



Oregon
Higher Education Coordinating Commission
Office of Community Colleges and
Workforce Development

WIOA TITLE II
Assessment Policy

PY 2023–2024

State of Oregon
Higher Education Coordinating Commission
Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD)
3225 25th Street SE
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<http://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/ccwd/>

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1. Setting the State Context

Overview of State Policy

These documents provide Oregon’s policies for state and local assessment for Title II programs under WIOA: Adult Basic Skills (ABS), English as a Second Language (ESL), and Adult Secondary Education (ASE), including workforce and family literacy programs.

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

These documents identify key assessment policies that support:

- ❑ Selection and use of appropriate assessment instruments
- ❑ Appropriate test administration, scoring, and reporting of test scores
- ❑ Appropriate use of test results to inform instruction and improve programs
- ❑ Setting Performance Standards; and
- ❑ Reporting valid and reliable assessment results and related information for accountability to local, state, and federal funding sources and policymakers.

A. Need for Assessment Policy

Oregon’s assessment policies include the selection and use of appropriate learner assessment and procedures for:

- ❑ Accurate learner placement into appropriate program and instructional level
- ❑ Diagnostic information to inform instruction
- ❑ Pre- and post- testing to monitor progress toward goals; and
- ❑ Consistent testing and security protocols to ensure comparability and quality data.

These policies also include staff training and test security requirements for all staff who administer state approved assessments and use the results from these assessments.

Assessments Permitted

Table 1 - OCTAE Approved Assessment Instruments for Accountability Use in Oregon
 (The following may be used for ABE/ASE and ESL testing for Title II programs under WIOA.)

| Test | Series | Appraisal & Locator forms | Reading forms | Math forms | Listening forms | Speaking forms | Computer forms | Approved until: |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| CASAS | Reading GOALS | 900R (paper-based) 104R (eTest) | Levels A, B, C, D (901 – 908) ABE/ASE only | | | | eTests | February 5, 2025 |
| CASAS | Math GOALS | 900M (paper-based) 104M (eTest) | | Levels A/B & C/D (913-914 & 917-918) ABE/ASE only | | | eTests | March 7, 2024 |
| CASAS | Life and Work | 80* eTests CAT | Levels A, AX, B, C, D (81-188) ESL only | | Levels A-C, (981L – 986L) ESL only | | eTests | February 2, 2024 |
| BEST | Plus 2.0 | | | | | Forms D, E, and F ESL only | Computer-adaptive version forms D, E, and F | February 2, 2024 |

*ESL Oral Screening Interview may be used to determine if a Form 80 Appraisal is appropriate for non-native English speakers.

Validity and Reliability

Standardized progress tests are designed to assess learning along a continuum from beginning literacy and English language acquisition through completion of secondary level skills. They must monitor learning progress, with test difficulty levels ranging across all federal educational functioning levels. Each test level must have alternate test forms parallel in content and difficulty.

Title II programs under WIOA in the state of Oregon are required to use CASAS assessments with proven validity and reliability that correlate to the National Reporting System (NRS).

(**Validity** refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences made from test scores. **Validity** is a measure of the extent to which test items measure what they are intended to measure. Test **reliability** indicates the degree to which a test yields consistent results. Statistical techniques determine reliability and help ensure that there would not be a radically different score if the student were to attempt the test a second time with no additional learning). Programs may also use BEST Plus 2.0 to assess ESL students. BEST Plus 2.0 assessments are permitted but not required in Oregon.

All CASAS assessment instruments undergo rigorous test development and validation procedures and meet the standards of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the National Council for Measurement in Education (NCME), and the American Psychological Association (APA). The *CASAS Test Administration Manuals* contain detailed information about test validity and reliability. (See *Reading GOALS Test Administration Manual*, 2019, *Math GOALS Test Administration Manual V3*, 2019, *Life and Work Test Administration Manual, Second Edition*, 2005, and *Life and Work Listening Test Administration Manual*, 2014). Test content of the new CASAS Reading GOALS series is aligned with College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education. The BEST Plus 2.0 assessment was also developed under rigorous procedures. A thorough study of the reliability of the computer-adaptive version of BEST Plus 2.0 is detailed in the *BEST Plus 2.0 Technical Report* (January 2015) including typical inter-rater reliability that may be achieved by qualified and well-trained test administrators, and the consistency of measurement across test/re-test administrations of the computer-adaptive form of *BEST Plus 2.0*. For more information about these studies, see pages 10 -15 of the *BEST Plus 2.0 Technical Report*. Validity studies were also conducted, as well as a standard-setting study panel to relate BEST Plus 2.0 to the Student Performance Levels (SPLs) and to the Progress Testing: Pretest and Posttest ESL.

