



ASSESSMENT POLICY FOR VIRGINIA
ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY
PROGRAMS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS
ASSESSMENT POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT	4
A. Need for a State Assessment Policy.....	5
Reliability and Validity.....	5
Educational Gain.....	6
Non-NRS Approved Assessments.....	6
B. Purposes and Uses of Assessment.....	6
Measure Learner Educational Knowledge and Progress.....	6
Guide and Determine the Effectiveness of Instruction.....	7
Make Decisions Related to Learner, Staff, and Program Accountability.....	7
Determine National External Diploma Program (NEDP) Placement.....	7
C. Summary.....	7
II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS	8
A. Learners to be Assessed.....	9
Pre-testing.....	10
Post-testing.....	10
Program Exit.....	10
B. Assessments Permitted.....	10
C. Training for Administration of Assessments.....	11
Assessment Staffing.....	11
Qualified Assessors.....	12
Training Data.....	12
Collection.....	12
Reporting.....	12
D. Accommodating for Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs.....	13
Identifying Documentation.....	13
Types of Accommodations.....	14
Administering Assessments with Accommodations.....	14
III. GUIDELINES FOR EACH ASSESSMENT	16
A. General Overview.....	17
B. Identifying Each Assessment.....	19
BEST Literacy.....	19
BEST Plus 2.0.....	20
CASAS Life and Work – Listening.....	21
CASAS Life and Work – Reading (ESL).....	22
CASAS Life and Work – Reading (ABE/ASE).....	23
CASAS Life Skills – Mathematics.....	24
GAIN – English.....	25
GAIN – Mathematics.....	28
TABE – Reading.....	29
TABE – Total Mathematics.....	28
TABE – Language.....	29

TABE – CLAS-E Listening	30
TABE – CLAS-E Reading.....	31
C. Assessment Reporting.....	32
EFL Identification.....	32
Pre-Test Versus Post-test Identification.....	32
Lowest EFL and Instructional Program of Study	33
Test Type or Subject Change.....	35
Review of Assessment Information in the Data System.....	33
D. Quality Control Procedures.....	33
Testing Environment.....	33
Test Security	34
E. Purchasing Procedures for Each Assessment.....	35
F. Resources for Information and Assistance.....	35
IV. APPENDIX	37
Assessment Policies Summary	38
Acronym Guide.....	40

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION	42
A. Need for a Distance Education Assessment Policy.....	42
II. DEFINITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	43
A. Definition of Distance Education.....	43
B. Definition of Adult Education Learners.....	43
C. Approved Distance Education Hours.....	44
D. Approved Distance Education Curricula.....	45
III. ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING	46
A. Accommodating Learners with Disabilities and Other Special Needs.....	46
B. Assessment of Distance Education Learners.....	46
C. Reporting Distance Education Learners.....	46
D. Resources for Technical Assistance and Professional Development.....	47
IV. APPENDIX	48
Distance Education Policies Summary.....	49
Approved Distance Education Curricula.....	49
Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel.....	50

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

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.

Adults seeking education services must be provided fair and equitable access to services. The consistent and accurate administration and interpretation of assessments is necessary to ensure placement of learners in appropriate instructional levels that encourage retention, engagement, and gain.

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

Policy 1.1

Programs must adhere to the assessment policies identified in this document to ensure fair and equitable access to services, practice informed decision making, and identify program improvement needs.

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 (USED) for reliability and validity. Reliability and validity are defined below.

Reliability: An assessment is reliable if it can consistently measure the skills and abilities across all intended audiences (e.g., ages, ethnicities, gender, location, etc.) for which it was designed. For example, if an assessment produces consistent results in a rural area but not in an urban area, the assessment may not be reliable for use in all areas.

Validity: An assessment is valid if, when administered correctly, it accurately measures the skills and abilities for which it was developed. For example, to measure a person's understanding of calculating area, the assessment must provide questions that specifically require the test taker to calculate area. Furthermore, programs must administer, when appropriate, locator or appraisal tests and adhere to score validity ranges to ensure that the

correct level of the assessment is administered and to maintain the validity of the assessment.

EDUCATIONAL GAIN

The NRS mandates the assessment of learners in adult education programs to determine educational functioning level (EFL) gains. NRS identifies twelve EFLs in its accountability measures. Four EFLs are in ABE, two in adult secondary education (ASE), and six in English as a second language (ESL). Each functioning level addresses a general set of standards and competencies that adults must demonstrate to move to the next EFL. Three competency areas are discussed within each EFL. Basic reading and writing skills and functional and workplace skills are included in each EFL. Numeracy is the third competency area in ABE, while speaking and listening, or oral skills, is the third ESL area.

ASE High Completion: Completion of the ASE High functioning level is demonstrated by passing a high school equivalency examination approved by the Board of Education, earning an adult high school diploma, or completion of the National External Diploma Program (NEDP).

ESL Advance Completion: Completion of the ESL Advanced functioning level is demonstrated when a learner posttests beyond the highest scale score reportable for ESL Advanced.

NON-NRS APPROVED ASSESSMENTS

Programs may use non-NRS approved assessments in support of the teaching and learning process. However, non-NRS approved assessments may not be used to demonstrate educational gain.

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 participation in a program for a defined period of instruction. 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 improvement from one point in time to another. The result is an improved teaching and learning experience.

MEASURE LEARNER KNOWLEDGE AND PROGRESS

Assessments can improve student retention by documenting improvement. Assessments provide the learner with an opportunity to determine the amount of progress that has been made. Assessments also identify the knowledge or skills that the learner possesses and helps

the teacher develop an educational plan based on that information. However, administrators and teachers must ensure that the assessments administered measure the knowledge or skills that are being taught.

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 realignment of coursework may be required to address the gaps in instruction.

MAKE DECISIONS RELATED TO LEARNER, STAFF, AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

Assessments provide an opportunity to evaluate learners' progress and programmatic and instructional effectiveness. Decisions about the use of specific curriculum, length of instruction, or program location may be made once assessments are completed. Assessment results may also influence funding decisions.

