



Adult Learner Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual

FY 2021

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I. Introduction and Context

This manual outlines the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), Office of Adult Education (OAE), assessment policies and guidelines that have been designed to comply with local, state, and federal accountability and reporting requirements. All local adult education programs funded by OAE with federal and/or state dollars are required to adhere to these policies and guidelines to guarantee accurate and uniform assessment information. The assessment information provided in this manual will be invaluable when setting student goals, evaluating learner progress, providing instruction, appraising program performance, and informing public policy. The policies noted are taken from the comprehensive Office of Adult Education's Policy and Procedure Administrative Manual (<https://tcsge.edu/adult-education/>).

Programs should assess adult learners at specific times during the educational process to:

- Help learners understand their basic skill functioning levels and to explore the available educational options;
- Determine the appropriate program and instructional level for placement;
- Identify learners' strengths and gaps to guide instruction;
- Monitor student learning in class and target instruction based on learners' needs;
- Assess and monitor learners' educational gains after a period of instruction;
- Examine classroom performance for planning and quality improvement purposes;
- Evaluate program performance; and
- Acquire data that meets local, state, and federal accountability and reporting requirements.

To achieve these aims, the OAE mandates that all programs use the following approved standardized assessments to determine learner outcomes for the National Reporting System (NRS): *BEST Literacy*, *BEST Plus Version 2.0*, *TABE 11&12*, and *TABE CLAS-E*.

The TCSG administers the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS), which is a web-based management information system that meets the reporting needs of Georgia's adult education programs while meeting the needs of the NRS. All data related to the NRS are captured in GALIS.

A. Need for Assessment Policy

Adult Education programs are required by law, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and by regulation [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE)] to make sure that the initial and ongoing assessment of adult learners is valid, reliable, and comparable on national and state levels. More specifically, the assessments must:

- Meet the standards of **validity** (the ability of a test to measure what it claims to measure, and appropriateness of the conclusions made based on the scores), **reliability** (the degree to which test scores are consistent) and **comparability** (providing scores from all programs that describe the same levels of performance and educational gain);
- Be aligned with Georgia Adult Education Curriculum Framework **standards**; and
- Provide useful program information to instructors and adult learners.

OAE administers the programs for Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) via successful grantees identified through a Request for Application (RFA) process. Grantees must adhere to policies and procedures identified in the RFA. One such requirement is that local programs assess and advance adult learners according to national and state policies and procedures.

It is critical that all programs adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this manual to ensure uniform implementation and comparability across programs. Therefore, the OAE will provide targeted technical assistance and training activities to promote compliance with applicable testing policies and procedures, as well as federal and state accountability reporting.

B. Purposes and Uses of Assessment

OAE-approved assessments provide local program staff a structure for:

- developing rapport with adult learners;
- placing learners accurately into appropriate program and instructional levels;
- analyzing diagnostic information to identify and implement appropriate instructional strategies for the individual;
- establishing realistic goals and monitoring tests to gauge progress toward goals;
- creating and implementing a student learning plan; and
- certifying level and program completions.

Informal and Supplemental Assessment

In addition to standardized assessments, OAE encourages programs to use a variety of informal assessments to guide instruction. Programs can use teacher-made tests, unit tests, portfolios, applied performance assessments, and learner observations to monitor learning and guide instruction. However, programs may only use approved assessments to report learner gains for the NRS.

C. Summary and Overview

All (100%) adult learners enrolled in an OAE-funded program must be assessed using one of the state-approved assessment instruments:

Approved Assessment Instruments	Adult Education Program Areas
BEST Literacy BEST Plus TABE CLAS-E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Acquisition (ELA); English Language Learners (ELL) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English as a Second Language (ESL) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)
TABE 11&12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Basic Education (ABE) Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

For any of the approved assessment instruments listed above, the preferred testing mode is computer-based, if available, regardless of cost. BEST Literacy only has a paper-based testing mode available. Keep in mind that paper-based testing is allowed in cases where a class location, like in a correctional facility, explicitly forbids the use of computers. Local programs should ensure that their assigned Grant Program Support (GPS) Coordinator is made aware, on an ongoing basis, of locations where computer-based testing cannot be used.

At least one of the approved assessment instruments must be administered within the first 12 contact hours to determine the educational functioning level of the student. If an assessment has a Locator, it must be given prior to the administration of any other part of the pre-test. The results of the Locator must be implemented by individual subject area. The averaging of Locator results in order to administer a single test level is not permitted. Scale score ranges for approved assessment instruments are correlated with each educational functioning level in basic *reading and writing*; *numeracy skills*; and *functional and workplace skills*. The tables below show a quick reference of scale score ranges to educational functioning levels for ABE and ESL.

NRS Level	TABE 11&12 Reading	TABE 11&12 Math	TABE 11&12 Language
ABE 1	300-441	300-448	300-457
ABE 2	442-500	449-495	458-510
ABE 3	501-535	496-536	511-546
ABE 4	536-575	537-595	547-583
ABE 5	576-616	596-656	584-630
ABE 6	617-800	657-800	631-800

NRS Level	BEST Plus	BEST Literacy	TABE CLAS-E Listening/Speaking	TABE CLAS-E Reading/Writing
ESL 1	88-361	0-20	230-407	225-394
ESL 2	362-427	21-52	408-449	395-441
ESL 3	428-452	53-63	450-485	442-482
ESL 4	453-484	64-67	486-525	483-514
ESL 5	485-524	68-75	526-558	515-556
ESL 6	525-564	76-78	559-600	557-600

Programs unable to administer a state-approved test due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic may exempt that student from testing through June 30, 2021. The exemption applies if the student is unable to take a state-approved test in person or virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. In this instance, programs may use informal assessments to provisionally determine a student's educational functioning level for instructional and NRS-reporting purposes. Programs must assign a provisional educational functioning level within the student's first 12 contact hours. Programs that exempt participants

Please note...

Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested AND who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content.

from state-approved tests should put procedures in place to identify students who were not tested due to an inability to conduct testing, so that the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak can be appropriately tracked. Programs must also maintain documentation of provisional educational functioning level determinations for NRS reporting. Programs must administer state-approved pre-tests as soon as feasible and adjust any provisional educational functioning level placements based on the state-approved pre-test score. A participant cannot achieve an educational functioning level gain without an NRS- and state-approved pre- and post-test.

Accommodations may be made for students who are unable to understand or respond to the assessment due to low literacy or lack of English proficiency (See Section II A). Accommodations may also be made for individuals with a disability (See Section II D, Accommodations for Assessment, and review the information about accommodations provided for each approved assessment in Section III).

The purposes of reassessing adult learners are to measure academic performance on a standardized assessment instrument and to ascertain the completion of an educational functioning level. Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested and who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content. Please note that the number of instructional hours should not be the only determining factor when deciding to post-test, since not all students will be ready to post-test even after meeting that threshold. The minimum number of instructional hours before post-testing is shown in the table below.

For TABE 11&12, the student should be post-tested in at least one of the subject area tests that was given as a pre-test. GALIS provides pre- and post-testing reports to help local programs verify their assessment data, look for problem areas, and confirm that assessments are being administered in alignment with the assessment policy. Post-testing reports include the number of hours since an assessment was given, the assessment date, form/level, scale score, and NRS educational functioning level.

Assessment	Minimum Instructional Hours before Post-testing
<i>BEST Literacy</i>	60 hours of instruction
<i>BEST Plus Version 2.0</i>	60 hours of instruction
<i>TABE 11&12 for ABE students</i>	40 hours of instruction

<i>TABE 11&12</i> for ASE students	30 hours of instruction
<i>TABE CLAS-E</i>	60 hours of instruction

D. Resources for Information and Assistance

For clarification on Georgia's assessment policies or for other questions regarding the appropriate assessment of adult learners, please contact the Office of Adult Education, Director of Instructional Services, or your program's assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator.

II. General Assessment Requirements

A. Students to be Assessed

All (100%) adult learners, including distance education students, enrolled in an OAE-funded adult education program must be assessed in a secure, proctored setting with a trained test administrator using a state-approved assessment instrument. Students in distance education programs must be pre- and post-tested in the same manner and at the same frequency as traditional adult education students. Local programs may implement virtual test proctoring using the state-approved assessments in accordance with the test publisher's procedures for virtual testing.

Programs unable to administer a state-approved test to a distance learner due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic may exempt that student from testing through June 30, 2021. The exemption applies if the student is unable to take a state-approved test in person or virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. Programs that exempt participants from state-approved tests should put procedures in place to identify students who were not tested due to an inability to conduct testing, so that the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak can be appropriately tracked. Programs must administer state-approved pre-tests as soon as feasible. A participant cannot achieve an educational functioning level gain without an NRS- and state-approved pre- and post-test.

