**<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/mst/sci/qascience.html>**

**Program Requirements in Science for the Commencement-Level (High School)**

1. **What are the requirements in science for a Regents diploma for students entering Grade 9 in 2001 and beyond?**   
   Students entering Grade 9 in Fall 2001 and beyond must earn three units of credit in science. The three units must be comprised of commencement-level science courses aligned with the New York State Learning Standards in Mathematics, Science, and Technology, including one course from the Physical Setting (physical science) and one course from the Living Environment (life science). The third may be from either life sciences or physical sciences [100.5(a)(3)(iii)]. All commencement-level science courses, including specialized courses, must include laboratory activities. Students who take commencement-level science courses based on New York State’s science core curricula (Living Environment, Physical Setting/Earth Science, Physical Setting/Chemistry, and Physical Setting/Physics) must successfully complete the State-mandated laboratory requirement. Completion of this requirement includes 1200 minutes of hands-on laboratory experience with satisfactory laboratory reports and prepares students for the corresponding Regents examination in science. Students must pass one Regents examination in science [100.5(a)(5)(i)(d)(3)].

The third credit in science may be a commencement-level science course derived from one of the four core curriculum areas; a specialized course, including an elective such as an advanced placement and other externally developed courses in life sciences and/or the physical sciences derived from Standards 1, 2, 4, 6, and, 7 of the New York State Learning Standards in Mathematics, Science, and Technology; a Technology education course; or a MST integrated course [100.5(b)(7)(iv)]. A commencement-level course in technology education may be used as the third unit of credit in science or mathematics, but not both [100.5(b)(7)(iv)(j)].

1. **What are the requirements in science for a student who wishes to earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation?**   
   In order to earn a Regents diploma with advanced designation, students must earn three units of credit in commencement-level science. Two units of credit must be earned through completion of courses based on science core curricula, one from the Physical Setting (physical sciences) and one from Living Environment (life science). Those two courses must culminate in a Regents examination in science. Students must pass two Regents examinations in science, with at least one from the Living Environment (life sciences) and one from the Physical Setting (physical sciences) [100.5(7)(v)(b)].
2. **May a student be exempted from the Regents diploma testing requirements in science?**   
   Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year and thereafter, the principal may exempt a student who enters a registered New York high school for the first time in grade 12 from the requirement for the State Regents examination in science [100.5(d)(5)(iv)(b)].
3. **What are the Department approved alternatives to State assessments in science?**   
   A current listing of Department-approved alternative examinations [100.5(a)(5)(ii)] in science is maintained by the Office of State Assessment and posted on the Department’s web site at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/osa/hsgen/archive/list.pdf> (pdf document 10.08 KB)
4. **What courses lead to meeting the diploma requirements for science?**Commencement-level science courses derived from the Learning Standards in Mathematics, Science, and Technology and Standards may be applied toward fulfillment of Regents diploma requirements. [100.1(1)(t)(1)(ii)], [100.5(a)(3)(iii)]. At a minimum these must include one unit of credit from the Physical Setting (physical science) and one unit of credit from the Living Environment (life science) and one unit of credit in either Physical Setting (physical science) and the Living Environment (life science). Science courses that are derived from one of the four commencement-level science core curricula (Physical Setting/Chemistry, Physical Setting/Earth Science, Living Environment, and Physical Setting/Physics) must include the State-mandated 1200 minute laboratory requirement with satisfactory laboratory reports and culminate in a corresponding Regents examination in science.

Specialized courses in science that are derived from the Standards 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7 of the New York State Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science, and Technology must be approved by the appropriate school official, usually the Superintendent. These courses may include laboratory activities within the regular classroom instructional meeting time, or may include additional laboratory associated with earning a unit of credit, but they do not include the State-mandated laboratory requirement and do not end in a Regents examination for science.

