



FAQs for

The Non-Traditional High School Diploma Option Program (HSDO)



1. Who issues the diploma to HSDO students?

The diploma is issued by the Alabama high school or local school system that the student last attended (determined by local board policy).

2. How will the transcript, supporting the diploma earned through HSDO, be prepared?

Local schools and/or local school systems will issue both the diploma and transcript. The cumulative record will include the student's high school transcript as well as the Adult Education Program HSDO transcript. There should be a notation on the high school transcript indicating the additional page of the Adult Education Program HSDO transcript. K-12 should **not** assign grades and/or graduation credits to the student's high school transcript for any of the student's instructional activities included on the Adult Education HSDO transcript.

3. What graduation date will be listed on the official high school transcript and the high school diploma?

The actual date the student completes the graduation requirements for the HSDO will be the graduation date that is listed on the high school transcript and the high school diploma. The diploma will **not be** back dated to the date that a student should have graduated from high school.

4. What type of diploma will the HSDO student receive?

The student will receive a regular Alabama High School Diploma.

5. If an HSDO student is charged a diploma fee, can Adult Education pay the fee for the student?

Some school systems may charge HSDO students a diploma fee. The diplomas are ordered through a vendor, and the same fee is charged to traditional high school students. Currently, it is the responsibility of the HSDO student to pay the diploma fee if the school/school system charges a



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diploma fee. To assist with any hardship cases, you may wish to see if any churches or organizations in your community would like to be sponsors for students who are unable to pay the fee.

6. Who initiates the HSDO process?

The process is initiated by the student requesting that a transcript audit be sent from the local high school or school system last attended to the participating local Adult Education program.

7. Regarding a student's official high school Transcript Audit Form, how will these be sent to the Adult Education Programs?

The preferred method is for transcript audit forms to be sent electronically from the local high school or school system to the Adult Education Program. However, the Transcript Audit Form may be accepted from the student if the form is within a sealed envelope and contains the official school seal. (This change in policy, effective 3/31/17, **no longer requires both an official high school transcript and the transcript audit form - now the transcript audit form will suffice.**)

8. Will a student who is already enrolled in an Adult Education program be eligible to participate in HSDO?

Yes, if he or she qualifies. He or she must meet all eligibility requirements and must request that his or her transcript audit form be sent to the participating local Adult Education Program.

9. If a student participating in HSDO, Option 2, has already successfully passed portions of the GED, may he or she use the tests to fulfill part of his or her requirements?

If the student has completed the 2014 GED Test™, then any passing scores for the student may be used to build graduation credit(s). However, any version of the GED test prior to 2014, may not be used.



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- 10. Are students who complete the HSDO program eligible for the free 3-hour college class?**

No, this is only for students who complete a GED, per ACCS Board policy.

- 11. Is it possible for students who enter an Adult Education Program with enough of the required high school graduation credits to be eligible for the HSDO program, to choose not to participate in HSDO when they first register in Adult Education?**

Yes, the student may choose to work toward the GED instead of the high school diploma. However, they may change and choose to pursue the HSDO program at a later time.

- 12. If a 16-year-old student is currently in an Adult Education Program, and then turns 17 years old while still in the program, may the student then opt to participate in HSDO?**

Yes, a 16-year-old already enrolled in an Adult Education Program, may choose to pursue the HSDO option once they turn 17, if they are determined by the Adult Education Program to meet all the eligibility requirements for the HSDO program.

- 13. If a student meets all eligibility requirements for Option 2 of HSDO, but does not score at or above the High Intermediate level on TABE in all 3 sub-skills, may the student choose the HSDO option once he or she obtains the required scoring level on TABE?**

Yes, the student could then opt to participate. The student would be updated in AAESAP to HSDO status (at the time the programming phase has been completed for AAESAP to include HSDO student information), after the student has met all eligibility requirements.

- 14. If a student attended the first two years of high school in Alabama, and then moved to another state and attended one year in that state before dropping out, would the student be eligible to participate in HSDO?**



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No, the student's last record of high school attendance must be recorded at an Alabama public high school for the student to be eligible to participate in HSDO.

- 15. Can students be granted graduation credit for credit-bearing options they have already completed before they chose to utilize the HSDO option?**

Yes, if there is official documentation of the student's successful completion, and the documentation is available for the student's file.