Programs must maintain all assessment records in the student permanent record that are available for review, when requested.

Assessment records include the following:

- *BEST Literacy*: test book and scoring sheet
- *BEST Plus*: score report
- *TABE (print-based)*: locator answer sheet, test answer sheet, and score report
- *TABE (computer-based)*: score report
- *TABE CLAS-E: paper-based* - locator answer sheet, answer book, writing folio, and score report; *computer-based* – score report

Please note...

All students must have records of assessment results in their student permanent records that are available for review, when requested.

Accommodations may be made for students who are unable to understand or respond to the assessment due to low literacy, lack of English proficiency, and/or a disability. For more information related to accommodations for students with a disability, please refer to section II D, Accommodations for Assessment. For adult students who have low literacy skills or a lack of English proficiency and are unable to be assessed using an approved assessment to measure their abilities, programs must document that an attempt was made to assess the student. Programs must maintain a record of this attempt in the student's permanent record for audit purposes.

For GALIS purposes, document the attempt in writing and use the following base scores:

- *BEST Literacy*: enter the form attempted and the scale score of zero (0)
- *BEST Plus*: enter the form attempted and the scale score of 88
- *TABE 11&12*, level L, Reading, Math or Language: enter the form attempted and the scale score of 300

- *TABE 11&12*, level E, Reading, Math, or Language: enter the form attempted and the scale score of 310 (if *TABE L* is not used.)
- *TABE CLAS-E*, level 1, Listening/Speaking: enter the form attempted and the scale score of 230
- *TABE CLAS-E*, level 1, Reading/Writing: enter the form attempted and the scale score of 225

B. Assessments Permitted

From the NRS list of approved assessments, OAE has adopted the following. Only scores from these tests will be accepted for GALIS data entry and NRS reporting.

Approved Assessment Instruments	Adult Education Program Areas
BEST Literacy BEST Plus TABE CLAS-E	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English Language Acquisition (ELA); English Language Learners (ELL)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ English as a Second Language (ESL)○ Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)
TABE 11&12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Basic Education (ABE)• Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

Pre-testing Guidelines

OAE requires that students must be assessed within the first 12 contact hours. If an assessment has a Locator, it must be given prior to the administration of any other part of the pre-test. The results of the Locator must be implemented by individual subject area. The averaging of Locator results in order to administer a single test level is not permitted.

Tests administered in sub-test areas (*TABE 11&12*) must be compared and used to determine the placement of the student. The lowest functioning level achieved by the student on one or more sub-tests determines the student's entry Educational Functioning Level (EFL) and placement in GALIS. A returning student's most recent test record will be brought forward automatically into the new fiscal year as long as the rollover date is within 270 calendar days of the test administration date.

Please note...

*All assessment data must be entered into GALIS. This applies to **all** assessment results, whether scores go up, down, or remain the same.*

Pre-test scores from students who stop-out from the program are also valid within the 270 calendar day period. If the student has exited the program for at least 90 days and then begins a new Period of Participation (PoP), his/her test scores are valid for calculating EFL gain as long as the scores have not exceeded the 270 calendar day validity period. If the scores fall outside of this range, a new assessment must be administered. When test results roll over, they must be used by the local program in order to preserve the student's assessment history and to ensure that each PoP has a valid pre-test. Programs should have a local procedure to verify that each returning student has a valid assessment.

When selecting an assessment for a student, keep in mind the student's purpose for enrolling in the adult education program. For example, the typical practice for assessing a student with the goal of obtaining a GED credential is to assess him/her in all subject areas in order to develop a solid diagnostic of the student's skills that are needed for the GED Test. For *TABE*, this means administering Reading, Math, and Language. However, if a student has a goal to improve in one academic area only, an individual subject area test may be given. Due to the longer testing times for *TABE 11&12*, it may be more appropriate to test in only one or two subject areas, rather than all three.

All pre-test data must be entered into GALIS within 10 business days of the test administration date. GALIS should be an electronic duplication of a student's complete assessment record. In the rare case that a program needs an exception to this data entry deadline (such as in the case of a natural disaster), the program administrator or designee must contact the assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator for approval.

Programs unable to administer a state-approved test due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic may exempt that student from testing through June 30, 2021. The exemption applies if the student is unable to take a state-approved test in person or virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. In this instance, programs may use informal assessments to provisionally determine a student's educational functioning level for instructional and NRS-reporting purposes. Programs must assign a provisional educational functioning level within the student's first 12 contact hours. Programs that exempt participants from state-approved tests should put procedures in place to identify students who were not tested due to an inability to conduct testing, so that the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak can be appropriately tracked. Programs must also maintain documentation of provisional educational functioning level determinations for NRS reporting. Programs must administer state-approved pre-tests as soon as feasible and adjust any provisional educational functioning level placements based on the state-approved pre-test score by entering the pre-test data into GALIS within 10 business days of the test administration date. A participant cannot achieve an educational functioning level gain without an NRS- and state-approved pre- and post-test.

If OAE determines that a program has administered assessments outside of the standards of the OAE Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual and/or the Test Publishers' guidelines or the program has mismanaged student assessment records, OAE will sanction the program.

Post-testing Guidelines

Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested AND who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content. Please note that the number of instructional hours should not be the only determining factor when deciding to post-test, since not all students will be ready to post-test even after meeting that threshold. For TABE 11&12, the student should be post-tested in at least one of the subject area tests that was given as a pre-test. **Students must not be post-tested prior to the allotted minimum hours per assessment and Educational Functioning Level.** Additional post-tests must also follow the same established post-testing guidelines and times.

Assessment	Minimum Hours before Post-testing
<i>BEST Literacy</i>	60 hours of instruction
<i>BEST Plus Version 2.0</i>	60 hours of instruction
<i>TABE 11&12 for ABE students</i>	40 hours of instruction
<i>TABE 11&12 for ASE students</i>	30 hours of instruction
<i>TABE CLAS-E</i>	60 hours of instruction

Assessments have an effective date of 270 calendar days (defined as weekdays, weekends, and holidays) from the test administration date.

Programs are encouraged to utilize informal assessments, e.g. teacher-made tests, unit tests, portfolios, applied performance assessments, and learner observations, to monitor learning and guide instruction. Programs may only use approved assessments to report learner gains for the NRS.

All post-test data must be entered into GALIS within 10 business days of the test administration date. Keep in mind that all assessment data must always be entered into GALIS. This applies to **all** assessment results, whether scores go up, down, or remain the same. GALIS should be an electronic duplication of a student's complete assessment record. Assessments cannot be entered into GALIS if it has been 30 days or more from the test administration date. In the rare case that a program needs an exception to this standard practice (such as in the case of a natural disaster), the program administrator or designee must contact the assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator for approval.

If OAE determines that a program has administered assessments outside of the standards of the OAE Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual and/or the Test Publishers' guidelines or has mismanaged student assessment records, OAE will sanction the program.

C. Training for Administering Assessments

OAE provides professional development and training on NRS and accountability policies as well as on certain approved assessment instruments. During the fiscal year, local programs funded by OAE must designate personnel to participate in staff development related to NRS and accountability policies, administration of assessments, scoring, interpretation of the results, and placement of adult learners. All professional development sessions are recorded in GALIS. The training opportunities are designed to address the following:

Please note...

OAE offers BEST Plus and BEST Literacy trainings throughout the fiscal year. Refer to the Professional Development Calendar for specific dates.

- Developing rapport with learners to minimize test anxiety and develop test-taking skills;
- Administering and interpreting the assessment instrument;
- Understanding cultural diversity and the implications for successful student performance;
- Providing accommodations for students with documented disabilities;
- Identifying the appropriate level for placement and completion;
- Selecting instructional strategies based on assessment results; and
- Understanding NRS policy and implementing accountability procedures.

Training of personnel administering assessment instruments is required to ensure test security and appropriate testing procedures, including accommodations for students with disabilities. Adult educators and administrators designated to administer the state-approved assessments are required to abide by the assessment standards of the test publishers, the [American Psychological Association](#), and OAE-established testing policies and guidelines.

New Personnel

Local providers must include the Adult Learner Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual in the orientation and training of new personnel by local providers. OAE offers annual training on the assessment policies and the relationship between assessment, student placement, and measurable skill gains. Specific training guidelines for individual assessments are shown below.

Assessment	Initial Training Guidelines
<i>BEST Literacy</i>	CAL recommends studying the test administration manual and 3-4 practice administrations
<i>BEST Plus</i>	CAL requires a one-day training with a certified trainer and 20 practice administrations
<i>TABE and TABE CLAS-E</i>	DRC recommends that test administrators be trained before administering the tests

All personnel responsible for the administration of specific assessments must receive training on the administration of that instrument. It is the responsibility of the local program to ensure that the training and/or certification have been completed successfully and to maintain a record of the training in local records and GALIS.