Uniform Implementation and Comparability

Programs awarded Title II funds in Oregon shall have enrollment, attendance, and retention standards that are objective, quantifiable, and measurable. Programs allocated funds shall be held accountable for the execution of core activities leading to consistent and reportable student outcomes and continued program improvement.

Continual program improvement will be evaluated using indicators of performance such as the numeric measures and data used to determine the quantitative level of the impact of instruction on client achievement.

States and local adult basic skills programs receiving Workforce Opportunity and Innovation (WIOA), Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds are required to collect and report data in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education, National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines. This data will be audited on a regular basis and used by CCWD to compare and scrutinize student outcomes. In awarding grants, Oregon will consider the past effectiveness of the eligible provider receiving funds under Title II in improving the basic skills of adults and in meeting or exceeding performance measures.

Federal Criteria for Assessment Instruments

The following criteria are mandatory for any assessment instruments used for federal reporting.

- ❑ **Standardized:**
 - In test administration and scoring, maintaining a constant testing environment and conducting the test according to detailed rules and specifications, so that testing conditions are equivalent for all test takers.
 - In test development, establishing scoring norms based on the test performance of a representative sample of individuals with which the test is intended to be used.
- ❑ **Valid:** The degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of tests.
- ❑ **Reliable:** The degree to which test scores for a group of test takers are consistent over repeated applications of a measurement procedure and, hence, are inferred to be dependable and repeatable for an individual test taker; the degree to which scores are free from measurement errors for a given group.
- ❑ **Alternate forms of the same test exist for pre- and posttesting:** When distinct forms of a test are constructed to the same explicit content and statistical specifications and administered under identical conditions, they are referred to as alternate, parallel or equivalent forms.
- ❑ **Appropriate:** Assessment instrument must be appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult students.
- ❑ **Aligned with Educational Functioning Levels:** Assessment tools must have evidence linking them to the NRS Educational Functioning Levels.

Furthermore, the instruments used for assessing and reporting student progress must be identified and approved by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) for federal reporting.

B. Purpose and Use of Assessments

In response to the 1993 Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) that required all Federal programs to develop indicators of performance to demonstrate their program's impact, and the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA) that established accountability requirements, the U.S. Department of Education created the National Reporting System (NRS). The goals of the NRS were to establish a national accountability system for adult education programs by:

- ❑ Identifying a set of measures that describe adult education students and the outcomes they achieve due to their participation
- ❑ Defining a set of educational functioning levels
- ❑ Establishing methods and requirements for data collection and reporting; and
- ❑ Developing training materials and activities on NRS requirements and procedures.

The 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) replaced WIA. The Education Department (ED) and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) collaborated on the implementation of the performance accountability requirements for WIOA. This important effort focused on developing the six primary indicators of performance, among other things. The primary indicators of performance are:

- ❑ The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- ❑ The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
- ❑ The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- ❑ The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
- ❑ The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and
- ❑ The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program.

Federal regulation 34 CFR 462.40-41 requires that states have an assessment policy that identifies the pre- and post-tests and test procedures that eligible providers must use to measure the EFL placement and gain of ABE, ASE, and ESL learners. CCWD is responsible for ensuring that programs follow uniform federal data collection policies and procedures and for implementing accountability requirements which include:

- ❑ Facilitating ongoing professional development of local staff
- ❑ Providing technical assistance to local programs
- ❑ Implementing quality control and monitoring procedures to ensure that local data procedures are accurate and complete
- ❑ Establishing and maintaining a state database that includes an individual student record system employing a relational database for local programs
- ❑ Establishing statewide uniform methods for a student assessment system
- ❑ Documenting state learning gains on the educational functioning levels

- ❑ Analyzing assessment results to identify trends and anomalies
- ❑ Setting annual performance targets for educational functioning levels; and
- ❑ Including performance outcomes in the annual funding formula.