DETERMINE NATIONAL EXTERNAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM (NEDP) CLIENT PLACEMENT

Satisfactory scores on approved assessment instruments, along with satisfactory completion of the other diagnostic requirements, will enable clients to move from the Diagnostic to the Generalized Assessment phase of NEDP.

C. 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 results regularly. Complete descriptions of each of the approved assessments are provided in *Section III, Guidelines for Each Assessment* (p. 16).

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

A. LEARNERS TO BE ASSESSED

All learners entering a program must take a pre-test within the first six hours of instruction. A valid pre-test or post-test is a test that has been administered in accordance with OAEL policy within the past two fiscal years. For example, if a student takes a pretest in October 2015, this test would remain valid until June 30, 2017. However, a pre-test or post-test becomes invalid when there has been an interruption in instruction of 90 days or more.

An NRS reportable learner is a student with 12 or more contact or approved proxy contact hours. Providers must measure the gain of all students receiving 12 or more hours of instruction. Students with 12 or more hours of instruction but less than the minimum number of hours required for post-testing will be reported as showing no gain.

All learners who will be reported in the state MIS must be assessed within the first six hours of instruction. Any assessment used must be on the list of state-approved assessments. The selection of assessment should be based on the type of instruction provided to learners. For example, if an ESL learner has instruction primarily in reading; the learner should be assessed on an instrument that measures reading gain for ESL learners.

Programs are not obligated to pre-test individuals in all areas (e.g., reading, mathematics, or writing). However, programs should consider administering assessments in all 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. Locators and appraisals should be used as a guide for determining the correct level of assessment to be administered to the learner.

Policy 2.1

Programs must assess all learners reported into the state MIS. Assessments must meet the following standards.

- **A pre-test must be administered within the first six hours of instruction to 100 percent of all eligible learners seeking services.**
 - **A post-test must be administered to a minimum of 70 percent of all NRS-reportable learners according to the post-test time frame(s) specified in this policy manual.**
 - **All learners continuing to a new fiscal year must have completed an approved assessment on or after July 1 of the previous fiscal year.**
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PRE-TESTING

The NRS requires that the state establish a uniform time for programs to pre-test adult learners as the basis for determining accurate placement in an EFL corresponding with NRS definitions. Pre-testing information serves two fundamental purposes. First, it is the baseline upon which programs will measure learners' EFL advancements. Second, pre-test information is used to develop effective instructional plans for each learner.

POST-TESTING

Post-testing is necessary to determine whether or not individual learners make educational progress. This information is useful to the learner, the teacher, and the program manager. 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.

Post-testing Time Frame: OAEL 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* (p. 16) for post-testing time frame requirements for specific publishers' assessments.

PROGRAM EXIT

Policy 2.2

Programs must administer a new pre-test for any learner who has spent 90 or more consecutive days without reported program attendance.

Gaps in program attendance are likely to affect the learner's EFL. A learner must receive program services and have continuous attendance identified in the state MIS for the last assessment of record to be used for measuring EFL gain. In situations where a learner has continuous attendance across fiscal years, his or her previous assessment may be used for measuring educational gain against a current post-test. However, if a learner has a gap of 90 or more consecutive days without attendance (within a fiscal year or across fiscal years), the learner must be administered a new pre-test to establish the current EFL.

B. ASSESSMENTS PERMITTED

Policy 2.3

- **An assessment must be approved by both USED and OAEL.**
 - **Programs must administer to adult learners only those assessments that are NRS and state approved.**
 - **All approved assessments must be administered in English.**
-

The following assessment instruments, 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.

Assessment Instrument	Subject	Program Type
BEST Literacy	Reading and Writing	ESL
BEST Plus 2.0	Oral (e.g., Speaking and Listening)	ESL
CASAS Life and Work Series	Reading; Listening	ESL
CASAS Life and Work Series; Life Skills	Reading; Mathematics	ABE/ASE
GAIN	English; Mathematics	ABE/ASE
TABE	Reading; Total Mathematics; Language	ABE/ASE
TABE CLAS-E	Reading; Listening	ESL

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
- Has evidence linking it to NRS EFL

C. TRAINING FOR ADMINISTRATION OF ASSESSMENTS

ASSESSMENT STAFFING

Policy 2.4

All approved local programs must at all times have at least one active staff member trained and qualified to administer any approved assessment that the program uses.

As learners request services in approved programs, staff must be available to administer assessments. Because staff and volunteers in the majority of approved programs are part-time employees, having at least one staff member qualified to administer assessments remains critical. The most logical staff member to be qualified is the regional or local program manager and/or the regional program specialist. It is recommended that the local program manager or director and one other designated staff member (at minimum) be trained to administer the approved NRS assessment(s) that the program uses.

Policy 2.5

All staff members who administer approved assessments in a program must:

- **successfully complete certification training on the approved assessment(s) the program uses**
- **successfully administer and score three assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment**
- **Every two years, successfully complete recertification training to administer assessment(s).**

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) coordinates approved training. Assessment training opportunities are available throughout each fiscal year. Training provided by VALRC is most often provided without charge to the participants. Online training opportunities are available for selected assessments.

QUALIFIED ASSESSORS

A staff member is considered a qualified assessor upon successful completion of assessment training and after the administration of three supervised assessment. All staff members who continue to administer assessments must re-certify on assessment administration at least once every two years. Local programs must submit identification of qualified assessors via the state MIS. .

TRAINING DATA

Training data will be collected, reported, and maintained by the regional or local programs, VALRC, and OAEL. Each of these organizations plays a critical role in supporting proper professional development related to policy understanding and application.

COLLECTION

VALRC will record data related to all staff members who have completed assessment training on approved NRS assessments. This data must include the participant's name, mailing address, e-mail address, program affiliation, and date of training.

REPORTING

Policy 2.6

Approved programs must report and maintain the following information related to assessment training:

- **Local programs must report into the state MIS all staff trained on an approved NRS assessment within 30 days of training completion.**
 - **Local programs must maintain a training log that identifies the three students (minimum of one student for each of three observed administrations) who were initially administered an assessment by the newly trained assessor. The log must identify the test type, date administered, and the student's number as assigned in the state MIS.**
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D. ACCOMMODATING FOR LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES OR OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS

Policy 2.7

Learners with professionally certified documentation, issued within five years prior to program registration, who self-disclose a given physical, mental, or emotional disability must be provided an appropriate accommodation for assessment of EFL.