Please note...

Local programs are responsible for providing annual assessment training to all test administrators for each assessment they give.

Experienced Personnel

Personnel that have experience in the administration of the approved assessments are required to participate in professional development annually to review relevant topics, such as the test materials, proper administration, scoring, test security, testing accommodations, and the interpretation of test results.

Local programs are required to keep a record of all persons trained to administer assessments and the type of training they have received.

D. Accommodating for Students with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

Students with documented disabilities who require accommodations are responsible for requesting assessment instruments in alternative formats and alterations in test administration procedures. *Documented disabilities* means that the individual can present a formal document provided by a qualified professional (physician, educational counselor, psychologist, special education teacher, or a rehabilitation counselor) such as a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment, an Individual Education Plan (IEP), or other formal record of disability that includes:

- A diagnosis of the disability, whether it be a medical, psychological, learning, developmental, and /or attention deficit disorder.
- An evaluation of the educational implications of the diagnosis and the impact of the disability on areas of functioning.
- Recommendations for the specific strategies and accommodations in education required by the disability, which are reasonable and necessary as provided by ADA/Section 504.

The accommodations provided in the assessment should be the same accommodations used during instruction.

Students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities served by local programs are subject to the standardized testing requirements as referenced in the state assessment policy.

A testing accommodation is a change made to the test administration procedure to provide equal access for students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. If an accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. In particular, if the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then it should not be used in the testing situation.

Testing accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- **Flexible scheduling:** Several brief testing sessions during a day, frequent rest breaks, testing at a different time of day, additional time.
- **Flexible setting:** Individually or in small groups with proctor, study carrel or separate room, special lighting, equipment, acoustics.

- **Flexible responding:** Oral response, signed response, response on word processor, or Braille response.
- **Flexible presentation:** Mechanical aids, revised formats such as Braille, large print, or signed or oral presentations for directions and items other than reading items.
- **Assistive devices:** Assistive devices typically used in classroom instruction such as visual magnification or auditory amplification devices, calculators (if authorized in test administration manual).

The accommodations must not alter the underlying content that is being measured by the assessment or negatively affect the assessment's reliability and validity. These testing accommodations must be provided to ensure equal access to programs and activities and in compliance with provisions in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and 34 CFR, part 104, as applicable for adults.

Each local program should have a plan in place that clarifies how they will handle student documentation and requests for accommodations. For most technical colleges and school systems, this means contacting the person in the organization who coordinates services for students with disabilities. Community-based organizations may not have the same position in their agency, but they still must have a plan in place.

For specific information about accommodations related to an individual assessment, refer to the individual assessment pages within this document. As you review the accommodations for each assessment, keep in mind that some testing accommodations are more informal and can be provided to any student, whether they have a documented disability or not. For example: a pregnant student may request to take additional breaks, a student with back problems may need to go for a short walk between testing sessions, or a student with vision issues may request to use a magnifying glass.

If you are ever unsure if a testing accommodation requires documentation or not, please contact your supervisor, program administrator, or designee.

III. Guidelines for Each Assessment

OAE has established the state assessment policy to assist local programs with all state-approved assessment instruments. Section II, General Assessment Requirements, provides detailed information relating to the target audience, administration procedures, training, pre- and post-testing, and accommodations for students with special needs. This section will address additional implementation guidelines not detailed in Section II.

A. *BEST Literacy*

Description and Eligibility

OAE has approved *BEST Literacy* for use by local programs to meet the requirements of the NRS. This assessment is administered for placement of ESL and IELCE students who are enrolling or continuing in an adult education program. *BEST Literacy* measures reading and writing skills in English. It may be administered individually or in a group, and there are three print-based forms (B, C, and D) available for use. This test is not intended for students who indicate that their language spoken at home is English.

Pre-testing Guidelines

OAE requires that students must be assessed within the first 12 contact hours unless they are exempt due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pre-test score achieved by the student determines the student's entry Educational Functioning Level (EFL) and placement in GALIS. Pre-test scores from students who stop-out from the program are valid within the 270 calendar day period. If the student has exited the program for at least 90 days and then begins a new Period of Participation (PoP), his/her test scores are valid for calculating EFL gain, and must be used, as long as the scores have not exceeded the 270 calendar day validity period. If the scores fall outside of this range, a new assessment must be administered. Programs should have a local procedure to verify that each returning student has a current valid assessment.

For adult students who lack English proficiency and are unable to be assessed using an approved assessment to measure their abilities, programs must document that an attempt was made to assess the student. The result of this attempt must be kept in the student's record for audit purposes. For GALIS, enter the form and the scale score of zero (0).

Students who test into the NRS Educational Functioning Level of ESL 6, scores of 76 – 78, must be given another pre-test, as there are no exit criteria established by NRS for *BEST Literacy*. If this occurs, do the following:

Administrative Action	Pre-test Option #1	Pre-test Option #2
1. Do not enter into GALIS. 2. Record pre-test attempt in student permanent record.	1. Use an oral screening tool to determine if student has low oral skills. 2. If so, administer <i>BEST Plus</i> or <i>TABE CLAS-E Listening/Speaking</i> .	Administer <i>TABE 11&12 Locator</i> and <i>TABE 11&12 Reading and/or Language</i> . (Student is reported as ABE, not ESL.) <i>TABE Math is not required unless student has a math improvement goal.</i>

GALIS will not accept a *BEST Literacy* pre-test score that results in an Entry EFL of ESL 6. If the score is entered, GALIS will display an error message: *GALIS ERROR – ESL 6 pre-test using BEST Literacy is not collected; there is no method for testing out of this level.*

Post-testing Guidelines

Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested with *BEST Literacy* (60 hours) AND who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content. Please note that the number of instructional hours should not be the only determining factor when deciding to post-test, since not all students will be ready to post-test even after meeting that threshold. Students must not be post-tested prior to reaching 60 contact hours. Additional post-tests must also follow the same established post-testing guidelines and times. Students who were pre-tested with *BEST Literacy* must be post-tested with *BEST Literacy*; however, a different form must be used. When administering *BEST Literacy*, there are two levels: (1) test administrator and (2) scorer. The primary classroom teacher is an appropriate test administrator, but for the scoring of the assessment, OAE strongly recommends that, when possible, the scorer be another trained staff member. This helps to ensure the objectivity and neutrality of the scoring process.

Post-testing provides the opportunity to meet with the student about his/her progress and goals. This conversation should be documented in the student's conference notes and/or GALIS. In addition, the student's learning plan should be reviewed and updated, as needed.

Transitioning from BEST Literacy to TABE 11&12

When a student completes Advanced ESL (ESL 6), administer the TABE 11&12 Locator and TABE 11&12. Keep in mind that a student's educational functioning level (EFL) placement is determined by his/her pre-test. EFL gains are measured from the student's entry EFL. ESL students who have completed *BEST Literacy* can transition to TABE within the same fiscal year. Additional Measurable Skill Gains made through TABE pre- and post-testing will be reported under the student's entry EFL.

Use of Scale Scores for NRS Reporting

Local programs will record and track scale scores in student records and GALIS. The scale score is the primary score for *BEST Literacy*. GALIS translates the scale scores into NRS levels. Programs may generate reports that show student educational functioning levels and gains using GALIS. Refer to Appendix A: *GALIS Test Score, Goal and EFL Matrix*.

Accommodations for BEST Literacy

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and other related federal, state, and local laws were enacted to guarantee equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities, including those in educational programs. Programs administering *BEST Literacy* are responsible for providing accessible services and for making sure that requests for accommodation are considered and handled in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

Test administrators may provide or allow accommodations in test administration procedures or in the testing environment for individuals with disabilities, provided that the accommodation does

not compromise the purpose of the test as a measure of reading and writing in English. Permissible accommodations related to test administration procedures include the use of eyeglasses or magnifying glasses, earplugs, color overlays, or rulers. Testing environment accommodations might include, but are not limited to, frequent breaks or individual administration.

It is not an appropriate accommodation for someone to read the test questions to an examinee with sight impairment, as *BEST Literacy* is a test of reading (*BEST Literacy Test Manual* 2008 pgs. 9-10). If local programs are unable to accommodate a student's needs due to the test publisher's guidelines and no other testing option is available, program administrators should contact their assigned GPS Coordinator to determine feasible accommodations to serve the student. For more information about accommodations, see section II D.

***BEST Literacy* Frequently Asked Questions**

BEST Literacy FAQs are available at http://www.cal.org/aea/pdfs/FAQs_CAL_Adult_ESL_Assessments_19.pdf. Some of the most pertinent questions are included below.

