Alabama Community College System
Adult Education

Assessment Policy Guidelines

This document is pending final approval

Alabama Community College System | Adult Education Division
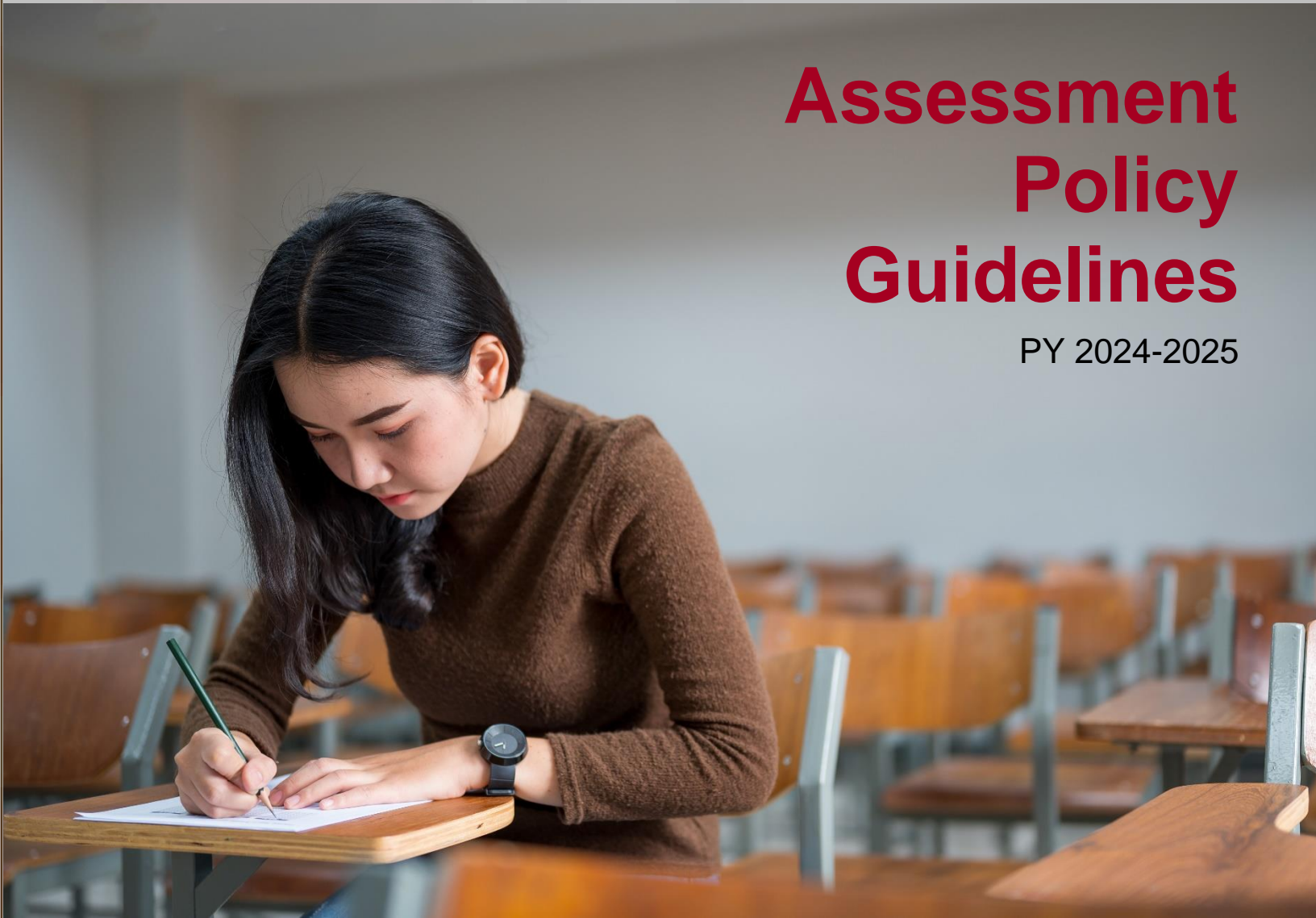
Assessment Policy Guidelines

PY 2024-2025

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Non-Discrimination Policy

The Alabama Community College System Adult Education Division does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political affiliation, or against otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. The policy permits appropriate employment preferences for veterans and specifically prohibits discrimination against veterans.

Introduction

This document provides the Alabama Community College System's (ACCS) guidelines for developing and implementing a comprehensive state and local assessment policy for Alabama's Adult Education Program which includes:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Adult Secondary Education/GED Programs (ASE/GED)
- Workplace and Family Literacy Programs
- Institutionalized/Corrections

The State accountability system works in accordance with the National Reporting System (NRS) for adult education guidelines. The NRS is the accountability system for federally funded adult education programs.