Adults with 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 with professionally certified documentation identifying disabilities should receive accommodations based on their disability. Providing accommodations to adults with documented disabilities will result in a more accurate assessment of their EFLs.

If a learner self-discloses a disability and provides valid, corroborating documentation, it is the responsibility of the local program to provide reasonable accommodations. Local programs may not deny or prevent access to services based on a learner's disability. The local program may be required to absorb the costs related to the accommodation(s). By not providing an accommodation, programs could find themselves in violation of federal law for failure to provide appropriate accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities.

IDENTIFYING DOCUMENTATION

Learners who self-disclose a physical, mental, or emotional disability must provide certified documentation issued within five years prior to program registration. Documentation must include a letter on official letterhead, signed by a certifying professional who specializes in the diagnosis of the disability. Documentation should identify the learner's history with the disability or limitation, report the learner's current ability level, discuss the reason(s) for accommodation, and indicate the specific recommendation(s). The most common forms of documentation include:

- professional diagnostician's identification
- psychological assessment report
- physical ability report

Support documents may include:

- individualized educational plan (IEP)
- 504 Plan

Certifying professionals include psychologists, psychiatrists, clinicians, general practitioners, or other medical physicians.

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.

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 aides that do not affect the administration of the test. Test-taking aides include:

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

ADMINISTERING ASSESSMENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS

The local program should consult the test publisher guidelines before testing to ensure that approved accommodations for the learner are permitted. 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 local program staff to provide the learner with access to the appropriate accommodations once the official diagnosis has been made by a certified professional and the documentation has been provided to the program. Local program staff must provide adequate resources for the variety of accommodations permitted. Two common examples include separate testing rooms and additional staff during 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. Local program staff should monitor and review the results of the use of accommodations.

Reporting

As with standard assessments, local 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 data system provide an opportunity to indicate when an accommodation is granted and the type(s) of accommodation provided.

III. GUIDELINES FOR EACH ASSESSMENT

A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

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. Local programs should pay special attention to the training requirements and when accommodations may be provided. The following are brief explanations of each category presented.

Assessment Name The full, official name of the assessment is identified for reference.

Applicable Program The applicable program for which the assessment was designed is indicated.

Subject Assessment instruments may have separate subject areas developed for testing. The specific subject is identified here.

Active Date and Expiration Date Each assessment has a date at which it was approved for use. Additionally, each assessment has a target date for expiration. Expiration dates are subject to change depending on the development of new assessments, updates to existing assessments, or state review and decision.

Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges Programs are required to report scores for assessments according to levels identified by the NRS Implementation Guidelines.

Version Available Assessments may be available in computer-based or print-based versions.

Administration Type Some assessments may only be administered to learners individually, while other assessments may be administered individually or in a group setting.

Administration Time Each assessment has an estimated completion time. Many assessments also have specific time limits for learner completion of individual subtests within a battery (when applicable).

Locator/Appraisal Required A locator or an appraisal is often required to determine the appropriate level of the assessment to administer. When applicable, a locator or appraisal must be administered before the learner completes the approved assessment.

Forms Available Most assessments have multiple forms at each level. Different forms provide an opportunity to post-test learners on similar but different questions within the same skill sets. When applicable, a notation regarding the necessity to repeat forms rather than alternate forms is required.

Length before Pre-test All learners must be assessed within a designated time frame.

Length before Post-test Each assessment, through norming processes and reliability and validity studies, has established guidelines for when a learner may be post-tested. Additionally, each assessment has established guidelines for when a form may be repeated for post-testing. All post-testing time frames indicate the minimum number of instructional hours required between the administration of the pre- and post-tests.

Post-test Form Repetition Describes the requirements, when applicable, for post-testing using alternate forms of the assessment.

Item Type/Content A brief overview of the main concepts and skills of each assessment are identified. This is not comprehensive.

Scoring Procedures Each assessment has defined scoring procedures. Some assessments provide only a manual scoring process with conversions of raw scores to scale scores. Other assessments are scored electronically.

Accommodations Certain assessments identify accommodations that may be made for learners with special needs.

Training Requirements All assessors must complete the identified training before administering the assessment(s).

B. IDENTIFYING EACH ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT NAME	BASIC ENGLISH SKILLS TEST (BEST) LITERACY
Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Reading and Writing
Active Date	July 1, 2006
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Beginning Literacy 0-20 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Low Beginning 21-52 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL High Beginning 53-63 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate Low 64-67 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate High 68-75 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Advanced 76-78
Version Available	Print
Administration Type	Individual or Group
Administration Time	1 hour (approximately)
Locator/Appraisal Required	No
Forms Available	B, C, and D
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.
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. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)
Accommodations	See administrator's guide.
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for BEST Literacy, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by the VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.

ASSESSMENT NAME	BASIC ENGLISH SKILLS TEST (BEST) PLUS 2.0	
Applicable Program	ESL	
Subject	Speaking and Listening	
Active Date	July 1, 2016	
Expiration Date	February 02, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Beginning Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Low Beginning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL High Beginning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Advanced	88-361 362-427 428-452 453-484 485-524 525-564
Version Available	Computer-adaptive; Semi-adaptive print based	
Administration Type	Individual	
Administration Time	3-20 minutes (approximately – depending on the learner’s ability)	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes (print only, time varies) – A locator assesses the level of questions for the learner (levels 1, 2, or 3).	
Forms Available	Computer based: Adaptive questions respond to the learner’s ability. Print: D, E, and F	
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 (<i>print version only</i>).	
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 based: Learner responses are identified, rated on a scoring rubric by the reviewer, and then entered into the computer. <u>Print</u> : All rated responses by the reviewer must be entered into the scoring software for conversion to a scale score. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)	
Accommodations	See administrator’s guide.	
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for BEST Plus 2.0, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by the VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.	

