

# 2024-25 Competitive Events Guidelines

## Career Exploration



Career Exploration provides members with the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge around competencies in many career areas. This competitive event consists of an objective test. It aims to inspire members to learn about yourself, your options, and to create a plan to reach your career goals.

### Event Overview

**Division:** Middle School

**Event Type:** Individual

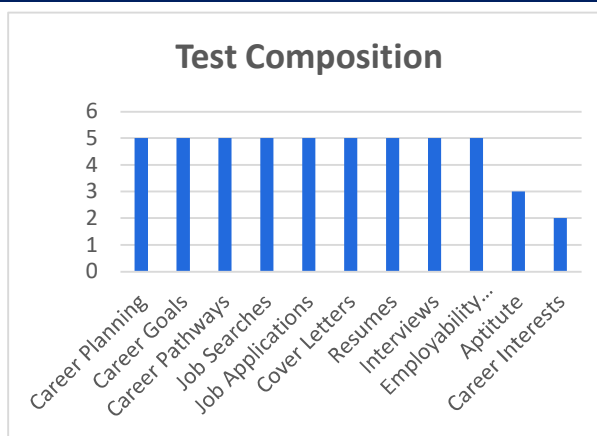
**Event Category:** Objective Test, 50-multiple choice questions (breakdown of question by competencies below)

**Objective Test Time:** 30 minutes

**NACE Connections:** Career & Self-Development

### Competencies

- Career Planning
- Career Goals
- Career Pathways
- Job Searches
- Job Applications
- Cover Letters
- Resumes
- Interviews
- Employability Skills
- Aptitude
- Career Interests



### State

Each chapter may enter three participants in this event. Testing is school site and will be conducted the two weeks prior to the state leadership conference (in March).

### National

#### Required Competition Items

Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharpened pencil</li> <li>• Fully powered <a href="#">device for online testing</a></li> <li>• Conference-provided nametag</li> <li>• Attire that meets the <a href="#">FBLA Dress Code</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One piece of scratch paper per competitor</li> <li>• Internet access</li> <li>• Test login information (link &amp; password)</li> </ul>

#### Important FBLA Documents

- Competitors should be familiar with the Competitive Events [Policy & Procedures Manual](#), [Honor Code](#), [Code of Conduct](#), and [Dress Code](#).

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### *Eligibility*

- FBLA membership dues are paid by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on March 1 of the current program year or by SLC Conference registration deadline—whichever is earlier.
- Members may compete in an event at the National Leadership Conference (NLC) more than once if they have not previously placed in the top 10 of that event at the NLC. If a member places in the top 10 of an event at the NLC, they are no longer eligible to compete in that event.
- Members must be registered for the SLC/NLC and pay the conference registration fee to participate in competitive events.
- Each chapter may submit three entries; each state may submit four entries per event.
- Each member can only compete in one individual/team event and one chapter event (Annual Chapter Activities Presentation or Community Service Presentation) for national competition; for state competition, students may participate in one objective test, one performance event, and one chapter event.
- If competitors are late for their assigned objective test time, they will be allowed to compete with a five-point penalty until such time that results are finalized, or the accommodation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event.
- Some competitive events start in the morning before the Opening Session of NLC. The schedules for competitive events are displayed in the local time of the NLC location. Competitive event schedules cannot be changed.

### *Recognition*

- The number of competitors will determine the number of winners. The maximum number of winners for each competitive event is 10 at the NLC; 5 at the SLC.

### *Event Administration*

- This event is an objective test administered online at the SLC/NLC.
- No reference or study materials may be brought to the testing site.
- No calculators may be brought into the testing site; online calculators will be provided through the testing software.

### *Tie Breaker*

- Ties are broken by comparing the correct number of answers to 10 pre-determined questions on the test. If a tie remains, answers to 20 pre-determined questions on the test will be reviewed to determine the winner. If a tie remains, the competitor who completed the test in a shorter amount of time will place higher.

### *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*

- FBLA meets the criteria specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act for all competitors with accommodations submitted through the conference registration system by the registration deadline.

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### *Penalty Points*

- Competitors may be disqualified if they violate the Code of Conduct or the Honor Code.
- Five points are deducted if competitors do not follow the Dress Code or are late to the testing site.

### *Electronic Devices*

- Unless a pre-approved accommodation is in place, all cell phones, smart watches, and headphones must be turned off and put away before competition begins. Any visibility of these devices will be considered a violation of the Honor Code.

