

ASSESSMENT POLICY and DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY

FOR VIRGINIA

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS

Effective Date: July 1, 2021

Virginia Department of Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

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# 2021-2022 Assessment Policy Addendum

## Extension of COVID-related Flexibility

The flexibility extended for remote intake, enrollment, and service to eligible individuals provided in Directors Memos [25-20](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/resources/ae-director-memos/2020/025-20.docx) and [26-20](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/resources/ae-director-memos/2020/026-20.docx) will be extended through program year 2021-2022, or until rescinded, as Virginia localities continue to respond to COVID-19 related health requirements. Providers are encouraged to offer NRS-approved assessments as soon as feasible.

With this Assessment Policy Addendum (Addendum), Memos 25-20 and 26-20 become official assessment policy for adult education providers in Virginia. They are reprinted here for readers’ convenience.

This Addendum also addresses policy on the implementation of remote testing that requires providers to follow test publisher guidelines.

Department of Education

P. O. BOX 2120

Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

ADULT EDUCATION MEMO NO. 025-20

**DATE:** March 31, 2020

**TO:** Adult Education Program Administrators

**FROM:** George R. Willcox, Director, Operations and Accountability

 Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

**SUBJECT:** **Serving Eligible Individuals During COVID-19 Related Closures**

[Guidance](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/octae-program-memo-20-3.pdf) from the U.S. Department of Education, posted March 27, 2020, recognizes that due to state restrictions and program closures related to the COVID-19 outbreak, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) programs may not be able to administer in-person assessments.

Programs may, however, continue to enroll eligible individuals and provide services via remote contact hours and/or through distance education materials listed in the [*Approved Distance Education Curriculum List*](https://valrc.org/leadership/docs/VADEApprovedCurriculumOCT19_a.pdf).

Newly enrolled students must complete an Adult Student Profile Document (ASPD). Because of the prevalence of program closures, it is expected that the ASPD will be completed with assistance from program personnel either by telephone or by email. The time spent completing an ASPD may be recorded as attendance hours. Although it is not expected that programs will be able to administer in-person initial assessments, programs must still determine an Educational Functioning Level for placement. This can be achieved by administering a non-NRS approved instrument such as a curriculum-based assessment or other diagnostic tool. To be considered a participant, newly enrolled students must accrue at least 12 attendance hours, which may consist of contact hours or proxy hours earned participating in an approved distance education curriculum.

Current students may continue to receive instruction, and attendance should be entered in SSWS.

This guidance is in effect for Virginia adult education providers delivering services during the COVID-19 related closures. Further guidance on how programs are expected to enter data for students unable to take an assessment will be forthcoming.

If you have any questions, please contact Heidi Silver-Pacuilla, Ph.D., Adult Education Coordinator, by email at oael@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 786-3347.

GRW/HSP/sed

Department of Education

P. O. BOX 2120

Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

ADULT EDUCATION MEMO NO. 026-20

**DATE:** April 23, 2020

**TO:** Adult Education Program Administrators

**FROM:** George R. Willcox, Director, Operations and Accountability

 Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

**SUBJECT:** **Reporting Eligible Individuals During COVID-19 Related Closures**

This memo, along with [Directors Memo 025-20](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/resources/ae-director-memos/2020/025-20.docx), provides guidance on how to serve students and report student attendance and performance during the COVID-19 related closures. These memos serve as addendums to the current [*Assessment and Distance Education Policy for Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Programs*](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/data_monitoring_evaluation/assessment/assessment-policy.docx) and are in effect until June 30, 2020.

Directors Memo 25-20 provides guidance as to how Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) programs can enroll eligible individuals and provide services via remote contact hours and/or through distance education materials listed in the [*Approved Distance Education Curriculum List*](https://valrc.org/leadership/docs/VADEApprovedCurriculumOCT19_a.pdf).

This memo provides additional information on how to report attendance and outcomes for students for the remainder of program year 2019-2020 and on allowances for the use of remote assessments.

The VDOE has released a [recorded tutorial](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OD2WbXds2XM&feature=youtu.be) on assessment data entry steps that will allow the Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS) to recognize students who are unable to pre-test or post-test as a result of restrictions on in-person testing. Program data entry staff must review the tutorial and accompanying slides and transcript before entering student data.

Many NRS-approved test publishers have begun a phased-in approach to offering remotely proctored assessments. The VDOE expects program administrators to stay in contact with the relevant publishers’ representatives to learn more and receive official guidance. The VDOE expects that any certified assessors who plan to administer remote proctoring be knowledgeable about the publishers’ guidelines. We recommend that no new assessors be certified to administer remote proctoring at this time.

If you have any questions, please contact Heidi Silver-Pacuilla, Ph.D., Adult Education Coordinator, by email at oael@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 786-3347.

GRW/HSP/sed

## Implementation of Remote Testing

When in-person testing is unavailable, adult education providers may consider remote testing for determining accurate placement of students as well as supporting performance reporting under the NRS. If remote testing is implemented, providers are required to follow test publisher guidelines, including but not limited to:

* Student pre-screening and test orientation
* Test security
* Proctor compliance
* Administration compliance
* Retesting

**Assessment Policy**

**for Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Programs**

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# I. Introduction and Context

Reliable, quality data reporting is critical to presenting a clear picture of the services delivered by the programs funded through Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA). These services provide critical foundation skills instruction to adults across the Commonwealth that contributes to their personal, educational, and career advancement. Accurately documenting the outcomes associated with adult education services provides a reliable means for tracking the impact of the federal and state investments and the progress toward meeting the ambitious goals of the *WIOA State Plan for the Commonwealth of Virginia*.

## A. Need for a State Assessment Policy

The assessment policies in this document are designed to guide adult education programs in Virginia. They provide explanations of the state and local program responsibilities for assessment specific to the National Reporting System (NRS) and state requirements.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (the Office) must make decisions about the quality of programs and the need for technical assistance. An assessment policy provides for consistency in program service delivery and a platform on which to build a system for equitable program comparability.

The consistent and accurate administration and interpretation of assessments are necessary to ensure placement of learners in appropriate instructional levels that encourage classroom engagement, student retention, and educational functioning level (EFL) gains.

| **Policy 1****Programs must adhere to the assessment policies identified in this document.**  |
| --- |

An assessment policy is necessary to:

* Ensure assessments are administered properly and as intended
* Ensure the accuracy of assessment data reported to the state
* Ensure that assessments are a reliable indication of educational gain

### Reliability and Validity

Assessments must be reliable and valid. Each of the standardized assessments identified in this policy manual have been reviewed by test publishers and the United States Department of Education for reliability and validity. Reliability and validity are defined below.

***Reliability***: Reliability refers to the degree of consistency in performance on an assessment. The greater the consistency of performance across multiple administrations or under different conditions, the greater the reliability of the assessment. An important condition that can differ across assessment administrations is the form of the assessment. Similarity in performance across forms is, therefore, an indication of assessment reliability.

