

The Competence Test

The Competence Test is administered at the end of primary school (in 6th class) and it is the first external examination the student attempts in his school education. The first Competence Test was administered in 2002.

The Competence Test fulfils three basic functions:

1. to motivate a student to learn,
2. to motivate teachers to use methods allowing the effective execution of those aspects of the Core Curriculum, which aim to integrate subjects and move the priority in education from passing knowledge to developing crucial skills,
3. to provide a source of information about school achievements that is accurate thorough and comparable across the nation.

The Competence Test is conducted by the Regional Examination Boards and it is obligatory and it. A student who decides not to take the Test will not graduate from primary school. It is administered in April, at a date fixed by the Director of Central Examination Board. In all schools in Poland it takes place on the same day and at the same hour. All candidates attempt the same set of tasks.

The Competence Test is usually conducted at the student's own school. Only in special cases the Competence Test might be conducted in another institution, fixed by the appropriate Regional Examination Board. The Competence Test does not have a selection function but only an informational one – the results does not have any influence on a student's promotion and should not be the basis of any selection process. Any student who has graduated from primary school, independent of test results, must be admitted to the lower secondary school in the appropriate area (until the age of 16).

The test integrates a number of subjects and it tests the skills and abilities specified in the attainment standards within the scope of:

- reading
- writing
- reasoning
- using information
- applying knowledge.

Students have 60 minutes to complete the test. The result of the test is a sum of the points gained in all open and closed tasks. The results are final and they are settled by the Regional Examination Boards. The maximum score is 40 points. Every candidate receives from the Regional Examination Board a certificate with detailed test result. The certificates are distributed in schools.