## **Study Guide: Competencies and Tasks**

- A. Career Planning
  1. Determine the expenses that you will incur each month when you are on your own.
  2. Calculate how much to spend on your lifestyle.
  3. Determine minimum salary needs.
  4. Explore occupations that earn the salary needed.
  5. Define career research.
  6. Explain the career information included in the “Occupational Outlook Handbook.”
  7. Determine personal strengths and weaknesses.
  8. Describe job duties for different careers.
  9. Describe the training and education required for different careers.
  10. Describe the work environment associated with a selected career.
  11. Explain the importance of job outlook when selecting a career.
  12. Explain work, licenses, and certification requirements for a selected career.
- B. Career Goals
  1. Define a career goal.
  2. Explain the importance of setting specific realistic career goals.
  3. Match career goals to personal strengths.
  4. Describe maps to reach career goals.
  5. Explain the difference between short-term and long-term goals.
  6. Explain how personal success is associated with choosing the correct career.
  7. Define measurable career goals.
  8. Explain the importance of writing goals down.
  9. Visualize success associated with career goals.
  10. Define professional networking.
  11. Explain why it is important to share personal goals with individuals in your professional network.
- C. Career Pathways
  1. Define a career pathway.
  2. Explain the jobs needed to reach an ultimate career goal.
  3. Define vertical and lateral growth or advancement associated with career paths.
  4. Explain the frequency of changing jobs throughout a lifetime.
  5. Define career transfers.
  6. Define career promotions.
  7. Explain the path through an industry or an organization.

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8. Explain the relationship between individual and career development goals within a company.
  9. Explain how career values and personal benefits are influenced by career pathway choices.
  10. Give examples of career pathways.
  11. Define lifetime learning.
  12. Explain how many career paths involve increasing levels of responsibility.
  13. Describe how skill sets are associated with career pathways.
  14. Explain why personal flexibility is an important factor to reach career pathway goals.
- D. Job Searches
1. Prepare documents (resume, cover letter, references, online resume) for the job search.
  2. Polish online personal presentation.
  3. Explain the importance of your professional network.
  4. Set goals for job applications and interviews.
  5. Understand the importance of sending effective business e-mail messages.
  6. Explain the importance of fringe benefits associated with careers.
  7. Describe online job searches.
  8. Determine personal willingness to move to another location.
- E. Job Applications
1. Explain positive interview skills.
  2. Describe types of job applications.
  3. Explain the information required on a job application.
  4. Outline the major parts of a resume.
  5. Explain the reason and information for a cover letter.
  6. Explain the purpose of a job application and the need to fill it out completely and accurately.
  7. List the personal information you may be asked for when applying for a job.
  8. Explain the importance of truthful answers to questions asked in the interview.
  9. Explain the differences between online and in-person job applications.
  10. Explain why proofreading the application before submitting it is important.
- F. Cover Letters
1. Explain a cover letter.
  2. Explain the reason for sending a cover letter for a job application.
  3. Explain why a cover letter must be customized for different job openings.
  4. Explain why research is important when writing a cover letter.
  5. Describe key action words in cover letters to get the interviewer's attention.
  6. Explain the format of a cover letter.
  7. Explain why it is essential to proofread the cover letter.
  8. Define the information that should be included in the cover letter.
- G. Resumes
1. Define a resume.
  2. List competencies (teamwork, responsibility, commercial awareness, decision making, leadership, communication, trustworthiness, problem solving, and ethical standards) to include in a resume.
  3. List the sections for effective resumes.
  4. Describe the standard format for a resume.
  5. Explain the importance of including work experience and internships in the resume.
  6. Define 'work gaps' in the resume and strategies to fill those gaps.

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7. List relevant keywords that should be included in an effective resume.
  8. Define an objective for a resume.
  9. Explain the importance of limiting a resume to one page.
  10. Explain the differences between a chronological, functional, and combination resume.
- H. Interviews
1. List the documents and information needed when going on an interview.
  2. Describe a professional dress code for a job interview.
  3. Explain the importance of a firm handshake.
  4. Explain cell phone protocol for an interview.
  5. Explain the importance of arriving on time for the interview.
  6. Explain waiting room procedures before going into the interview.
  7. Describe mannerisms that are negative during an interview.
  8. Explain the importance of being on time to an interview.
  9. Explain why the time of an interview makes a difference on results.
  10. Explain the importance of sending a thank you immediately following the interview.
  11. Explain the importance of greeting the receptionist or driver when going on an interview.
  12. Explain conservative business clothing colors for an interview.
- I. Employability Skills
1. Explain the importance of clear communication skills.
  2. Describe the importance of writing skills.
  3. Explain the importance of proper netiquette.
  4. Define soft skills needed for success.
  5. Explain professionalism in the workplace.
  6. Explain the importance of teamwork at the workplace.
  7. Explain the need for critical thinking.
  8. Explain the importance of computer skills.
  9. Describe the impact of motivation in the workplace.
  10. Explain the importance of flexibility to learn new skills.
  11. Describe the impact of enthusiasm in the workplace.
- J. Aptitude
1. Define aptitude.
  2. Explain the relationship between aptitude and job description.
  3. Explain how an aptitude assessment can help individuals choose a career.
  4. Explain how aptitude tests are related to different job roles.
  5. Define types of aptitude tests: cognitive ability, numerical reasoning, diagrammatic, situational, judgement, verbal reasoning, and inductive reasoning.
  6. Explain how human resource departments use aptitude tests to hire employees.
- K. Career Interests
1. List informative resources to learn about different career interests.
  2. Explain the impact of job shadowing and internships to learn about careers.
  3. Explain the benefits of matching your interests to your career choice.
  4. Describe how choosing a career is related to exploring personal interests.
  5. Explain the difference between a job and a career.
  6. Explain how to research educational requirements for different careers.
  7. Describe the value of interviewing career professionals to learn more about your interests.