

BELS



Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Certification Study Guide

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Program Goal and Objectives

The goal of the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences is to promote excellence in manuscript editing in the life sciences. To accomplish this goal, the Board has three objectives:

- To establish a standard of proficiency for editing in the life sciences
- To provide certified manuscript editors in the life sciences a way to demonstrate their editorial proficiency
- To provide employers and clients of manuscript editors in the life sciences a way to identify proficient editors

To meet these objectives, the Board has instituted a program for testing and evaluating editorial proficiency at two levels. An editor can be certified at the first level by passing the BELS certification examination and at the second, or diplomate, level by submitting a portfolio of edited work for review by current Diplomates. Study Guides for both exam levels are available at <https://www.bels.org>.

For the purposes of certification, a manuscript editor is defined as an editor who is concerned with both the form and the intellectual content of a manuscript. A manuscript editor's responsibilities include not only such matters as grammar, punctuation, and syntax but also logic, organization, consistency, and coherent development of the message.

Registration and Fees

Your first step on the path to earning your ELS is to apply for candidacy by completing an application via the BELS website and submitting the required materials documenting your education and experience. The application fee is \$65 (US currency).

Once your materials have been reviewed and you have been accepted into candidacy, you will receive an email from BELS stating you are eligible to sit for the BELS certification examination and have a two-year window in which to register. Exam registration is two-fold. You must first register and pay the examination fee of \$350 (US currency) to BELS before the published two-year window deadline. You will then be notified by Prometric, our electronic testing company, regarding how to complete the second step, which is to schedule your exam at one of their worldwide testing sites or from your own computer system. Testing cycles are the months of January, April, July, and October each year.

An adjusted fee of \$200 is applicable if you have already taken the examination without passing during this same two-year window of candidacy. You will have to sit out one testing cycle prior to retesting. For example, if you took the exam in January and did not pass, you would not be able to take the exam again until July. If you have not passed by the end of your two-year window, you may renew your candidacy for one year by paying a \$65 renewal fee.

When you have completed both steps of the registration process you will be registered for the examination and sent information by Prometric regarding your admission to the examination.

There may still be some in-person exams, and details for each in-person exam will be posted on our website.

Cancellation or Rescheduling of Exam

Cancellation of and/or rescheduling your exam date must be done a minimum of five days prior to your scheduled exam date. Details for cancellation or rescheduling are outlined in your admission confirmation letter from Prometric. If you fail to notify Prometric per their requirements and do not sit for the exam, you will forfeit the whole examination fee.

The Certification Examination

The certification examination tests your understanding of the knowledge necessary to edit manuscripts in the life sciences. It focuses on five content domains: i) mechanics; ii) syntax, clarity, and organization; iii) numbers, measures, statistics, and displays of information; iv) editorial knowledge and judgment; and v) legal and ethical responsibilities.

Defining the Content Domains

In addition to editing for grammar, spelling, punctuation, use of capitalization, and the formation of plurals, mechanics involves editing for word usage and compliance with style guides and document instructions. Word usage encompasses use of jargon, vogue words, similar and commonly confused words, scientific and statistical terminology, and nomenclature. Although the examination tests for compliance with style guides, it does not test for knowledge of any particular style guide but for use of a style guide supplied during editing.

For the domain of syntax, clarity, and organization, the examination has questions that assess logic and structure at the sentence, paragraph, and document levels as well as the use of lists. Concision, consistency, and adherence to conventional journal article format are also assessed.

Included within the domain of numbers, measures, statistics, and displays of information are ensuring consistency of data, correct use of standard forms of mathematical and numerical presentation, units of measure, and numbers and percentages. The examination also assesses the ability to identify improbable values and errors in the presentation of statistical results and the evaluation of tables, graphs, and figures.