***Validity***: Within the scope of the National Reporting System (NRS), validity refers to the appropriateness of an assessment for measuring educational gain. Determining whether the assessment is matched to the content of the NRS EFL descriptors and the extent to which assessment results are free from effects unrelated to what the assessment measures, such as practice effects or cultural-based knowledge, are important for evaluating validity. Validity also hinges on how assessments are used. When required, programs must administer locator or appraisal tests to ensure that the correct level of the assessment is administered and that the results are within the published validity ranges.

| **Policy 2****Staff responsible for administering NRS-approved assessments must ensure that all testing policies and procedures established by the test publisher are followed.** |
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### Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Gain

Educational functioning level (EFL) gain is one of two types of measurable skill gains (MSG) that states must report as part of their performance accountability reporting. While federal guidance on EFL gain indicates multiple ways for students to demonstrate an EFL gain, only one, the comparison of a student’s initial and current EFL based on the student’s pre- and post-test results, is affected by the policies set forth in this document. When students first enroll in an adult education program, they must be administered a pre-test using an NRS-approved assessment. The pre-test is used for instructional placement and serves as a baseline for determining students’ educational gains.

There are twelve EFLs that represent the three adult education program types. Adult basic education (ABE) is represented by four EFLs (ABE Levels 1-4), adult secondary education (ASE) encompasses two EFLs (ABE Levels 5 and 6), and English language acquisition (ELA) contains six EFLs (ESL Levels 1-6). Each literacy level contains specific standards and competencies that individuals are expected to demonstrate. All EFLs feature basic reading and writing skills and functional and workplace skills. ABE and ASE students are also required to demonstrate numeracy skills; ELA students must also demonstrate speaking and listening skills.

Completion of the ABE Level 6 functioning level is demonstrated by earning a secondary credential in one of the following ways:

* Earning a high school diploma,
* Passing a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, or
* Earning an adult high school diploma, which, in Virginia, may be accomplished in one of three ways:
1. Completing the number of course credits required for graduation at the time the student entered the ninth grade.
2. Meeting the requirements of the General Achievement Adult High School Diploma (GAAHSD), or
3. Completing the National External Diploma Program (NEDP).

## B. Purposes and Uses of Assessment

Adult learners enter programs with a wide range of educational backgrounds, experiences, and proficiency levels. The purpose of educational assessment is to determine the skill levels of a learner. This determination establishes the learner’s functioning level at the time of the assessment, either when first joining a program or after a period of instruction that is suitable for taking a post-test. Program administrators and teachers are expected to use assessment information to address the academic needs of their students. The information may also be used diagnostically to group learners, determine appropriate courses of instruction, or indicate an individual’s degree of progress after a set number of hours of instruction.

### Measure Learner Knowledge and Progress

Assessments identify the knowledge or skills that learners possess and help teachers develop educational plans based on that information. Program administrators and teachers must ensure that the assessments administered measure the knowledge and/or skills that are being taught. Assessments can also improve student retention by documenting improvement and providing learners with a way to monitor the progress they are making toward their goals.

### Guide and Determine the Effectiveness of Instruction

Assessments offer staff an opportunity to determine the effectiveness of instruction. When learners complete an assessment, teachers and administrators are able to identify specific competencies or skills that learners may or may not have mastered. Based on this information, adjustments or realignments of coursework may be required to address gaps in instruction.

### Make Decisions Related To Learner, Staff, and Program Accountability

Assessments provide an opportunity to evaluate not only the learners’ progress but also programmatic and instructional effectiveness. Decisions about the use of specific curricula, the intensity and quality of instruction, and classroom locations, for example, may be informed by assessment results. Assessment results may also influence program funding decisions.

## C. Violation of Assessment Policy

Adults seeking education services must be provided fair and equitable access to services. Providing students with accurate assessment services is essential to this requirement. Violations of the assessment policies identified in this document could result in actions and decisions that are detrimental to the goals of the program and the instructional needs of the students.

| Policy 3 Evidence of violation of the state assessment policy may lead to corrective action, a return of grant funds, expungement of assessment data affected by the violation(s), or other appropriate forms of redress. |
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## D. Summary

Local providers must adhere to the policies and guidelines set forth in this document. The use of approved assessments is required by programs reporting into the state Management Information System (MIS). Decisions made at the class, program, and state levels are influenced by the results of these assessments. If assessments are unreliable or invalid, those decisions may be inappropriate or incorrect. To practice continuous program improvement, local providers should review assessment procedures and results regularly. Complete descriptions of each of the approved assessments are provided in Section III, Guidelines for Each Assessment.

# II. General Assessment Requirements

## A. Learners to Be Assessed

All learners must be assessed using an NRS-approved assessment within the first six hours of instruction. The selection of assessment to use should be based on the type of instruction provided to the learner. For example, if a provider is offering ESL instruction in reading, the learner should be assessed on an instrument that measures reading gain for ESL learners.

Consider administering assessments in all subject areas in which instruction is provided. Programs serving both ABE and ESL learners should consider the selection and use of assessments that will assist learners in successfully bridging the transition from an ESL to an ABE instructional program.

When applicable, a locator or appraisal must be administered as the first step in the assessment process in accordance with test publisher instructions. Locators and appraisals are typically used to determine the level of the assessment to be administered.

| **Policy 4****Students must be assessed based on the following standards:*** **A pre-test must be administered within the first six hours of instruction to all (100 percent) eligible learners seeking services.**
* **Programs must administer a pre-test to any learner who does not have a valid assessment.**
* **If a test publisher requires the administration of a locator or appraisal prior to the administration of a pre-test, the program must do so; otherwise, the pre-test results will be invalid and may not be used for evaluating a student’s educational functioning level gain.**
* **A post-test must be administered to** **a minimum of 60 percent of all NRS participants according to applicable publisher post-test time frames.**
* **An NRS-approved test result is valid for up to two fiscal years.**
* **A student may not be allowed to accumulate instructional hours towards a post-test without a valid pre-test result.**
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### Pre-testing

In Virginia, programs are required to administer a pre-test within the first six hours of instruction. Pre-testing information serves two fundamental purposes. First, it is the baseline by which programs will measure learners’ EFL advancement. Second, pre-test information is used to develop effective instructional plans for each learner.

### Post-testing

Post-testing is necessary to determine educational progress. This information is useful to the learner, the teacher, and program administration. It is also one measure of accountability required for NRS purposes. At a minimum, learners should be post-tested in the area in which they pre-tested and in which they received instruction. Policy 4 states that programs must post-test a minimum of 60 percent of all NRS participants according to applicable publisher post-test time frames.

The VDOE requires that a learner must meet the minimum number of instructional hours required by the publisher for post-testing. Some publishers establish recommended hours before post-testing along with the required minimum number of instructional hours while other publishers establish minimum hours only. Please see Section III, Guidelines for Each Assessment, for post-testing time frame requirements for specific publishers’ assessments.

### Retesting

In previous years, students who had not received adult education and literacy services for more than 90 consecutive days were required to take a pre-test upon their return. This policy has been modified. Students are required to take a pre-test after a period of instructional inactivity only if the test publisher requires it. Some test publishers do not have retesting restrictions; others recommend that students do not exceed a maximum period of instructional inactivity in order to post-test. Please see Section III, Guidelines for Each Assessment,for retesting restrictions for specific publishers’ assessments. Adult education providers are encouraged to consider the instructional needs of each student who has been absent for an extended period of time when making the decision to re-test.

## B. Assessments Permitted

The following assessments, correlated to subject areas and program type, are accepted for measuring and reporting EFL performance and progress into the state MIS. Only the assessment instruments identified here may be used for these purposes.

