

## Frequently Asked Questions - Ability to Benefit

Baruch College Fall 2011

**My college has informed me that I need to take an Ability to Benefit (ATB) exam in order to be eligible for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and Scholarships. What exactly is meant by ATB?**

If you do not have a US high school diploma or recognized equivalent such as a GED, you must take and pass an ability to benefit (ATB) exam approved by the NYS Board of Regents and designated by your school to be eligible to apply for State aid. The ATB exam demonstrates the student's ability to benefit from the training offered.

**I have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from my high school, is this considered the same as a high school diploma or GED for State aid purposes?**

No, an IEP diploma is not equivalent to a local or Regents high school diploma. You must contact your college to identify the procedures you will need to follow to be considered for admission. For State aid purposes, you will still need to take and pass an ATB exam.

**I have been to college before, am transferring my credits to another college and have never received any State aid. My new school said that I need to take and pass an ATB exam in order to be eligible to receive any State aid since I do not have a high school diploma.**

Yes, the Ability to Benefit regulations apply to all students who are first-time state aid recipients who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent (GED.)

**I currently have a college degree and am continuing with my education, however, I do not have a high school diploma or GED. Will I need to take and pass an ATB exam to be eligible to apply for State aid at my new college?**

If you are seeking to earn a degree and already have earned a degree from a regionally accredited college or university or any institution in New York State authorized by the Board of Regents to confer degrees, your prior degree can be used to satisfy State requirements to be used in place of an ATB exam.

**I graduated from a university outside the United States. Will my foreign degree allow me to be eligible for State aid without taking the ATB exam?**

If your degree comes from a college or university that is recognized by your home country's Ministry of Education, you are considered to meet the requirements and do not have to take an ATB exam.

**I have a non-U.S. high school diploma and have never had any New York State aid before. Do I qualify for State aid or any State scholarships?**

Without a U.S. high school diploma or its equivalent you will need to take and pass an Ability to Benefit (ATB) exam. Again, the ATB requirements apply to all students who are first-time state aid recipients and the exam is required to be eligible to receive any State aid.

**I have taken the required ATB exam but have just found out that I did not pass it. Will I be able to retake the exam?**

Yes, after the appropriate remediation prescribed by the college.

**I have already started at my college and have just found out I did not pass the ATB exam I took prior to the start of school. If I retake the exam and pass it this time will I be able to receive State aid for the term I am currently in?**

You must take the exam within the institution's add/drop period to establish award eligibility in that term.

**I have been home-schooled. Am I eligible for State aid?**

Yes, you will be eligible to apply for State aid once you have received a letter from your home school's district superintendent attesting to the substantial equivalence of the homeschooling to the education completed by public high school graduates.

**Are United States high school diplomas the only high school diplomas that are acceptable to be eligible for State aid?**

Yes. Note: US high school diplomas include diplomas from the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam or the Northern Mariana Islands and qualify you to be eligible to apply for State aid.