The policy guidelines identify key assessment policies that are aligned with NRS levels for documenting achievement and support:

- Selection and use of appropriate assessment instruments.
- Appropriate test administration, scoring, and reporting of test scores.
- Appropriate use of tests results to inform instruction and improve programs.
- Setting performance standards.
- Reporting valid and reliable assessment results and related information for accountability.
- Staff training and test security requirements for staff that administer the standardized assessments and use the database management system.

A. Need for Assessment Policy

Adherence to state assessment policies and guidelines ensure the selection and use of appropriate learner assessment and procedures for:

- Consistent testing and security protocols to ensure comparability and quality data.
- Accurate learner placement into appropriate program and instructional level.
- Diagnostic information to form instruction.
- Pre- and post-testing to monitor progress toward goals.
- Certification of NRS levels of achievement and program completion.

The ACCS prescribes that adult education agencies use the following assessments with proven validity and reliability that correlate to the NRS.

- CASAS - Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System
- TABE – Test of Adult Basic Education
- BEST (Basic English Skills Test) Literacy 2.0, Plus 3.0
- ACT WorkKeys

Validity

Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences made from test scores. It is a measure of the extent to which test items measure what they are intended to measure. All assessment instruments have undergone rigorous test development and validation

procedures.

Reliability

Reliability indicates the degree to which a test yields consistent results. Statistical techniques determine reliability and help ensure that there would not be a radically different score if the student were to attempt the test a second time with no additional learning. The TABE, CASAS, BEST, and ACT WorkKeys technical manuals provide data on the reliability of their respective item banks and specific test series.

Uniform Implementation and Comparability Evaluation

These are key to continual program improvement. Indicators of performance are outcomes that reflect the impact of instruction on client achievement. Numeric measures are the data used to determine the quantitative level of the impact of instruction on client achievement. Performance standards define the acceptable program performance in terms of a specific measurement of variable. These NRS performance measures and Alabama's adult education goals were negotiated with the U.S. Secretary of Education. Programs shall be evaluated as whole entities so that not only are participant outcomes evaluated, but also the processes through which these outcomes are achieved.

In awarding grants, Alabama will consider the past effectiveness of the eligible provider receiving funds under the subtitle in improving the literacy skills of adults and families, and in meeting or exceeding such performance measures.

State Policy

Agencies/organizations allocated adult education funds shall submit to the ACCS regional director a strategic plan that includes the use of the assessment in enrollment, attendance, and retention objectives. The objectives must be quantifiable, measurable, and reflect the need for each individual to attend on a sustained, consistent basis in order to achieve one or more of the core indicators of performance as identified by NRS during each program year, July 1-June 30, or period of participation.

Agencies/organizations allocated adult education funds shall be held accountable for the execution of adult education services. These activities shape the program's mission, guide program efforts and decisions, lend the program integrity, and allow for continual program improvement.

B. Purpose and Use of Assessments

The administration of standardized tests provides results that are the basis for state and federal accountability reporting. Standardized assessments are used in the Alabama Adult Education Program to ensure accuracy in learner placement, in diagnosis of learner strengths and weaknesses, to inform instruction, in monitoring progress, and in certifying learner mastery.

Feedback based on evaluation is a critical element in directing the learner's attention to useful methods to make up learning deficiencies. This cycle of reassessment, Plan of Instruction (POI) development, and learning continues until the learner reaches mastery. Appropriate records documenting assessment results, assignments, and progress shall be maintained for each individual.

To demonstrate whether learning has taken place, every effort should be made to progress/post-test participants at least once during the program year. **Alabama's targeted test rate for PY 2024-2025 is seventy-five (75%) percent of all participants.**

Instruction-based, non-standardized or in-formal assessments may be used to supplement standardized assessments but will not be used for NRS reporting purposes. These assessments

help determine mastery of skills. The use of teacher-made tests, end of unit tests, portfolios, applied performance assessment, and teacher observations are encouraged to monitor learning and to inform instruction on a regular, ongoing basis.

The assessment of students should be in the area(s) in which instruction for completion has been focused. Pre-testing is used for initial placement in an Educational Functioning Level (EFL). Assessment scores are used for measuring gain and advancing students across EFLs.

All who receive services from adult education and literacy programs are considered **reportable individuals.** Individuals who have 12 or more contact hours within a program year (July 1-June 30) and a qualifying pre-test are considered **participants** by the NRS. In Alabama all individuals enrolled in adult education are considered students.

The ACCS reports on the following exit outcome indicators for all participants:

- **Entered** Employment: This measure is reported for learners who are unemployed and in the labor force when they enter the program and who exit during the program year. Employment performance indicators are tracked in the second and fourth quarters after exit.

- **Median** Earnings**:** This measure is reported for participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit.