State assessment policies support—

- ❑ The use of appropriate assessment instruments
- ❑ Appropriate test administration, scoring, and reporting of test scores
- ❑ Appropriate use of test results to inform instruction and improve programs
- ❑ The training of staff on assessment; and
- ❑ The reporting of valid and reliable assessment results and related accountability information to local, state, and federal funding sources.

Program Responsibilities

Programs must, in addition to complying with Federal assessment rules and the Oregon assessment policies, create and maintain local assessment policies, which must include the following:

1. A complete and current list of all certified test administrators, their assessment certifications and their dates of certification.
2. Documentation of testing procedures, including:
 - a) Who notifies instructors when students are eligible to posttest
 - b) When to notify instructors that students are eligible to posttest
 - c) How instructors communicate when students are ready to posttest; and
 - d) Who makes the final decision whether a student posttests.
3. Programs must make local assessment policies available to CCWD and OCTAE upon request.
4. Programs must report on the NRS measures according to state and federal requirements, including:
 - a) Complying with the federal and state-defined procedures for assessing learners for placement in EFLs and assessing progress using valid, standardized procedures to ensure comparability across programs; and
 - b) Reporting accurate data in TOPSpro Enterprise.
5. Scoring and alignment with NRS levels: Programs must use scaled scores provided in conversion charts by CASAS and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL, for BEST

Plus 2.0) for state and federal reporting and when communicating with learners about their progress. Programs must not use raw test scores for these purposes.

6. Learners to be assessed and reported: Programs must assess all learners receiving Title II services and include assessment data in TOPSpro Enterprise.

C. Summary and Additional Information

Implementation of a comprehensive assessment policy enables informed and effective instruction, and ensures reliable and comparable performance reporting. CCWD requires the use of standardized progress tests which are designed to assess learning along a continuum from beginning literacy and English language acquisition through completion of secondary level skills. Assessments must monitor learning progress, with test difficulty levels ranging across all federal educational functioning levels. Each test level must have alternate test forms parallel in content and difficulty. Programs must input all collected student data into TOPSpro Enterprise within 30 days of collection.

D. Resources for Information and Assistance:

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Director of Assessment Development
CASAS

Adult ESL Assessment
aea@cal.org
1-866-845-2378

Center for Applied Linguistics (for BEST
Plus 2.0)

2. General Assessment Requirements

A. Students to be Assessed

All students receiving Title II services under WIOA in the state of Oregon must be included in NRS reporting using the TOPSpro Enterprise Learner Management and Accountability System. Local providers must measure the educational level of all learners who receive 12 hours or more of instruction within a program year (July 1 to June 30). See the section Accommodations for Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs to note exceptions or accommodations for special populations (e.g., learners with disabilities, language barriers, and limited literacy skills).

B. When to Test

Pretests

Programs must pretest students in all required skill areas to establish a baseline against which progress will be measured and to evaluate their educational needs. The required skill area for ABE/ASE is reading. Math is a reportable skill area. Prior to receiving instruction in math, students must be pretested using CASAS for placement purposes, and subsequently posttested after receiving a minimum of 40 hours of instruction. The required skill area for ESL is reading. Listening and speaking are reportable skill areas, but are not required for either state or federal reporting. Pretests must be administered within the first 12 contact hours of program entry. Programs must collect instructional time in accordance with the NRS definition of actual “contact hours.” The NRS defines contact hours as follows: *Hours of instruction or instructional activity the learner receives from the program. Instructional activity includes any program-sponsored activity designed to promote student learning in the program curriculum, such as classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring, or participation in a learning lab. (Implementation Guidelines, Chapter II, Student Participation Measure #1: Contact Hours, page 44).*

The pretest establishes a baseline against which to measure future progress. The results of the pretests help identify the learning needs of the student and help guide instruction. The following exceptions apply:

- 1) If a student has passed one or more GED subject tests, the institution can decide if that GED test exempts the student from pretesting in that subject (e.g. passed GED math means student doesn't have to pretest in math). The local programs must outline which GED test(s) negate which pretest(s) in their local assessment procedure manuals.
- 2) Students who have previously tested at the highest level (Level 6) do not need to be retested in that subject, even if the test is from a previous year. Local programs must have a record of that student testing at the highest level.