Each assessment identified has been selected because it meets the following criteria:

* Is appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult learners,
* Has standardized administration and scoring procedures,
* Has alternate, equivalent forms for pre- and post-testing, and
* Is aligned to the NRS EFLs and is approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

| **Assessment Instrument** | **Subject** | **Program Type** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| BEST Literacy | Reading and Writing | ESL |
| BEST Plus 2.0 | Oral (i.e., Speaking and Listening) | ESL |
| CASAS Life and Work Series, Beginning Literacy Assessment | Reading and Reading for Language Arts | ESL |
| CASAS Reading and Math GOALS Series | Reading and Math | ABE and ASE |
| CASAS Life and Work 980 Series | Listening | ESL |
| TABE 11/12 | Reading, Total Mathematics, and Language | ABE and ASE |
| TABE CLAS-E | Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing | ESL |

| **Policy 5****Assessments used for NRS-reporting purposes must be approved by the U.S. Department of Education.**  |
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## C. Training for Administration of Assessments

To ensure consistent and accurate administration of assessments and the interpretation of assessment results, staff members administering assessments must be trained and, if required, certified to do so. Programs are responsible for maintaining a staff of qualified assessment administrators.

### Assessment Staffing

Programs must maintain a sufficient number of qualified staff to administer assessments.

| **Policy 6****Staff members who administer approved assessments must successfully complete certification and recertification training on the approved assessment(s) the program uses according to publisher guidelines.** |
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To become and remain a certified assessor, individuals must successfully complete certification and recertification training. This training is offered directly through the test publishers. All assessment training is managed at the program level. Certification data must be collected by the regional or local program and reported and maintained in the state MIS. The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) offers [guidance](https://valrc.org/leadership/docs/Guide%20to%20COVLC%20External%20Learning_a.pdf) for submitting evidence of external assessment training to the Commonwealth of Virginia Learning Center to assist programs in the management of this training.

| **Policy 7****Local programs must report into the state MIS staff trained on an approved NRS assessment within 30 days of training completion**. |
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## D. Accommodating for Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

Adults with learning, physical, mental, or emotional disabilities may not be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a standardized test administration or with a standard test format. In order to accurately reflect their true EFL, adults who disclose a disability should be offered appropriate accommodations in accordance with test publisher guidelines. Providing accommodations to adults with disabilities will result in a more accurate assessment of their EFLs.

| **Policy 8****Learners who self-disclose a learning, physical, mental, or emotional disability must be offered an accommodation in accordance with test publisher guidelines.** |
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Programs may not deny or prevent access to services based on a learner’s disability. Programs may be required to pay the costs related to the accommodation(s).

### Types of Accommodations

Most test publishers provide recommendations or guidelines for accommodating various disabilities. Local providers should review the specific test publisher guidelines for identified accommodations and the publisher’s available resources. Providers may consult with the [Virginia Assistive Technology System](http://www.vats.org/index.htm) and local service partners to explore accommodations and options.

The most common forms of accommodations include:

* Extended time
* Private room
* Use of a standard calculator or talking calculator
* One test per day
* Scribe
* Audio version
* Braille version
* Large-print version

Additionally, learners should have an opportunity to use test-taking aids that do not affect the administration and scoring of the test or the validity of the test scores. Test-taking aids, which do not require prior approval for their use, include:

* Magnifying glasses, lenses, or sheets
* Clear and/or colored overlays
* Straight edge
* Adhesive notes or flags
* Highlighters
* Visor
* Earplugs

Learners who self-disclose a disability that may require accommodations on a high-stakes test such as a high school equivalency test should seek information on the types of certifying documentation required by the test publisher to grant testing accommodations.

### Administering Assessments with Accommodations

In addition to meeting all of the standard requirements and policies related to assessing learners, the following administrative processes must be followed.

***Access:*** It is the responsibility of the program staff to provide the learner with access to the appropriate accommodations. Program staff must provide adequate resources for the variety of accommodations permitted. Two common examples include separate testing rooms and extended time. The cost of and time required to administer assessments with accommodations should be considered when planning a budget, especially when an interpreter or an audio version of an assessment may be required.

***Reporting:*** As with standard assessments, program staff must report the results of the assessments administered with accommodations. The results must be reported on the student intake form and in the state MIS. Both the student intake form and the MIS provide an opportunity to indicate when an accommodation is granted and the type(s) of accommodation provided.

## E. Assessment Reporting

It is the responsibility of local and regional programs to ensure timely assessment of learners both at program start and program completion and prompt reporting of the assessment results. Logic checks built into the state MIS will provide verification of the correct administration of assessments. These systematic logic checks also recognize anomalies such as

out-of-range scale scores and inappropriate post-test time frame so that program staff are alerted when an assessment has been improperly recorded and can take corrective action as soon as possible. Additionally, the data system provides reports with detailed information related to learner, staff, and class performance. Program staff should review these reports after each entry of learner assessment information to identify areas for improvement in assessment administration and instructor performance.

| **Policy 9****Programs must score and report each NRS assessment (pre- and/or post-test) administered to learners within a reasonable time frame. Assessments must be scored within seven business days of the test administration and reported within 30 business days during the fiscal year. The assessment must be reported in the state MIS. Each reported assessment must identify the following:*** **Test type**
* **Test date**
* **Test subject**
* **Test form**
* **Pre-test or post-test**
* **Scale score**
* **Test administrator/staff**
* **Test identification**
* **Accommodation use and type (if applicable)**
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### EFL Identification

When programs report learner assessments in the state MIS, only scaled scores should be entered into the system. The system will not accept raw scores, grade equivalents, or student performance levels. When the scaled score is entered, the system converts the scaled score into an EFL, which is the basis for determining placement in an EFL for reporting purposes and whether the student has made an educational gain. Program staff should discuss educational levels and assessment results with learners using scaled score results.

### Pre-test versus Post-test Identification

The administered assessment should measure and be reflective of the skills developed in an instructional program. The first assessment administered to the learner is identified as a pre-test. When learners have accumulated enough instructional hours, they are eligible to take a post-test. The results of the post-test are used to determine if the learner has made an educational gain. The minimum number of instructional hours required for a learner to post-test differs for each assessment. Consult Section III, Guidelines for Each Assessment to learn the post-test timeframe for each assessment.

### Test Type or Subject Change

Learners may be assessed in more than one subject area or on different assessments during the fiscal year. This type of situation might occur when an ESL learner works on speaking and listening skills in the first part of the year and on reading skills in the second part of the year. It is important to remember, however, that the results from different assessments (in this case a speaking and listening assessment and a reading assessment) cannot be compared with each other to measure educational gain.

| **Policy 10****Programs may not report pre-test and post-test results from two different assessments to demonstrate measurable skill gains (MSG) attainment.**  |
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## F. Quality Control Procedures

Quality control measures are a set of procedures intended to ensure that a performed service adheres to a defined set of quality criteria. It is important that certain requirements and standards be met and maintained.

### Testing Environment

To ensure the reliability and validity of testing results, it is important that the testing environment be appropriate, whether it is an in-person or remotely proctored administration. Test publishers have provided guidelines for remote proctoring, establishing requirements for both the test taker’s environment as well as the proctor’s. For in-person testing, the following conditions and provisions should be available during testing:

* Appropriately sized room to properly accommodate the number of test takers
* Room location with reduced noise and distractions
* Proper and adequate room lighting
* Adequate heating and cooling
* Appropriately sized tables and chairs
* Access to a restroom
* Clock or other timing device visible to test takers
* Chalk board, white board, or overhead projector
* Sufficient staffing for assistance
* Technology that complies with test publisher guidelines for administration

| **Policy 11****Programs must provide assessment locations and environments that maximize the opportunity for learners to demonstrate accurate educational functioning levels.**  |
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### Test Integrity and Security

The integrity and security of a program’s assessment system is critical to ensure that assessment results are true indicators of learner performance. Poor management of assessment materials or poor administration practices may result in inaccurate assessment results. Such results would not be considered reliable or valid and could result in program sanctions.

| **Policy 12****Programs must have a written test security policy that includes the administration and security of paper-based and computer-delivered assessments.** |
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The program’s test security policy should be maintained on file as well as shared with assessment staff and teachers, such as through a teacher handbook or in-service training.

