Pre-employment Testing Process for Skill Assessments

Applicant Preparation Guide
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to assist you in preparing for the MD Anderson Cancer Center (MDACC) Pre-employment Testing Process. The guide provides background information about the requirements for clerical, secretarial, and technical jobs, examples of the types of items that are included in the test battery, and tips for helping you prepare for the testing process.

The testing process is designed to measure various skills and abilities that are important to performing clerical, secretarial, and technical jobs. At MDACC, there is a wide range of jobs that are currently tested. These jobs include:

- Administrative and secretarial positions
- Patient and public contact positions
- Data entry operators
- Business and clerical positions
- Pharmacy technicians
- Surgery schedulers
- Medical transcriptionists

Presented in this guide is an overview of the testing process, sample items similar to those in the basic skills tests, a brief discussion of the specialized skills tests, and general test taking tips.

Using this guide does not guarantee you will successfully complete the Pre-employment Testing Process.
TEST-TAKING TIPS

The following are some suggestions to help you prepare for the Pre-employment Testing Process.

**General Testing Suggestions**

**Before the Test**
- Eat well and get a good night’s sleep before the test. If you are tired or hungry, your concentration may be affected and so might your test performance.
- Make sure that you have set aside enough time to complete the test battery. Once you start a particular test, you will not be able to exit the test and come back to it at another time.
- Make sure the testing area you choose is quiet and free from distractions. Silence or turn off any pagers, cell phones, calculators, portable radios, etc.
- Read the frequently asked questions regarding assessments located on the How to Apply page.
- Go into the test with a positive attitude, determined to do your best. Focus on what you know rather than worrying about what you do not know.

**During the Test**
- Read all of the instructions for each test and follow them step-by-step. If you skip the instructions, you may miss important information.
- No calculators, cell phones, and other electronic devices may be used during the test. Scratch paper/pencil may be used if needed.
- Keep in mind that some tests have time limits. Work as quickly and accurately as you can, but do not become discouraged if you do not complete any test. It is not expected that everyone will be able to respond to all of the test questions in the given time limits.
- Carefully read each test item. Skimming over a test item may cause you to miss important information.
- Try to stay relaxed during the test.
Strategies for Multiple-Choice Tests

Multiple-choice test formats present questions with several response alternatives. You are to choose the one alternative that is the correct or best answer to the question. Keep the following tips in mind when you are taking a multiple-choice exam:

- Never choose an alternative based on the frequency or pattern of your previous responses. Do not assume that the correct answers follow any sequence or pattern, or that they are used in equal numbers.

- Be sure to read every alternative. Even if one of the first responses is the alternative you expected to be correct, one of the others may be better or more specifically correct.

- Eliminate alternatives you know are wrong. This will help you to focus on the remaining alternatives. If two or more alternatives seem correct, compare them to determine what makes them different. Evaluate these differences in relation to the question.

- If you are not sure about any of the alternatives, use logical reasoning to rule out as many alternatives as you can. Then, choose between the remaining alternatives.

- If you cannot rule out any alternatives, your first reactions often tend to be correct. Change your answer only if information remembered later or a strong hunch indicates that your first guess is wrong.

- Try to answer as many questions as you can during the time limit. Do not spend too much time on any one question.
The MD Anderson titles in the Administrative/Secretarial, Business/Clerical, Data Entry, Medical Transcription, Pharmacy, Public/Patient Contact, and Surgery Support job families were studied to determine the skills and abilities that are required of individuals in order to perform successfully in these jobs. The following list presents examples of requirements that were identified as important for these jobs (note that you will only be tested on a subset of these as appropriate for the test that you are applying to):

- Ability to inspect and verify information for accuracy, paying close attention to details.
- Ability to formulate ideas and thoughts and present them meaningfully (for example, in letters, memos, reports, presentations, or instructions).
- Ability to read and comprehend information from charts, graphs, and diagrams.
- Ability to think logically and make appropriate decisions in routine and non-routine situations.
- Ability to follow MD Anderson rules, regulations, and procedures.
- Ability to organize, assemble, and compile information, including tracking and recording information on forms and in records.
- Ability to plan, schedule, organize, and prioritize work activities for self and others.
- Personal characteristics such as dependability, communication, and interpersonal skills.