The final two domains assess tasks associated with the practice of editing as a profession. For the editorial knowledge and judgment domain, the examination assesses the ability to make recommendations to tailor documents to audience and stakeholders, write effective author queries, and recognize sound practices of scientific publishing as well as elements that are beyond the editor's scope. Lastly, knowledge of the ethical and legal aspects of publishing for both editors and authors are assessed. Such requirements include recognition and statements of conflicts of interest; confidentiality; authorship and acknowledgments; copyright, publication licensing, and permissions; human and animal subjects in research; and research and publication misconduct.

Examples of the kinds of questions that appear in the certification examination are provided in this booklet (see "Sample Test Questions"). Use them to judge whether you are ready to take the examination. Please note that not all of the domains are represented within the provided examples.

The Test and Test Scoring

You will be evaluated on the basis of your performance on a multiple-choice test of 105 questions. Of these questions, 8 are being evaluated for future examinations and therefore are not scored on the examination you take. You will have 165 minutes to complete the examination. Always pick the BEST answer. The examination is graded on a pass–fail basis.

Note that because of its multiple-choice format, the examination does not require you to edit substantively or reorganize material as you usually would in a manuscript. However, some questions test skill in handling substantive matters, such as organization and logic. Furthermore, although the test does not require mathematical or statistical expertise, it does contain questions involving the correct presentation of such material.

Read each question carefully and then decide which choice is the correct option. Your score is calculated from the total number of questions answered correctly. You should answer ALL questions, even if you are not sure of the correct response. Do not spend too much time on any one question. You will be able to return to earlier questions while taking the examination.

The Topics Tested

Specifically, the examination tests proficiency in the following:

Bibliographic references: recognition of incompleteness, inconsistency, or inaccuracy of bibliographic references; recognition of adherence to a model.

Grammar: use of language according to grammatical norms, for such items as voice and tense of verbs, singular and plural of nouns, cases of pronouns, and placement and appropriate use of adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, clauses, and phrases.

Internal consistency: recognition of consistency in form, usage, and logic; ability to correct inconsistencies.

Mechanics: appropriate use of, for example, capital letters, italics, lists, abbreviations, and acronyms; recognition of misspellings.

Organization: recognition of logical sentence order.

Numbers: knowledge of appropriate, accurate, and consistent presentation of numerical values in text; recognition of mathematical accuracy; recognition of standard forms of mathematical presentation.

Publishing requirements: adherence to a journal's or publisher's instructions; for example, formatting references, using headings and subheadings, and preparing tables and figures. (Knowledge of a particular style is not tested.)

Punctuation: proper use and placement of punctuation marks.

Syntax: recognition of correct sentence structure; ability to correct faulty structure to ensure brevity and clarity.

Tables and illustrations: knowledge of principles of graphic presentation of data; for example, appropriate use of graphic formats; terminology for parts of tables and figures; requirements for legends, captions, notes, and credit lines.

Traditional principles and ethics of scientific inquiry, writing, and publishing: fair use of copyrighted material; permissions, credits, and acknowledgments; issues of multiple authorship; ethical principles and procedures in animal and human experimentation.

Units of measure and scientific terms: appropriate use of common scientific terms; choice of appropriate units of measure; ability to judge the relative accuracy of data as presented in a passage; consistency in use of terms and units. (You will not be asked to convert to SI units.)

Usage and diction: appropriate word choice to ensure accuracy and clarity; recognition of problems with jargon, nominalization, redundancy, vogue words, and acceptable scientific terminology; knowledge of standards of proper usage.

Sample Test Questions

The following sample test questions will give you an idea of what to expect on the certification examination. Answer all the questions first and then check your answers against those given in the section that follows. The answers include explanations of the reasoning behind the correct choices.