All assessment-related materials (e.g., answer sheets, test booklets, norms booklets, answer keys, and passcodes for computerized assessments) should be secured and inventoried on a regular basis. To secure print-based materials, programs should provide lockable storage that is not accessible to learners or the public. Only those materials specifically needed for a test administration should be removed from the locked storage. Completed learner answer sheets and scratch paper are considered secure materials and should be handled accordingly. Test booklets should be reviewed after each test administration for stray marks, missing pages, recorded answers, and overall condition. Any test booklet deemed unusable should be shredded. Generally, test booklets should be replaced after 15 to 20 administrations. Access to assessment materials, both print-based and computerized, should be limited to qualified assessment staff.

### Security Guidelines

Local programs should adhere to the test publisher guidelines when securing assessments and related materials, both paper-based and computerized. The following points are intended to guide assessment staff concerning issues that would constitute a breach of test security.

* Learners must not be exposed to test items or to the answers of test items before or following test administration.
* Assessment staff may not provide learners with answers to any test item.
* Assessment staff may not make suggestions as to how to respond to a test item before, during, or after a test administration.
* Assessment staff should not review with learners test items or test booklets before, during, or after test administration.
* Copying, printing, or photographing all or any part of an assessment or taking notes about the items included on an assessment are strictly prohibited. As stated in the copyrights, testing materials may not be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical.
* All persons are prohibited from logging into computer-assisted (online or local computer) assessment applications posing as a learner, current or fabricated, to view an assessment. Only an eligible learner is permitted to log in and take a computer-assisted assessment.
* All assessments must be administered in accordance with the instructions outlined in the administration manuals.
* Assessment items may not be used as a sample or practice item to demonstrate how to select responses. Sample items are included in assessments to familiarize learners with the format of the items and the procedures for selecting answers.
* All persons except qualified assessors are prohibited from scoring assessments, either formally or informally.
* All assessors, proctors, or interpreters administering a paper or online assessment to learners approved for accommodations are prohibited from answering test questions in the computer-assisted or print assessment before, during, or after the administration of the test.
* All persons are prohibited from changing learners’ answers to test items whether by providing hints or clues during a test administration, correcting wrong answers during or after a test administration, or by erasing and/or correcting answers or responses selected or recorded by the learner.

# III. Guidelines for Each Assessment

Each assessment has specific administration procedures. Procedures have been established to maintain the reliability and validity of each assessment. The procedures for each assessment are identified on the following pages. Programs should pay special attention to the training requirements and when accommodations may be provided.

| **Assessment Name** | **Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program | Suitable for use at all English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) levels of the NRS |
| Subject | Reading and Writing |
| Active Date | July 1, 2017 |
| Expiration Date | February 2, 2023  |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Print  |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group |
| Administration Time | 1 hour (approximately) |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | No |
| Forms Available | Forms B, C, and D are approved for use on paper  |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | 60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended |
| Post-test Form Repetition | Forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. |
| Retesting Restrictions | None |
| Item Type/Content | The BEST Literacy assessment addresses reading and writing skills of English language learners. The learner must respond to and interpret everyday life reading and writing tasks. Examples of content include labels, items in a newspaper, addressing an envelope, and completing a simple application.  |
| Scoring Procedures | Two skill areas are measured: Reading and Writing. Reviewers rate responses using rubrics on the specific parts of the assessment. A raw score is generated and converted to a scale score. (Scale score determines EFL.) |
| Accommodations | See Test Manual. |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for BEST Literacy, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by the Center for Applied Linguistics.  |

| **Assessment Name** | **Basic English Skills Test (BEST) PLUS 2.0** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS |
| Subject | Speaking and Listening |
| Active Date | July 1, 2017 |
| Expiration Date | February 2, 2023 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Computer-adaptive; print  |
| Administration Type  | Individual |
| Administration Time | 3-20 minutes (approximately – depending on the learner’s ability) |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes (print only, time varies) – A locator assesses the level of questions for the learner (levels 1, 2, or 3). |
| Forms Available | Forms B, C, and D are approved for use on paper and through the computer-adaptive delivery format  |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | 60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended or at the end of the period of instruction if it exceeds 60 hours |
| Post-test Form Repetition | Forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test *(print version only)*. |
| Retesting Restrictions | Must pre-test after 90 days of non-attendance.  |
| Item Type/Content | The BEST Plus 2.0 addresses speaking and listening skills of English language learners. The learner must respond to and interpret everyday life tasks in personal, occupational, and community areas. Examples of content areas include health, parenting, employment, citizenship, and transportation.  |
| Scoring Procedures | Computer-adaptive: Learner responses are identified, rated on a scoring rubric by the reviewer, and then entered into the computer. Print: All rated responses by the reviewer must be entered into the scoring software for conversion to a scale score. (Scale score determines EFL.) |
| Accommodations | See Test Administrator Guide. |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for BEST Plus 2.0, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by the Center for Applied Linguistics. |

| **Assessment Name**  | **Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)****Life and Work Listening Assessments (LW Listening)** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS |
| Subject | Listening |
| Active Date | July 1, 2017 |
| Expiration Date | February 2, 2023  |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Print (CD); Computer based |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group. In person or remote. |
| Administration Time | 30 – 40 minutes (approximately) |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes, Appraisal Form 80L: eTests Locator 89L (15 minutes) |
| Forms Available | Forms 981L, 982L, 983L, 984L, 985L, and 986L of this test are approved for use on paper (CD) and through the computer-based delivery format |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | 70-100 hours recommended; 40 hours minimum |
| Post-test Form Repetition | Forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. The Life and Work Series may not be compared to the Life Skills series. |
| Retesting Restrictions | Guidelines: Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for post-testing but not for pre-testing. Students who score in the conservative estimate range for pre-testing should be retested at the next highest test level. |
| Item Type/Content | CASAS Life and Work Series – Listening is an assessment of aural comprehension for English language learners that tests basic academic and everyday life skills. The assessment is computer-delivered and by test booklet (level A only) and CD. It includes items such as identifying similar statements, answering questions, finishing a conversation, and making meaning from a dialogue. See CASAS Listening Standards (2009) and CASAS Competencies. |
| Scoring Procedures | Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct learner responses are converted into scale scores. (Scale score determines EFL.) |
| Accommodations | Large or enhanced print, Braille, and audio editions are available or being developed. (See administrator’s guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.) |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for CASAS Life and Work Series-Listening, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS.  |

