ParSystem™ Integrated Testing Suite

Getting Started with ParTest
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**Software Version**
This document supports ParTest 7.0.

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Chapter 1: Overview

ParSystem is a suite of testing and scoring products, which includes ParTest, ParTest Online, and ParScore.

Before You Begin

Before you begin using ParTest, be sure to read this guide for instructions on installing and using the products.

System Requirements

See the ParTest Release Notes on the CD for the most current system requirements.
Overview

Using ParTest within ParSystem

ParTest shares information with the other ParSystem products, ParScore and ParTest Online. If you use ParTest alone, the benefits of item analysis and online testing are not available, nor can you score tests and save the scores with student records.

ParTest
ParTest includes all the tools and technology to make test creation easy and more effective. You can create an unlimited number of item banks, each with up to 5,000 questions including several question types. All questions can be grouped by objective and keywords.

If you post results back from ParScore, a “Quick Preview” window lets you review and analyze test questions. The analysis includes the degree of difficulty, discrimination levels, scores, item analysis, and response frequencies.

ParScore
ParScore provides a gradebook and student management system to support, capture, and shows results from tests created using ParTest or scanned from other forms. Create class rosters, score tests, and run a variety of analytic reports. If you are using ParTest, item analysis information is transferred from ParScore to ParTest item banks.

ParTest Online
Online tests and multimedia files are created in ParTest. These files are used in ParTest Online (PTOL) to compose online test sessions. See the ParTest Online User’s Guide for more information.
The following shows an overview of how ParSystem shares information:

Available Resources

Training

Outside the U.S. Contact your local sales representative for training information.

Within the U.S. For more information or to sign up for training:

- Visit our Web site at www.scantron.com, or
- Call Scantron Training at 800-336-3426 (extension 6123).

Internet Resources

Go to www.scantron.com to access the Scantron Customer Support Web site. It gives you access to the following:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) with answers about scanning hardware and software products.
Overview

• Online registration of your scanner or software product with Scantron Customer Support. This ensures you of timely notification of product updates and upgrades.
• Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) with answers about scanning hardware and software products.
• Software updates (including driver and utility updates for scanners) that you can download if you have a current software subscription or hardware support agreement.

NOTE: Access to some of these resources requires a software subscription support agreement.

Ordering Forms and Print Services

Outside the U.S. Contact your local sales agent for forms and print services information.

Within the U.S. Scantron has a large variety of standard forms to meet your data collection needs. For an illustrated list of the forms available and to order online, visit the Scantron online store. To order by phone, contact Scantron Print Services at the numbers shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Phone or Fax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scantron Online Store</td>
<td>Scantron Print Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.scantron.com/store">www.scantron.com/store</a></td>
<td>Phone 1-800-735-2566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fax 1-717-884-1300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Custom Form Design and Other Services

In addition to custom printed forms and standard forms, Scantron Print Services can also assist with custom form design. After you have an idea of what the project entails, call Scantron Print Services at the numbers below to discuss the project with a Customer Service Representative (CSR). Scantron CSRs have the expertise needed to ensure that the job gets done right, and with the value-added features that you need. Other services available through Scantron Print Services include background form images, high volume merge printing projects, and delivery and fulfillment services.

Requesting Support

Outside the U.S. Contact your local sales agent for support.

Within the U.S. If you have questions about your software that are not answered by the printed documentation, the Help system, or www.scantron.com, call Scantron Customer Support.

When you call Scantron, an operator will ask you to describe your problem. The operator then relays information about the problem to an analyst who will call you back as soon as possible. You can reach Customer Support from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, your local time (except for Alaska and Hawaii where support is available through 7:00 P.M. CST). Customer support is not available on Scantron holidays.
Before calling:

1. **Know the serial number of the product you are calling about.**
   
The serial number is listed:
   - In the About dialog box
   - On the product CD case

2. **Write down a description of your problem.**
   
   Include a sequence of the steps leading to the problem. Doing this ensures that you have all the details you need when you talk to the analyst.

3. **Note any error messages that appear on your computer screen.**

4. **Have a description of your hardware ready.**
   
   - Computer, including processor and speed, amount of memory, disk size, available disk storage space, and operating system.
   - Laser printer, if applicable, including whether PostScript® or PCL, color or black and white, and equipped for duplex printing or not.

5. **Have a description of your software ready.**
   
   The software you are using, the version numbers, and any additional modules that are installed.