What is *BEST Literacy* used to measure?

BEST Literacy tests reading and writing skills in authentic situations specifically geared for adult English language learners in the United States.

What types of questions are on *BEST Literacy*?

Test items include reading dates on a calendar, addressing an envelope, writing a check, reading a schedule, writing personal information, reading articles and other documents, and writing a short personal note.

Is training required to administer *BEST Literacy*?

CAL does not require *BEST Literacy* training. However, *BEST Literacy* test administrators and scorers must read and review the *BEST Literacy Test Manual* before and after administering the test. In addition, individual states and programs may have their own training requirements in order to administer *BEST Literacy*. (OAE provides training for test administrators or scorers. Contact your Grant Program Support Coordinator for more information.)

How do I get started using *BEST Literacy*?

To get started using *BEST Literacy*, you will need to know how many students you will be pre-and post-testing to determine the number of test packets to order. Test booklets and corresponding scoring sheets are sold in packets of 20 per form (B, C, and D). You will also need to order enough copies of the *Test Manual* for your test administrators and scorers to read and review before and after testing.

If you would like sample copies of *BEST Literacy* to review before deciding to use it as your assessment tool, please send CAL an email at aea@cal.org.

Do the students write in the *BEST Literacy* test booklets?

Yes. The students will write their answers in the test booklets. Test booklets are consumable and cannot be photocopied or reused.

Where do I find the *BEST Literacy* score sheets?

20 corresponding score sheets are included with each packet of 20 test booklets.

What are appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities?

Programs administering *BEST Literacy* are responsible for providing accessible services and for ensuring that requests for accommodations are considered and handled in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations. Program and test administrators may provide and allow accommodations in test administration procedures or in the testing environment for individuals with disabilities, provided that the accommodations do not compromise the purpose or results of the test.

Permissible accommodations related to test administration procedures for *BEST Literacy* include the use of eyeglasses or magnifying glasses, earplugs, color overlays, or rulers. Testing environment accommodations might include frequent breaks or individual administrations. It is not an appropriate accommodation for someone to read the test questions to an examinee with sight impairment, as *BEST Literacy* is a test of reading, not listening.

For more information regarding test accommodations for students with disabilities, please see the *BEST Literacy Test Manual* (June 2008).

B. BEST Plus Version 2.0

Description and Eligibility

OAE has approved *BEST Plus Version 2.0* for use by local programs to meet the requirements of the NRS. This assessment is administered for placement of ESL and IELCE students who are enrolling or continuing in an adult education program. *BEST Plus Version 2.0* tests communication, fluency, pronunciation, and listening comprehension skills in English. It is administered individually and comes in two versions: computer-adaptive and print-based (forms D, E, and F). This test is not intended for students who indicate that their language spoken at home is English.

For *BEST Plus Version 2.0*, the preferred testing mode is computer-based, regardless of cost. Keep in mind that paper-based testing is allowed in cases where a class location, like in a correctional facility, explicitly forbids the use of computers. Local programs should ensure that their assigned GPS Coordinator is made aware, on an ongoing basis, of locations where computer-based testing cannot be used.

Pre-testing Guidelines

OAE requires that students must be assessed within the first 12 contact hours unless they are exempt due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pre-test score achieved by the student determines the student's entry Educational Functioning Level (EFL) and placement in GALIS. Pre-test scores from students who stop-out from the program are valid within the 270 calendar day period. If the student has exited the program for at least 90 days and then begins a new Period of Participation (PoP), his/her test scores are valid for calculating EFL gain, and must be used, as long as the scores have not exceeded the 270 calendar day validity period. If the scores fall outside of this range, a new assessment must be administered. Programs should have a local procedure to verify that each returning student has a current valid assessment.

For adult students who lack English proficiency and are unable to be assessed using an approved assessment to measure their abilities, programs must document that an attempt was made to assess the student. The results of this attempt must be kept in the student's record for audit purposes. For GALIS data entry purposes, enter the form attempted and the scale score of 88.

Students who pre-test into *BEST Plus Version 2.0* exit criteria (ESL X), scores of 565-999, must be given another pre-test as ESL X is not an NRS Educational Functioning Level. If this occurs, do the following:

Administrative Action	Pre-test Option #1	Pre-test Option #2
1. Do not enter into GALIS. 2. Record pre-test attempt in student permanent record.	1. Use a literacy screening tool to determine if student has low literacy skills. 2. If so, administer <i>BEST Literacy</i> or <i>TABE CLAS-E Reading/Writing</i> .	Administer <i>TABE 11&12 Locator</i> and <i>TABE 11&12 Reading and/or Language</i> . (Student is reported as ABE, not ESL.) <i>TABE Math</i> is not required unless student has a math improvement goal.

GALIS will not accept a *BEST Plus Version 2.0* pre-test score that results in an entry EFL of ESL X. If the score is entered, GALIS will display an error message: *GALIS ERROR – Score is not valid as pre-test. TABE should be given.*

Post-testing Guidelines

Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested with *BEST Plus Version 2.0* (60 hours) AND who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content. Please note that the number of instructional hours should not be the only determining factor when deciding to post-test, since not all students will be ready to post-test even after meeting that threshold. Students must not be post-tested prior to reaching 60 contact hours. Additional post-tests must also follow the same established post-testing guidelines and times. Students who were pre-tested with *BEST Plus Version 2.0* must be post-tested with *BEST Plus Version 2.0*. When post-testing with the *BEST Plus Version 2.0* print-based, a different form must be used. *BEST Plus Version 2.0* computer-based is designed to automatically administer multiple forms. Due to the nature of *BEST Plus Version 2.0*, OAE strongly recommends that, when possible, post-testing should be administered by a test administrator that is not the primary classroom instructor. This reduces the chance that the test administrator would “fill in” the student’s responses.

Post-testing provides the opportunity to meet with the student about his/her progress and goals. This conversation should be documented in the student’s conference notes and/or GALIS. The student’s learning plan should be reviewed and updated, as needed.

Transitioning from BEST Plus Version 2.0 to TABE 11&12

When a student completes Advanced ESL (ESL 6), administer the TABE 11&12 Locator and TABE 11&12. Keep in mind that a student’s educational functioning level (EFL) placement is determined by his/her pre-test. EFL gains are measured from the student’s entry EFL. ESL students who have completed *BEST Plus Version 2.0* can transition to TABE within the same fiscal year. Additional Measurable Skill Gains made through TABE pre- and post-testing will be reported under the student’s entry EFL.

Use of Scale Scores for NRS Reporting

Local programs will record and track scale scores in student records and GALIS. The scale score is the primary score for *BEST Plus Version 2.0*. GALIS translates the scale scores into NRS levels. Programs may generate reports that show student educational functioning levels and gains using GALIS. Refer to Appendix A: *GALIS Test Score, Goal and EFL Matrix*.

Accommodations for BEST Plus Version 2.0

Accommodations in test administration procedures for *BEST Plus Version 2.0* include using hearing aids, but do not include allowing students to read prompts from the computer screen. As *BEST Plus Version 2.0* is not a timed test, no accommodation for testing time is needed. Furthermore, as an oral proficiency interview, students need to hear test prompts and respond orally as well as look at picture cue prompts; therefore, no accommodation can be made for students who cannot hear, speak or see (CAL 2008). If local programs are unable to accommodate a student’s needs due to the test publisher’s guidelines and no other testing option is available, program administrators should contact their assigned GPS Coordinator to determine feasible accommodations to serve the student. For more information about accommodations, see section II D.

***BEST Plus Version 2.0* Frequently Asked Questions**

BEST Plus Version 2.0 FAQs are available at

http://www.cal.org/aea/pdfs/FAQs_CAL_Adult_ESL_Assessments_19.pdf. Some of the most pertinent questions are included below.

What is *BEST Plus Version 2.0* used to measure?

BEST Plus Version 2.0 is an individually administered, face-to-face oral interview designed to assess the English language proficiency of adult English Language Learners in the U.S. An adult is anyone 16 years or older who is not in secondary school.

What types of questions are on *BEST Plus Version 2.0*?

BEST Plus Version 2.0 measures the examinee's ability to communicate in English through questions tied to authentic situations that arise in daily life in the United States, such as going to the doctor, getting a job, housing, and community services. The question types range from simple picture description questions to questions that require elaborate and organized discourse.

How is *BEST Plus Version 2.0* administered?

BEST Plus Version 2.0 is administered individually by a trained *BEST Plus Version 2.0* test administrator.

Is training required to administer *BEST Plus Version 2.0*?

Yes. All test administrators must complete the six contact hour test administrator training workshop and be approved by a certified *BEST Plus Version 2.0* trainer prior to administering *BEST Plus Version 2.0*.