| **Assessment Name** | **Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)****Reading Assessments (Life and Work, Beginning Literacy Reading Assessment, Reading for Citizenship, Reading for Language Arts—Secondary Level)**  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program  | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS |
| Subject | Reading |
| Active Date | July 1, 2017 |
| Expiration Date | February 2, 2023 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Print; Computer based |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group. In person or remote. |
| Administration Time | 1 hour (approximately) |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes – Appraisal Form 80R; eTests CAT Locator 102R (15 minutes) |
| Forms Available | Forms 27, 28, 81, 82, 81X, 82X, 83, 84, 85, 86, 185, 186, 187, 188, 513 and 514 of this test are approved for use on paper and through the computer-based delivery format.  |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | 70-100 hours recommended; 40 hours minimum |
| Post-test Form Repetition | Forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. The Life and Work Series may not be compared to the Life Skills series. |
| Retesting Restrictions | Guidelines: Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for post-testing but not for pre-testing. Students who score in the conservative estimate range for pre-testing should be retested at the next highest test level. |
| Item Type/Content | CASAS Life and Work Series – Reading is an assessment of reading comprehension for adult basic education learners that measures basic academic and everyday life skills. The assessment requires learners to scan and interpret functional items such as charts, forms, signs, and other types of reading samples. See CASAS Listening Standards (2009) and CASAS Competencies. |
| Scoring Procedures | Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct learner responses are converted into scale scores. (Scale score determines EFL.) |
| Accommodations | Large or enhanced print, Braille, audio editions are available or being developed. (See administrator’s guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.) |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for CASAS Life and Work Series-Reading, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS.  |

| **Assessment Name** | **Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)****Reading GOALS Series** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program | Suitable for use at all ABE and ASE levels of the NRS |
| Subject | Reading  |
| Active Date | February 5, 2018 |
| Expiration Date | February 5, 2025 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Print; Computer based |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group. In person or remote. |
| Administration Time | Forms 901R/902R: 60 minutes. Forms 903R-908R: 75 minutes |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | GOALS Reading Appraisal 900R (30 minutes); eTests GOALS Reading Locator 104R (15 minutes) |
| Forms Available |  901R – 908R |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | 70-100 hours recommended; 40 hours minimum |
| Post-test Form Repetition | Forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. |
| Retesting Restrictions | Guidelines: Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for post-testing but not for pre-testing. Students who score in the conservative estimate range for pre-testing should be retested at the next highest test level. |
| Item Type/Content | CASAS Reading GOALS test content is aligned with College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education. Comprehension questions draw on higher order reading skills, including inferring and determining an author’s point of view in complex texts. Test content also assesses relevant functional life and work competencies for adult learners drawn from the CASAS Competencies. |
| Scoring Procedures | Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct learner responses are converted into scale scores. (Scale score determines EFL.) |
| Accommodations | Large or enhanced print, Braille, and audio editions are available or being developed. (See administrator’s guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.) |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for CASAS Reading GOALS Series, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS.  |

| **Assessment Name** | **Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)****Math GOALS Series** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program | Suitable for use at all ABE and ASE levels of the NRS |
| Subject | Math |
| Active Date | March 7, 2019 |
| Expiration Date | March 7, 2023 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Print; Computer based |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group. In person or remote. |
| Administration Time | Forms 913M/914M: 60 minutes. Forms 917M/918M: 75 minutes |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | GOALS Math Appraisal 900M (30 minutes); eTests GOALS Math Locator 104M (15 minutes) |
| Forms Available |  913M, 914M, 917M, 918M |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | 70-100 hours recommended; 40 hours minimum |
| Post-test Form Repetition | Forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. |
| Retesting Restrictions | Guidelines: Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for post-testing but not for pre-testing. Students who score in the conservative estimate range for pre-testing should be retested at the next highest test level. |
| Item Type/Content | CASAS Math GOALS test content is aligned with College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education. Questions assess math skills in a variety of life and work contexts drawn from the CASAS Competencies. The content covers arithmetic, algebra, geometry, measurement, and data analysis, including understanding data in graphs and charts.  |
| Scoring Procedures | Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct learner responses are converted into scale scores. (Scale score determines EFL.) |
| Accommodations | Large or enhanced print, Braille, and audio editions are available or being developed. (See administrator’s guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.) |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for CASAS Reading GOALS Series, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS.  |

| **Assessment Name** | **Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE 11/12)**  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program | Suitable for use at all ABE and ASE levels of the NRS  |
| Subject | Reading, Math, Language |
| Active Date | September 7, 2017 |
| Expiration Date | September 7, 2024 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Computer based; Print; Large Print; Braille; Audio; Text to Speech |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group  |
| Administration Time Guidelines | See times per subject and level at [Link: http://www.tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE\_11\_12\_Max\_Testing\_Times.pdf](http://www.tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_11_12_Max_Testing_Times.pdf) |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes, Reading - 45 minutes; Total Mathematics - 45 minutes; Language – 30 minutes |
| Forms Available | Forms 11 and 12 Levels L, E, M, D, A  |
| Length before Pre-test | Within first six hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test | Alternate Form Testing - 50-60 hours recommended; 40 minimum for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 1-4; 30 hours minimum for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 5 and 6 Same Form Testing – 60-80 hours recommended  |
| Retesting Restrictions | None |
| Item Type/Content | Reading focuses on reading items from everyday life, work, and other literary content. Visual items are included in the reading items. With different levels, the information increases in complexity. Questions are in a multiple-choice, drag and drop, multiple select, and evidence-based selected response format. Total Mathematics focuses on mathematical items from everyday life, the world of work, and other familiar contexts. Visual items are included, such as charts, graphs, or documents. With different levels, the information increases in complexity. Questions are in multiple-choice, gridded response, drag and drop, and multiple select formats.Language (Writing) addresses the use, mechanics, formation, and development of English in life and the world of work. Items reflect the modern writing process, including editing. With different levels, the information increases in complexity. Questions are in multiple-choice, drag and drop, and multiple select formats. |
| Scoring Procedures | Raw scores are determined by counting the total points achieved. The total points are converted into a scale score for reporting. For the score to be valid, it must fall in the acceptable range for the form and level as established by the publisher. Scoring is completed in one of three ways: (1) manually - carbonless answer sheet or Answer Key; (2) scanning - scan the answer sheet with DRC’s Scanning Portal; (3) online - scored automatically by DRC’s Insight Testing Platform. (Scale score determines EFL.)  |
| Accommodations | Large Print, Braille, audio editions are available. |
| Training Requirements | To become an assessor for TABE, individuals must successfully complete an online or in-person certification training provided by Data Recognition Corporation.  |

| **ASSESSMENT NAME**  | **Tests of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E)** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program  | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS  |
| Subject  | Listening |
| Active Date  | July 1, 2017  |
| Expiration Date  | February 2, 2023 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges | See Appendix B |
| Version Available  | Print and Online |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group  |
| Administration Time Guidelines  | 20 minutes for paperhttp://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE\_CLAS-E\_Online\_Test\_Adminsitration\_Times.pdf |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes |
| Forms Available  | Forms A and B are approved for use on paper. |
| Length before Pre-test  | Within first six hours of instruction.  |
| Length before Post-test  | 60-95 hours recommended; 50 minimum.  |
| Retesting Restrictions | None |
| Item Type/Content  | TABE CLAS-E Listening - With the use of a CD/audiocassette for paper or headphones for computer based, TABE CLAS–E presents items in a spoken format of varying lengths. Familiar adult contexts assess students in meaningful work, community, and education situations. Students’ tests cover quantitative literacy, listening comprehension, and interpersonal skills. |
| Scoring Procedures  | The TABE CLAS-E Listening objective items are (manually) hand-scored or electronically scored by transferring the following information to a Level 1 CompuScan® answer sheet and filling in the appropriate circles: the examinee’s answers from the test book; demographic data for paper. Computer-based Listening tests are scored automatically by the system. |
| Accommodations  | Large Print or text to speech for computer-based testing |
| Training Requirements  | To become an assessor for TABE CLAS-E, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by Data Recognition Corporation.  |