The tests you will complete are based on the skill and ability requirements of the specific job for which you are applying.
TESTING PROCESS OVERVIEW

**Basic Skills Tests**

Many of the Basic Skills Tests in the Pre-employment Testing online application process are multiple-choice tests. You will select the best answer to each question from the response options presented. The number of response options varies, ranging from two to five, depending on the test. The specific Basic Skills Tests you will complete depend on the job for which you are applying. Some of the tests are timed, and depending on the test, you will have 3 to 7 minutes to respond to as many of the items as you can. You should work as quickly and accurately as possible.

**Specialized Skills Tests**

In addition to the Basic Skills Tests, applicants for some jobs will complete a Specialized Skills Test. Administrative and secretarial applicants will complete a Microsoft Word test; administrative applicants will also complete Microsoft Excel and Microsoft PowerPoint tests. Applicants for data entry operator positions will complete a data entry test. Medical transcriptionist applicants will complete a test transcribing information from an audiotape into the computer onsite at MD Anderson Human Resources. Applicants for pharmacy technician positions will complete an online Pharmacy math and dosage calculations test. Surgery Scheduler applicants will complete a surgery terminology test online.
There are several tests of basic skills included in the Pre-employment Testing online application process. The specific tests you will take are based on the job for which you are applying. This guide includes samples of the different types of items included in the test batteries. The items presented in this guide may not be exactly like the items you will see on the actual tests. Rather, this guide provides you with information regarding the types of items you may see.

On the following pages are descriptions and samples of the types of items in the pre-employment tests. At the top of each page is the type of test, followed by a brief description, sample item, and explanation for the answer to the sample item.
Alphanumeric Matching

Description
The Matching - Alphanumeric test aims at assessing the test taker's visual accuracy in determining whether a set of letter/numerical combinations, some including symbols, are the same or different.

Sample Item
Are the following the same or different?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>531E27</td>
<td>53E727</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  Same  
B  Different

Explanation: The two strings of characters 531E27 and 53E727 are not alike. The third and fourth characters are different. Therefore, the correct answer is B.
**Coding**

**Description**
The Coding test aims at assessing the skill level of the test taker in accessing information using charts, interpretation of data, and assigning codes. Such work scenarios as catalog documentation, telephone directories and time zones are employed.

**Sample Item**
According to the chart, what is the department code for Marketing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Number of Staff</th>
<th>Supplies Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77 Facility Management</td>
<td>1 1 - 19 employees</td>
<td>11 Less than $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 Finance</td>
<td>2 40 - 74 employees</td>
<td>12 $2,000 - $4,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Human Resources</td>
<td>3 75 - 99 employees</td>
<td>13 $5,000 - $9,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Marketing</td>
<td>4 100 or more employees</td>
<td>14 $10,000 or greater</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  27
B  45
C  77
D  94

**Explanation**: Referencing the chart for the sample item, the code for the Marketing Department is 45. The answer to the same item would be B.
**Computer Literacy**

*Description*

This Computer Literacy - Basic assessment is designed to measure the skills of a person familiar with some of the technical aspects of computer knowledge as well as knowledge generally known by users that covers terminology and practices associated with basic computer use.

*Sample Item*

When sending an email you received to another individual, what functionality should you use?

- A  Follow Up
- B  Forward
- C  New
- D  Reply

**Explanation:** The correct answer for the sample item is forward, because forwarding allows the user to send an email to someone who was not originally on the distribution list to receive the email. Therefore, the answer is B.
Corrective Proofreading

Description
The Corrective Proofreading - Reply Letter test presents test takers with a text passage similar to a reply letter that contains spelling, grammar and punctuation errors. This test measures a person's ability to recognize and correct the errors within the text passage.

Sample Items
Dr Thomas Thank you for your recent inquiry to our department. We have reviewed the information request and will have a response to you by February 22.

Explanation: To correct spelling errors, the test taker would click on the word and make the correction. The correct punctuation errors, the test taker would click on the word closest to the error. In the sample above, a period needs to be added after “Dr”. A colon and carriage return need to be added after Thomas. In addition, “request” and “February” are misspelled. Finally, “has” should be “have”.