- 16. If, at the time a HSDO student was in high school, only three parts of the Exit Exam were required to receive a high school diploma, is the student only responsible for those three parts?**

Yes, those are the only parts that should be considered (social studies and science would not need to be addressed).

- 17. If a student utilizing the HSDO option separates from one Adult Education Program and then begins attending another Adult Education Program, how will the new Adult Education Program evaluate the student's credits already earned?**

Only Alabama Adult Education Program personnel may edit HSDO data for past registrations, so the ACCS/AE office must be contacted for assistance.

- 18. At the local Adult Education Program level, who is responsible for reviewing documentation and awarding credits?**

Each Adult Education Program should designate personnel who can review documentation and grant graduation credits. However, when it is time to forward a HSDO student's transcript to the school system for issuance of the diploma, the program director is the ONLY local Adult Education Program staff member who can sign and verify the student's completion.

- 19. How many credits are required to fulfill the requirements for a high school diploma through the HSDO Option 2?**



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The Alabama State Board of Education requires 24 credits for graduation; however, some local school systems may require more per local board policy.

- 20. Will students who are enrolled in AAESAP as HSDO students, who complete their programs without post-testing, penalize the Adult Education Program regarding federal reporting?**

Completion of the high school diploma should fall under the “Measurable Skill Gain (MSG)” and should not negatively affect the program’s reporting data.

- 21. If a student has completed all the required graduation credits, but failed to pass the science portion of AHSGE, and the student chooses as his or her POI option to receive instructional assistance in the deficient area (science) and post-test in TABE, what will be the process since there is not a science sub-skill test of the TABE assessment?**

The student will receive instructional assistance in the deficient area (in this example, science). The student’s plan of instruction must **also** include the student taking the GED Ready™ and scoring “Likely to Pass” or higher. In addition, there must be a post-test TABE in reading, with the student scoring 9.0 or higher on TABE Level A. (This would also apply if the student’s deficient area was social studies, except the student’s POI would include the GED Ready™ test in social studies.)

- 22. If the HSDO student is required to take a GED Ready™ test as part of his/her POI, can the local Adult Education Program provide a voucher for the test?**

Yes, the local Adult Education Program should cover the cost of the GED Ready™ test for these HSDO students.

- 23. Can an out-of-state adult who last attended an Alabama high school and completed enough credits for graduation participate in HSDO?**

Out-of-state students, who last attended an Alabama High School, and completed all required graduation credits, but did not pass the Alabama



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High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE), may participate, on a case-by-case basis, in the HSDO Option 1 **only**. The out-of-state student participating in the HSDO Option 1 will have a limited plan of instruction (POI), that includes only the ACT WorkKeys Assessment or Prior Learning Assessment. Any students meeting these criteria should be referred to the Alabama State Adult Education Office:

Danielle Smith, Administrative Assistant
Adult Education Division
Alabama Community College System
135 South Union Street (36104)
P.O. Box 302130
Montgomery, AL 36130-2130
(334) 293-4567
(334) 293-4565 fax
danielle.smith@accs.edu

Unfortunately, Adult Education Programs will **not** be able to assist out-of-state students needing to build graduation credits (Option 2).

24. For HSDO students, how far back can existing TABE scores be used?

TABE test scores are valid for 270 days from the point the test was taken.

25. Can students who received the Alabama Occupational Diploma participate in HSDO?

Yes - they may participate as Option 2 HSDO students.

26. Can a HSDO student participate in a Career Pathway?

Yes, and it is highly recommended.

27. If a student chooses to take the ACT WorkKeys assessment as a POI option, takes the assessment and does not score a 4 or higher on all three sections, may the student immediately take the assessment again?



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No, if the student takes the ACT WorkKeys assessment and is not successful in meeting the requirements, the student must complete a program of study before being administered the ACT WorkKeys assessment again.

28. Does the Transcript Audit Form require both signatures (counselor/registrar and principal/administrator)?

Yes, both signatures are required for the Transcript Audit Form to be processed by the Adult Education program. The original version of the form also required the superintendent's signature, but after discussion with ALSDE, the superintendent's signature is no longer required on the Transcript Audit Form.

