

**U. S. Department of Education  
Office of Postsecondary Education/Federal TRIO Programs  
Policies and Procedures for Prior Experience (PE) Assessments  
Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program  
2012–17 Grant Award Cycle**

***Brief summary of policies and procedures for assessing Prior Experience (PE) points***

The purpose of this appendix is to provide information on the Department’s policies, procedures and calculation rules used to award Prior Experience (PE) points for the FY 2012-17 McNair grant cycle.

McNair projects funded in the assessment years are eligible for PE points.

- The PE assessment years are 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16.
- The calculation of PE points for the three assessment years is based on:
  - A project’s approved number of participants to be served;
  - A project’s approved objectives; and
  - The student-level data a project submits in its annual performance report (APR) for each assessment year.
  - The Department has not cleaned or changed any of the student-level data and will not accept any changes to the APR data submitted in prior years.
- A project may earn up to a total of 15 points for each year assessed (see 34 CFR 646.20(a)(2)). The final PE score is the average of the scores for the three years assessed.
- A project that served less than 90 percent of the number of students the project was funded to serve in the assessment year is not eligible to earn points for any of the PE criteria in the assessment year (see 34 CFR 646.22(b)).
  - To determine if a project has served at least 90 percent of the approved number of student to be served, standard rounding rules are applied; if the calculated Number Served rate is between 89.5 and 89.9 percent, it is rounded up to 90 percent.
  - To earn PE points for the Funded Number criterion, a project must serve at least the number funded to serve. Except for the one situation noted above, no rounding is applied to the Number Served rates. For example, if the calculated rate is 99.6 percent, the rate will be 99 percent, not 100 percent.
- A McNair project funded in the current grant cycle (2012-17) that submits the APR for each of the assessment years is eligible to earn PE points for the following PE criteria:
  - Funded Number;
  - Research or Other Scholarly Activities;
  - Post-baccalaureate Program—Graduate School Enrollment; and
  - Post-baccalaureate Program—Continued Enrollment in Graduate School.
- PE points are awarded based on meeting or exceeding the approved objectives. No partial credit is given. If the calculated rate for the PE criterion (i.e., actual rate) is greater than or equal to the approved rate, PE points are awarded. Except where noted above, standard rounding rules are used (e.g., 79.6 percent rounds to 80 percent).
- To be eligible to earn PE points for the doctorate degree attainment criterion, a McNair project must have been operating a project and must have submitted an APR for the year in which the cohort was established. In addition, the project must have been continuously funded for the ten year period in which PE is being assessed.
- A project that does not submit an APR in the assessment year (i.e., 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16) is not eligible to earn any PE points for that assessment year.

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- The Department will not accept any changes to the project's APR data (or re-calculate the PE points) once the APR has been submitted for the assessment year. However, if other information such as audit reports, site visit reports, and project evaluation reports indicates the APR data used to calculate PE points are incorrect, the Department may decide to adjust (decrease) the PE scores or not award PE points (see 34 CFR 646.22(a)(3)).

### Eligibility to Receive PE Points by Years Funded and by PE Criteria

Each McNair project funded in the current grant cycle (FY 2012-17) is eligible to earn up to 13 or 15 PE points for each assessment year. The following provides information on the maximum number of PE points a project is eligible to receive for each of the three assessment years based on length of time the project has been continuously funded. A McNair project will fall into only *one of the two* scenarios below.

- Number of PE points that may be earned by a project first funded in 2003-04 and continuously funded through 2015-16 is 15 for each PE assessment year (2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16) and is divided by 3; therefore, total number of PE points that may be earned is **15** (i.e.,  $45/3 = 15$ ).
- Number of PE points that may be earned by a project first funded in 2003-04 and continuously funded through 2015-16 is 13 for each PE assessment year (2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16) and is divided by 3; therefore, total number of PE points that may be earned is **13** (i.e.,  $39/3 = 13$ ).

### *How is the Rate for the Funded Number Criterion Calculated?*

PE points are awarded based on the project having served the approved number of participants for the reporting year. The actual number of participants served must be equal to or greater than the number of participants the project was funded to serve.

- The **denominator** is the project's approved number of participants to be served.
- The **numerator** is actual number of participants served during the assessment year and is the sum of field #22 (Participant Status), options 1 and 2.

### *How is the Rate for the Research or Other Scholarly Activities Criterion Calculated?*

PE points are awarded to eligible projects that met or exceeded their approved objective for completing research or other scholarly activities. For a given assessment year, a project needed to have served students in the target population (i.e., students that participated in research or other scholarly activities).

The calculation rule for the **"percent of participants who completed research or other scholarly activities"** is as follows:

- The **denominator** is an unduplicated count of the number of students that participated in Research, Other Scholarly, or McNair Internships and is derived from:
  - Field #32 (Research) options 1 or 2, **OR**
  - Field #33 (Other Scholarly Activities) options 1 or 2, **OR**
  - Field #34 (McNair Internships) options 1 or 2.