ASSESSMENT NAME	COMPREHENSIVE ADULT STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CASAS) LIFE AND WORK	
Applicable Program	ESL	
Subject	Listening	
Active Date	July 1, 2008	
Expiration Date	February 02, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Beginning Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Low Beginning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL High Beginning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Advanced	0-180 181-190 191-200 201-210 211-220 221-235
Version Available	Print; Computer-based	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time	30 – 40 minutes (approximately)	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes – Appraisal Form 80; eTests CAT Appraisal (30 minutes)	
Forms Available	Forms 981L, 982L, 983L, 984L, 985L, 986L	
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.	
Item Type/Content	CASAS Life and Work Series – Listening is an assessment of comprehension for English language learners in everyday life skills. The assessment is administered by test booklet (level A only) and compact disc (CD). It includes items such as identifying similar statements, answering questions, finishing a conversation, and making meaning from a dialogue.	
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. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)	
Accommodations	Large or enhanced print, Braille, and audio editions are available or being developed. (<i>See administrator's guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.</i>)	
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for CASAS Life and Work Series – Listening, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.	

ASSESSMENT NAME		COMPREHENSIVE ADULT STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CASAS) LIFE AND WORK SERIES	
Applicable Program	ESL		
Subject	Reading		
Active Date	July 1, 2008		
Expiration Date	February 02, 2017		
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Beginning Literacy	0-180	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Low Beginning	181-190	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL High Beginning	191-200	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate Low	201-210	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Intermediate High	211-220	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESL Advanced	221-235	
Version Available	Print; Computer-based		
Administration Type	Individual or Group		
Administration Time	1 hour (approximately)		
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes – Appraisal Form 80; eTests CAT Appraisal (25 minutes)		
Forms Available	Life and Work Series Forms 951, 952; Levels A-D (AX and BX are bridges to the next level).		
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.		
Item Type/Content	CASAS Life and Work Series – Reading is an assessment of reading comprehension for adult basic education learners in everyday life skills. The assessment requires learners to scan and interpret functional items such as charts, forms, signs, and other types of reading samples.		
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. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)		
Accommodations	Large or enhanced print, Braille, audio editions are available or being developed. (<i>See administrator's guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.</i>)		
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for CASAS Life and Work Series-Reading, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.		

ASSESSMENT NAME	COMPREHENSIVE ADULT STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CASAS) LIFE AND WORK SERIES	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE	
Subject	Reading	
Active Date	July 1, 2008	
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	0-200 201-210 211-220 221-235 236-245 246-269
Version Available	Print	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time	1 hour (approximately)	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes – Appraisal Form 80; eTests CAT Appraisal (25 minutes)	
Forms Available	Life and Work Series Forms 27R, 28R, 81-86R, 185-188R; Levels A-D (AX and BX are bridges to the next level)	
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.	
Item Type/Content	CASAS Life and Work Series- Reading is an assessment of reading comprehension for adult basic education learners in everyday life skills. The assessment requires learners to scan and interpret functional items such as charts, forms, signs, and other types of reading samples.	
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. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)	
Accommodations	Large or enhanced print, Braille, and audio editions are available or being developed. (<i>See administrator's guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.</i>)	
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for CASAS Life and Work Series-Reading, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.	

ASSESSMENT NAME	COMPREHENSIVE ADULT STUDENT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CASAS) LIFE SKILLS	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE	
Subject	Mathematics	
Active Date	July 1, 2003	
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	0-200 201-210 211-220 221-235 236-245 246-268
Version Available	Print; Computer-based	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time	1 hour (approximately)	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes – Appraisal Form 30; eTests CAT Appraisal (25-30minutes)	
Forms Available	Life Skills Series Forms 31-38; 505 and 506	
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.	
Item Type/Content	CASAS Life Skills- Math is an assessment of math skills for adult basic education learners in everyday life skills. The assessment requires learners to perform basic computation; apply formulas; use basic algebra; locate information on a chart, table, or graph; and solve word problems.	
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. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)	
Accommodations	Large or enhanced print, Braille, and audio editions are available or being developed. (<i>See administrator's guide or contact CASAS for a complete description.</i>)	
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for CASAS Life Skills-Mathematics, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by CASAS. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.	

ASSESSMENT NAME	GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS (GAIN)	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE	
Subject	English	
Active Date	July 1, 2011	
Expiration Date	February 02, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy	200-406
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education	407-525
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low	526-661
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High	662-746
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low	747-870
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	871-1,000	
Version Available	Computer-based; Print	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time	45 minutes	
Locator/Appraisal Required	No	
Forms Available	Forms A and B	
Length before Pre-test	Within first six hours of instruction	
Length before Post-test	60 hours minimum (same level, different form)	
Post-test Form Repetition	Generally, forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. If retesting is necessary, 60 days must transpire before using the same form.	
Item Type/Content	General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN) – The Test of English consists of two subscales and eight categories. The Grammar/Usage/Style subscale includes items to evaluate skills dealing with parts of speech, proofreading for grammatical errors, punctuation and capitalization, and sentence structure. Items in the reading subscale deal with information retrieval, letter and word recognition, reading comprehension, and words in context. Questions are in a multiple-choice format.	
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is converted into a scale score for reporting. Scoring is completed online for online administrations. Print administrations can be scored online or through a “fax back” system.	
Accommodations	See administrator’s guide.	
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for GAIN, individuals must successfully complete a certification training provided by Wonderlic. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment. Certification is valid for two years.	

ASSESSMENT NAME	GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS (GAIN)	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE	
Subject	Mathematics	
Active Date	July 1, 2011	
Expiration Date	February 02, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	200-314 315-522 523-669 670-775 776-854 855-1,000
Version Available	Computer-based; Print	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time	45 minutes	
Locator/Appraisal Required	No	
Forms Available	Forms A and B	
Length before Pre-test	Within first six hours of instruction	
Length before Post-test	60 hours minimum (same level, different form)	
Post-test Form Repetition	Generally, forms may not be repeated and must be alternated when administering a post-test. If retesting is necessary, 60 days must transpire before using the same form.	
Item Type/Content	General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN) – The Test of Math Skills consists of 75 questions in three subscales and eight categories. The three subscales are: Arithmetic, Rational Numbers, Operations; Charts and Graphs; Algebra, Geometry, & Trigonometry. Questions are in a multiple-choice format.	
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is converted into a scale score for reporting. Scoring is completed online for online administrations. Print administrations can be scored online or through a “fax back” system.	
Accommodations	See administrator’s guide.	
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for GAIN, individuals must successfully complete a certification training provided by Wonderlic. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment. Certification is valid for two years.	