Filing Names

Description
The Filing by Name assessment measures the test taker's ability to categorize items and alphabetize proper names using basic filing procedures.

Sample Items
Which of the following should be filed immediately AFTER Harrison, April?

A Howard, Michelle
B Cunningham, Joann
C Hamilton, June
D Huntington, Alex
E Garrett, Marie

Explanation: Alphabetically, “Howard” falls after Harrison. The correct answer is A.
**Following Written Instructions**

*Description*

The Following Written Instructions test aims at determining the skill level of the test taker in reading, assessing, and applying written instructions to clerical tasks. The test focuses on tasks between filing, organization, order of action (prioritizing), and compilation of information (documentation).

*Sample Item*

You are arranging travel, which includes arranging for a rental car. The four types of cars available for rental are compact, mid-size, full-size, and SUV. Listed below are the instructions for deciding which type of car should be rented.

- Compact or mid-size cars should be rented when only one or two people will be riding.
- Full-size cars must be rented when three to four people will be riding.
- SUV-size cars must be rented when five to seven people will be riding.
- Compact cars should only be used when traveling less than 25 miles.
- Mid-size cars should be used when traveling more than 25 miles.

How should the reservation be made for four people traveling 20 miles?

A  Compact  
B  Mid-size  
C  Full-size  
D  SUV  

**Explanation:** According to the rules listed above, when four people are traveling, a full-size car must be rented. Because of the number traveling, the mileage is not a factor in the answer. Therefore, a full-size car is the correct answer, which is C.
Medical Spelling

Description
The Medical Spelling test is in a text editing format. The test taker is required to identify whether words are spelled correctly. If necessary, the test taker uses the mouse and keyboard to edit misspelled words.

Sample Item
canceris

Explanation: In the Medical Spelling Test, the test taker must decide if the word is spelled correctly. If it is, the test taker would click Next Question to move to a new item. In this sample item, the word “canceris” is spelled incorrectly. To be spelled correctly, the test taker would correct to “cancerous”.
Medical Terminology

**Description**
This test measures the ability to recognize and understand typical terminology that may be encountered by oncology staff on the job.

**Sample Item**
A localized tumor is…

A  Categorized by the regional site  
B  Located beyond the primary site  
C  Restricted to a single site  
D  Spreading to a secondary site

**Explanation**: For the sample item, the definition of a localized tumor is a tumor that is restricted to a single site. The other response options indicate spread beyond the initial site. Therefore, the correct response is **C**.
If you are applying for an administrative, secretarial, data entry, medical transcriptionist, pharmacy technician, or surgery scheduler position, you will take a Specialized Skills Test in addition to the Basic Skills Tests.

**Administrative and Secretarial Applicants**
Administrative and secretarial jobs require employees to be skilled at performing word processing activities. Therefore, applicants to these jobs will complete a computerized Microsoft Word test in addition to the Basic Skills Tests described previously. In addition, administrative jobs require employees to be skilled at performing spreadsheet and presentation activities. Therefore, applicants to administrative jobs will also take the Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint tests.

**Data Entry Operator Applicants**
Data entry operators are required to quickly and accurately enter data into computer systems from forms, records, and tables. Applicants to data entry positions will complete a computerized data entry test in addition to the Basic Skills Tests described previously.

**Medical Transcriptionist Applicants**
Medical transcriptionists at MD Anderson transcribe information from audio tapes into computerized systems. In addition to the Basic Skills Tests described previously, transcriptionist applicants will complete a computerized transcription test onsite in MD Anderson Human Resources. This test requires applicants to quickly and accurately transcribe medical information presented to them through headphones. Recruiters will contact candidates as appropriate for the onsite testing.

**Pharmacy Technician Applicants**
Pharmacy Technicians at MD Anderson use basic math skills to assist with filling prescriptions, calculating the appropriate dosage, and converting measurements between numerical systems. In addition to the Basic Skills Tests described previously, pharmacy technician applicants will complete a computerized pharmacy mathematics and dosage calculation test.

**Surgery Scheduler Applicants**
Surgery Schedulers at MD Anderson use written orders with surgery terminology to schedule patients appropriately for surgery. In addition to the Basic Skills Tests described previously, surgery scheduler applicants will complete a computerized surgery terminology test.