Posttests

Per CASAS guidelines, posttesting will be at either the same level or a higher level, depending on the pretest score. It is recommended that the same test series that is used for the pretest be used for posttesting; however, the test series are normed so that the scores of most series are interchangeable and an alternate series may be used in most cases.

Programs must posttest learners in the same skills area as the pretest to measure academic progress (i.e., programs cannot use a reading pretest and a math posttest to determine learner gains). Learners must only be posttested in subject areas in which they received instruction. Students must not receive the same version/form of a test two testing sessions in a row. See the Summary and Overview section of this document for additional information on progress testing, scoring and alignment with NRS Levels.

Per CASAS guidelines and Oregon requirements, learners must receive at least 40 hours of instruction before being posttested. It is recommended that programs conduct posttesting at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction if learners have received at least 40 hours of instruction. However, the CASAS *recommendation* is that students should receive between 70 and 100 hours of instruction before being posttested, therefore professional judgment should be exercised as to whether students are ready to test after the required 40 hours, or whether it would be in the students' interests to wait until the recommended number of hours has been reached.

Per the test publisher's guidelines, a minimum of 60 hours of instruction are required before posttesting with BEST Plus 2.0 and posttesting after 80-100 hours of instruction is recommended, where possible. It is also recommended that programs conduct posttesting at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction if learners have received at least 60 hours of instruction. However, not all students may be ready for BEST Plus 2.0 posttesting at 60 hours. After the 60 hour minimum has been reached, professional judgement should be exercised in order to determine when it is most appropriate to test students, up to the recommended maximum of 100 hours.

Test Scores Outside the Range

If a learner achieves a score on a CASAS pretest which is potentially inaccurate because the learner's skills exceed the upper limits of the test (displayed in the CASAS system as a conservative estimate or "diamond" score), the learner must be re-tested with a test from the next higher level within a week of the initial pretest. The new assessment score replaces the conservative estimate score and the replaced test record should be deleted from the database. If a learner achieves a conservative estimate (diamond) score on an appropriate level posttest, the learner has sufficiently demonstrated skill gain and should not be re-tested until the next scheduled assessment cycle. At the next scheduled assessment cycle the student should receive a test from the next higher CASAS level.

Periods of Participation

A Period of Participation (PoP) begins when a student enters a program and becomes reportable when a student has 12 or more contact hours. The PoP ends when the student leaves the program and goes for 90 days without services or scheduled services (i.e. exits the program). Students who remain enrolled across program years/multiple program years do not need to requalify as participants. A Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) will be applied to a previous PoP if a student exits without posttesting, then reenters for a subsequent PoP, is tested at re-entry and demonstrates a level gain. However, an MSG cannot be retroactively applied to a prior program year. Any test given at re-entry will be used as a pretest for the subsequent PoP. A gain will also be counted for a prior PoP if the student exits with insufficient hours to posttest but achieves enough hours after re-entering to be eligible to posttest.

If a student is absent for 90 days or more but accumulated enough hours during the previous PoP to be eligible to posttest, the student must be tested on re-entry. If a student is absent for 90 days or more and did not accumulate enough hours during the previous PoP to be eligible to posttest, the program may determine that it is still in the student's best interests to retest upon re-entry, in which case the program must submit a detailed pedagogic justification for testing a student who has accumulated fewer than the minimum required number of hours (as outlined by published testing guidelines) to CCWD via secure file transfer. CCWD will use data to monitor students who are tested at under the minimum required number of hours and carry out random sampling to verify that required documentation has been submitted. If the student has been absent for 120 days or more, the student must be tested on reentry regardless of how many hours he/she accumulated during a previous PoP.

Uniform Test Administration Times

Uniform test administration times: Programs must follow the test publisher's requirements for the maximum amount of time allowed for testing:

CASAS Appraisal: no more than 30 minutes.

CASAS Life and Work pre- and posttests 60 minutes per test.

CASAS Reading GOALS pre/posttests Level A: 60 minutes, Levels B, C, D: 75 minutes.