1. **May extended courses be taught in the sciences?**   
   A three or four semester commencement-level science course that culminates in a Regents examination in science may be offered to students who need additional time to earn credit towards attainment of diploma requirements for science. Credit may be offered at 0.5 credits per semester, i.e., 1.5 credits for a three-semester course, and 2.0 credits for a four-semester course. All students must complete the State-mandated laboratory requirement to be eligible to take a Regents examination in science. The State-mandated laboratory requirement for an extended course in science that culminates in a Regents examination in science may be satisfied in the following ways:
   * The last two semesters of a commencement-level extended science course must include the State-mandated laboratory requirement in addition to the required classroom instruction associated with earning a unit of credit.
   * The State-mandated laboratory requirement may be extended over each semester of the commencement-level extended course in science; however, laboratory activities must be in addition to the required classroom instruction associated with earning a unit of credit.
2. **May an elective course in science be taken first?**   
   Yes. A student entering grade 9 in September 2001 and beyond may take a commencement-level science elective course or pre-course to prepare for a commencement-level course which culminates in a Regents examination in science. Examples of such courses are: math/science/technology skills and content; basic skills in science, and extended courses (see question 14 for additional information on commencement-level extended courses).
3. **May a student "challenge" a Regents examination in science to earn credit?**   
   With the approval of an appropriate school official (the Superintendent or designee in public schools, and usually the principal in non-public schools) a student may earn credit by examination only if the State-mandated laboratory requirement, including 1200 minutes of hands-on laboratory with satisfactory laboratory reports, has been completed. Additionally, the student must meet the requirements as stated in Regulations of the Commissioner of Education [Part 100.5(d)(1)], including passing the Regents examination in science with a score of no less than 85.
4. **Must a commencement-level science curriculum be aligned with the New York State Learning Standards?**   
   Yes. All science courses must be aligned with the New York State Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science, and Technology [100.1(1)(t)(l)(ii)]. Commencement-level science courses that culminate in a Regents examination in science must derive from one the following science core curricula: Living Environment, Physical Setting/Earth Science, Physical Setting/Chemistry, and Physical Setting/Physics.
5. **Who develops course curricula for commencement-level sciences?**  
   It is the responsibility of the school district, charter school, and/or non-public school to develop and implement curriculum for science courses. Curriculum guidance for commencement-level science courses that culminate in a Regents Examination in science is provided in the commencement-level science core curricula in Physical Setting/Chemistry, Physical Setting/Earth Science, Living Environment, and Physical Setting/Physics that derive from the New York State Learning Standards for Mathematics, Science, and Technology.
6. **What is the laboratory requirement for admission to a Regents examination in science?**   
   For admission to a Regents examination in science, a student must complete the State- mandated laboratory requirement. The laboratory component must be provided in addition to the required classroom instruction associated with earning a unit of credit and must include 1200 minutes of hands-on laboratory with satisfactory laboratory reports [100.5(b)(7)(iv)(d)]. Laboratory reports must be kept on file for at least six months after the student takes a Regents examination in science.
7. **May a science course be offered for more than one unit of credit?**   
   No.
8. **Must the laboratory requirement be met prior to admission to a State Regents examination in science?**Yes. Schools are permitted to establish a target date for the completion and submission of the laboratory requirement at any time, but no later than one week prior to the administration of any component of a Regents examination in science.

The Department strongly recommends that the laboratory requirement be completed again by all students who fail any commencement–level science course.

1. **May a school administrator or teacher exempt a student from the laboratory requirement?**   
   No. All students must complete the laboratory requirement. Students who are hospitalized, homebound, or home-schooled may be given comparative laboratories or alternative laboratories.

**Special Needs Students**

1. **Must students with disabilities meet the science laboratory requirement for admission to the Regents examination in a science?**   
   All students must meet the State-mandated laboratory requirements described in the answer to question # 20.
2. **What accommodations may be used in the science laboratory setting?**All accommodations as indicated in the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) must be applied to the laboratory setting as needed. For example, a student with a visual impairment may have a laboratory partner or an aide report observations to the student. The student, however, must manipulate the data or make inferences from the observed data.
3. **What is the science teacher’s responsibility in implementing the IEP?**According to Part 200, Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Relating to General Education and Diploma Requirements [200.4 (e)(3)], the school district must ensure that each science teacher who is responsible for the implementation of a student’s IEP shall have access to a copy of the IEP. Science teachers shall be informed by the school district of responsibilities related to implementing the student’s IEP, specific accommodations, and in providing supports in accordance with the IEP.
4. **What accommodations in testing procedures are permitted or required on New York State science assessments?**As long as the accommodations do not alter the constructs being tested, students may be entitled to testing accommodations for:
   * temporary disability (e.g., broken arms, hospitalization)
   * § 504 plans
   * IEP accommodations