How do I become trained on *BEST Plus Version 2.0*?

BEST Plus Version 2.0 begins with training to ensure the accurate use and scoring of the test. The goals of the *BEST Plus Version 2.0* Training Workshops are to prepare participants to administer *BEST Plus Version 2.0* via both the computer-adaptive and print-based versions, instruct participants in using the *BEST Plus Version 2.0* Scoring Rubric, and provide participants the opportunity to practice administering and scoring *BEST Plus Version 2.0*.

During the training, the trainer provides the workshop participants with an overview of the development and the purposes of *BEST Plus Version 2.0*. Participants are guided through scoring benchmarks and practice administering the test and scoring responses in a group environment.

The recommended characteristics of potential test administrators include:

- Native or native-like oral English (the test administrator needs to conduct the interview in English with clarity and confidence).
- Some familiarity interacting with adult non-native speakers of English.
- Interest in standardized assessment and an understanding of how the role of a test administrator differs from that of an instructor.

All requests for training should be sent to your assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator, and must originate with the local program administrator or designee. Local programs are responsible for providing a new Test Administrator Guide for each training participant. OAE does not provide these materials.

How can I get started using *BEST Plus Version 2.0*?

The first step is to attend a *BEST Plus Version 2.0* test administrator training workshop through your state. Once you have been trained, CAL can help you order the materials you'll need to get started.

Virtual Testing

To conduct BEST Plus 2.0 virtual testing, programs must complete all of the following:

1. Submit and receive approval from the OAE that the program's certified test administrators meet the basic requirements to be a virtual test examiner (must have administered BEST Plus 2.0 assessment within 6 months).
 - a. Send names of current certified test administrators that wish to conduct virtual testing to Kimberlee Bryant at kbryant@tcsge.edu.
 - b. Test administrators who have not administered a BEST Plus 2.0 assessment within 6 months must participate in a BEST Plus 2.0 Scoring Refresher Training and score in the "Acceptable" range.
2. Select a video conferencing platform, such as Webex or Blackboard Collaborate, that meets the following requirements:
 - a. Easy for students to access and use;
 - b. Supports face-to-face video conferencing for proper test administration; and,
 - c. Supports identity verification and test security.
3. Ensure the video conferencing platform is available to all test administrators and provide each with training on the basics of using the platform.
4. Require approved test administrators participate in the training *Using BEST Plus as a Virtual Assessment*.
5. Verify that approved test administrators practice administering BEST Plus 2.0 virtually 3 times before administering it as an actual assessment to students.
6. Adhere fully to the virtual test administration guidance provided by CAL (http://www.cal.org/aea/pdfs/BEST_Plus_2_Virtual_Test_Administration_Guidance.pdf), which includes connecting with students via the video conferencing platform before the test to ensure that the student is comfortable with the platform and verifying the identity of the student before testing.

C. The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE): 11&12

Description and Eligibility

OAE has approved *TABE 11&12* for use by local programs to meet the requirements of the NRS. This assessment is administered for placement of adult basic education students that are enrolling or continuing in an adult education program. The Tests of Adult Basic Education (*TABE*) is a standardized test of reading, math, and language. *TABE* can be administered either individually or in a group setting in accordance with approved testing guidelines. *TABE* has two forms (11, 12) and five levels (L, E, M, D, A—listed in ascending order by content level).

For *TABE 11&12*, the preferred testing mode is computer-based, regardless of cost. Keep in mind that paper-based testing is allowed in cases where a class location, like in a correctional facility, explicitly forbids the use of computers. Local programs should ensure that their assigned GPS Coordinator is made aware, on an ongoing basis, of locations where computer-based testing cannot be used.

Pre-testing Guidelines

OAE requires that students must be assessed within the first 12 contact hours unless they are exempt due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The *TABE 11&12* Locator must be given prior to the administration of any other part of the assessment. Due to the length of the 11&12 Locator, programs may choose to administer one subject area of the Locator at a time. Once the Locator for that subject area is administered, the pre-test for that subject area can be given and so forth. (Example: Reading Locator, Reading Pre-test, Math Locator, Math Pre-test, Language Locator, Language Pre-test). The results of the Locator (L, E, M, D, or A level) must be implemented by individual subject area. The averaging of Locator results in order to use a single test form is not permitted.

Please note...

The TABE 11&12 Locator must be given when pre-testing students and used to determine which test levels to administer by subject.

The lowest functioning level achieved by the student on one or more sub-tests determines the Educational Functioning Level (EFL) placement in GALIS. Tests administered in sub-test areas are compared and used to determine the placement of the student.

Pre-test scores from students who stop-out from the program are valid within the 270 calendar day period. If the student has exited the program for at least 90 days and then begins a new Period of Participation (PoP), his/her test scores are valid for calculating EFL gain as long as the scores have not exceeded the 270 calendar day validity period. If the scores fall outside of this range, a new assessment must be administered. Programs should have a local procedure to verify that each returning student has a current valid assessment.

For adult students who have low literacy skills and are unable to be assessed using an approved assessment to measure their abilities, programs must document that an attempt was made to assess the student. The results of this attempt must be kept in the student's record for audit purposes. For GALIS data entry purposes, enter the form attempted and the scale score of 300

for TABE 11&12, level L, Reading, Math, or Language. If the local program does not normally administer TABE L, use the minimum scale score of 310 for TABE 11&12, level E, Reading, Math, or Language.

When selecting an assessment for a student, keep in mind the student's purpose for enrolling in the adult education program. For example, the typical practice for assessing a student with the goal of obtaining a GED credential is to assess him/her in all subject areas in order to develop a solid diagnostic of the student's skills that are needed for the GED Test. For *TABE*, this means administering Reading, Math, and Language. However, if a student, has a goal to improve in one academic area only, an individual subject area test may be given. Due to the longer testing times for TABE 11&12, it may be more appropriate to test in only one or two subject areas, rather than all three.

Post-testing Guidelines

Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested AND who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content. Please note that the number of instructional hours should not be the only determining factor when deciding to post-test, since not all students will be ready to post-test even after meeting that threshold. An Adult Basic Education (ABE) student must have at least **40** hours of instruction prior to post-testing with *TABE*. An Adult Secondary Education (ASE) student must have at least **30** hours of instruction prior to post-testing with *TABE*. The classification of ABE or ASE is determined by the student's lowest subject area EFL at the time of entry. An ABE student has an EFL of ABE 1, ABE 2, ABE 3 or ABE 4. An ASE student has an EFL or ABE 5 or ABE 6. Additional post-tests must also follow the same established post-testing guidelines and times. TABE Complete Battery or Survey may be used when post-testing.

A program staff member should meet with the student to determine if one, two, or three subject tests should be administered during initial post-testing or in subsequent post-tests. Measurable Skill Gain achievement can be reported in any subject area, not just the lowest.

Students who were pre-tested with *TABE* must be post-tested with *TABE*. Post-testing necessitates that either a different form (11&12) or level (L, E, M, D, A) be used.

- When administering the **same level (L, E, M, D, A)**, use of the alternate form is required. For example, if a student pre-tested using 11E, then the post-test must be 12E.
- When administering the **same form (11&12)** a higher level must be used. For example, if a student pre-tested using 11M, then the post-test must be 11D or 11A. 11E, which is lower, cannot be used.

Post-testing provides the opportunity to meet with the student about his/her progress and goals. This conversation should be documented in the student's conference notes (hard copy and/or GALIS). The student's learning plan should be reviewed and updated, as needed.

TABE testing guidelines state that random and frequent testing is discouraged, as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores. Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended to

maximize gain. If a test is to be administered as a retest because the initial test session was invalid, there is not a prescribed length of time that needs to occur.

Use of Scale Scores for NRS Reporting

Local programs will record and track scale scores in student records and GALIS. The scale score is the basic or primary score for TABE, and is used to compute and derive all other scores. GALIS translates the scale scores into NRS levels stipulated by OCTAE. Programs may generate reports that show student NRS functioning levels and gains using GALIS. Refer to Appendix A: *GALIS Test Score, Goal and EFL Matrix*.

Accommodations for TABE

Testing accommodations specific to TABE are included in the TABE Frequently Asked Questions in this policy document. In addition, Data Recognition Corporation has developed a Test Administrator Manual that addresses general testing accommodations for standardized assessments.