Passage for Questions 1 and 2

Perhaps the most dramatic natural factor **(1) effecting** budworm populations is weather. Several investigators have found that periods of warm, dry weather have **(2) preceded** major outbreaks. Weather may also cause short-term reduction in populations. **(3) Unreasonable** fall or spring frosts can act directly by freezing larvae or indirectly by destroying the food supply. In 1969, early June temperatures **(4) plummeted** in **(5) western** Montana when budworm larvae were actively feeding on newly developed foliage. Populations were reduced by nearly 90 percent. But despite the destruction of populations by the frost, the **(6) effect** was short lived: by 1972, populations resurged to nearly pre-1969 densities. Long periods of warm weather in the fall **(7) replete** nutritional reserves in hibernating larvae and, after **(8) emergence**, they may be too weak to break and penetrate needle or buds. Starvation also causes mortality during prolonged outbreaks.

1. In which of the following pairs of numbered words are **BOTH** words used **INCORRECTLY**?

- (A) (1) and (8)
- (B) (1) and (3)
- (C) (2) and (4)
- (D) (4) and (7)

2. In which of the following pairs are **BOTH** words used **CORRECTLY**?

- (A) (2) and (5)
- (B) (3) and (6)
- (C) (3) and (7)
- (D) (5) and (7)

3. Bq (becquerel) is most similar to

- (A) Ci (curie).
- (B) C (coulomb).
- (C) cal (calorie).
- (D) cd (candela).

4. $\frac{A-B}{C+A} \times 100$ can be written as

- (A) $A \div C - B \div A \times 100$.
- (B) $A - B \times 100 \div C + A$.
- (C) $[(A - B) \div (C + A)] \times 100$.
- (D) $A - (B \div C) + A \times 100$.

Paragraph for Questions 5 and 6

The San Juan Islands, situated in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains and, as a result, include some of the driest sites encountered in western Washington. However, because of highly variable topographical configuration and aspect, most islands possess a surprisingly diverse assemblage of plant communities ranging from very dry to very moist types. South-facing slopes that receive the full force of prevailing dry winds in the summer months are occupied by grassland vegetation and scattered trees. Sheltered south slopes are not exposed to the drying effects of the summer winds and therefore support closed forests, mostly of *Pseudotsuga menziesii* and *Arbutus menziesii*.

5. Choose the **CORRECT** substitution for the first underlined passage.

- (A) "Mountains and as a result include"
- (B) "Mountains, include"

- (C) "Mountains include"
- (D) No substitution is necessary.

6. The second underlined passage

- (A) is a phrase, not a clause.
- (B) should be set off from the rest of the sentence by commas.
- (C) is a nonrestrictive clause.
- (D) is a restrictive clause.

Passage for Question 7

The timing of individual cilium assemblage depends on the position of the particular blastomere along the animal-vegetal axis (Masuda 1979), the blastomeres in the animal hemisphere, which give rise exclusively to ectodermal derivatives, are first to form cilia, at the eighth or ninth cleavage. One cleavage cycle later, the blastomeres in the vegetal hemisphere, which give rise to both ectodermal and endodermal derivatives, form their cilia.

7. Choose the **BEST** substitute for the underlined passage.

- (A) "(Masuda 1979); the blastomeres"
- (B) "(Masuda 1979), thus the blastomeres"
- (C) "(Masuda 1979); since the blastomeres"
- (D) No substitution is necessary.

Passage for Question 8

The dosage of drug used affected neither the course of tumor appearance nor the incidence of papillomas, nor the overall mortality, nor the magnitude of weight loss.

8. Which is the best rewrite of the above sentence?

- (A) "The dosage of drug used affected neither the course of tumor appearance, nor the incidence of papillomas, nor the overall mortality, nor the magnitude of weight loss."
- (B) "The dosage of drug used did not affect either the course of tumor appearance or the incidence of papillomas or the overall mortality or the magnitude of weight loss."
- (C) "The dosage of drug used did not affect the course of tumor appearance, the incidence of papillomas, the overall mortality, or the magnitude of weight loss."
- (D) No rewrite is necessary.

Passage for Question 9

The manner in which the patients are received, the thoroughness to their individual needs, and the enthusiasm by all members of the staff play a part in making this a world-class medical center.