*The denominator represents all those students that participated in research, other scholarly activities, or McNair internships, regardless of whether they completed the activities or not. Thus, all students served during the assessment year who participated in research, other scholarly activities, or McNair internships were included in the denominator, but only once.*

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- The **numerator** is an unduplicated count of the number of students who participated in and completed all components of the *research, other scholarly activities, or McNair internships* and is derived from:
  - Field #32 (Research) option 2, **OR**
  - Field #33 (Other Scholarly Activities) option 2, **OR**
  - Field #34 (McNair Internships) option 2

*The numerator represents all those students that completed their research, other scholarly activities, or McNair internships. Thus, all students served during the assessment year who completed research, other scholarly activities, or McNair internships were included in the numerator, but only once.*

### ***How is the Rate for the Post-baccalaureate Program—Graduate School Enrollment Criterion Calculated?***

PE points are awarded to eligible projects that met or exceeded their approved objective for post-baccalaureate program—graduate school enrollment. For a given assessment year, a project needed to have served students in the target population (i.e., participants who attained a bachelor’s degree during the assessment year).

The calculation rule for the “**post-baccalaureate program—graduate school enrollment rate**” is as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants who attained a bachelor’s degree during the assessment year and is derived from:
  - Field #38, (Graduate School Enrollment Status) option 1, 2, and 3.
- The **numerator** is the number of participants who attained a bachelor’s degree during the assessment year and enrolled in a post-baccalaureate program by the following fall term and is derived from:
  - Field #38, (Graduate School Enrollment Status) option 1

### ***How is the Rate for the Post-baccalaureate Program—Continued Enrollment in Graduate School Criterion Calculated?***

PE points are awarded to eligible projects that met or exceeded their approved objective for post-baccalaureate program persistence. For a given assessment year, a project needed to have served participants in the target population (i.e., students who were *First Year Graduate Students*).

The calculation rule for the “**post-baccalaureate program—continued enrollment in graduate school rate**” is as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants who were first-year graduate students during the assessment year and is derived from:
  - Field #39, (First-Year Graduate Student Persistence Status) option 1, 2, and 3.
- The **numerator** is the number of participants who were first-year graduate students during the assessment year and were still enrolled in a post-baccalaureate degree program by the following fall term and is derived from:
  - Field #39, (First-Year Graduate Student Persistence Status) option 1

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### *How is the Rate for the Doctoral Degree Attainment objective calculated?*

PE points are awarded to eligible projects that met or exceeded their approved objective for doctoral degree attainment. To receive PE points for a given assessment year, a project needed to have (1) served participants in the year in which the cohort for the doctoral degree attainment was established (e.g., 2004-05 for the 2014-15 assessment year), and (2) been continuously funded for the duration of the PE assessment period (e.g., 2004-05 through 2014-15 for the 2014-15 assessment year).

The calculation rule for the “**doctoral degree attainment rate**” is as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants who attained a bachelor’s degree in the applicable cohort (e.g., 2005-06 for the 2015-16 assessment year) and is derived from:

- Field #29 (Graduating Cohort Year of Bachelor’s Degree) option 5.

***Minus***

- Field #22 (Participant Status) option 4

***IF***

- Field #44 (Highest Graduate Degree Earned) not equal to options 2, 3, or 4.

- The **numerator** is the number of program participants in the graduating cohort year of the bachelor’s degree (e.g., 2004-05) that attained a doctoral degree *within* ten years and is derived from those in the denominator where:

- Field #44 (Highest Graduate Degree Earned) option 2, 3, and 4

Examples for assessing the doctorate degree attainment objective:

**Scenario #1:** Grantee A has 12 students in the 2005-06 cohort and reported 6 students as having earned a doctorate degree. The grantee reported one of the students as deceased (field 22, option 4) and also indicated the student did not earn a research-intensive doctorate within the 10 year time frame (i.e., by 2015-16). The participant who is now deceased is removed from the cohort; therefore, the cohort/denominator is 11 and the numerator is 6.

**Scenario #2:** Grantee B has 12 students in the 2005-06 cohort and reported 7 students as having earned a doctorate degree. The grantee reported one of the students as deceased (field 22, option 4); however, they earned a research-intensive doctorate within the 10 year time frame (i.e., by 2015-16). The participant who is now deceased is retained in the cohort and is also included in the numerator; therefore, the cohort/denominator is 12 and the numerator is 7.

**Scenario #3:** Grantee C has 12 students in the 2005-06 cohort and reported 6 students as having earned a doctorate degree. The grantee did not report any of the 12 students as deceased (field 22, option 4); therefore, the cohort/denominator is 12 and the numerator is 6.