- Credential **Attainment**: This measure is reported for learners who were enrolled in postsecondary education or training while enrolled or within one year of exit. This includes an integrated education and training (IET) program.

- **Attained a secondary credential and enrolled in postsecondary education or training or employed within one year of exit**: This measure is reported for learners who are at the ninth grade or higher level at entry or during enrollment or pass all GED® tests while enrolled or within one year of exit.

The assumed goal of all students served is completion and advancement of one or more functioning level.

State Policy: Programs have until the 15th day of the month, following the month being reported, to enter data into Alabama's adult education data management system.

State Policy: All pre-test and progress/post-test scores need to be dated on the exact date the test was administered.

C. Duration and Intensity
Implementation of a comprehensive assessment policy enables informed and effective instruction and ensures reliable and comparable performance reporting. Alabama adult education and literacy classes shall be of such duration and intensity so that learners are afforded the opportunity to achieve one or more of the core indicators of performance as identified in the NRS. At least six hours of classroom instruction must be made available per week allowing for sufficient instructional times to meet the assessment policy.

General Assessment Requirements

A. Students to be Assessed

All adult education and literacy programs receiving adult education federal and state funds from the Alabama Community College System must report data for all students using the Alabama adult education data management system.

B. Provisional EFL Placement

If an asynchronous student is not able to be assessed within the first 12 hours of attendance, then the student will be placed provisionally in an Educational Functioning Level (EFL).

Students will be identified in the Alabama adult education data management system in a report labeled "Students Without an Entering Educational Functioning Level (EFL)". This provisional placement is based on the State's Provisional Assessment Guidelines. (A provisional EFL is assigned based on last grade completed.) Additional resources are in the Help/Resource section, refer to "WIOA Reports-Part 2", slide 8. Once programs can test with an approved NRS assessment, the participant will be assigned to an initial EFL.

Local programs may implement virtual test proctoring in accordance with the test publisher's procedures.

C. Assessments Permitted

- **ABE/ASE - Pursuing High School Equivalency or Academic Achievement:** TABE*, CASAS Math Goal 2, CASAS Reading Goals
- **ABE/ASE - Pursuing Career Interest Only:** TABE*, CASAS Math Goal 2, CASAS Reading GOALS, ACT WorkKeys Applied Math (Math only, all ABE levels), ACT WorkKeys Workplace Documents (Literacy/English Language Arts at ABE levels 2 through 6)
- **ESL:** BEST Literacy 2.0, BEST Plus 3.0, CASAS Reading STEPS, CASAS Listening STEPS, TABE CLAS-E

The Alabama adult education's approved assessments meet the NRS requirements for:
- Suitability for measuring literacy and language development of adult students.
- Having standardized administration and scoring procedures.
- Having alternate, equivalent, forms for pre and progress testing.
- Having evidence linking them to NRS Educational Functioning Level.

Assessments should match the appropriate skill areas that are the focus of instruction for the student. Pre-testing shall be completed at intake/orientation or as soon as possible thereafter. The Alabama Adult Education Division discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect. Instructional intervention between testing periods is necessary to maximize academic gain.

State Policy: If a test has a locator or other placement instrument, it must be used to inform the pre-test to be administered.

An exception may be applied to this state policy with ACCS approval when the program selects a specific level of an assessment instrument to administer for college and work-related purposes, i.e., a specific business, college or career pathway, Alabama Work preparation programs, or through

collaboration with the local One-Stop Career Centers.

State Policy: All instructors must follow the test publisher's recommended timeframe for pre- and progress/post- testing as stated in this document.

The initial assessment of the student may be in all three learning areas, or any one of the three focus areas - reading, language, or math. The assessment should be the area(s) most relevant to the students' needs. It is strongly recommended that all three TABE subskill test scores be entered into Alabama's adult education data management system upon initial enrollment, unless the student's goals and needs create an exception (i.e., student lacks one subject area of the GED® test.) Multiple initial assessments will increase the opportunity for the student to obtain a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) in the best aligned with their course of study. An MSG may be obtained by advancing in any subject matter area. One MSG is counted per period of participation (POP) per program year.

State Policy: A participant must be assigned to a primary designation of either ABE/ASE, or ESL.

An individual may be assessed with either an ABE or ESL instrument. If the individual is assessed in multiple subject areas, the lowest functioning level will be the default for the EFL placement. If the individual's goals conflict with the default subject area, instructional intervention and progress testing should meet the needs and goals of the individual. If a student is initially assessed at ESL Advanced, an ABE assessment may be administered to help determine the appropriate designation for the student and guide instruction.

To demonstrate whether learning has taken place, every effort to administer a progress assessment should be made at least once during the program year. Pre and progress/post-tests are tracked for each subject within an ABE/ASE or ESL designation. The Alabama adult education data management system has validations to ensure that testing is not occurring prior to the publisher's recommended number of instructional hours. To determine skill gain, the participant must be assessed on a different form of the same subject area initially assessed. No matter the length of time between testing, the Alabama adult education data management system will always require an alternate test form for instruments with alternate forms.

