



**Procedural Guideline Questions for the Non-Traditional High
School Diploma Option Program
(HSDO)**



1) What is the age of eligibility for the HSDO Program?

Beginning 8/1/2018, a student must be 19 years of age to participate in the HSDO program. Prior to 8/1/2018, the minimum age to participate in the program was 17. Students who enrolled in HSDO prior to 8/1/2018, and were 17 or 18 years of age, will be allowed to continue and complete the program. Any new HSDO students enrolling 8/1/2018 or after, must be at least 19 years of age.

2) Who initiates the HSDO process?

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

3) How will the student's Transcript Audit Form be sent to the Adult Education Program from the high school?

The preferred method is for the Transcript Audit Form to be sent electronically from the local high school or school system to the local 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.

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

Yes, both signatures are required for the Transcript Audit Form to be processed by the Adult Education program.

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

Yes, as of 9/18/2017, the K-12 LEA will make this determination in the designated box of the updated version (8/30/2017) 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. If there is a question regarding the correct option, please email Ms. Gay Finn at gfinn@ALSDE.edu to request assistance.

6) What type of diploma will the HSDO student receive?

The student will receive a regular Alabama High School Diploma.

7) 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 school board policy).

8) What graduation date will be listed on the official high school transcript and the high school diploma?

The actual date that the student completes the graduation requirements for 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.

9) Once a student completes the HSDO 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 a 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.

10) How will the transcript, supporting the diploma earned through HSDO, be prepared?

Local school and/or school systems will issue both the diploma and the 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.

11) How many credits are required to fulfill the requirements for a high school diploma through the HSDO Option 2?

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

12) 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 student, who last attended an Alabama High School, and completed all required graduation credits, but did not pass the Alabama 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:

Wendy Roberts, Adult Education Specialist
Adult Education Division
Alabama Community College System
135 South Union Street (36104)
P.O. Box 302130
Montgomery, AL 36130-2130
(334) 293-4532
Wendy.roberts@accs.edu

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

13) 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?

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.

14) 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.

15) 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).

16) Can students who received the Alabama Occupational Diploma participate in HSDO?

Yes, they may participate as Option 2 HSDO students.

17) 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 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.

18) 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 of the eligibility requirements and must request that his or her transcript audit form be sent to the participating local Adult Education Program.

19) 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 from the 2014 test may be used to build graduation credit(s). However, any version of the GED test prior to 2014, may not be used.

20) Are students who complete the HSDO program eligible for the free 3-hour college class provided by ACCS?

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

21) Is it possible for students who enter an Adult Education program with enough high school credits to be eligible for the HSDO program to choose not to participate in HSDO, when they first register in Adult Education classes?

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

- 22) If a student meets all eligibility requirements for Option 2 of HSDO, but does not score at or above the High Intermediate Level in all 3 sub-skills (scale scores of at least 536 in Reading, 537 in Math, and 547 in Language on TABE 11 &12), may the student choose the HSDO option once he or she obtains the required scoring levels on TABE?**

Yes, the student could then opt to participate. However, the hours of remediation before the student can be assessed the TABE again, must follow the assessment policy.

- 23) 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.

- 24) 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 Adult Education Division Office must be contacted for assistance.

- 25) 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.

- 26) If a student has completed all the required graduation credits, but failed to pass the science portion of the 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 (scale score of at least 576 on TABE 11 & 12). (This would also apply if the student's deficient area was social studies, except that the student's POI would include the GED Ready™ test in social studies.)

27) 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 test through the use of a voucher.

28) 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.

29) Can a HSDO student participate in a Career Pathway?

Yes, and the student's participation in a pathway should be strongly encouraged.

30) 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?

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.

31) Can a HSDO student, who, at the time he/she 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 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 graduation credits but did not pass one or more subtests of the AHSGE, then the student is eligible to participate.

32) 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?

No, the PLE credit does not have to be directly related to the deficient area(s). 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 credit for life experience), then he or she will have successfully completed the POI option.

33) 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.

34) Is a TABE post-test required for an Option 2 HSDO student?

Any Option 2 student must have TABE post-test scores for all three sub-skill tests, scoring in the Low Adult Secondary Level or higher - scale scores of at least 576 in Reading, 584 in Language, and 596 in Math for TABE 11 & 12), 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.

35) If a student has already earned a GED, can he/she participate in HSDO to earn his/her high school diploma?

Yes, at age 19, a qualifying student can register as an HSDO student in an Adult Education class. With proper documentation, high school concurrence, transcripts, and completion of HSDO requirements, he/she could receive his/her high school diploma from his/her last Alabama public high school of attendance. The student could potentially then have two separate high school graduation documents – a GED and a regular high school diploma.