9. Which revision of the underlined passage conveys the author's intended meaning most clearly?

- (A) "the staff's thorough attention to their individual needs, and the enthusiasm evident among them"
- (B) "their thorough attention to their individual needs, and our enthusiasm with all members of the staff"
- (C) "the thoroughness of their individual needs, and the enthusiasm of all members of the staff"
- (D) "the careful attention paid to their individual needs, and the enthusiasm among all members of the staff"

Passage for Question 10

In an organism there may be a continuum of responses to a noxious agent, extending from responses that lead to removal of the agent or repair of initial injury to responses that indicate that irreversible pathologic change has occurred or is destined to occur at a later time. Markers are needed to indicate what stage in this continuum of effects has occurred.

10. The **BEST** wording for the last sentence is

- (A) "Markers are needed to indicate what sort of damage has occurred."
- (B) "Markers are needed to indicate where along the continuum a particular response lies."
- (C) "Markers are needed to indicate what stage of damage has occurred."
- (D) The original sentence is best.

Passage for Question 11

All plants support populations of nonpathogenic microorganisms on (epiphytically) their external structures and within (endophytically) their tissues.

11. What is the **BEST** revision of the underlined passage?

- (A) The passage does not need to be revised.
- (B) "on their external structures (e.g., epiphytically) and within their tissues (e.g., endophytically)."
- (C) "epiphytically on their external structures and endophytically within their tissues."
- (D) "epiphytically (on their external structures) and endophytically (within their tissues)."

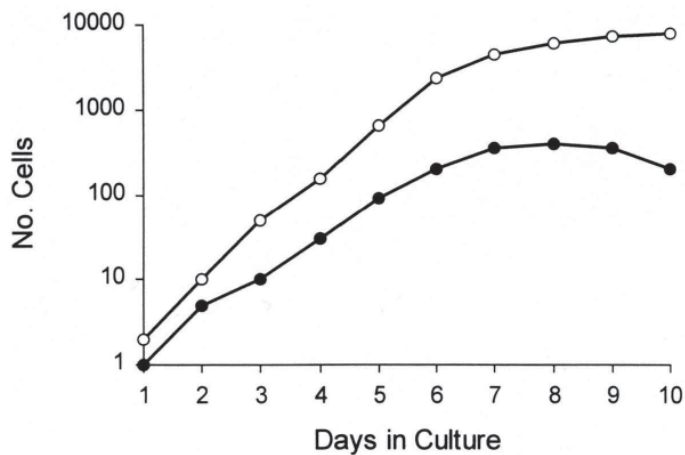
Passage for Question 12

However, there was a significant difference in the frequency of caval venous pressure line usage according to both the position of the patient and the type of surgical procedure.

12. Which is the most appropriate editorial response regarding “significant difference”?

- (A) Ask author, “How different is the significance?”
- (B) After “significant” insert “(P < 0.05).”
- (C) Ask author, “Do you mean statistically significant? If so, please support claim.”
- (D) Substitute “substantial” for “significant.”

Graph for Questions 13 and 14



13. Which of the following editorial revisions would NOT be correct?

- (A) Change the abbreviation “No.” in the vertical axis to “Number of.”
- (B) Add a key explaining the variable that each line represents.
- (C) Change the labels on the vertical axis to read 1, 10, 10², 10³, 10⁴.
- (D) Change “10000” to “100000” on the vertical axis.

14. The tick mark labels on the vertical axis indicate

- (A) use of a logarithmic scale.
- (B) improper compression of data.
- (C) that the horizontal scale should be renumbered to match.
- (D) that the number of cells rises each day.

Answers and Explanations

Answer to Question 1: Option B is the correct answer because both (1) effecting and (3) unreasonable are incorrectly used. The correct word choice for (1) effecting is affecting because one can change or alter a population but not cause it to come into being. The correct word choice for (3) unreasonable is unseasonable. The question of timing (the seasonableness of the frost) is clearly implied by the words fall or spring and the following sentence, describing a June freeze. Both show that the question of severity or unreasonableness is not the issue. In the other options, at least one of the two words is correctly used.

