

CPL: SECTION 3-CREDIT THROUGH ASSESSMENT BY LOCAL EXAM (ABLE)

Credit for Prior Learning Webinar | First Friday of Every Month¹, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. | Click here (<https://vccs.zoom.us/join/9876543210>) to register.

¹ Except for January 2, 2026

General Information About Assessment by Local Exam (ABLE)

Using exams prepared by NOVA faculty, Assessment by Local Exam (ABLE) allows students to receive credit for courses by demonstrating they have acquired the competencies through prior education or other experiences. In most cases, students must contact the department offering the exam to determine if they are qualified to take the exam; they may have to meet certain background requirements in order to qualify.

There is no charge for ABLE exams or for having credit recorded on the student's permanent record. Credits earned through ABLE exams do not count towards the College residency requirement and may or may not transfer to other institutions of higher education. The ABLE exams and instructions are listed below.

If students pass and wish to use the exam results to fulfill a current enrolled course requirement, it is their responsibility to drop the course before the Census Date for a full tuition refund, or no later than the last day to withdraw without grade penalty. Furthermore, students are encouraged to review the Academic Calendar (<https://www.nvcc.edu/calendars/academic/summer21.html>) and consult a faculty advisor or counselor before deciding to drop a course. The ABLE test score does not replace the grade earned through enrollment.

SDV 100: Student Development ABLE Exam

About the Exam

Students who enter NOVA with advanced study skills and knowledge of college processes may be able to take the SDV ABLE exam. If a student's program requires SDV 101 Orientation to:, it is his or her responsibility to check with the department to determine if the SDV ABLE exam will fulfill the requirement.

The SDV ABLE exam, which has 50 questions that reflect the course content of SDV 100 (<https://www.nvcc.edu/depts/academic/coursecont/summaries/SDV100.pdf>), is a 90-minute timed test administered in person at any NOVA testing center (<https://www.nvcc.edu/student-resources/technology/testing-centers/>). Students must score 38 or higher in order to receive credit. The exam may be taken only once.

Eligibility

- The exam is designated for students with previous college experience and 30+ credits.
- First time to college students and dual-enrolled students are **ineligible** to take the exam.

- Students who intend to take the ABLE exam should do so prior to enrolling in the SDV course.
- Students who have earned an A - F grade in SDV 100 College Success Skills/SDV 101 Orientation to: are not eligible to take the SDV ABLE exam.

Testing Procedures

Students must take the SDV ABLE exam in person and may do so at any NOVA testing center. They must start the test at least two hours before closing. Visit the Testing Centers website (<https://www.nvcc.edu/student-resources/technology/testing-centers/>) for hours of operation.

HLT 141: Introduction to Medical Terminology ABLE Exam

About the Exam

There are 50 questions that reflect the course content of HLT 141 (<https://www.nvcc.edu/academic/coursecont/summaries/HLT141.pdf>). Students will have 2 hours to complete the exam, and it can only be taken once. Scores will be available at the conclusion of the exam. Credit will be applied, if appropriate, to the student's permanent record upon achieving a passing score of 70%.

Eligibility

Students who enter NOVA with pre-existing knowledge or experiences with medical terminology may be eligible to take the HLT 141 ABLE exam. The exam is available only through NOVA's MEC campus testing center. For most MEC Campus programs, the exam is administered based on your eligibility, except for the Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) program, which requires permission from the program director in addition to meeting the eligibility requirement.

Eligibility is determined by MEC Testing Staff once the student sends an email requesting the exam. Before sitting for the exam, students will fill out a credit by ABLE examination form. Students are advised to check with the department to determine if the HLT 141 ABLE exam will fulfill their degree requirement. Students who have earned a grade in HLT 141 Introduction to Medical Terminology are ineligible to take the exam. This exam can only be taken once.

Students will receive an email confirming their eligibility with the instructions and password to access the HLT 141 exam in Canvas.

Testing Procedures

The HLT 141 ABLE exam is now available to students remotely. Students can request the exam by emailing the Medical Education Campus (MEC) testing center (mectesting@nvcc.edu) and provide the following information:

Full Name: (<https://www.nvcc.edu/novaconnect/students/>)

NOVA Student ID Number: (<https://www.nvcc.edu/novaconnect/students/faq.html>)

Expected graduation date and degree plan: (<https://www.nvcc.edu/graduation/>)

Do you require accommodations? (<https://www.nvcc.edu/disability-services/>)

If yes, please include a copy of your current Memorandum of Accommodation (MOA)

MUS 111: Music Theory ABLE Exam

About the Exam

The MUS 111 ABLE test consists of two parts. The first part, which serves as a screening section to determine if students are qualified to take MUS 111 ABLE, is administered online by the music department via Canvas. If students pass the screening, they will schedule to take the second part in person with a music teacher. Students must score at least 85% in both parts in order to receive credit for MUS 111 Music Theory I.

Eligibility

All students who have requisite training and experience and are interested to test out MUS 111 Music Theory I are eligible to take the MUS 111 ABLE test. This includes students who previously took and failed the course. Students who score below 85% in the MUS 111 ABLE test can repeat the test once.

Testing Procedures

Students should contact the Alexandria Music Department (<https://www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/lass/>) to get enrolled in the MUS 111 ABLE Canvas site. They would then complete the quizzes on Canvas at the given time. Each quiz has two attempts, and students must score at least 85% in all the quizzes to proceed to Part Two. After students pass Part One, they schedule to take Part Two in person with a full-time music teacher at the Alexandria Music Department (testing at another campus may be arranged as needed).

MUS 141-142: Class Piano I-II ABLE Exams

About the Exams

These are playing exams. Students play each of the items live, in person, for a panel of faculty. There are no written questions or answers. Students perform on the piano and do sight reading and harmonization for this exam. The MUS 141 test would take 15 minutes at most, the MUS 142 test 15-20 minutes.

Eligibility

Students must have acquired the skills through private piano lessons and/or group keyboard instruction. Self-practice in conjunction with guided instruction is critical to be able to make progress. Piano lessons in a studio or local piano teacher are the most common places students might have had lessons. Additionally, some schools offer music instruction or ensemble classes which can help build skills like reading music and musicianship skills which are necessary to complete Class Piano I and II.

Testing Procedures

Students should contact the music department at the Alexandria campus (<https://www.nvcc.edu/academics/divisions/lass/>) to register for the ABLE MUS 141-142 exams. Tests are to be administered in person at the Alexandria or Annandale campus; they can also be taken at other campuses upon request. Students can take ABLE exams only once.