/eligibility number for one test administration. Since the candidate/eligibility number is not activated immediately, you will be sent a letter of confirmation. You should schedule your exam appointment immediately upon receipt of your confirmation in order to ensure a seat for the exam.
- The required ID is a valid government-issued photo identification with the candidate's signature.
- You will not be permitted to bring any pens, pencils, papers, etc. into the exam room.
- If you decide not to take the exam, in order to receive a refund you must (1) cancel your appointment with Prometric at least 2.5 days before your appointment and (2) request a refund from the Preliminary Actuarial Exams/SOA by the published deadline.

Detailed rules are provided with the exam syllabi on both the CAS and SOA websites.

*Arlene Woodruff, FCAS, serves on the CAS Examination Committee.*