Answer to Question 2: Option A is the correct answer because both (2) preceded and (5) western are used correctly. Some might believe, by false analogy with the word proceeded, that preceeded would be the correct spelling. Others might believe that (5) western should have an initial capital letter, but in cases of simple direction, a lowercase letter is correct. Options B and C must be rejected because, as explained above, (3) unreasonable is incorrect. Of course, (6) effect is the correct word choice when the noun for a result is appropriate. Option D must be rejected because (7) replete is an adjective or, in entomology, a noun but not a verb; the appropriate form of the word would be the verb replenish, but replenish is not a logical choice in this context.

Answer to Question 3: Option A is the correct choice because Bq is the SI unit most closely corresponding to Ci; they are both measures of radioactivity. The other three abbreviations—C, cal, and cd—are superficially similar but measure entirely different physical quantities—electricity, heat, and light, respectively.

Answer to Question 4: The correct answer is option C. The question is intended to evaluate the ability to reduce two-line equations to a single line, which is simpler and more economical to print. Arithmetic operations are performed from left to right in the following order: (1) operations within inclusions (parentheses, brackets, division bars), (2) multiplication and division, (3) addition and subtraction. In the question as written, the division line of the fraction is an inclusion, so the operations within the numerator and denominator are performed first. Then the numerator is divided by the denominator, and the result is multiplied by 100. Of the possible answers, only option C gives the same result as the equation in the question.

In option A, the operations are performed in order from left to right, top to bottom without regard for inclusions or kinds of operations. In option B, the operations are performed left to right across the top and then left to right across the bottom, without regard for inclusions or order of operations. In option D, the inclusion function of the division line is ignored.

Answer to Question 5: The correct answer is option B. Because it lacks the closing comma of the parenthetical phrase beginning with *situated*, option C is incorrect. Option A eliminates superfluous commas around “as a result,” but it does not cure the jumbled syntax of the underlined phrase. Option D is similarly incorrect.

Answer to Question 6: The correct answer is option D. Option A is wrong because the underlined passage has both a subject (*that*) and a predicate (*receive*) and therefore is a clause. It must be restrictive because we know from the following sentence that some south-facing slopes are not exposed to drying winds, so option C is wrong. Restrictive elements are not set off from the rest of the sentence by commas, so option B is wrong.

Answer to Question 7: The correct answer is option A. It separates the two independent clauses with a semicolon; other ways of separating independent clauses are possible, but none of them is among the options. Option C might appear to be correct, in that it, too, separates the clauses with a semicolon. However, the insertion of *since* makes the second clause a dependent clause, and so the use of a semicolon becomes incorrect. Option B does not change the requirement to use a conjunction or stop between the two independent clauses.

Answer to Question 8: Option C is the best rewrite of the sentence. It changes the conjunction so that the reader is not surprised that there are more than two choices for what the drug does not affect, avoids the choices set up by “either,” reserves the “or” for the last item in the series, and properly places commas between the items in the series. The original sentence repeats the disconcerting conjunction *nor* and is missing one comma; option A is properly punctuated but uses the same conjunctions, and option B changes the conjunctions but maintains the repetition.

Answer to Question 9: Option D is the correct choice. The skeleton of meaning in the original sentence can be discerned, in spite of unclear referents. Option A makes that meaning more obvious, but the referents for *their* and *them* are unclear. Option B heightens the uncertainty about referents, and option C heightens the nonsensical nature of the text. Only option D is sensible and free of unclear referents.

Answer to Question 10: Option B is the correct choice. The syntax of the last sentence is jumbled, so option D cannot be correct. Option B is the only one that both corrects the syntax and preserves the original meaning. In option A, the syntax is correct, but the meaning of the original—*placement in the continuum*—is lost. In option C, the syntax is correct, but the meaning of the original is lost—stage of damage was not an issue in the original.

