

DECA Exam Specifications 2025-2026

DECA currently uses seven different exams for its competitive events. Please keep in mind that each state makes independent decisions regarding specific uses of each exam. New comprehensive, multiple-choice exams are developed each year and are based on the most recent update of the national standards.

Rubrics and role plays used by DECA are not provided by MBA Research. Questions regarding these aspects of the competitive events should be directed to state advisors.

General information for 2025-2026

- All exams are 100-item, multiple-choice. True/False and combination items (e.g., A & B are correct) are not used.
- Tests are designed with test discrimination in mind. The design is intended to encourage a broad range of student scores, minimizing the occurrence of “clusters” of students near the top. This approach results in lower overall scores but makes the results more valid and reliable in terms of identifying “winners.”
- All exams are fully independent of one another. There will be little or no overlapping use of questions among exams used in competition.
- Item selection is based on the national [Business Administration standards](#). With the exceptions of the Entrepreneurship exams and the district and state level exams for the “Principles” events, most exams are based on performance indicators at or below the specialist level ([Curriculum Planning Levels](#)). The Entrepreneurship exams draw from all six curriculum planning levels. District and state exams for the “Principles” event are based on the prerequisite and career-sustaining level indicators.
- Items are prorated across all eligible performance indicators so that each instructional area (e.g., promotion) is represented in proportion to the total of all performance indicators. For example, if there were a total of 200 indicators in a particular list, and 25 of them were from the promotion area, there would be approximately 12 or 13 promotion items on the exam. Note: Actual counts may vary slightly from those in the charts on the following pages.
- For some events, DECA has added performance indicators for use in the participating portion of the event (role plays). These additional indicators are not used in the exams.
- Items for district and state-level exams include a mix of new and revised (previously used) items. All items are reviewed each year and updated as appropriate. Although items are pulled from a large test-item bank, some may have appeared in other products, including other exams, LAP modules, or practice activities. However, although many items for a given performance indicator may sound similar to students, the actual reuse of items in any given year is quite small. (The item bank exceeds 30,000.)

Exams for specific events:

At the national level, seven exams are being used in 2025-2026. Each exam is utilized for several different competitive events:

Event	Exam
<i>Principles of Business Administration Events</i>	
Principles of Business Management & Administration	Business Administration Core Exam
Principles of Entrepreneurship	Business Administration Core Exam
Principles of Finance	Business Administration Core Exam
Principles of Hospitality and Tourism	Business Administration Core Exam
Principles of Marketing	Business Administration Core Exam
<i>Team Decision Making Events</i>	
Business Law and Ethics	Business Management and Admin Cluster Exam
Buying and Merchandising	Marketing Cluster Exam
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship Exam
Financial Services	Finance Cluster Exam
Hospitality Services	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam
Marketing Management	Marketing Cluster Exam
Sports and Entertainment Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam
Travel and Tourism	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam
<i>Individual Series Events</i>	
Accounting Applications	Finance Cluster Exam
Apparel and Accessories Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam
Automotive Services Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam
Business Finance	Finance Cluster Exam
Business Services Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship Exam
Food Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam
Hotel and Lodging Management	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam
Human Resources Management	Business Management and Admin Cluster Exam

Marketing Communications	Marketing Cluster Exam
Quick Serve Restaurant Management	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam
Restaurant and Food Service Management	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam
Retail Merchandising	Marketing Cluster Exam
Sports and Entertainment Marketing	Marketing Cluster Exam
<i>Personal Financial Literacy Event</i>	
Personal Financial Literacy	Personal Financial Literacy Exam
<i>Integrated Marketing Campaign Events</i>	
Integrated Marketing Campaign—Event	Marketing Cluster Exam
Integrated Marketing Campaign—Product	Marketing Cluster Exam
Integrated Marketing Campaign—Service	Marketing Cluster Exam
<i>Professional Selling and Consulting Events</i>	
Financial Consulting	Finance Cluster Exam
Hospitality and Tourism Professional Selling	Hospitality and Tourism Cluster Exam
Professional Selling	Marketing Cluster Exam

Business Administration Core Exam

("Principles" events for first-year members)
(100-item exam)

District and State Specifications

Prerequisite and Career Sustaining-level Performance Indicators

National Specifications

Prerequisite, Career Sustaining, and Specialist-level Performance Indicators

Business Administration Core	A – District	B – Association	C - ICDC
Business Law	1	1	4
Communications	15	15	11
Customer Relations	5	5	4
Economics	7	7	12
Emotional Intelligence	22	22	19
Entrepreneurship	0	0	1
Financial Analysis	16	16	13
Human Resources Management	1	1	1
Information Management (NF)	10	10	11
Marketing	1	1	1
Operations	11	11	13
Professional Development	11	11	9
Strategic Management	0	0	1

Actual counts may vary slightly.