6. **Be available at the PC system where your software is installed.**
   
   This is so that the analyst can guide you through the troubleshooting process.
Scantron Customer Support can answer your questions about a variety of subjects, including:

- Installation and configuration
- Program features and operation
- Scanner and software troubleshooting
- Documentation and the Help system
- Basic forms design
- Fonts and graphics
- Software/hardware errors
- Laser printing forms

Services

Outside the U.S.   Contact your local sales agent for services information.

Within the U.S.   A variety of services are available including custom data collection solutions, survey research services, scanner maintenance, equipment installation, network installation, custom training solutions, custom application development, database support, software support for custom applications, and consulting services.

For information on any of these services, contact Scantron:

Online    Phone
www.scantron.com  1-800-447-3269
ParTest is a versatile application that you use to create test instructions/passage, item banks, objectives, questions, tests, and generate reports. This information is easily stored, recalled, edited, copied, saved, manipulated, or exported to another program.

With ParTest you can:

- Create item banks that function as database repositories to store test questions
- Create various types of test questions
Getting to Know ParTest

- Create up to 26 versions of a test by scrambling all questions, answers, or both
- Create tests to be taken on a computer workstation using ParTest Online
- Create tests with multimedia files
- Print or preview reports for
  - item banks
  - tests
  - answer sheets
  - test keys
  - test blueprints
  - item bank cross-references
  - statistical information, such as response frequency associated with each question

You can use ParTest on a single–user computer, or on a network for multiple users. See the ParTest Installation Guide for the differences between these versions.
Starting ParTest

After installing the software (see the ParTest Installation Guide) and setting up a user account (see the online help), you are ready to access and log in to ParTest.

You can run only one instance of ParTest at a time on a computer, even in multi-user environments. Fast user switching is not supported.

To start ParTest

Locate and click ParTest on the Windows Start menu.

Logging In

After you start ParTest, you must log in to your account. If your system administrator has allowed it, you log in using your network login.

If you log in with your network login, you are automatically logged into ParTest when you start ParTest. If you use your network login, you cannot change your password in ParTest.

TIP: If you do not yet have an account or are unsure of your login, see your system administrator.

To log in to ParTest

1. In the ParTest Login dialog box, enter your user name in the User field.

   NOTE: You must enter both your user name and password as originally defined when your account was created. If you make a mistake
while entering your user name or password, an error message appears stating access is denied. Re-enter your user name and password.

2. Enter your password.

3. Click OK to log in and open the ParTest main window.

Changing Your Password
After you log in for the first time, we recommend that you change your password immediately.

NOTE: If you use your network login, you cannot change your password in ParTest.

To change your password
1. Select Tools→Password.
2. Enter your new password.

NOTE: Passwords:
• must be at least two characters
• can be up to 20 characters
• are not case-sensitive
3. Enter your new password again to confirm it.
4. Click OK.
About Structural ParTest Elements

Item banks, objectives, and (optionally) instructions are components used when you create tests. Before you can create a test, you need to create at least one item bank and at least one objective to store and retrieve the test questions:

- Each item bank stores questions about a similar subject.
- Within each item bank, each objective indicates the course unit that is the focus of the questions.
Getting to Know ParTest

You can create optional instructions to provide directions to students for taking the test or to provide a passage or equation that applies to multiple questions. Instructions are maintained separately from tests so they can be added to as many tests as necessary.

For specific information about creating and using elements, see the online help.

About Item Banks

Item banks store questions on a similar subject. You can create an unlimited number of item banks; a single item bank can contain up to 5,000 questions.

When you create an item bank, you create a database file to store a group of questions with a common subject. Every user who creates an item bank assigns a name, description, attributes, and access rights. Each item bank is therefore unique.

When creating item banks, provide a name that reflects the subject matter of your course or questions. For example, test questions for an introductory course in Economics could be stored in an item bank named “Econ 100”.

Further define the characteristics of the item bank by assigning up to eight user-defined attributes, such as school, level, and term.
About Structural ParTest Elements

You can designate an item bank for secondary user access and for public read access.

After you create item banks, you can:
- export them to other applications
- spell check all questions in an item bank
- define keywords, difficulty levels, and discrimination levels for the item banks to assist you in sorting and locating questions.

About Objectives
Create objectives within an item bank to provide a more specific focus for a group of closely related test questions. For example, create an objective to reflect or specify a course and the questions specifically targeted to that course.