State Policy: The validity of a test spans a full program year or 270 calendar days crossing program years. If a student "stopped out" and returns within 270 calendar days in the new program year, the last test recorded may be used. After a 270-day period of non-attendance, a new pre-test should be administered.

Local eligible providers shall use the following entry and progress levels for ABE/ASE, Institutionalized/ Corrections Education, Family Literacy, and Workplace Education:

Educational Functioning Levels
Adult Basic Education (ABE) & Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

Initial EFL (NRS Educational Functioning Level)	TABE (11 & 12)		CASAS (Reading GOALS & Math GOALS 2)		ACT WorkKeys (Applied Math & Workplace Documents)	
Beginning ABE Literacy	Reading Math Language	300-441 300-448 300-457	Reading Math	0-203 0-192	Reading Math	N/A 65-71
Beginning Basic Ed.	Reading Math Language	442-500 449-495 458-510	Reading Math	204-216 193-203	Reading Math	72-76 72-75
Low Intermediate	Reading Math Language	501-535 496-536 511-546	Reading Math	217-227 204-213	Reading Math	77-80 76-79
High Intermediate	Reading Math Language	536-575 537-595 547-583	Reading Math	228-238 214-224	Reading Math	81-82 80-82
Adult Secondary (Low)	Reading Math Language	576-616 596-656 584-630	Reading Math	239-248 225-235	Reading Math	83-85 83-85
Adult Secondary (High)	Reading Math Language	617-800 657-800 631-800	Reading Math	249+ 236+	Reading Math	86-90 86-90

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Initial EFL (NRS Educational Functioning Level)	BEST Plus 3.0 Scale Scores Computer Based or Printed		BEST Literacy 2.0 Scale Scores - Composite	CASAS STEPS Scale Scores		TABE CLAS-E Scale Scores Reading & Writing Listening & Speaking	
Beginning ESL Literacy 0-1	Computer	600-677	100-182	Reading	0-183	Read/Write	225-394
	Printed	600-677		Listening	0-181	Listen/Speak	230-407
Low Beginning ESL 2	Computer	678-702	183-209	Reading	184-196	Read/Write	395-441
	Printed	678-702		Listening	182-191	Listen/Speak	408-449
High Beginning ESL3	Computer	703-726	210-244	Reading	197-206	Read/Write	442-482
	Printed	703-726		Listening	192-201	Listen/Speak	450-485
Low Intermediate ESL 4	Computer	727-752	245-300	Reading	207-216	Read/Write	483-514
	Printed	727-752		Listening	202-211	Listen/Speak	486-525
High Intermediate ESL 5	Computer	753-785	N/A	Reading	217-227	Read/Write	515-556
	Printed	753+		Listening	212-221	Listen/Speak	526-558
Advanced ESL 6	Computer	786-849	N/A	Reading	228-238	Read/Write	557-600
	Printed	753+		Listening	222-231	Listen/Speak	559-600

D. Publisher-Recommended Timeframes for Pre- and Progress Testing Using Adult Education Assessments

Test Name	Recommended Pre- and Progress testing Timeframes
BEST Literacy 2.0 & BEST Plus 3.0	40 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended
CASAS	40 hours minimum; 70-100 hours recommended
TABE	Recommended 50-60 hours of instruction when testing with an alternate form (i.e., 11 M to 12 M) for students that test into NRS levels 1-4 (ABE) with a minimum of 40 hours. For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High), 30-59 hours of instruction is recommended.
TABE CLAS-E	For alternate form testing, DRC recommends a minimum of 40 hours of instruction for students that test into NRS levels 1-6 (ESL).
ACT WorkKeys	50-60 hours recommended for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 1-4, with a minimum of 40 hours.; 30-59 hours for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 5 & 6 using the same level, different form.

E. Assessment Contact Details

Exam	Contact Info
BEST Literacy 2.0 & BEST Plus 3.0	Center for Applied Linguistics 4646 40th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016-1859 (202) 362-0700 www.cal.org
CASAS	CASAS 5151 Murphy Canyon Rd., Suite 220, San Diego, CA 92123-4339 (800) 255-1036, www.casas.org
TABE and TABE CLAS-E	Data Recognition Corp. 13490 Bass Lake Rd., Maple Grove, MN 55311, (800) 826-2368, www.tabetest.com Mike Johnson | National Adult Education Director mjohnson@datarecognitioncorp.com, (630) 995-6712
ACT WorkKeys	ACT WorkKeys Customer Support, www.act.org (800) 967-5539 workkeys@act.org

F. Targeted Instructional Progress (TIP) Testing

After the initial pre-test assessment is provided to determine the EFL, participants in certain types of targeted instruction and workplace literacy classes may be allowed to progress/post-test after completing a minimum of one-half the currently defined publishers' instructional guidelines. The condensed instructional period for the progress/post-test is only allowed for documented reasons such as the following:

- Completion of a workplace literacy program, such as Alabama Career Essentials (ACE), or Mobilizing Alabama's Pathways (MAP).
- Completion of a targeted One-Stop Career Center referral training course.
- Exiting the program because of employment.
- Exiting the program because of attainment of a high school equivalency.
- Exiting the program because of transitioning to postsecondary education or skills training credentialing programs.