CASAS Math GOALS pre/posttests Levels A/B: 60 minutes, Levels C/D: 75 minutes.

BEST Plus 2.0 tests are not timed.

Pre- Post- Match Percentages

The actual posttesting percentages for 2021-2022 showed an increase of 16% in ABE, 12% in ASE, and 36% in ESL, compared with the prior year (2020-21). The overall increase in posttesting was 23%. The increase in posttesting rates is, in part, due to the creation of a statewide remote proctoring service. In response to local program director feedback, Oregon contracted with a local program to establish a statewide remote proctoring service. Available to any local ABS program in Oregon, the statewide remote proctoring service addressed barriers that local programs had with pre- and post-testing, including not having the staffing capacity to conduct widespread remote testing. As a result, pre and post-testing pairs and assessment rates have increased. Due to the success of the initial year of statewide remote proctoring, the contract was renewed and online proctoring continues.

Percentages are based on the number of Title II Participants reported in the federal NRS tables. Programs must have a pre-/post-test match rate as prescribed in the table below.

| | Actual 20-21 | Actual 21-22 | Goal 21-22 | Goal 22-23 | Goal 23-24 |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| ABE | 29% | 45% | 52% | 43% | 45% |
| ASE | 8% | 20% | 34% | 24% | 26% |
| ESL | 8% | 44% | 68% | 48% | 50% |
| Overall | 17% | 40% | 55% | 41% | 43% |

C. Assessments Permitted

Appraisal and Locator Tests

Appraisal or locator tests: Programs must use the CASAS appraisal or locator tests for the skill areas indicated below. The appraisal/locator is built into the pretest of the computer-adaptive version of the test (CAT), but is a separate test for both the paper and computer-based (CBT) versions of the test. There is no appraisal for BEST Plus 2.0. The CASAS Locator and Appraisal are different, though they have the same purpose of determining the appropriate pretest at intake. Locator tests generally comprise 12 items and can take up to 15 minutes. Appraisals comprise 28 items and usually take up to 30 minutes. Programs may choose to use either the locator or the appraisal test based on what is determined to be in the students' best interests.

Initial placement with a CASAS appraisal or locator gauges a learner's reading, math, and listening comprehension. Oregon requires the use of CASAS appraisals or locators to ensure that appropriate decisions are made regarding educational placement and appropriate pretest form to administer. Appraisals and locators cannot be used as a pretest or to measure learner progress. The CASAS test administration manual includes specific recommendations about

which level of pretest to administer based on the appraisal or locator test score. Programs must use the CASAS appraisal or locator tests for the skill areas indicated below.

Table 2A CASAS Appraisal and Locator Tests for ABE/ASE/ESL

| Skills Areas | ABE/ASE Reading | ABE/ASE Math | ESL Reading & Listening |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Appraisal | 900R | 900M | Form 80 |
| Locator | 104R | 104M | CBT Locator |

Educational Functioning Levels

Raw test scores are not to be used for either state or federal reporting or to communicate with students about progress. Instead, scaled scores provided in conversion charts by CASAS and CAL provide level information. Tables 3A and 3B show the relationship between scale score ranges and NRS levels for ESL and ABE/ASE. For NRS reporting purposes, placement in educational functioning levels is determined by the lowest pretest scaled score. Posttest results are used to measure educational gain and to advance students across educational functioning levels.

Table 3A Scoring and Alignment with NRS Levels for ABE/ASE

| NRS Educational Functioning Levels | CASAS Reading Scale Score Ranges (Reading GOALS) | NRS Educational Functioning Levels | CASAS Math Scale Score Ranges (Math GOALS) |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Beginning ABE Literacy | 203 and below | Beginning Literacy | 193 and below |
| Beginning Basic Education | 204-216 | Beginning Basic | 194-203 |
| Low Intermediate Basic Education | 217-227 | Low Intermediate | 204-214 |
| High Intermediate Basic Education | 228-238 | Middle Intermediate | 215-225 |
| Low Adult Secondary Education | 239-248 | High Intermediate | 226-235 |
| High Adult Secondary Education | 249 and above | Adult Secondary | 236 and above |