Virtual Testing

To conduct TABE 11/12 Locator Online and TABE 11/12 Online (full assessment) virtual testing, programs must:

1. Complete *Remote Testing* training before administering any assessments.
2. Select a web conferencing platform, such as Webex or Blackboard Collaborate, that meets the following requirements:
 - a. Computer-based audio and video for students and examiners;
 - b. Recording capability;
 - c. Breakout sessions with private chat and screen-sharing capability for identify verification and test security;
 - d. Screen-sharing by participants; and,
 - e. Private chat in main meeting room.
3. Ensure the web conferencing platform is available to all test administrators and provide each with training on the basics of using the platform.
4. Conduct all testing sessions using a web conferencing platform that meets all requirements. NOTE: Programs are limited to proctoring five assessments (students) at a time.
5. Use only experienced test administrators who completed TABE training.
6. Verify the identity of the student before testing.
7. Adhere to all instructions and guidance for remote testing provided by DRC (http://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Remote_Proctoring_Guidance.pdf).

TABE 11&12 Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions about TABE 11&12 is published by Data Recognition Corporation to address some common questions related to TABE. Some of the most pertinent questions are listed below. Further information about *TABE 11&12* is available at: <http://tabetest.com/resources-2/testing-information/faqs/>

What is TABE?

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (*TABE*) is an assessment product designed to measure basic skills commonly found in adult basic education curricula and instructional programs. *TABE* is most commonly used to assess adults for placement in education, training or employment programs as well as determining readiness for the GED exam.

What content types are assessed with TABE 11&12?

TABE 11&12 assesses skills in the following content areas: Reading, Math, and Language. Additional information can be obtained from the *TABE 11&12* Test Administration Manual.

When administering TABE 11&12, can we offer accommodations for students with special needs?

A testing accommodation is a change made to the test administration procedure to provide equal access for students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. If an accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. In particular, if the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then it should not be used in the testing situation.

TABE Online is appropriate for some students who have difficulty taking paper-and-pencil tests. Some *TABE* administrators have made other accommodations such as allowing extra time to complete the test or letting students mark answers in test booklets rather than on separate answer sheets. Additional accommodation suggestions are available in the *TABE* Guidelines to Inclusive Testing Accommodations ([https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE Guidelines to Inclusive Testing 2017.pdf](https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Guidelines_to_Inclusive_Testing_2017.pdf)) or DRC's Assessment Accommodations Checklist (#53682); order online or call Customer Care at 800.538.9547.

Who is eligible to administer TABE 11&12?

Adult educators who have a general knowledge of measurement principles and are willing to abide by the assessment standards of the American Psychological Association may administer *TABE 11&12*. These professional standards require *TABE 11&12* administrators to follow specific guidelines, such as keeping tests in a secure place and administering them only as directed. For additional information, see the Purchaser's Qualification Statement in the back of the DRC Assessment Products and Services Catalog.

How long does it take to administer TABE 11&12?

Testing times vary by content area and level. Exact times are listed in the *TABE 11&12* Test Administration Manual. The most recent version is posted to the DRC portal.

How will I know which level of TABE 11&12 to administer?

For adult basic education or other programs that include students at various levels of ability, administer all or part of the *TABE 11&12* Locator Test first. The results will indicate which level of *TABE 11&12* to use by content area.

D. TABE Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E)

Description and Eligibility

TABE Complete Language Assessment System – English measures the language proficiency of adult English language learners in the areas of reading, listening, writing, and speaking in English. The items are aligned with the NRS English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) Educational Functioning Levels. The assessment is available in paper-based and computer-based formats. The paper-based system consists of a Locator test for initial placement, test books, writing folios, answer booklets, and score reports. It is delivered face-to-face in a paper/pencil format. It can be hand-scored or scanned. The computer-based assessment is delivered through the DRC testing portal. The test has two forms (A & B) and four levels (1, 2, 3, and 4). This test is not intended for students who indicate that their language spoken at home is English.

Pre-testing Guidelines

OAE requires that students must be assessed within the first 12 contact hours unless they are exempt due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The TABE CLAS-E Locator must be given prior to the administration of any other part of the pre-test.

The lowest test level achieved by the student determines the student's entry Educational Functioning Level (EFL) and placement in GALIS. Pre-test scores from students who stop-out from the program are valid within the 270 calendar day period. If the student has exited the program for at least 90 days and then begins a new Period of Participation (PoP), his/her test scores are valid for calculating EFL gain, and must be used, as long as the scores have not exceeded the 270 calendar day validity period. If the scores fall outside of this range, a new assessment must be administered. Programs should have a local procedure to verify that each returning student has a current valid assessment.

For adult students who have low literacy skills or lack English proficiency and are unable to be assessed using an approved assessment to measure their abilities, programs must document that an attempt was made to assess the student. The results of this attempt must be kept in the student's record for audit purposes. For GALIS data entry purposes, enter the form, level, skill area attempted, and the minimum scale score shown below:

- Listening/Speaking – level 1, scale score of 230
- Reading/Writing – level 1, scale score of 225

When administering *TABE CLAS-E*, a minimum of two skill area tests must be given in a particular combination, either Listening/Speaking or Reading/Writing. The Locator test must be administered first and is used to determine the appropriate difficulty level of the pre-test(s). All four skill areas may be given, but only the lowest composite score set is used to place the student into an educational functioning level.

For pre-tests (and post-tests) using *CLAS-E*, one "out of range" score on a skills test is allowed per composite pair. If both skills tests are out of range, do not enter the composite score into GALIS and retest the student with a higher level. "Out of range" scores are indicated on the scoring table with a "+" sign by the NRS functioning level placement.

Post-testing Guidelines

Programs should make a reasonable effort to post-test all students (100%) who have met the number of hours to be post-tested with *TABE CLAS-E* (60 hours) AND who, through their studies, have demonstrated significant mastery of content. Please note that the number of instructional hours should not be the only determining factor when deciding to post-test, since not all students will be ready to post-test even after meeting that threshold. Students must not be post-tested prior to reaching 60 contact hours. Additional post-tests must also follow the same established post-testing guidelines and times.

Students who were pre-tested with *TABE CLAS-E* must be post-tested with *TABE CLAS-E*. Post-testing necessitates that either a different form (A or B) or level (1, 2, 3, or 4) be used.

- When administering the **same level (1, 2, 3, 4)**, use of the alternate form is required. For example, if a student pre-tested using A1, then the post-test must be B1.
- When administering the **same form (A or B)**, a higher level must be used. For example, if a student pre-tested using A2, then the post-test must be A3 or A4. A1, which is lower, cannot be used.

For post-tests (and pre-tests) using *CLAS-E*, one “out of range” score on a skills test is allowed per composite pair. If both skills tests are out of range, do not enter the composite score into GALIS and retest the student with a higher level. “Out of range” scores are indicated on the scoring table with a “+” sign by the NRS functioning level placement.

Due to the nature of the *TABE CLAS-E sub-tests*, OAE strongly recommends that, when possible, the scorer be a trained staff member that is not the primary classroom teacher. This helps to ensure the objectivity and neutrality of the scoring process.

Post-testing provides the opportunity to meet with the student about his/her progress and goals. This conversation should be documented in the student’s conference notes (hard copy and/or GALIS). The student’s learning plan should be reviewed and updated, as needed.

TABE CLAS-E testing guidelines state that random and frequent testing is discouraged, as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores. Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended to maximize gain. If a test is to be administered as a re-test because the initial test session was invalid, there is not a prescribed length of time that needs to occur.

Use of Scale Scores for NRS Reporting

Local programs will record and track scale scores in student records and GALIS. The scale score is the basic or primary score for *TABE CLAS-E* and is used to compute and derive all other scores. GALIS translates the scale scores into NRS levels stipulated by OCTAE. Programs may generate reports that show student NRS functioning levels and gains using GALIS. Refer to Appendix A: *GALIS Test Score, Goal and EFL Matrix*.

Accommodations for TABE CLAS-E

Testing accommodations specific to *TABE CLAS-E* are included in the Frequently Asked Questions in this policy document. In addition, Data Recognition Corporation has developed a test administration manual that addresses general testing accommodations for standardized assessments and a more specific document located here:

[https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE Guidelines to Inclusive Testing 2017.pdf](https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Guidelines_to_Inclusive_Testing_2017.pdf).

Please note that these components of the *TABE Complete Language System – English* are available: Large Print Edition Locator Test and Large Print Edition Language Proficiency Tests, Forms A and B.

Virtual Testing

To conduct TABE CLAS-E Online virtual testing, programs must:

1. Complete *Remote Testing* training before administering any assessments.
2. Select a web conferencing platform, such as Webex or Blackboard Collaborate, that meets the following requirements:
 - a. Computer-based audio and video for students and examiners;
 - b. Recording capability;
 - c. Breakout sessions with private chat and screen-sharing capability for identify verification and test security;
 - d. Screen-sharing by participants; and,
 - e. Private chat in main meeting room.
3. Ensure the web conferencing platform is available to all test administrators and provide each with training on the basics of using the platform.
4. Conduct all testing sessions using a web conferencing platform that meets all requirements. NOTE: Programs are limited to proctoring five assessments (students) at a time.
5. Use only experienced test administrators who completed TABE training.
6. Verify the identity of the student before testing. Adhere to all instructions and guidance for remote testing provided by DRC
(http://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Remote_Proctoring_Guidance.pdf).