Cluster Exams

District, State, and National Specifications

Prerequisite, Career Sustaining, and Specialist-level Performance Indicators

Business Management & Administration Cluster

(100-item exam, including BA Core)

Instructional Area	A – District	B – Association	C - ICDC
Business Law	5	5	5
Communications	7	6	6
Customer Relations	2	2	1
Economics	6	5	4
Emotional Intelligence	9	8	6
Entrepreneurship	1	0	0
Financial Analysis	7	6	5
Human Resources Management	1	0	0
Information Management (NF)	7	6	6
Knowledge Management	6	7	8
Marketing	1	1	1
Operations	21	24	26
Professional Development	6	5	4
Project Management (PJ)	6	7	8
Quality Management	3	4	5
Risk Management	4	5	5
Strategic Management	8	9	10

Actual counts may vary slightly.

Cluster Exams

District, State, and National Specifications

Prerequisite, Career Sustaining, and Specialist-level Performance Indicators

Finance Cluster

(100-item exam, including BA Core)

Instructional Area	A – District	B – Association	C - ICDC
Business Law	7	8	7
Communications	5	4	3
Customer Relations	5	5	4
Economics	6	5	4
Emotional Intelligence	9	8	6
Entrepreneurship	1	0	0
Financial Analysis	24	28	30
Financial-Information Management	9	10	12
Human Resources Management	1	0	0
Information Management	6	5	5
Marketing	1	1	1
Operations	6	5	4
Professional Development	13	14	15
Risk Management	6	7	9
Strategic Management	1	0	0

Actual counts may vary slightly.

Cluster Exams

District, State, and National Specifications

Prerequisite, Career Sustaining, and Specialist-level Performance Indicators

Marketing Cluster

(100-item exam, including BA Core)

Instructional Area	A – District	B – Association	C - ICDC
Business Law	2	2	1
Channel Management	5	6	7
Communications	5	4	3
Customer Relations	2	2	1
Economics	6	5	4
Emotional Intelligence	9	8	6
Entrepreneurship	1	0	0
Financial Analysis	6	5	4
Human Resources Management	1	0	0
Information Management	5	4	3
Market Planning	4	4	5
Marketing	1	1	1
Marketing-Information Management	11	14	16
Operations	6	5	4
Pricing	3	4	4
Product/Service Management	11	13	15
Professional Development	6	5	5
Promotion	9	11	13
Selling	6	7	8
Strategic Management	1	0	0

Actual counts may vary slightly.

Cluster Exams

District, State, and National Specifications

Prerequisite, Career Sustaining, and Specialist-level Performance Indicators

Hospitality & Tourism Cluster

(100-item exam, including BA Core)

Instructional Area	A – District	B – Association	C - ICDC
Business Law	3	3	2
Communications	5	4	3
Customer Relations	8	9	9
Economics	6	6	5
Emotional Intelligence	9	9	7
Entrepreneurship	1	0	0
Financial Analysis	8	7	7
Human Resources Management	2	1	1
Information Management	14	15	15
Knowledge Management	0	1	1
Market Planning	1	1	2
Marketing	1	1	2
Operations	13	13	13
Pricing	1	1	1
Product/Service Management	6	7	9
Professional Development	8	7	6
Promotion	2	3	3
Quality Management	1	1	1
Risk Management	1	1	2
Selling	7	8	9
Strategic Management	3	2	2

Actual counts may vary slightly.

Entrepreneurship Exam

(100-item exam)

District, State, and National Specifications

Prerequisite, Career Sustaining, Specialist, Supervisor, Manager, and Owner-level
Performance Indicators

Instructional Area	A – District	B – Association	C - ICDC
Business Law	4	4	3
Channel Management	3	3	3
Communications	1	0	1
Customer Relations	1	1	1
Economics	3	3	2
Emotional Intelligence	6	6	4
Entrepreneurship	14	13	14
Financial Analysis	10	9	11
Human Resources Management	5	4	4
Information Management	4	3	2
Market Planning	5	6	6
Marketing	1	1	1
Marketing-Information Management	2	3	2
Operations	13	13	14
Pricing	2	3	2
Product/Service Management	4	4	4
Professional Development	5	5	4
Promotion	6	7	8
Quality Management	1	1	1
Risk Management	2	3	4
Selling	1	1	1
Strategic Management	7	7	8

Actual counts may vary slightly.

Personal Financial Literacy Exam

District, State, and National Specifications

The 100-item Personal Financial Literacy Exam is based on the National Standards for Personal Financial Education, created and maintained by the Council for Economic Education and Jump\$tart Coalition® for Personal Financial Literacy.

Topic	A – District	B–Association	C - ICDC
Earned Income	25	20	16
Spending	14	14	14
Saving	15	14	13
Investing	15	19	21
Managing Credit	16	19	21
Managing Risk	15	14	15

Actual counts may vary slightly.