The implementation of these accommodations can be found in the most recent copy of the Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests, and Proficiency Examinations: School Administrators Manual, as well as in Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Relating to General Education and Diploma Requirements.

***State Ed's response to my questions in red (some questions are based on things that have come up in other districts too!)...***

Hello again.  
  
I have had some similar questions come up in many districts and want to make sure I give them the most updated information.   
  
As far as lab policies go, districts should be documenting the minutes, not the number of labs correct? [Clause 100.5(b)(7)(iv)(d) of the Part 100 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education includes "In order to qualify to take a Regents examination in any of the sciences a student must complete 1200 minutes of actual hands-on (not simulated) laboratory experience with satisfactory documented laboratory reports. The 1200 minutes of laboratory experience must be in addition to the required classroom instruction associated with earning a unit of credit." There is no mention of a number of labs.]  
  
What is the deadline for completing labs...and can they exclude a student from taking the regents mid-year? [I'm not sure what you mean by "exclude a student from taking the regents mid-year." I wouldn't want to write off a student mid-year. Why not allow make-up sessions? The push should be to get students to achieve, not write them off. Only students who have satisfied the laboratory requirement are allowed to take the Regents examinations. If they haven't satisfied the requirement, they can't take the Regents exam mid-year. See question 22 and its associated answer at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/mst/sci/qascience.html. If a deadline hasn't been set then students have up until actual entry to the Regents examination to satisfy the requirement. Of course, the laboratory reports would have to be graded to determine if they are satisfactory prior to the student's admission to the examination.]  
  
Also, when a student transfers from another state and does not have labs, what is the protocol the school should follow? [Section 102.3 of the Part 102 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education includes:  
  
"Building principals are responsible for administering department examinations and maintaining the integrity of examination content and programs, in accordance with directions and procedures established by the commissioner."  
  
The principal is authorized to administer the Regents examinations. The principal, therefore, has to make the decision as to whether or not the student in question has completed 1200 minutes of actual hands-on (not simulated) laboratory experience with satisfactory documented laboratory reports. The principal must be able to defend the decision if the administration of the Regents examination to this student is ever called into question. The principal would have to provide evidence that the student completed 1200 minutes of actual hands-on (not simulated) laboratory experience with satisfactory documented laboratory reports. If it can be verified that the student has satisfied the laboratory requirement, then the student is eligible to take the associated Regents examination.  
  
A student that transfers in from another State still has to satisfy the 1200 minute laboratory requirement before that student is admitted to a Regents examination in the sciences. The are no exemptions to this requirement. The school from which the student transferred should be contacted to provide you with evidence of laboratory experiences and laboratory reports that have been completed by the student.]  
  
What about home SCHOOL students who want to take the regents at school but didn't have 1200 lab minutes at home? [All students must satisfy the laboratory requirement before they are admitted to the associated science regents examination. See question 62 and its associated answer at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/homeinstruction/homeschoolingqanda.html.]

62. **May a student instructed at home take Regents examinations?**

Yes. If a request is made, school officials are encouraged to admit a student receiving home instruction to Regents examinations. If a Regents examination has a lab requirement, the student may be admitted to the examination if there is evidence that the student has met the lab requirement. The IHIP, quarterly reports and/or verification from the student's teacher can provide such evidence.

Regents examinations may only be administered at the public school or registered nonpublic school because they are secure examinations. The test results can be helpful to the student and also to public school officials.  
  
Thank you for your continued assistance!  
  
Sincerely,  
  
Monica