ASSESSMENT NAME	TEST OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE) FORMS 9 AND 10	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE	
Subject	Reading	
Active Date	July 1, 2005	
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy	160-367
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education	368-460
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low	461-517
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High	518-566
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low	567-595
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	596-812	
Version Available	Computer-based; Print	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time Guidelines	Complete Battery: 50 minutes Survey: 25 minutes	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes (12 minutes)	
Forms Available	Forms 9 and 10: Complete Battery or Survey (Levels L, E, M, D, A – Complete Battery or Survey)	
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 - 120 hours recommended	
Item Type/Content	Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) – Reading focuses on reading items from everyday life, work, and other fictional and non-fictional content. Visual items are included in the reading items. With different levels, the information increases in complexity. Questions are in a multiple-choice format.	
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is 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 scoring stencil; (2) scanning - scan the answer sheet with scoring software; (3) online - scored automatically by the online software. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)	
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 the VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.	

ASSESSMENT NAME	TEST OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE) FORMS 9 AND 10	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE	
Subject	Total Mathematics	
Active Date	July 1, 2005	
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017	
Applicable NRS Levels and Scale Score Ranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy	160-313
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education	314-441
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low	442-505
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High	506-565
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low	566-594
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	595-795	
Version Available	Computer-based; Print	
Administration Type	Individual or Group	
Administration Time Guidelines	Complete Battery: 24 minutes (Computation); 50 minutes (Applied) Survey: 15 minutes (Computation); 24 minutes (Applied)	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes (12 minutes)	
Forms Available	Forms 9 and 10: Complete Battery or Survey (Levels L, E, M, D, A – Complete Battery or Survey)	
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 - 120 hours recommended	
Item Type/Content	Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) – 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 a multiple-choice format.	
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is 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 scoring stencil; (2) scanning - scan the answer sheet with scoring software; (3) online - scored automatically by the online software. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)	
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 the VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.	

ASSESSMENT NAME		TEST OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE)	
Applicable Program	ABE; ASE		
Subject	Language		
Active Date	July 1, 2005		
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017		
Applicable NRS Levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Literacy	160-389	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Beginning Basic Education	390-490	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate Low	491-523	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ABE Intermediate High	524-559	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE Low	560-585	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASE High	586-826	
Version Available	Computer-based; Print		
Administration Type	Individual or Group		
Administration Time Guidelines	Complete Battery: 55 minutes Survey: 25 minutes		
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes (12 minutes)		
Forms Available	Forms 9 and 10: Complete Battery or Survey (Levels L, E, M, D, A – Complete Battery or Survey)		
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 - 120 hours recommended		
Item Type/Content	Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) – 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 a multiple-choice format.		
Scoring Procedures	Raw scores are determined by counting the number correct. The number correct is 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 scoring stencil; (2) scanning - scan the answer sheet with scoring software; (3) online - scored automatically by the online software. (<i>Scale score determines EFL.</i>)		
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 the VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.		

ASSESSMENT NAME	TEST OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE) CLAS-E Listening
Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Listening
Active Date	
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017
Version Available	Print
Administration Type	Individual or Group
Administration Time	20 minutes
Guidelines	
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes
Forms Available	A and B
Length before Pre-test	Within first six hours of instruction.
Length before Post-test	60-95 hours recommended; 50 minimum.
Item Type/Content	TABE CLAS-E Listening - With the use of a CD or audiocassette, 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.
Accommodations	Large Print
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for TABE CLAS-E, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by the VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.

ASSESSMENT NAME	TEST OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (TABE) CLAS-E Reading
Applicable Program	ESL
Subject	Reading
Active Date	
Expiration Date	February 2, 2017
Version Available	Print
Administration Type	Individual or Group
Administration Time Guidelines	25 minutes
Locator/Appraisal Required	Yes
Forms Available	A and B
Length before Pre-test	Within first 6 hours of instruction
Length before Post-test	60-95 hours recommended; 50 hours minimum
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.
Accommodations	Large Print
Training Requirements	To become an assessor for TABE CLAS-E, individuals must successfully complete the certification training provided by VALRC. After successfully completing the training, participants must successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.

C. ASSESSMENT REPORTING

Policy 3.1

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 and post-test**
 - **Scale score**
 - **Test administrator/staff**
 - **Test identification**
 - **Accommodation use and type (if applicable)**
-

It is the responsibility of local programs to ensure timely assessment of learners both at program start and program completion. In addition, proper reporting of learner assessments in the state MIS allows local programs to verify the correct administration of assessments and to take corrective action, if needed, as soon as possible.

EFL IDENTIFICATION

When programs report learner assessments in the state MIS, only scale scores may be reported for determining EFL. Raw scores, grade equivalents, and student performance levels (SPLs) may not be reported. When the scale score is entered into the data system, the learner's EFL will be identified. This EFL serves as the basis from which educational gains will be measured. Local programs should discuss educational levels and assessment results with learners using the scale scores.

PRE-TEST VERSUS POST-TEST IDENTIFICATION

The assessment administered should measure and be reflective of the skills developed in an instructional program. The first assessment administered to the learner is identified in the state MIS as a pre-test for learners who attend the program for the first time. If the learner has continuous attendance, the next assessment administered is identified in the data system as a post-test. Should the learner continue in the program with the same program of study, each subsequent assessment is coded as a post-test. When a learner begins a new program of study (e.g., reading to math), a different assessment should be administered. If a new assessment is administered, the assessment should be coded as a pre-test.

LOWEST EFL AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OF STUDY

If a learner is assessed in more than one area and scale scores reflect different EFLs, the learner shall be reported in the EFL represented by the lower or lowest test score and instruction shall be provided to learner in that area, at a minimum.

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 transitions to a reading focus in the second part of the year. To demonstrate educational gains, the learner should complete an oral assessment to begin the year and a reading assessment in the second part of the year. Staff must understand, however, that the results from different assessments may not be compared to one another to measure educational gain. For example, a CASAS-Reading score for an ESL learner may not be compared to a BEST Plus 2.0 score for that same learner.

REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION IN THE DATA SYSTEM

The state MIS has error checks programmed into the system related to assessment reporting. Out-of-range scale scores, incorrect forms, and inappropriate post-test time frames are recognized by the system so that the local program will know when an assessment has been administered improperly. Additionally, the data system provides exports of data and reports with detailed information related to learner, staff, and class performance related to assessments. Local programs should review these reports after each entry of learner assessment information to identify areas for improvement in assessment administration and instructor performance.

D. QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES

TESTING ENVIRONMENT

Policy 3.2

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

To ensure the reliability and validity of testing results, it is important that the testing environment be appropriate. Learners' performances may be adversely affected if the room in which they test is not comfortable or is poorly maintained; for example, it is too cold, too hot, or poorly lighted. At a minimum, the following conditions 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
- Comfortable room temperature
- Appropriately sized tables and chairs
- Access to a rest room

- Clock or other timing device visible to test takers
- Chalk board, white board, or overhead projector
- Sufficient staffing for assistance

TEST SECURITY

Policy 3.3

Programs must have a written test security policy on file that includes information about proper storage of, the proper handling of, and the regular maintenance of assessment materials.

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.

All assessment-related materials (e.g., answer sheets, test booklets, norms booklets, and answer keys) should be secured and inventoried on a regular basis. To secure materials, programs should provide lockable storage that is not accessible to learners or the public. Access to assessment materials should be limited to qualified assessment staff. 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.

Security Guidelines

Local programs should adhere to the test publisher guidelines when securing assessments and related materials. 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.

E. PURCHASING PROCEDURES FOR EACH ASSESSMENT

Local programs should contact the test publisher(s) for specific costs and purchasing requirements. Some test publishers may require that only staff trained for the specific assessment may order the materials. Select test publishers may require the purchase of a total number or range of administrations annually. As indicated previously, some assessment instruments are printed while others are computer based. Local programs should keep this in mind when planning a purchase.

F. RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

Virginia Department of Education
Office of Adult Education and Literacy
Telephone: (804) 225-2053
Fax: (804) 225-3352
Toll Free: (800) 292-3820
Web site: <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
Web site: <http://www.valrc.org/>

ASSESSMENT DIRECT CONTACTS

BEST Literacy and BEST Plus 2.0

Center for Applied Linguistics

Tel: (202) 362-0700

E-mail: info@cal.org

Web site: <http://www.cal.org/>

CASAS

CASAS

Tel: (858) 292-2900

Tel: (800) 255-1036

E-mail: casas@casas.org

Web site: <http://www.casas.org/home/>

GAIN

Wonderlic

Tel: (800) 370-9317

E-mail: gain.info@wonderlic.com

Web site: <http://www.wonderlic.com/>

TABE

Data Recognition Corporation | CTB

Tel: 800.538.9547

E-mail: Customer_Service_Ind@ctb.com

E-mail: CTBTechnicalSupport@CTB.com

20 Ryan Ranch Road

Monterey, CA 93940

IV. APPENDIX

ASSESSMENT POLICIES SUMMARY

1.1 ADHERENCE TO POLICIES (P. 5)

Programs must adhere to the assessment policies identified in this document to ensure fair and equitable access to services, practice informed decision making, and identify program improvement needs.

2.1 LEARNERS TO BE ASSESSED (P. 9)

Programs must assess all learners reported into the state MIS. Assessments must meet the following standards.

- A pre-test must be administered within the first six hours of instruction to 100 percent of all eligible learners seeking services.
- A post-test must be administered to a minimum of 70 percent of all eligible learners according to the time frame(s) specified in this policy manual.
- All learners continuing to a new fiscal year must have a valid assessment on record on or after July 1 of the previous fiscal year.

2.2 PROGRAM EXIT (P. 10)

Programs must administer a new pre-test for any learner who has spent 90 or more consecutive days without reported program attendance.

2.3 ASSESSMENTS PERMITTED (P.10)

- An assessment must be approved by both USED and OAEL.
- Programs must administer to adult learners only those assessments that are NRS and state approved.
- All approved assessments must be administered in English.

2.4 MINIMUM STAFFING FOR ASSESSMENTS (P.11)

All approved local programs must at all times have at least one active staff member trained and qualified to administer any approved assessment that the program uses.

2.5 TRAINING FOR ADMINISTERING ASSESSMENTS (P.11)

All staff members who administer approved assessments in a program must:

- successfully complete the training on the approved assessment(s) the program uses;
- successfully administer and score three assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment;
- successfully complete requalification training to administer assessment(s) every two years.

2.6 ASSESSMENT TRAINING REPORTING (P.12)

Approved programs must report and maintain the following information related to assessment training:

- Local programs must report into the state MIS all staff trained on an approved NRS assessment within 30 days of training completion.
- Local programs must maintain a training log that identifies the three students (minimum) who were initially administered an assessment by the newly trained assessor. The log

must identify the test type, date administered, and the student's number as assigned in the NRS data system.

2.7 ACCOMMODATING FOR LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES OR OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS (P. 13)

Learners with professionally certified documentation, issued within five years prior to program registration, who self-disclose a given physical, mental, or emotional disability must be provided an appropriate accommodation for assessment of EFL.

3.1 ASSESSMENT REPORTING (P. 32)

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 and Post-test
- Scale Score
- Test administrator/staff
- Test identification
- Accommodation use and type (if applicable)

3.2 TESTING ENVIRONMENT (P. 33)

Programs must provide locations used for assessment that maximize the opportunity for learners to accurately demonstrate educational functioning level.

3.3 TEST SECURITY (P. 34)

Programs must have a written test security policy on file that includes information about proper storage of, the proper handling of, and the regular maintenance of assessment materials.

ACRONYM GUIDE

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

Instructional programs that provide basic skills for adults who are performing below the ninth-grade level in reading, writing, mathematics, and other basic skills; may include pre-GED® preparatory components.

Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

Instructional programs that serve adults who do not possess a high school diploma (or equivalent) and who have knowledge and skills consistent with a ninth grade or higher educational level, including the General Educational Development (GED®) program, high school credit programs for adults, and the National External Diploma Program (NEDP).

Basic English Skills Test (BEST)

The BEST is an NRS-approved assessment for conducting pre-testing and post-testing of ESL adult learners.

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)

CASAS is an NRS-approved assessment for conducting pre-testing and post-testing of adult learners.

Comprehensive Language Assessment System – English (CLAS-E)

CLAS-E is an NRS-approved assessment for conducting pre-testing and post-testing of ESL learners.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)

Twelve educational functioning levels are identified by the National Reporting System. These learner categories address a general set of standards and competencies that adults must demonstrate to move to the next level. Each level addresses competency areas including basic reading and writing skills, numeracy skills, functional skills, and workplace skills.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESL/ESOL)

Instructional programs that provide basic educational services to adults who are not native speakers of English; primary goal is proficiency in the four English language skills – reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)

GAIN is a NRS-approved assessment for conducting pre-testing and post-testing of adult learners (ABE/ASE) in the subjects of English and math.

General Educational Development (GED®) Test

Requires successful completion of a battery of four comprehensive tests in reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science, and social studies; passing requirements set by the American Council on Education in cooperation with the state.

Integrated English Literacy/Civics (IEL/Civics) Education

Program under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act that funds high-quality, integrated English literacy and civics education services to immigrants and other adults with limited English proficiency so that they are able to better understand United States culture and institutions.

National External Diploma Program (NEDP)

The NEDP is an applied performance assessment system that assesses the high school level skills of adults and out-of-school youth. The NEDP evaluates the reading, writing, math, and workforce readiness skills of participants in life and work contexts. For assessment information specific to the NEDP, refer to the *National External Diploma Program in Virginia Guidelines*.

National Reporting System (NRS)

Accountability system required under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998, which includes student-level demographic, performance, and follow-up data

Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL)

Located within the Virginia Department of Education, OAEL distributes and oversees funding for adult education and literacy activities in Virginia.

Student Performance Level (SPL)

SPLs are a measure of student English language proficiency based on a standardized assessment. The Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) Project originally developed the SPLs in the 1980s. SPLs assisted in forming the basis of the skills identified in reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the various NRS educational functioning levels for English language learners.

Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

The TABE is a widely used, NRS-approved assessment for conducting pre-testing and post-testing of adult learners.

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY FOR VIRGINIA ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMS

I. INTRODUCTION

A. NEED FOR A DISTANCE EDUCATION REPORTING POLICY

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 1.1

Adult education programs must follow the steps and processes described in this document to report distance education classes and related student attendance into the state approved data management system.

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 also provides a way for the under-skilled employed and unemployed adults in the state to access education by offering flexible hours and instruction through a variety of media. Distance education's incorporation of technology allows students who are not able or choose not to attend traditional classes to have 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

A. DEFINITION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

The federal 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.*

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

B. DEFINITION OF ADULT EDUCATION LEARNERS

With the inclusion of distance education as a reportable educational activity, each adult basic education student will be identified as one of two types of learners:

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

Policy 2.1

Every adult basic education student must be identified as either a traditional learner or a distance learner.

A student is classified as a distance learner if the majority of the student's hours earned in a program year are derived by his or her participation in distance learning activities. However, a student's hours in *both* distance and classroom activities must be reported into the data management system.

PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

Distance education may not be the right solution for every adult education learner. Identifying the type of adult populations (e.g. ABE, ASE, ESOL,) to be served and their

required minimum NRS-levels, as well as other required competencies, are essential first steps in creating an effective distance education program. For adults to be successful using distance education, they require the appropriate language, reading, mathematics, and writing skills that will enable them to follow written directions, work independently, and communicate effectively. The selected distance education curricula must also be appropriate for the targeted learner population both in content and level of technical complexity.

The following personal competencies should be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of distance education for adult learners. While these competencies are not as easily measured as reading, math, and language skills, they may be ascertained through a thorough and comprehensive intake and interview process.

- Motivation
- Self-direction
- Time management skills
- Organizational skills
- Network of support
- Telephone and Internet access

TECHNOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

The following technological knowledge should be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of distance education activities mediated by technology.

- Demonstrated facility with basic technology use, such as sending and replying to e-mail; using a Web browser; downloading, opening, and saving electronic files; and filling out Web-based fields and forms
- Regular access to computer technology with Internet access through the use of a personal or publicly available computer
- E-mail account

C. APPROVED DISTANCE EDUCATION HOURS

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

CONTACT HOURS

Contact hours are defined as time spent interacting with the learner. Contact hours for distance education students can be a combination of actual 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 & orientation, assessment, goal setting, counseling, and classroom-based skills training.

A distance learner may be reported in the NRS data system after 12 contact hours have been completed.

PROXY HOURS

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

- I. *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.
- II. *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.
- III. *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.

D. APPROVED DISTANCE EDUCATION CURRICULA

Policy 2.2

Only hours spent engaged with OAEL-approved distance education curricula can be reported in the state Information Management System (MIS).

See the Appendix to this document for a list of currently approved distance education curricula and their respective, approved proxy-hour models.

As new distance education materials become available, OAEL reserves the right to review and consider the impact of approving them for state use and reporting. A review of approved distance education materials will be conducted as needed. OAEL will establish and maintain a Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel to review and approve distance education curricula and materials. (For more information on this Panel, see the Appendix to this document.). If programs wish to use curricula and/or materials not identified in the Appendix to this document, they must submit the new curricula or materials to OAEL's Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel for review and approval before proxy hours may be reported for students using the newly proposed distance education curricula. See the Appendix to this document for a link to the form that programs may use to request review of proposed curricula or materials.

III. ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

A. ACCOMMODATING LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES OR OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS

Policy 3.1

Learners with professionally certified documentation, issued within five years prior to program registration, who self-disclose a given physical, mental, or emotional disability must be provided appropriate accommodations for participating in a distance education program.

If a learner self-identifies a disability, it is the responsibility of the distance education program to provide reasonable accommodations. Programs may not deny or prevent access to services based on a learner's disability. Under certain conditions, the program may be required to absorb the costs related to the accommodation(s). By not providing appropriate accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities, programs could find themselves in violation of federal law.

B. ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION LEARNERS

Policy 3.2

All potential distance education students must be given an approved assessment and meet all of the policy guidelines as identified in the *Assessment Policy for Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Programs*.

All assessments must be administered in a proctored, face-to-face setting. Pre-tests must be administered within the first six hours of instruction. Post-tests must be administered according to the testing specifications of the assessment as identified by the test publisher.

C. REPORTING DISTANCE EDUCATION LEARNERS

Policy 3.3

Programs must report all required data on distance education students in the state Management Information System (MIS).

A student is classified as a distance learner if the majority of contact hours earned in a program year are derived from proxy hours. Non-proxy and proxy contact hours will be recorded in separate fields in the state MIS. The decision about the student's status as a classroom or distance learner will be made at the end of the year when a student's proxy

and non-proxy hours are compared. If a learner has more than 50% of instructional hours reported as proxy, he or she will be identified as a distance learner. The student's hours in both distance and classroom programs will be included in the NRS reports.

D. RESOURCES FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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 classroom-based program. Program staff may request further technical assistance and training from either the Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) or the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC). Contact information for each is below.

Virginia Department of Education
Office of Adult Education and Literacy
Telephone: (804) 225-2053
Toll Free: (800) 292-3820
Web site: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/index.shtml>

Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC)
Telephone: (804) 828-6521
Toll Free: (800) 237-0178
Web site: <http://www.valrc.org/>

IV. APPENDIX

DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICIES SUMMARY

POLICY 1.1 (P. 42)

Adult education programs must follow the steps and processes described in this document to report distance education classes and related student attendance into the state approved data management system.

POLICY 2.1 (P. 43)

Every adult basic education student must be identified as either a traditional learner or a distance learner.

POLICY 2.2 (P. 45)

Only hours spent engaged with OAEL-approved distance education curricula can be reported in the state Information Management System (MIS).

POLICY 3.1 (P. 46)

Learners with professionally certified documentation, issued within five years prior to program registration, who self-disclose a given physical, mental, or emotional disability must be provided appropriate accommodations for participating in a distance education program.

POLICY 3.2 (P. 46)

All potential distance education students must be given an approved assessment and meet all of the policy guidelines as identified in the *Assessment Policy for Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Programs*.

POLICY 3.3 (P.46)

Programs must report all required data on distance education students in the state Management Information System (MIS).

Approved Distance Education Curricula

Distance education curricula is reviewed and approved by the Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel. The list of approved distance education curricula is maintained and disseminated by the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center.

A full list of approved curricula may be found [here](#), or via the Distance Education portal on www.valrc.org.

Distance Education Curriculum Review Panel

Mission

The mission and purpose of the Distance Education Curriculum Panel is to review and evaluate submitted distance education curricula and determine whether to approve or deny the use of submitted curricula by local adult education programs. The Distance Education Curriculum Panel will also review curricula at the end of its approval period to determine its continued relevance for use in adult distance education courses.

Panel Members

The Distance Education Curriculum Panel membership will reflect the programs that provide adult education services in Virginia. The panel will be composed of at least one member from each of the following categories: a Community-based literacy organization (CBLO), an EL/Civics grant recipient, a PluggedInVA program, a Corrections and Institutions instructional program, a representative of the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC), the Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL), and other representatives based on need. Individual members may fulfill multiple categories of inclusion. No more than 13 individuals may hold membership at any given time.

Appointment

Membership on the panel is obtained by appointment. Membership is finalized by a majority vote. In the case of a tie vote, the chairperson may cast the deciding vote.

Terms of Service

A member's term of service will last for one (1) year. Membership will be reviewed each year, and at that time, a member's term may be extended. A member who has resigned from the Distance Education Curriculum Panel must be reappointed to be reinstated as a member.

Meeting Procedures

The Distance Education Curriculum Panel calendar begins on July 1st of each year. At the first meeting of each year, it will be the panel members' duty to nominate a chairperson.

Nominating a Chairperson

The panel members will nominate a chairperson by a simple majority vote. To be considered, all chairperson nominees must be a current member of the Distance Education Curriculum Panel. The chairperson will serve for a term of one year that may be renewed at the beginning of each panel year. Chairperson responsibilities include setting a panel agenda, calling panel meetings to order, and chairing each meeting.

Appointing a Secretary

The secretary will be the Education Support Specialist at the Virginia Adult Resource Center. Secretary responsibilities include recording the minutes of each meeting and guiding the panel through a review of minutes at the start of each meeting.

Meeting Agenda

The meeting agenda will be sent by the secretary prior to each meeting. Each meeting agenda

will have the following broad components: Call to order, Approval of minutes, Old business, New business, and Adjournment. Minutes are approved by assent of panel members and will be posted on the Distance Education Curriculum Panel Wordpress site.

Panel Responsibilities

Panel responsibilities include developing and overseeing the process by which curricula are submitted for approval, establishing guidelines for evaluating submitted curricula, and reviewing approved curricula to determine continued relevance for adult education instruction, in accordance with state and federal guidance.

Approving Curricula

All submitted curricula must be approved by a Regional Program Manager, an Executive Director of a Community-Based Literacy Organization, or a designee of program leadership prior to submission. To submit curricula, designated individuals must use the [Distance Education Submission Form](#). Approved curriculum will remain on the approved curriculum list for a period of up to 3 years, after which the Distance Education Curriculum Panel will review each curriculum to assess its continued relevance for adult learners.

Approval Process

Panel members will review the submitted curricula during each meeting. If the curricula are approved, the field will be notified by an announcement on the Regional Program Managers listservs, in the *First Mondays* monthly newsletter, or other appropriate means.

Rubric

The Distance Education Curriculum Panel members will use the [Distance Education Curriculum Rubric](#) to evaluate curricula. Such criteria as student and instructor experiences with curricula, innovation, and retention may be considered.

Removing Curricula

A curriculum may be considered for removal prior to its expiration. Removals are finalized by a simple majority vote. When a curriculum is removed, an announcement will be made on the VAELN, Regional Program Managers and Regional Specialist listservs, in the *First Mondays* newsletter, or other appropriate means.



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