An item bank can contain up to 200 objectives, for example, an item bank for Economics 100 could contain objectives for Macro, Micro, Historical, and World Economics.

After you create objectives, you are ready to create and store questions. Use the objectives to help focus your search for specific questions when you are creating tests.

About Instructions
Instructions let you to add consistent, reusable elements such as multimedia files, passages, and explanations to tests.
Getting to Know ParTest

You can create as many instructions as you need or none at all.

Instructions can include text, pictures, multimedia files (if you administer the test using ParTest Online), or some combination of all of these.

Use instructions to provide passages (long sections of text or images that you want to ask several questions about).

For example, if you create a word problem, you can write the word problem itself in the instruction, then create one or more questions that refer to that instruction.
About Questions

Questions are the basis of all tests. Before you can create a test, you need to create and store the questions within the objectives of an item bank. Each Item Bank may contain up to 5,000 questions, organized by objectives.

You can create, edit, analyze, store, and retrieve five types of questions:

• True-False
• Multiple choice
• Matching
• Fill-In
• Essay/Problem

You can also associate keywords with a question, evaluate item (question) analysis information, and sort questions.

After you create questions, you are ready to create tests. When you create a test, you can sort questions and evaluate the associated information to select questions which meet your specific test needs.
Creating tests is the end result of the ParTest process. After a test is created, you can generate up to 26 versions of it, and maintain each for continual use.

**Creating Tests**

When you create a new test, ParTest creates a test file (for example, T3868997_Econ_101) and stores it in your user folder under the ParTest directory. The Test Information dialog box shows this information in the Path and Reference Number.

- Test files have a .MDB file extension
- Online test files have a .TOL extension

**Saving Tests**

ParTest automatically saves open tests when you exit the application or open another test. The test is stored for future retrieval whether or not you generate it. This allows you to exit a test before you finish assembling it and continue at a later time.

You do not need to save tests manually.

**Adding Instructions to a Test**

You can add general instructions, which apply to the entire test, and specific instructions, which apply to sections of the test.

When you add an instruction to a test, the instruction acts as a divider between
sections of questions, in addition to providing directions for taking the test.

If you generate a multiple-version test and choose to scramble the questions, each instruction remains in its original position and the questions between the instructions are scrambled.

**Adding Questions to a Test**

The Test pane shows a list of questions you assembled for a test. You can add specific questions or you can use a “quick pick” method to automatically add a random selection of questions from a specific objective.
Getting to Know ParTest

About Reports

You can generate reports, tests, and item banks. Print tests for all versions or for one test version only. In addition, tests can be printed with questions only or with selected information. You can also print reports including statistical information about the tests and item banks.

You can preview any report, then print it on 8½" x 11" paper (standard US Letter).

**NOTE:** The top, bottom, and right-side margins are preset to ½" and cannot be changed. The left margin is preset at ¾" to allow for a three-hole drill, so you can store printed reports in a binder.

For the Test and Selective Details and Item Bank Details reports, an optional feature allows you to define and print headers and footers on each page.
### Understanding the Report Types

Several report types are available for you to preview, print, or export:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use this report...</th>
<th>... to preview or print...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test and Selective Details</td>
<td>the selected test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Key</td>
<td>the selected test key.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Blueprint</td>
<td>statistical information about the test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer Sheet</td>
<td>a selected answer sheet with blank lines for the student to complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item Bank Details</td>
<td>the criteria for the selected item bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item Bank Cross-Reference</td>
<td>cross-reference keyword category, keyword name, and question information for selected item banks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You've just purchased ParSystem, a powerful software solution that helps universities, corporate training departments and other educational institutions create, administer, and score tests on paper, via networks, or over the Internet. Using unified item banks, easy test creation, and a variety of administration methods, ParSystem enables your organization to make better test questions—questions that are reliable and valid to accurately measure student achievement. With ParScore, you can easily develop and manage student records and test data, including customized class rosters. Many other tracking, viewing and data manipulation options are available. You can define your own grading criteria, and report scores and grades as Raw, Percent, Stanine, T-Score, Z-Score, Percentile, and User-defined T-Score. You can also merge student test results from standardized tests so performance can be compared across classes or schools institution-wide. With ParTest, you can share item banks with other users and create up to 26 versions of your tests. Use the “Quick Pick” feature, to automatically choose your test questions from the item banks. With ParTest Online, you can import files that allow test takers to work via computer on a proprietary network or over the Internet. ParSystem elements work together to give you a consistent, easy, and unified assessment approach.