TABE CLAS-E Frequently Asked Questions

More information about TABE CLAS-E is posted to the Data Recognition Corporation website located at [http://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE CLAS-E.pdf](http://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_CLAS-E.pdf).

Can TABE CLAS-E be used by any student whose first language is not English?

Yes. English language learners may speak a variety of languages at home and come from a diverse range of cultures. In developing the test, items were tried out by students who speak a variety of languages.

Can the Locator Test be used to determine a student's level?

No. The Locator Test is not designed to determine NRS Level. Its only function is to point to the most appropriate TABE CLAS-E testing level, and it should not be used for any other purpose.

How will I know which of the four test levels of TABE CLAS-E to administer?

For English language learners at various levels of ability, administer the TABE CLAS-E Locator Test first. The results will indicate by skill area which level of TABE CLAS-E to use.

How long does it take to administer TABE CLAS-E?

Estimated times for each section are as follows: Reading — 25 minutes per group; Listening — 20 minutes per group; Writing — 47 minutes per group; Speaking — 15 minutes per student.

What types of items are included in TABE CLAS-E?

The test formats include multiple-choice and constructed-response items that address a wide range of language skills. Test items include realistic illustrations, contextualized reading passages, and contexts encountered at home, in the community, and in the workplace.

Who is eligible to administer TABE CLAS-E?

Educators who have a general knowledge of measurement principles and who comply with the assessment standards of the American Psychological Association may administer TABE CLAS-E. These professional standards require TABE administrators to follow specific guidelines, such as keeping tests in a secure place and administering them only as directed.

What types of materials are available for TABE CLAS-E?

TABE CLAS-E is a complete language proficiency system for assessing adult English language learners. It addresses the full continuum of measurement—from placement, to planning, to progress. A Locator Test determines the appropriate test level for each student. The Locator Test includes an oral interview and additional multiple-choice items representative of the skill areas assessed in the four test levels. Pre- and post-tests are available at four different proficiency levels, ensuring that students are testing within the appropriate skill range. Local scoring of the paper-based version is available with TestMate® TABE software. Tests can also be scored manually by using scoring stencils, the Scoring Tables book, and the Individual Diagnostic Profile. The computer-based version is administered through the DRC testing portal. The two-volume Teacher's Resource Guide helps connect test results to instruction by offering lesson plans that teachers can use to deliver instruction or provide extra practice for students. Staff Development materials are also available for individual or group training sessions.

What are the Test Publisher's guidelines for testing accommodations?

DRC has released document specifically on this topic. *TABE Guidelines to Inclusive Testing* is located at [https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE Guidelines to Inclusive Testing 2017.pdf](https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Guidelines_to_Inclusive_Testing_2017.pdf).

E. Quality Control Procedures

The Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS) was created to provide a secure, uniform, statewide adult education database. GALIS is a web-based Management Information System that is operated and maintained by the Technical College System of Georgia. Local program personnel are granted access to the system in order to enter data, verify its accuracy, and use the data for program management. GALIS is aligned with OAE policies and is designed with a series of edit checks to ensure data quality.

GALIS Training and Technical Assistance

OAE supports data quality by providing annual GALIS Data Manager training. In addition, the Grant Program Support Coordinators and local program personnel offer additional training as needed. Local programs should have regular training to give staff members the opportunity to discuss issues related to data or the database.

Technical Assistance is provided through a helpdesk that is staffed during regular business hours by the TCSG Data Center. Grant Program Support Coordinators are also tasked with providing technical assistance related to the assessment policies, individual assessments, and GALIS.

Data Entry Deadlines

All assessment data must be entered into GALIS within 10 business days of the test administration date. Keep in mind that all assessment data must be entered into GALIS. This applies to **all** assessment results, whether scores go up, down, or remain the same. GALIS should be an electronic duplication of a student's complete assessment record. In the rare case that a program needs an exception to this data entry deadline (such as in the case of a natural disaster), the program administrator or designee must contact the assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator for approval. Assessments cannot be entered into GALIS by the local program if it has been 30 days or more from the administration date.

All programs are required to have a system for the timely entry of student data. Timely data entry will allow staff to analyze data on a regular basis and use it for program planning and continuous program improvement. Part of local data entry procedures should also include a prompt, organized way to identify and resolve errors.

GALIS Reports

GALIS provides a robust reporting module. Local program and OAE staff members are able to run management reports for the local program as well as statewide. The reports are real-time and provide an invaluable tool for program administrators to manage their program, as well as off-site monitoring by the Grant Program Support Coordinator and other system office staff. The module also contains the reports required by OCTAE for the National Reporting System (NRS).

Specific reports have been created to address assessments. These reports are used to edit check assessment data, verify level completions, and determine the appropriate time for post-testing.

Data Quality Reviews

Local program administrative and instructional staff members are provided different levels of access to data. Local programs should specify at least one person who is responsible for entering information into GALIS. Programs must have procedures for checking data for completeness and accuracy at several times during the data entry process. One or more staff members should be assigned to perform these data checking functions. He or she should have the authority to request clarification and resolve errors.

It is the responsibility of local programs to review data on a continuous basis. Programs can use data reviews as an opportunity to examine issues. This process will improve data quality and help staff to see the importance of data collection and analysis for continuous program improvement.

Hard copies of all assessment records must be maintained in the student permanent record and be made available for review, when requested. Assessment records include the following:

- *BEST Literacy*: test book and scoring sheet
- *BEST Plus Version 2.0*: score report
- *TABE (print-based)*: locator answer sheet, test answer sheet, and score report
- *TABE (computer-based)*: score report
- *TABE CLAS-E*: locator answer book, answer book, writing folio and score report

G. Contact and Purchasing Information

BEST Literacy and BEST Plus Version 2.0

For more information on ordering, please refer to your test manual, call (202) 362-0700, or log on to <http://www.cal.org/aea/>.

TABE 11&12 and TABE CLAS-E

For more information on ordering, please refer to your test manual, call 1-800-538-9547, email TABEHlpdesk@datarecognitioncorp.com, or visit www.tabetest.com.

H. Test Security

The implementation of uniform policies is essential to standardize test security for all programs funded by OAE. Therefore, all grantees must adhere to the test security policies in this manual as well as any test security policies stated by the test publishers. In addition, school district programs must comply to the Georgia Board of Education (SBE) Rule 160-3-1.07 Testing Programs—Student Assessment, as appropriate to the delivery of adult education services.

Testing Materials

Tests or individual test questions must not be revealed, copied, or otherwise reproduced. Test materials (current or previous), such as test booklets, answer keys, and answer sheets, shall not be used as an instructional tool or for test preparation. Test materials, such as test booklets, answer keys, and answer sheets, must be inventoried and accounted for in accordance with program inventory procedures. These records should be available for review by authorized personnel.

Test materials must be kept in secure, locked storage prior to and after administration of any test. In the event that test materials are determined to be missing, the program administrator or other designated personnel must be notified. The program administrator or other designated personnel will determine the appropriate action as needed.

In cases where testing materials need to be destroyed (due to deterioration or damage), the program administrator or designated personnel will completely destroy the test (i.e. shredding) and update the inventory. Unopened testing materials may be processed as defined by the test publisher's return policy and within established timelines.

Test Examinees

Examinees must not be assisted in answering test questions by any means. Examinees' answers to questions shall not be interfered with in any way. Examinees should not be allowed to leave the test site with answer sheets or test books.

Test Administrators

Test administrators and instructors must not participate in, direct, assist in, or encourage any activity that could result in the inaccurate measurement or reporting of the examinees' scores.

Each person who has access to tests must be informed of the specifications for maintaining test security. Training for administering assessments is coordinated through the Instructional Services Division of OAE and the local program. Refer to section II C of this document for more information.

Testing Violations

In situations where a person is suspected of a test violation or observed committing a test violation, the program administrator or other designated staff must be notified in order to determine the appropriate action as needed.

TCSG Data Center - Revised December 20, 2019

* ESL Exit Criteria: accepted scores are BEST Plus 565 - 999

** If an examinee pretests into Advanced ESL with a scale score of 76-78, use a different ESL assessment that measures higher reading and writing skills to more accurately measure a learner's ability.

ESL Exit Criteria: accepted scores for TABE CLAS-E are 601-730.