Answer to Question 11: Option D is the correct choice. The question is where to place the explanation of a term. In the underlined text, the term appears in parentheses and its meaning is part of the running text. Though in some contexts this subordination would be appropriate, the placement of the parenthetical term distorts its meaning, suggesting that the two terms mean simply “on” and “within” when, in fact, the words mean “on the plant” and “within the plant.” Option B distorts the meaning, in that the use of *e.g.* suggests that *epiphytically* and *endophytically* are merely examples of words that you might use here. Option C runs the definition and the term together, as though they were not synonymous. Option D properly identifies and places the parenthetical phrases.

Answer to Question 12: Option C is the best choice here. Option A is nonsensical. Option B presumes that the editor not only knows that the author means significant in the statistical sense but also knows the level of significance. Option D presumes that the editor knows that the author does not mean significant in the statistical sense. Without direct evidence from elsewhere in the manuscript, the editor can only ask the author what he or she means and to provide support for the conclusion if statistical significance is meant.

Answer to Question 13: The correct answer is option D. Changing 10000 to 100000 would violate the correct sequence in the logarithms. The other three options all would be correct editorial changes. Option C represents a method for labeling logarithms often preferred for its simplicity. Option B would be essential to the reader’s understanding of the graph, which should be comprehensible without reference to accompanying text. Option A would establish consistency with the style of the horizontal axis and avoid any confusion of the word *no* with the abbreviation for *number*.

Answer to Question 14: The correct answer is option A. Option B is incorrect; logarithms are used as a means of compressing data. Option C is incorrect because this is a semilog graph; the increments on the horizontal axis are supposed to be arithmetic and equal, whereas those on the vertical axis are intended to be logarithmic and unequal. Option D is obviously incorrect, not only because it is the lines on the graph and not the tick marks on the axes that show changes in variables but also because the lines as drawn indicate a leveling off or falling off after day 7.

Test-Taking Hints

Some questions are longer and take more time to answer than others. You should have sufficient time if you pace yourself and work methodically. You may answer the questions in any order, and you may go back and forth between questions.

When several questions all concern one long passage, you might read the questions through first before reading the passage, to save yourself the time that it would take to consider issues in the passage that are not relevant to the questions.

As you have seen in the sample test questions, you will be asked to choose the BEST listed answer for each question. Sometimes other possible answers are grammatically correct but are not the best. Remember that in editing, context is important. A particular question might have no best answer out of context but have an answer that becomes clear in context.

Preparation for the Examination

Your daily work as an editor is your best preparation. However, if you are uncertain about particular elements of editorial practice, you might find it helpful to take courses in editing and scientific writing offered by some colleges and universities or to complete workshops such as those offered by schools of journalism and publishing, by professional organizations of editors, and by editorial businesses and consultants. In addition, systematic preparation in those elements using the following reference books might be helpful.

American Medical Association. *Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*. 11th ed. Oxford University Press; 2020.

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual*. 7th ed. American Psychological Association; 2020.

Council of Science Editors Style Manual Committee. *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. 8th ed. The University of Chicago Press; 2014.

Day RA. *Scientific English: A Guide for Scientists and Other Professionals*. Oryx Press; 1992.

Day RA, Gastel B. *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper*. 8th ed. Cambridge University Press; 2016.

Huth EJ. *Writing and Publishing in Medicine*. 3rd ed. Williams & Wilkins; 1999.

Lang TA. *How to Write, Publish, and Present in the Health Sciences: A Guide for Physicians and Laboratory Researchers*. The American College of Physicians; 2010.

Lang TA, Secic M. *How to Report Statistics in Medicine*. 2nd ed. American College of Physicians; 2006.

Saller CF. *The Subversive Copy Editor, Second Edition: Advice from Chicago (or, How to Negotiate Good Relationships with Your Writers, Your Colleagues, and ... Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing)*. 2nd ed. The University of Chicago Press; 2009

Schwager E. *Medical English Usage and Abusage*. Oryx Press; 1991.