The suggested progress/post-test procedure will meet the threshold for instructional intensity. This type of testing should be done infrequently and is only allowable for those students who would otherwise be unable to progress test (by the test publisher) within the timeframe. Participants provided this option must have shown educational proficiency in the area being tested using a verified form of informal assessment or teacher observation which is documented in the record or portfolio of work. Each allowance to administering a NRS approved progress/post-test to students before the publisher's recommended hours of instruction must be approved by the local program director and must be noted in the Alabama adult education data management system.

G. Dissemination, Training, and Monitoring of Assessment Policy

The Alabama Assessment Policy Guidelines will be disseminated to all funded providers of adult education services. Local staff will be trained annually by ACCS. Each local director will use the posted Assessment Policy information located on the website to provide local staff training. The purpose of the training will be to ensure that all administrators and instructional staff are knowledgeable with the current approved Assessment Policy Guidelines. Accurate and timely data reporting will serve as a catalyst for continuous program improvement.

State Policy: An annual review and dissemination of the current Assessment Policy to all sub-recipients will be completed between July 1 and September 30, the first quarter of the program year. Any new hires within the program year will be trained within 14 days of hire date.

Assessment Policy Training

Assessment Policy training should include:

- Training agenda, attendance log, certificate of completion - maintained locally unless requested by the State.
- Test security protocols for each assessment administered.
- Accessibility resources.
- Distance education practices associated with the assessment.
- Ways to conduct data validity reviews.
- Ongoing technical assistance to ensure that the assessment policy is being reviewed and leading to program improvement.

State Staff provide Assessment Policy training at the annual state conference and other regional meetings. These meetings will include seminars and workshops on assessment policies and procedures, accommodations for assessing students with disabilities, NRS policy, data

collection procedures, definitions of measures, and specific training for conducting assessments used in the program.

BEST Literacy 2.0 and BEST Plus 3.0 Assessment Training

The state provides opportunities throughout the year for instructors to become certified in the administration of the BEST Plus 3.0 assessment. A state BEST Plus trainer, certified by the Center for Applied Linguistics, will conduct the training for the test administration and the refresher course. The training sessions are scheduled annually plus on an as-needed basis for new personnel. Records of trained personnel are maintained by the State, the state trainer and by the Center for Applied Linguistics.

TABE Assessment Training

Test administrators using TABE materials are required to use the training video, "Introduction to TABE" and the accompanying workbook, prior to administering the test - (https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_11_12_OnlineTraining_Videos.pdf). The training includes information on how to use the system, examples of test items and score reports.

Training records must be maintained by the local program director with copies provided to the State as requested.

CASAS Assessment Training

Test administrators will learn to administer CASAS tests and interpret results from completing online modules, www.training.casas.org. CASAS requires agencies to complete an online training module before ordering and administering all tests. Training records are maintained by the local program director with copies provided to the State as requested.

WorkKeys Training

Each test coordinator should read, understand, and reference the *ACT WorkKeys Administration Manual.* Then they should attend a WorkKeys Training webinar on the workkeys@act.org website. These are free, on-demand webinars with a User ID and Password provided. The webinar will provide foundational procedures for online testing**.**

1. Local program directors will follow assessment policy compliance by:
2. Conducting Assessment Policy training, with each instructor throughout the year as needed.
3. Providing each instructor with a copy of the current Assessment Policy.
4. Maintaining copies of completed training.

Quarterly point-in-time snapshots of individual program data are reviewed for monitoring purposes. This procedure will ensure that the State can maintain compliance with federal guidelines for assessment policies. Program coordinators, data specialists, and authorized personnel (instructors, etc.) can run real-time reports in the state system to:

1. Review data accuracy and comprehensiveness.
2. Benchmark attainment by instructor, class, and instructional program to determine where they currently are for enrollment and performance.
3. Compare enrollment and performance to other classes and program providers and compare their own performance to prior time periods.

