



AzSCI Performance Level Descriptors

November 18, 2022 Webinar

How will the state manage AzSCI given that ACT also tests in science?

AzSCI is the statewide assessment for science, which assesses Arizona's Three-Dimensional Standards in Science. AzSCI is the test that will be used for Federal and State requirements and will be utilized in Accountability.

Are the high school AzSCI Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) going to be updated or are the versions posted on ADE's website the final ones?

AzSCI Performance Level Descriptors for Grade 11 are final documents, posted 08.01.22. The published dates (11.07.22) for AzSCI Performance Level Descriptors Grades 5 and 8 reflect updates made to documents during the AzSCI Standard Setting Process this past summer.

Can you provide any guidance on using PLDs to create formative assessments?

In addition to summative assessments data, it is important that educators assess and monitor the learning progress of their students. Formative Assessment is a tool educators use to provide feedback and guide instruction. Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) provide a snapshot of the knowledge and skills expectations.

PLDs are a series of statements that describe the level of knowledge and skills required at each performance level on the new assessment. PLDs serve a variety of purposes. They provide specific information about what each level means and indicate the progression of student knowledge, skill, and ability across the performance levels. PLDs provide detail on the spectrum, or range, of performance within each performance level. PLDs are meant for the purposes of assessment; however, it can be used as a tool in classroom instruction to assist teachers and schools in better understanding a student's performance on AzSCI.

Will additional sample tests be released?

No. Additional Sample Tests will not be released. AzSCI resources include the Arizona Science Test (AzSCI) Sample Test for Grades 5, 8, and 11; AzSCI Scoring Guides with details about the items, student response types, correct responses, and related scoring consideration; Item Specifications; Blueprints; and more.

Can you share an overview of AzSCI for this year, including information about the three test units?

The overall AzSCI test is the same length as last year (2022 Administration); however, based on challenges and feedback received, the AzSCI test has been split into three test units instead of two.

AzSCI:

3 units (Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3)

60-90 minutes each.

Do the AzSCI PLDs align at all with the ACT Science section?

No. AzSCI PLDs align to the Arizona Science Standards, adopted 2018.

Where can I find the AzSCI PLDs?

The AzSCI PLDs are located on the Assessment AzSCI webpage:

<https://www.azed.gov/assessment/sci> under “AzSCI Performance Level Descriptors.”

Are the items on the assessment written at the High Proficient level for each standard as indicated on the AzSCI PLD document? Or are items written to the various performance levels?

Items on the assessment are written to various performance levels.

The construction of the AzSCI assessment is guided by the depth and rigor of the Arizona Science Standards. Items are created to address key components of the standards and assess a range of important skills. The AzSCI Blueprint provides an overview of the distribution of items on the AzSCI according to the standards. The test will ask questions that check a student’s conceptual understanding of Core Ideas as well as their Science and Engineering skills and Crosscutting concepts. These items have been written to be free from bias and sensitivity and widely vary in their degree of difficulty.

Will students need to complete all three AzSCI test sections to receive an AzSCI test score?

In order to receive an AzSCI test score, one item must be answered per unit.

Do you use Depth of Knowledge levels at all anymore? Or do the Minimally Proficient, Partially Proficient, Proficient, and Highly Proficient performance levels replace those?

Conventional cognitive complexity models, such as DOK (Depth of Knowledge), evaluate based on individual cognitive actions (memorization, application, evaluation, and analysis). This works well with one-dimensional standards. This does not work as well with multidimensional standards, such as the Arizona Science Standards, because each dimension being assessed could have its own cognitive level. To sufficiently evaluate a student’s range of proficiency, Arizona needed a scale that goes beyond a singular focus and takes into account three-dimensionality. The Task Analysis Guide in Science (TAGS) was developed for classroom use to evaluate cognitive demand with integration of practices and content. (Tekkumsu-Kisa, Stein, & Schunn (2015).

When will AzSCI scores be available this year?

AzSCI electronic score reports and Student Data Files will be available in PearsonAccess^{next} May 26, 2023. Paper copies of score reports will be delivered to districts and charters June 16, 2023.

Will AzSCI remain bonus points for A-F grades?

AzSCI currently contributes to bonus point for participation for State Accountability.

Webinar Information

How do I view this recorded webinar? If I attended the live event, how do I obtain a professional development certificate?

The recorded webinar and the PowerPoint slides are posted on the Assessment section website at <https://www.azed.gov/assessment> under the “Friday Focus Webinars 2022-2023” dropdown. If you attended the live webinar, you can access your certificate through your account in the Event Management System, where you registered for this event.