Stedman's *Abbreviations, Acronyms & Symbols*. 5th ed. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; 2012.

Strunk W Jr, White EB. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. Pearson; 2000.

University of Chicago Press. *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 17th ed. University of Chicago Press; 2017.

Zeiger M. *Essentials of Writing Biomedical Research Papers*. 2nd ed. McGraw-Hill; 2000.

Of course, many helpful books do not appear on this list. You probably already know and use books on language and usage, as well as style manuals associated with particular fields.

Examination Procedure

The certification examination can be taken in one of three modes: 1) computer-based testing at a testing center, 2) computer-based testing with remote proctoring using a personal computer, or 3) paper-based testing in person during a conference. The following table provides a summary of how each method differs.

| | <i>Computer-based examination at a testing facility</i> | <i>Computer-based examination with remote proctoring using a personal computer</i> | <i>Paper-based testing in person during a conference</i> |
|---|--|--|---|
| <i>Board certification application and payment</i> | Application completed through the BELS website | Application completed through the BELS website | Application completed through the BELS website |
| <i>Exam registration upon acceptance into candidacy</i> | Registration and payment done through BELS website | Registration and payment done through BELS website | Registration and payment done through BELS website |
| <i>Examination schedule</i> | Exam will be available during the months of January, April, July, and October | Exam will be available during the months of January, April, July, and October | To be determined when in-person conferences are scheduled; see https://www.bels.org for updated schedule |
| <i>Admissions to test</i> | Admission letter from Prometric is required for admittance to testing facility | Admission letter from Prometric is required for admittance to the Prometric personal computer testing site | Registration ticket administered by BELS |

You must bring your Prometric Admissions Letter to the examination site or have it available at your personal computer site. You must present a valid government-issued photo ID with signature to be admitted to the examination. Approved forms for ID are driver's license, government-issued ID card (must have photo and signature), passport, and military ID card. No other forms of identification will be accepted. The name on your admission letter must match the name on your photo ID. Also, the *Candidate User ID* and *Passcode* printed on the Prometric Admissions Letter are required for you to log into the system and start your examination. The Admissions Letter contains more information than we have summarized here so be sure to read the letter in its entirety.

The Prometric Admissions Letter will provide information on how early you should arrive for your examination appointment at the testing center or log in to the remote proctoring from a personal computer.

You will be asked to leave all belongings outside the door to the testing site or your personal computer testing room and empty all pockets.

You will be allowed one bathroom break of five minutes in length. If you have not returned within the five-minute time period your exam will be halted, and you will receive the score you had at the time the exam was halted.

You may not use any reference book or other computer during the examination, but you may use the calculator on the testing computer. No food or drink will be allowed during the testing session. A writing utensil and two clean sheets of plain white paper will be provided for you at the exam testing center. If you are testing remotely, you will be allowed to have these items within your testing room.

In either electronic testing scenarios, proctors will be available to assist you in any emergency. They may answer candidates' questions about the test format and procedure. However, they may not answer any questions about the content of the examination or about the intent or phrasing of a particular item or give any response that might bias the examination results.

Accommodations for Registrants with Disabilities

If you need to arrange for testing accommodations, please visit the [Testing Accommodations](#) page on the Prometric site.

Concerns

If you have concerns about the exam or any exam procedures, please contact the BELS office at info@bels.org within 30 calendar days of your exam appointment.

A Final Word

If you are taking the examination in person at a test or meeting site, arrange your travel to the test site so that you can arrive well ahead of time and can be rested and calm for the examination. The examination is designed to test your skill and working knowledge of scientific editing, not to test you for feats of memory or for encyclopedic knowledge of detail. Come to the examination ready to draw on your editorial experience.

We look forward to welcoming you to the company of certified editors in the life sciences.

For updated schedules of tests visit the BELS Web site at <http://www.bels.org>. For questions about registering for an examination or submitting an appeal, email info@bels.org.