H. Quality Control Procedures

To ensure the reliability and validity of testing results, sub-recipients must provide test takers with:

- An appropriately sized room to properly accommodate the number of test takers
- A room location with reduced noise and distractions
- Proper room lighting
- Comfortable room temperature
- Visible clock or timing device
- Appropriately sized tables and chairs
- Access to a restroom

When submitting a student update form for data entry of assessment information, the number of contact hours since the last test are required on the form as well as the signature of the instructor that certifies adherence to the Assessment Policy for validity and reliability of standardized assessment data. All records must be maintained in a central location and are subject to audit by the regional coordinator and other monitoring/evaluation team members.

Program officials have until the 15th day of the month following the month being reported to enter data into Alabama's adult education data management system. All sub-recipients must follow the state procurement policies when purchasing assessment materials.

I. Accommodations for Students

Students with diagnosed and documented disabilities from a licensed professional will be granted reasonable accommodation upon request during pre- and progress/post-testing. The publishers' manuals of the NRS-approved assessment tests are consulted to determine proper accommodation procedures for special populations for the administration of individual tests.

It is the responsibility of the local program to accommodate the individual needs of special populations. Accommodations are made to allow the test taker with a disability to demonstrate his or her skills and abilities more accurately than if no modifications were made. In all cases, the accommodation must meet the needs of examinees without changing what the test is intended to measure.

Regional and statewide professional development meetings are held with program staff for the purpose of sharing current information about learning disability issues. This information is disseminated to all local programs to ensure that students are informed about availability of accommodations as part of their enrollment/orientation process. Adult learners with disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodation and for submitting documentation of their disability at the time of registration, program entry, or after professional diagnosis while enrolled.

Documentation of the need for specific testing accommodations must be maintained in the learner's files as confidential information. The documentation must show that the disability interferes with the student's ability to demonstrate performance on the test. The information can come from a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, documentation from a vocational rehabilitation agency, or student's secondary school record. Appropriate accommodation must meet the needs of the learner without changing what a test is intended to measure.

> **CASAS:** Local agencies are responsible for providing fully accessible services and reasonable accommodation for learners with documented disabilities. Accommodations may alter the conditions for administering a test such as changes in timing, setting, or responding, or they may change the format of the test such as the use of a Braille version or text enlarger. Identified students may be allowed to take only one test per day or to test in an alternate quiet room. Learners may also use a variety of strategies when they take a test, such as a plain, straight-edge ruler, magnifying strips or glass, colored overlays, ear plugs, or other devices as deemed

appropriate. Other accommodations may include extended time, alternate schedule, frequent supervised breaks, scribe/writer, computer with spelling and grammar check disabled, simple calculator, sign language interpreter for test directions only, headphones for those taking a listening test, magnifier/template, text-to-speech software video magnifiers, limited testing per day, and one-on-one administration of the assessment. Any testing accommodation should be consistent with documentation in the student learning plan.

TABE: TABE-PC is appropriate for some students who have difficulty taking paper and pencil tests. Accommodations such as allowing extra time to complete the test or letting students mark answers in test booklets rather than on separate answer sheets may also be considered for students with special needs. The approved accommodation must minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. If the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then they should not be used in the testing situation. For TABE testing, large print, Braille, and audio versions are available. For the Braille version, the answers must be transferred to standard CompuScan or Scoreze answer sheets, depending on the preferred scoring method. Accommodations suggestions for TABE are available in
the guidelines: https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Guidelines_to_Inclusive_Testing_2017.pdf.

BEST Plus 3.0 and BEST Literacy 2.0: In the computer adaptive version, computer software selects test items appropriate to the examiner's ability after the locator items have been administered. In the print-based version, a quick locator determines the appropriate level of the test form for the examiner.

Use of a straight edge or colored overlays, removal from fluorescent lights, use of graph paper, or taking individual tests on different days are interventions that do not require disability accommodations.

ACT WorkKeys: For examinees requiring accommodation and/or supports, the ACT WorkKeys NCRC Assessment Examinee Affidavit of Qualification for Requestable Allowable Accommodations must be completed by the test coordinator and examinee. This form should be kept as part of the local provider records for one year and then should be securely destroyed. If any of the following are authorized for accommodations, examinees are expected to supply their own, which could include alternative communication device (AAC), headphones (if site cannot provide) and/or ACT-authorized word-to-word bilingual dictionary. All examinees in the room must have the same authorized timing. Examinees testing with accommodations may not test in a standard time room. If they do, tests from that room will not be scored or scores will be canceled.

J. Distance Education Policy

Distance learners in the Alabama Adult Education Program are students who are separated from the instructor by geography or time (or both) for the majority of the instructional period.

State Policy: A participant is classified as a distance learner if the majority (51% or higher) of the hours earned in a program year are derived by his or her participation in distance learning activities. However, a participant's hours in both distance and classroom activities must be reported in the Alabama adult education data management system.

Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs, and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, email,

online technologies, and/or software.