| **ASSESSMENT NAME**  | **Tests of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E)** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program  | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS |
| Subject  | Reading  |
| Active Date  | July 1, 2017 |
| Expiration Date  | February 2, 2023  |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges  | See Appendix B |
| Version Available  | Print and Online |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group  |
| Administration Time Guidelines  | 25 minutes for paperhttp://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE\_CLAS-E\_Online\_Test\_Adminsitration\_Times.pdf |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes |
| Forms Available  | Forms A and B are approved for use on paper. |
| Length before Pre-test  | Within first 6 hours of instruction |
| Length before Post-test  | 60-95 hours recommended; 50 hours minimum  |
| Retesting Restrictions | None |
| Item Type/Content  | TABE CLAS-E Reading - To assess students’ reading proficiency, the Reading test employs realistic document-based passages such as schedules, forms, flyers, store receipts, advertisements, product instructions, and newsletters. Lower-level students also answer discrete, picture-based items. Assessed Reading objectives include quantitative literacy, read words (e.g., applying knowledge of morphemes and syntax, word meaning, and appropriate associated information and reading comprehension). |
| Scoring Procedures  | The TABE CLAS-E Reading test objective items are (manually) hand-scored or electronically scored by transferring the following information to a Level 1 CompuScan® answer sheet and filling in the appropriate circles: the examinee’s answers from the test book; demographic data for paper testing. Computer-based tests are scored automatically by the system. |
| Accommodations  | Large Print or text to speech for computer-based testing. |
| Training Requirements  | To become an assessor for TABE CLAS-E, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by Data Recognition Corporation.  |

| **ASSESSMENT NAME**  | **Tests of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E)** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program  | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS  |
| Subject  | Writing |
| Active Date  | July 1, 2017  |
| Expiration Date  | February 2, 2023 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges  | See Appendix B |
| Version Available  | Print or online |
| Administration Type  | Individual or Group  |
| Administration Time Guidelines  | 47 minutes  |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes |
| Forms Available  | Forms A and B are approved for use on paper. |
| Length before Pre-test  | Within first six hours of instruction.  |
| Length before Post-test  | 60-95 hours recommended; 50 minimum.  |
| Retesting Restrictions | None |
| Item Type/Content | TABE CLAS-E Writing - The Writing test uses selected-response items to gauge students’ knowledge of English language grammar and mechanics, and constructed-response items to measure their application of this knowledge in expository writing. Selected-response items test quantitative literacy, usage and conventions, and sentence formation and coherence. |
| Scoring Procedures  | The constructed-response items are scored using holistic rubrics to assess students’ expository writing abilities. Lower-level students describe pictures and fill out realistic forms. Higher-level students write descriptions, brief work or community-related letters, and a short essay. |
| Accommodations  | Large print or text to speech for computer-based testing. |
| Training Requirements  | To become an assessor for TABE CLAS-E, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by Data Recognition Corporation.  |

| **ASSESSMENT NAME**  | **Tests of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E)** |
| --- | --- |
| Applicable Program  | Suitable for use at all ESL levels of the NRS  |
| Subject  | Speaking |
| Active Date  | July 1, 2017  |
| Expiration Date  | February 2, 2023 |
| Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges  | See Appendix B |
| Version Available | Print or online |
| Administration Type  | Individual  |
| Administration Time Guidelines  | 15 minutes  |
| Locator or Appraisal Required | Yes |
| Forms Available  | Forms A and B are approved for use on paper. |
| Length before Pre-test  | Within first six hours of instruction.  |
| Length before Post-test  | 60-95 hours recommended; 50 minimum.  |
| Retesting Restrictions | None |
| Item Type/Content  | TABE CLAS-E Speaking - The Speaking test is individually administered. The test uses picture-based stimuli to determine student proficiency in quantitative literacy, social interaction, providing information, and accomplishing goals. Realistic work and community contexts integrate critical speaking skills, such as phone competency, the expression of opinions and abilities, negotiating meanings, and providing descriptions and instruction. |
| Scoring Procedures  | In order to provide the most valid scores possible, the Speaking test introduces an innovative, multiple-criteria scoring rubric that simultaneously measures grammar, meaning, and the appropriateness of spoken responses. Students receive credit for strong performance in one or more areas, rather than simply receiving a one-dimensional score. |
| Accommodations  | Large print or text-to-speech for computer-based testing. |
| Training Requirements  | To become an assessor for TABE CLAS-E, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by Data Recognition Corporation.  |

## Resources for Information and Assistance

Virginia Department of Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Telephone: (804) 786-3347

Toll Free: (800) 292-3820

Fax: (804) 530-4517

[Link: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/index.shtml)

Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC)

Telephone: (804) 828-6521

Toll Free: (800) 237-0178

Fax: (804) 828-7539

[Link: http://www.valrc.org](http://www.valrc.org/)

**Assessment Publisher Contacts**

BEST Literacy and BEST Plus 2.0

Center for Applied Linguistics

4646 40th St. NW

Washington, DC 20016-1859

Tel: (866) 845-BEST (2378)

E-mail: aea@cal.org

[Link: www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org/)/aea

CASAS

5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220

San Diego, CA 92123-4339

Tel: (858) 292-2900

Tel: (800) 255-1036

E-mail: casas@casas.org

[Link: www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org/)

TABE

Data Recognition Corporation

13490 Bass Lake Road

Maple Grove, MN 55311

Tel: (800) 538-9547

E-mail: Customer\_Service\_Ind@ctb.com

[Link: www.tabetest.com](http://www.tabetest.com/)

Distance Education Policy

for Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Programs

# I. Introduction

This policy defines distance education for adult education programs in Virginia and provides guidelines by which programs can report adult learners’ distance education hours to the state Management Information System (MIS). The goal of this policy is to describe the types of activities and curricula approved for distance education and outline the requirements and procedures for reporting distance education activities to the state MIS.

| **Policy 13****Adult education programs must follow the steps and processes described in this document to report distance education attendance into the state approved MIS.** |
| --- |

Distance education is a way to increase services to adult learners in Virginia and a means to improve the state’s adult education outcomes. It is also a method of increasing access to educational resources for the state adult student population as well as building capacity to serve more students with a wider variety of delivery options.

Distance education’s incorporation of technology affords students who are not able or choose not to attend traditional classes another avenue to further their education and improve their skills. Students enrolled in distance education have the same opportunity as traditional students to receive quality instruction taught by trained, knowledgeable instructors.

# II. Definitions and Requirements

## Definition of Distance Education

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education defines distance education for adult education programs as follows:

Distance education is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period.\* Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, television broadcasts, computer software, web-based interaction, and other online technologies. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail, or other web-based technologies or software ([*Technical Assistance Guide for Performance Accountability under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*](https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS-TA-Aug2019-508.pdf), 2019, p. 48).

\* Completion of instructional activities in a computer lab for traditional classes does not qualify as distance education.

## Identification of Adult Education Learners

All adult education students will be identified by their attendance records as one of two types of learners:

* Traditional learners are students who receive the majority of their instruction through traditional, face-to-face instruction.
* Distance learners are students who receive a majority of their instruction through approved distance education services.