29. How will the AE program know that the HSDO student has officially graduated?

As soon as the high school transcript is updated, LEAs must send a copy of the final high school transcript, including the new graduation date, to the local participating Adult Education program. The graduation date indicated on the high school transcript will be the date Adult Education programs use as the student's completion date recorded in AAESAP.

30. Can a HSDO student, who, at the time the student should have graduated was only required to earn 22 credits, participate as an Option 1 student, or will the student need to participate as an Option 2 HSDO Student?

Yes, the student can participate as an Option 1 HSDO student. HSDO follows the graduation requirements for that particular cohort of students; therefore, if the student had enough of the required graduation credits but did not pass one or more subtests of the AHSGE, then the student is eligible to participate

31. If a student is an Option 1 student, and chooses Prior Learning Experience (PLE) as his/her Plan of Instruction option, must the student's PLE be related to his/her deficient area(s) of the AHSGE?



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No, the PLE credit does not have to be directly related to the deficient area.

For example, if the student's deficient area is Language (did not pass the Language portion of the AHSGE), the student does **not** have to receive PLE credit equivalent to a college level English class; rather, if the student receives any PLE credit (college level credit for life experience), then he or she will have successfully completed the POI option.

- 32. If a student is an Option 1 student, may the student choose an option from the Option 2 Plan of Instruction (POI) that is not listed as an option on the Option 1 POI?**

No, an Option 1 student should choose his or her option from the POI for Option 1, and an Option 2 student should choose his or her option(s), depending on the number of graduation credits the student needs to build, from the POI for Option 2.

- 33. Does a 17-year-old HSDO student need to provide the same documentation as a 17-year-old non-HSDO student participating in Adult Education?**

Yes, the student must have participated in an exit interview with their high school administration and provide a signed exit interview form, as well as a notarized and signed letter from his or her parent/legal guardian giving permission for the student to participate in the Adult Education program. (If the student is court mandated to participate, the student will provide official documentation from the court).

- 34. Can a 17 year-old HSDO participant complete the HSDO program and Receive his/her high school diploma prior to their graduation cohort?**

No, beginning February 1, 2017, a 17 year-old HSDO student is not able to complete the HSDO program and receive his or her diploma until September 1st of the student's high school graduation cohort year. The student's graduation cohort year will be determined by the requirements of the local school district, and should be recorded by the K-12 LEA on the Transcript Audit Form. **The Adult Education HSDO Transcript shall NOT be sent to the K-12 LEA prior to September 1st for these HSDO**



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students.

35. Is a TABE post-test required for an Option 2 HSDO student?

Any Option 2 HSDO student who begins the program on February 1, 2017 or after, must have TABE post-test scores for all three sub-skill tests, scoring in the Low Adult Secondary Level (grade equivalency of 9.0 or higher on TABE Level A), before any HSDO credits will be transcribed to the local school system for the awarding of the high school diploma. The assessment policy must be followed in regard to the number of instructional hours required before a post-test can be administered.

36. Once a student completes the program, should the student's grade point average (GPA) be re-calculated?

Since an Option 1 student has already completed the required graduation credits needed, the student's GPA would remain the same as previously earned.

Because an Option 2 student completes coursework that is essentially pass/fail—it will be impossible for the cumulative GPA to be re-calculated based on this additional coursework. On high school transcripts, the GPA would remain the same as previously earned. If additional GPA information is needed, the post-secondary institution would be responsible for recalculating the GPA.

37. If a student already has a GED and wants to participate in HSO to also earn his/her high school diploma, will the diploma earned by the student count as a measurable skill gain for the Adult Education program?

No, we are not allowed to count both a high school diploma and high school equivalency (GED); however, gains may be counted for transition to postsecondary or employment (or both).

38. Will the K-12 LEA identify, on the Transcript Audit Form, whether the student is as an Option 1 or Option 2 student?

Yes, effective 9/18/2017, the K-12 LEA will make this identification in the



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designated box of the updated version (8/30/17) of the Transcript Audit Form. However, if the LEA fails to make the selection on the form, and the local AE program is confident of the option that applies, the local AE program may move forward with the identified option. However, if there is a question regarding the correct option, please email Ms. Gay Finn at gfinn@ALSDE.edu to request assistance.

Working Document