During a program year, if a student is dually enrolled in a traditional classroom and distance education, for Federal reporting, the student can only be counted once. Students in distance education must have at least 12 hours of contact with the program before they can be counted as enrolled for Federal reporting purposes. These 12 hours can be a combination of actual contact (in-person classroom, one-on-one, small group instruction, etc.) and contact through telephone, video, tele-conference or online communication, as long as these communications have an instructional focus. These 12 hours must be verifiable. Local programs must ensure they have proper documentation of these 12 hours on file and must enter them into Alabama's adult education data management system.

State Policy: All individuals who are eligible for adult education services, including distance education participants, must be assessed in accordance with the Alabama Assessment Policy Guidelines.

- All pre-and post-assessments must be administered in a proctored setting, which can be face-to-face or remote.
- All eligible individuals should be pre-tested prior to 12 hours of instruction. If a pre-test cannot be administered, a provisional EFL may be assigned based on informal assessment methods until an NRS approved test can be administered. All test takers impacted will be tracked in a report.
- Distance education participants are subject to the same post-test instructional hour intervals as traditional learners.

The NRS guidelines state that proxy contact hours must be developed using one of three specified models: clock time, instructor verification, or learner mastery. As these models are appropriate for different types of curricula, Alabama Adult Education has chosen to use more than one proxy hour model. Local programs are required to follow the proxy hour models.

Proxy Hours are defined as the time distance education participants spend engaged in distance education activities, such as using distance education curricula. The hours for each activity are calculated using one of three models:

1. **Clock-time:** This model assigns contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to and engaged in an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time. The software must provide a mechanism to time-out or logout participants after a preset period of inactivity.

2. **Instructor Verification**: This model assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on the instructor's determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment. Contact hours for the instructor verification model are determined and established through a study conducted by the local program according to the following plan:
   a. Distance learning materials/resources are chosen.
   b. A sample of classes track how long they spend teaching the content, on a unit-by-unit basis.
   c. Average times for each unit are calculated from sample classrooms and that time is assigned for proxy contact hours for that unit.
   d. Local training is conducted for approved educational materials added.

3. **Learner Mastery:** This model assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the participant's demonstrated mastery of the content of a lesson. This model requires previous engagement by the participant on curriculum and materials related to the test. A high percentage of correct responses on the mastery test earn the credit hours attached to the material.

APPENDIX | Guidelines for Each Assessment

Administration procedures for each assessment that Alabama Adult Education endorses must be followed to maintain the reliability and validity of each test.

A. Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy 2.0

Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Reading and Writing
Administration Procedure	Individual or group
Expiration Date	July 2030
Scoring Procedures	Reviewers rate responses using rubrics on a specific part of the assessment. A raw score is generated and converted to a scale score.
Scores Linked to NRS levels	**NRS Level** **Composite** ESL Beginning Literacy — 100-182 ESL Low Beginning — 183-209 ESL High Beginning — 210-244 ESL Intermediate Low — 245-300 ESL Intermediate High — N/A ESL Advanced — N/A
Post-Test Time	60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended
Training Requirements	Training will be held under the supervision of a CAL qualified assessor. Training sessions will be held annually at the state conference and on an as needed basis during the year.
Forms Available	1,2, and 3
Locator Required	No

B. Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 3.0

Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Speaking and Listening
Administration Procedure	Individual
Expiration Date	July 2030
Scoring Procedures	Computer assisted and Print: Learner responses are identified, rated on a scoring rubric by the reviewer, and entered into the computer.

Scores Linked to NRS levels

NRS Level	Computer Based	Print Based
ESL Beginning Literacy	600-677	600-677
ESL Low Beginning	678-702	678-702
ESL High Beginning	703-726	703-726
ESL Intermediate Low	727-752	727-752
ESL Intermediate High	753-785	753+
ESL Advanced	786-849*	753+

*850 and higher would score above ESL advanced.

Post-test Time	60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended
Training Requirements	Training will be held under the supervision of a CAL qualified assessor. Training sessions will be held annually at the state conference and on an as needed basis during the year.
Forms Available	Computer Assisted: Adaptive questions respond to the learner's ability. Print: 1 & 2
Locator Required	Yes, for print only.

C. Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Listening and Reading STEPS

Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Listening and Reading
Administration Procedure	Individual or group
Expiration Date	July 2030
Scoring Procedures	Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct responses are converted into scale scores.
Scores Linked to NRS levels	<table><tr><td>**NRS Level**</td><td>**Listening**</td><td>**Reading**</td></tr><tr><td>ESL Beginning Literacy</td><td>0-181</td><td>0-183</td></tr><tr><td>ESL Low Beginning</td><td>182-191</td><td>184-196</td></tr><tr><td>ESL High Beginning</td><td>192-201</td><td>197-206</td></tr><tr><td>ESL Intermediate Low</td><td>202-211</td><td>207-216</td></tr><tr><td>ESL Intermediate High</td><td>212-221</td><td>217-227</td></tr><tr><td>ESL Advanced</td><td>222-231</td><td>228-238</td></tr></table>
Post-test Time	Minimum 40 hours recommended
Training Requirements	All qualified assessors for CASAS STEPS series must complete the training workshop provided by CASAS.
Forms Available	Listening Forms 621L-630L; Reading Forms 621R-630R
Locator Required	Yes

D. Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Math (2) and Reading GOALS

Applicable Program	ABE; ASE
Subject	Math and Reading
Administration Procedure	Individual or group
Expiration Date	Math - July 2030 Reading – February 2025
Scoring Procedures	Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct responses are converted into scale scores.

Scores Linked to NRS levels	**NRS Level**	**Math (2)**	**Reading**
	ABE Beginning Literacy	0-192	0-203
	ABE Beginning Basic	193-203	204-216
	ABE Intermediate Low	204-213	217-227
	ABE Intermediate High	214-224	228-238
	ASE Low	225-236	239-248
	ASE High	236->	249->

Post-test Time	Minimum 40 hours recommended
Training Requirements	All qualified assessors for CASAS GOALS Series must complete the training workshop provided by CASAS.
Forms Available	Math GOALS (2) - 921M-930M Reading GOALS - 901R-908R
Locator Required	Yes

E. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE CLAS-E)

Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Listening & Speaking
Administration Procedure	Individual
Expiration Date	June 2025
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is converted into a scale score for reporting.
Scores Linked to NRS levels	<table><tr><td>**NRS Level**</td><td>**Listening & Speaking**</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Beginning Literacy</td><td>230-407</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Beginning Basic</td><td>408-449</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Intermediate Low</td><td>450-485</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Intermediate High</td><td>486-525</td></tr><tr><td>ASE Low</td><td>526-558</td></tr><tr><td>ASE High</td><td>559-></td></tr></table>
Post-test Time	40 hours
Training Requirements	All test administrators must take "Introduction to TABE" and be familiar with the DRC/CTB training video and accompanying workbook on administering the TABE.
Forms Available	A & B
Locator Required	Recommended

F. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Forms 11 & 12
Mathematics, Reading and Language

Applicable Program	ABE; ASE
Subject	Mathematics, Reading, and Language
Administration Procedure	Individual
Expiration Date	Ending 9/07/24 Sunset – 06/30/24
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is converted into a scale score for reporting.
Scores Linked to NRS levels	<table><tr><td>**NRS Level**</td><td>**Math**</td><td>**Reading**</td><td>**Language**</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Beginning Literacy</td><td>300-448</td><td>300-441</td><td>300-457</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Beginning Basic</td><td>449-495</td><td>442-500</td><td>458-510</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Intermediate Low</td><td>496-536</td><td>501-535</td><td>511-546</td></tr><tr><td>ABE Intermediate High</td><td>537-595</td><td>536-575</td><td>547-583</td></tr><tr><td>ASE Low</td><td>596-656</td><td>576-616</td><td>584-630</td></tr><tr><td>ASE High</td><td>657-800</td><td>617-800</td><td>631-800</td></tr></table>
Post-test Time	50-60 hours recommended for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 1-4, with a minimum of 40 hours.; 30-59 hours for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 5 & 6 using the same level, different form.
Training Requirements	All test administrators must take "Introduction to TABE" and be familiar with the DRC/CTB training video and accompanying workbook on administering the TABE
Forms Available	11 & 12
Locator Required	Yes

G. ACT WorkKeys | Applied Math & Workplace Documents

Applicable Program	Students pursuing Career Interest Only
Subject	Applied Math and Workplace Documents
Administration Procedure	Individual
Expiration Date	July 2026
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is converted into a scale score for reporting.

Scores Linked to NRS levels	NRS Level	Math	Workplace Documents
	ABE Beginning Literacy	65-71	N/A
	ABE Beginning Basic	72-75	72-76
	ABE Intermediate Low	76-79	77-80
	ABE Intermediate High	80-82	81-82
	ASE Low	83-85	83-85
	ASE High	86-90	86-90

Post-test Time	50-60 hours recommended for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 1-4, with a minimum of 40 hours.; 30-59 hours for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 5 & 6 using the same level, different form.
Training Requirements	Each test coordinator should read, understand, and reference the *ACT WorkKeys Administration Manual.* Then they should attend a WorkKeys Training webinar on the workkeys@act.org website. These are free, on-demand webinars with a User ID and Password provided. The webinar will provide foundational procedures for online testing**.**

Forms Available	Math 014, 015, 016, 017	Workplace Documents 018, 019, 020, 021

Locator Required	If available