The state MIS will determine where the majority of attendance hours have been recorded for each student and determine their status at the end of the year when a student’s distance education and contact hours are compared. If a student has more than 50 percent of instructional hours reported as distance education, the student will be identified as a distance learner. The student’s contact and distance education hours will be included in the NRS reports.

While all students should be guided to improve their digital skills and offered various opportunities to learn with digital materials, fully remote distance education may not be the right solution for every learner. Adult education programs should consider balancing the adult’s language and literacy skills, the content tasks covered in the distance education program, the technology requirements of the curriculum, and the human and built-in supports available. Various print-based materials are approved for use as distance education curricula as well; these can be especially useful in correctional settings where Internet connections are limited or for students who do not have access to reliable Internet or personal computing devices.

Virginia is a member of the [IDEAL Consortium](https://edtech.worlded.org/professional-development/ideal-consortium/), a multi-state technical assistance effort to assist adult education programs design and support high-quality and innovative distance and technology-enhanced education. The IDEAL Consortium provides the following definitions of technology-enhanced educational models in the [IDEAL Handbook](https://edtechbooks.org/ideal_dl_handbook):

**Blended education**: A model…in which instructors consider both in-class and online instruction as part of a collective whole, making adjustments to their face-to-face teaching based on what they see as they monitor student work online and altering online assignments based on what they observe in class….

**Hybrid education**: Hybrid models employ both an online curriculum product and in-class teaching, but though the teacher is checking it, the assigned work that students complete online may not be directly aligned to what happens in the classroom.

**Supplemental use of technology**: Supplemental models make use of online curricula [in and] outside regular class time, are not required, and may not even be checked by the instructor. This is extra work that is somewhat aligned to the goals of a course, but it does not require any extra effort on the part of the instructor.

In the case of blended or hybrid instruction, the use of technology is required of the students for participation and the time spent using the curricula would be reported as attendance. Note that in the blended learning model, the content is tightly aligned across the in-person and online, or synchronous and asynchronous, instruction such that each component is critical to the experience. The time students spend using supplemental technology that is not required for class participation and time spent outside of class using the curricula would not be reported as attendance. This time investment is considered to be homework or self-study. Only hours associated with curricula or courses approved for distance education in Virginia may be considered as distance education attendance hours.

## Approved Distance Education Hours

There are two types of attendance hours that may be counted for reporting purposes: *contact* *hours* and *proxy hours.*

| **Policy 14****Every adult education student’s attendance hours must be identified as either contact hours or distance education (proxy) hours in the state MIS.** |
| --- |

### Contact Hours

Contact hours are defined as time spent by instructors interacting with the learner. Contact hours may be a combination of face-to-face contact and contact by telephone, video, teleconference, or other online communication where student and program staff are able to interact and through which learner identity is verifiable. Face-to-face interaction includes student intake and orientation, assessment, goal setting, counseling, and classroom-based skills training.

### Proxy Hours

Proxy hours are defined as the time students spend engaged in approved distance education activities, such as using distance education curricula or in activities that are part of an approved online course. The hours for each approved 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 or engaged in an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time.
2. *Teacher Verification*: This model assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on the teacher’s determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment.
3. *Learner Mastery*: This model assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the learner’s demonstrated mastery of the content of a lesson. This model requires previous engagement by the student on curriculum and materials related to the test. A high percentage of correct responses on the mastery test earns the credit hours attached to the material.

## Approved Distance Education Curricula

See Section III. E for a link to the currently approved distance education curricula and their respective, approved proxy-hour models.

| **Policy 15****Hours spent engaged with the VDOE-approved distance education curricula must be reported in the state MIS as distance education hours.** |
| --- |

The Office maintains a Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel to review and approve distance education curricula and materials. If programs wish to use curricula and/or materials not identified on the approved list for the purpose of distance education, they must submit the new curricula or materials to the Office’s Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel for review and approval before attendance hours may be reported for students using the newly proposed distance education curricula. See Section III. D for a link to the form that programs may use to request review of proposed curricula or materials.

# III. Assessment and Resources

All assessments must be administered according to publisher guidelines. Pre-tests must be administered within the first six hours of instruction. Programs must adhere to all other policies outlined in this document.

If a learner self-discloses a disability, it is the responsibility of the adult education program to offer accommodations. Programs may not deny or prevent access to services based on a learner’s disability. Programs should consider a distance education curriculum’s accessibility features before making decisions about its purchase and use.

Distance education curricula are reviewed and approved by the Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel. There is a rubric that is used to review and approve curricula. The criteria on the rubric evaluates how well the curriculum is reflective of innovative or promising practices, explicitly aligns with CCRS and/or the ELPS, integrates workforce preparation skills, and is usable for all learners (including those with the need for accessibility). The list of approved distance education curricula is maintained and disseminated by the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center.

A full list of approved curricula and a link to the form to use to request that a product be reviewed for addition to the approved list may be found via the [Distance Education portal](http://www.valrc.org/leadership/distance.html) on the VALRC website.

Integrating distance education opportunities into a program’s service delivery requires thorough planning and professional development. Teaching in a distance education format requires different skills and competencies from those required in an exclusively in-person setting. Program staff may request further technical assistance and training from either the Office or the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC). Contact information for each is below.

Virginia Department of Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Telephone: (804) 786-3347

Toll Free: (800) 292-3820

[Website: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/index.shtml)

Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC)

Telephone: (804) 828-6521

Toll Free: (800) 237-0178

[Website: http://www.valrc.org/](http://www.valrc.org/)

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Assessment Policy Index

**Policy 1**

Programs must adhere to the assessment policies identified in this document.

**Policy 2**

Staff responsible for administering NRS-approved assessments must ensure that all testing policies and procedures established by the test publisher are followed.

**Policy 3**

Evidence of violation of the state assessment policy may lead to corrective action, a return of grant funds, expungement of assessment data affected by the violation(s), or other appropriate forms of redress.

**Policy 4**

Students must be assessed based on the following standards:

* A pre-test must be administered within the first six hours of instruction to all (100 percent) eligible learners seeking services.
* Programs must administer a pre-test to any learner who does not have a valid assessment.
* If a test publisher requires the administration of a locator or appraisal prior to the administration of a pre-test, the program must do so; otherwise, the pre-test results will be invalid and may not be used for evaluating a student’s educational functioning level gain.
* A post-test must be administered to a minimum of 60 percent of all NRS participants according to applicable publisher post-test time frames.
* An NRS-approved test result is valid for up to two fiscal years.
* A student may not be allowed to accumulate instructional hours towards a post-test without a valid pre-test result.

**Policy 5**

Assessments used for NRS-reporting purposes must be approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

**Policy 6**

Staff members who administer approved assessments must successfully complete certification and recertification training on the approved assessment(s) the program uses, according to publisher guidelines.

**Policy 7**

Local programs must report into the state MIS staff trained on an approved NRS assessment within 30 days of training completion.

**Policy 8**

Learners who self-disclose a learning, physical, mental, or emotional disability must be offered an accommodation in accordance with test publisher guidelines.

**Policy 9**

Programs must score and report each NRS assessment (pre- and/or post-test) administered to learners within a reasonable time frame. Assessments must be scored within seven business days of the test administration and reported within 30 business days during the fiscal year. The assessment must be reported in the state MIS. Each reported assessment must identify the following:

* Test type
* Test date
* Test subject
* Test form
* Pre-test or post-test
* Scale score
* Test administrator/staff
* Test identification
* Accommodation use and type (if applicable)

**Policy 10**

Programs may not report pre-test and post-test results from two different assessments to demonstrate measurable skill gains (MSG) attainment.