[illegible]

Technical College System of Georgia
Office of Adult Education

Appendix B: FY2021 Distance Education and
Proxy Contact Hours Policy

Updated July 13, 2020

A. Definition: Distance Education

Distance education (DE) is formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance education materials can be delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recordings, video recordings, broadcasts, computer software, internet-based programs, mobile applications, and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, email, text messages, telephone calls or conferencing, video calls or conferencing, and other online technologies and software.

Note: While some students can be successful in a DE program that is fully at-a-distance, most students have better outcomes via a hybrid DE model, which combines face-to-face interaction (usually one 2-3 hour session per week) with 8-10 hours at-a-distance (usually via an online educational program).

B. Definition: Distance Learners

Distance learners are students who receive distance education services. For learners who receive both distance education and traditional classroom instruction during a program year (such as through a blended distance-classroom approach or concurrent enrollment in both types of instruction), classification as a distance learner will occur if the majority of contact hours earned in a program year are derived from time spent on distance education activities. Time spent on distance education activities are designated as proxy contact hours. Contact hours and proxy contact hours are recorded in the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS). The student's status as a classroom or distance learner is determined at the end of a Period of Participation and is based upon whether more than 50% of the student's hours were earned through distance education.

C. Measuring and Reporting Contact Hours for Learners in Distance Education

Contact hours for distance learners can be a combination of in-person contact and proxy contact hours accrued at-a-distance where student and program staff can interact and through which learner identity is verifiable, such as telephone calls or video calls.

The following are considered typical activities for distance education programs:

- face-to-face sessions for intake, assessment, orientation, and help sessions;

- telephone calls for technical assistance and guidance;
- completion of a self-assessment of distance education readiness;
- technology training on the use of the chosen distance education curriculum; and
- study skills and time management skills training.

Georgia’s Adult Education programs use the *Clock Time Model*, *Learner Mastery Model*, and *Teacher Verification Model* to determine proxy contact hours for distance education.

The *Clock Time 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.

The *Learner Mastery Model* assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the learner passing a test on the content of each lesson. Learners work with the curriculum and materials and when they feel they have mastered the material, take a test. A high percentage of correct answers (typically 70%-80%) earns the credit hours attached to the assignment.

The *Teacher Verification Model* assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on teacher determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment.

Teachers must maintain records of proxy contact hours for both state and NRS reporting requirements. Programs must collect proxy contact hours weekly at a minimum and record proxy contact hours in GALIS within five (5) business days. Proxy hours must be designated as “proxy contact” in GALIS. Programs must collect contact hours generated from face-to-face contact daily at a minimum and record the hours in GALIS within five (5) business days. Face-to-face contact hours must be designated as “classroom hours” in GALIS. The GALIS User Manual provides detailed information about entering contact hours. The OAE Grant Program Support Coordinators are also available to provide technical assistance.

D. Assessment of Learners in Distance Education

Adult Education programs must assess distance learners under the same guidelines as all adult learners in the state. For pre-testing, this includes assessing students within the first 12 hours of instruction. For post-testing, this includes following the specific post-testing timeframes for each individual assessment. All formal assessments must occur in secure, proctored settings, but it is permissible to arrange for remote testing locations that are more convenient for distance learners as long as all state requirements concerning assessment are met. Local programs may also implement virtual test proctoring using the assessments identified in Georgia’s Adult Learner Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual, in accordance with the test publisher’s procedures for virtual testing.

Programs unable to administer a state-approved test to a distance learner due to the widespread effect of the COVID-19 pandemic may exempt that student from testing through June 30, 2021. The exemption applies if the student is unable to take a state-approved test in person or virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. Programs that exempt

participants from NRS tests should put procedures in place to identify students who were not tested due to an inability to conduct testing, so that the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak can be appropriately tracked. Programs must administer state-approved pre-tests as soon as feasible. A participant cannot achieve an educational functioning level gain without an NRS- and state-approved pre- and post-test.

E. Curriculum

Georgia's distance education program is designed to reach and better serve learners who have limited accessibility to traditional adult education classes. Learners are supported by teachers who facilitate instruction through a variety of curricula to include: online educational programs, websites, audio and video recordings, computer-based software, and printed materials.

Programs that offer distance learning as an instructional option and wish to enter student proxy contact hours in GALIS as attendance hours must adhere to the specific guidelines for each proxy hour model:

Clock Time Model: Programs must use only the approved DE curricula listed in the chart on the next page to assign proxy contact hours using the Clock Time Model. If a program wants to use curricula not yet approved by the state, the program must submit the Distance Education Curriculum Request for Approval form to OAE.

Learner Mastery Model: Programs must use only the approved DE curricula listed in the chart on the next page to assign proxy contact hours using the Learner Mastery Model. If a program wants to use curricula not yet approved by the state, the program must submit the Distance Education Curriculum Request for Approval form to OAE.

Teacher Verification Model: Programs must develop a local evaluation system to assign, track, and document proxy contact hours according to the Teacher Verification Model. Teacher Verification Model assignments must align with state-approved instructional standards (CCRS and ELPS). Programs must document the evidence used to determine how to calculate proxy contact hours based on learner engagement and completion. Examples of evidence include piloting the assignment with a sample of students and determining an appropriate number of proxy contact hours through data analysis, or conducting a crosswalk of the assignment with state-approved DE curricula. In addition to entering the proxy contact hours into GALIS, programs must also maintain records of the student's satisfactory completion of the assignment and the actual number of hours the student spent on the assignment. Programs must conduct annual evaluations of approved Teacher Verification Model assignments by comparing the designated proxy contact hours with actual hours spent and update proxy contact hour designations as needed. Programs must maintain a database of locally approved Teacher Verification Model curricula along with all supporting documentation that OAE staff will audit during program monitoring. Programs should reach out to their Grant Program Support Coordinator if they need direct support using the Teacher Verification Model.

<i>Distance Education Curricula</i>	<i>Model type</i>	<i>Criteria For Proxy Contact Hours</i>	<i>Proxy Contact Hours</i>	<i>Validation Source</i>
Generally used with ABE/ASE				
ALEKS Aztec Common Core Achieve Common Core Basics CSM Learn GED Academy ITTS KET FastForward KeyTrain Khan Academy New Readers Press Online Learning PLATO Study Island TABE 11/12 Academy WIN Workforce Connects	Clock Time	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity Program must be able to differentiate class time (contact hours) from distance education time (proxy contact hours)	Time recorded by system ("Time on Task" reports are preferred, if available)	Software developer
Smart Horizons: Career Online High School	Mastery	Successfully complete one course (1/2 credit)	20 hours per course	Smart Horizons
Generally used with ESL/IELCE				
Burlington English DynEd English Language Learning Learning Upgrade Rosetta Stone Online Ventures Online Workbooks Voxy (New Readers Press)	Clock Time	System must track time and log out students after preset period of inactivity Program must be able to differentiate class time (contact hours) from distance education time (proxy contact hours)	Time recorded by system; ("Time on Task" reports are preferred, if available)	Software developer
U.S.A. Learns (All courses)	Clock Time	System must track time and log out students after preset period of inactivity Program must be able to differentiate class time (contact hours) from distance education time (proxy contact hours)	Time recorded by system; ("Time on Task" reports are preferred, if available)	Sacramento County Office of Education
Crossroads Café	Mastery	Passed unit test @ 70%	10 hours per unit; (Total 260)	North Carolina
English for All	Mastery	Passed unit test @ 70%	6 hours per unit; (Total 120)	NC, research done in CA

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Distance Education Curriculum - Request for Approval
to award Proxy Contact Hours

Local programs seeking to use instructional materials for Distance Education hours under the Clock Time Model or Learner Mastery Model must first verify that the selected materials have been approved for such use. In order to add new curricula to the list, the local program must complete the following application and receive OAE approval. Please complete the following questions about the curriculum and submit it to the OAE Instructional Services Director, Bobby Creech, at bcreech@tcsge.edu. Please limit your request to two total pages. OAE personnel will review the information and make a determination for its use for proxy contact hours.

1. Organization making the request:
2. Name of program/product:
3. Clock Time or Learner Mastery Model:
4. Publisher and contact information:
5. Sales Representative, if applicable, and contact information:
6. What are the content areas of the product?
7. Which groups of students will utilize it? Ex. ABE, ESL, etc.
8. Describe the product. Was it designed for adults?
9. (Clock Time Only) If software or online, does the product log the student off after a period of inactivity? If so, what is the amount of time?
10. (Clock Time Only) Are usage reports with the number of hours by individual student and by date range available to the local program?
11. (Learner Mastery Only) What is the standard for mastery? What evidence supports using this threshold?
12. What is the approximate cost of this product?
13. What kind of staff development will be implemented to ensure successful integration and use of the curriculum?