**Policy 11**

Programs must provide assessment locations and environments that maximize the opportunity for learners to demonstrate accurate educational functioning levels.

**Policy 12**

Programs must have a written test security policy that includes the administration and security of paper-based and computer-delivered assessments.

**Policy 13**

Adult education programs must follow the steps and processes described in this document to report distance education attendance into the state approved MIS.

**Policy 14**

Every adult education student’s attendance hours must be identified as either contact hours or distance education (proxy) hours in the state MIS.

**Policy 15**

Hours spent engaged with the VDOE-approved distance education curricula must be reported in the state MIS as distance education hours.

# Appendix B: FY2021-2022 SSWS Test Subject EFL Worksheet

ABE and ASE Assessments

**Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) – GOALS Series: Reading**

| **Level/Form** | **ABE Level 1** | **ABE Level 2** | **ABE Level 3** | **ABE Level 4** | **ABE Level 5** | **ABE Level 6** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level A *Forms: 901 and 902* | 165-203 | 204-212 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level B *Forms: 903 and 904* | 196-203 | 204-216 | 217-225 | --- | --- | --- |
| Level C *Forms: 905 and 906* | --- | 210-216 | 217-227 | 228-238 | --- | --- |
| Level D *Forms: 907 and 908* | --- | --- | --- | 228-238 | 239-248 | 249-263 |

**Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) – GOALS Series: Math**

| **Level/Form** | **ABE Level 1** | **ABE Level 2** | **ABE Level 3** | **ABE Level 4** | **ABE Level 5** | **ABE Level 6** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level A/B *Forms: 913 and 914* | 178-193 | 194-203 | 204-214 | 215-224 | --- | --- |
| Level C/D *Forms: 917 and 918* | --- | --- | --- | 218-225 | 226-235 | 236-250 |

**Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Forms 11/12**

| **Test Level/Subject** | **ABE Level 1** | **ABE Level 2** | **ABE Level 3** | **ABE Level 4** | **ABE Level 5** | **ABE Level 6** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level L (Reading) | 300-441 | 442-500 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level L (Total Math) | 300-448 | 449-495 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level L (Writing) | 300-457 | 458-510 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level E (Reading) | 300-441 | 442-500 | 501-535 | --- | --- | --- |
| Level E (Total Math) | 300-448 | 449-495 | 496-536 | --- | --- | --- |
| Level E (Writing) | 300-457 | 458-510 | 511-546 | --- | --- | --- |
| Level M (Reading) | --- | 442-500 | 501-535 | 536-575 | --- | --- |
| Level M (Total Math) | --- | 449-495 | 496-536 | 537-595 | --- | --- |
| Level M (Writing) | --- | 458-510 | 511-546 | 547-583 | --- | --- |
| Level D (Reading) | --- | --- | 501-535 | 536-575 | 576-616 | --- |
| Level D (Total Math) | --- | --- | 496-536 | 537-595 | 596-656 | --- |
| Level D (Writing) | --- | --- | 511-546 | 547-583 | 584-630 | --- |
| Level A (Reading) | --- | --- | --- | 536-575 | 576-616 | 617-800 |
| Level A (Total Math) | --- | --- | --- | 537-595 | 596-656 | 657-800 |
| Level A (Writing) | --- | --- | --- | 547-583 | 584-630 | 631-800 |

ESL Assessments

**Best Literacy\***

| **Subject** | **ESL Level 1** | **ESL Level 2** | **ESL Level 3** | **ESL Level 4** | **ESL Level 5** | **ESL Level 6** | **ESL Completer** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading and Writing  | 0-20 | 21-52 | 53-63 | 64-67 | 68-75 | 76-78 | --- |

*\* Because Best Literacy does not assess skills beyond ESL Level 6, it is recommended that students pre-testing at ESL Level 6 using Best Literacy be retested with a different assessment.*

**Best Plus 2.0**

| **Subject** | **ESL Level 1** | **ESL Level 2** | **ESL Level 3** | **ESL Level 4** | **ESL Level 5** | **ESL Level 6** | **ESL Completer** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Speaking and Listening | 88-361 | 362-427 | 428-452 | 453-484 | 485-524 | 525-564 | 565-999 |

**Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) - ESL**

| **Subject/Test Series** | **ESL Level 1** | **ESL Level 2** | **ESL Level 3** | **ESL Level 4** | **ESL Level 5** | **ESL Level 6** | **ESL Completer** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading (Life and Work, Reading Assessment) *Forms: 27-28* *81X-82X* *81-86* *185-188* | 0-180 | 181-190 | 191-200 | 201-210 | 211-220 | 221-235 | 236-999 |
| Listening (Life and Work) *Forms: 981L-986L* | 162-180 | 181-189 | 190-199 | 200-209 | 210-218 | 219-227 | 228-999 |

**TABE Complete Language Assessment System-English (CLAS-E) Forms A/B**

| **Test Level/Subject** | **ESL Level 1** | **ESL Level 2** | **ESL Level 3** | **ESL Level 4** | **ESL Level 5** | **ESL Level 6** | **ESL Completer** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 (Reading) | 250-392 | 393-436 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 (Writing) | 200-396 | 397-445 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 (Reading and Writing combined) | 225-394 | 395-441 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 (Listening) | 230-389 | 390-437 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 (Speaking) | 231-425 | 426-460 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 1 (Listening and Speaking combined) | 230-407 | 408-449 | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 2 (Reading) | --- | 393-436 | 437-476 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 2 (Writing) | --- | 397-445 | 446-488 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 2 (Reading and Writing combined) | --- | 395-441 | 442-482 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 2 (Listening) | --- | 390-437 | 438-468 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 2 (Speaking) | --- | 426-460 | 461-501 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 2 (Listening and Speaking combined) | --- | 408-449 | 450-485 | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Level 3 (Reading) | --- | --- | 437-476 | 477-508 | 509-557 | --- | --- |
| Level 3 (Writing) | --- | --- | 446-488 | 489-520 | 521-555 | --- | --- |
| Level 3 (Reading and Writing combined) | --- | --- | 442-482 | 483-514 | 515-556 | --- | --- |
| Level 3 (Listening) | --- | --- | 438-468 | 469-514 | 515-549 | --- | --- |
| Level 3 (Speaking) | --- | --- | 461-501 | 502-536 | 537-567 | --- | --- |
| Level 3 (Listening and Speaking combined) | --- | --- | 450-485 | 486-525 | 526-558 | --- | --- |
| Level 4 (Reading) | --- | --- | --- | --- | 509-557 | 558-588 | 589-800 |
| Level 4 (Writing) | --- | **---** | --- | --- | 521-555 | 556-612 | 613-800 |
| Level 4 (Reading and Writing combined) | --- | --- | --- | --- | 515-556 | 557-600 | 601-800 |
| Level 4 (Listening) | --- | --- | --- | --- | 515-549 | 550-607 | 608-800 |
| Level 4 (Speaking) | --- | --- | --- | --- | 537-567 | 568-594 | 595-800 |
| Level 4 (Listening and Speaking combined) | --- | --- | --- | --- | 526-558 | 559-600 | 601-800 |



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