Table 3B Scoring and Alignment with NRS Levels for ESL

| NRS Educational Functioning Levels | BEST Plus 2.0 Speaking Score Ranges | CASAS Reading Scale Score Ranges (Life and Works) | CASAS Listening Scale Score Ranges (Life and Works) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Beginning ESL Literacy | 400 and below | 180 and below | 180 and below |
| Low Beginning ESL | 401-417 | 181-190 | 181-189 |
| High Beginning ESL | 418-438 | 191-200 | 190-199 |
| Low Intermediate ESL | 439-472 | 201-210 | 200-209 |
| High Intermediate ESL | 473-506 | 211-220 | 210-218 |
| Advanced ESL | 507-540 | 221-235 | 219-227 |
| Exit Advanced ESL | | 236 and above | 228 and above |

**Publisher Recommended Timeframes for Pre- and Post-testing
Adult Education Assessments**

| Test Name | Recommended Pre- and Post-testing Timeframes | Contact/Notes |
|------------------|--|---|
| BEST Plus 2.0 | <p>60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended</p> <p>If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the recommended number of hours, posttesting may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session.</p> <p>Because program-related factors such as intensity of instruction, class size, teacher training and experience, and use of appropriate curricula and materials will affect language learning proficiency gains, programs should consider these factors when determining timing for pre-and post-testing.</p> | <p>Meg Montee, Director, Performance-based Language Assessment. Center for Applied Linguistics 202-384-1250 mmontee@cal.org</p> |
| CASAS | <p>40 hours minimum; 70-100 hours recommended</p> <p>Allow exceptions for courses with different schedules and intensity, e.g., allow more time for courses that meet infrequently or not intensively and for very intensive courses wait longer than the recommended number of hours to posttest.</p> <p>Programs offering high intensity courses (e.g., class meets more than 15 hours per week) may choose to test at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction, even though the instructional intervention is more than 100 hours of instruction.</p> <p>Programs offering low intensity courses with less than 70 hours in a semester, quarter, term, or other block of instruction, may choose</p> | <p>Linda Taylor, Director of Assessment Development, CASAS ltaylor@casas.org (800)255-1036 ext. 186 www.casas.org</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>to posttest at the end of instructional period.</p> <p>Programs may choose to assess students who indicate they are leaving the program before the scheduled posttest time, to maximize collection of paired test data.</p> | |
|--|--|--|

D. Training, Dissemination, and Monitoring of Assessment Policy

The OCTAE approved Oregon Assessment Policy will be published in the Higher Education Coordinating Commission’s Adult Basic Skills Policy Manual which is available on the HECC website at:

<https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/ccwd/Pages/abs-resources.aspx>

Test administrators must be certified by both the testing company and CCWD before administering or scoring any assessment instrument used for state and federal accountability reporting. Training for each state approved assessment is required to ensure accurate use of tests and interpretation of learner results, and to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process.

Program Administrators will receive regular assessment policy and training updates at quarterly meetings of the Oregon Council on Adult Basic Skills Development, on monthly program directors’ calls and via occasional webinars. Program Directors will use the Assessment Policy in the ABS Policy Manual posted on the CCWD website to provide local staff training.

CASAS test administrators, e-Test site coordinators and e-Test proctors must complete applicable CASAS certification trainings and certification tests. In addition, as of 7/1/22 all new paper test proctors must also complete CASAS certification training. BEST Plus 2.0 test administrators must complete an in-person or virtual BEST Plus 2.0 Initial Certification training offered by a state trainer. In addition to these trainings, all test administrators in Oregon Title II-funded programs must complete an Oregon-specific training which includes NRS policy, Oregon assessment and accountability policy, and data collection processes and procedures. Furthermore, all test administrators must be recertified as indicated in the table below. Test administrators who have not administered tests within a twelve-month period and/or who have not passed a recertification activity are no longer certified to administer the test and must be retrained and pass a certification test in order to be recertified.

Local program directors are responsible for determining sufficient numbers of certified test administrators and eTest proctors to meet state assessment and accountability requirements and local program assessment needs.

All test administrators must review the Test Administration Manual published by CASAS (and the Test Administrator Guide published by CAL if applicable) prior to the start of a new academic year, or prior to administering an assessment if they do not administer the assessment regularly.

Local program directors will monitor for assessment policy compliance by:

- ❑ Providing faculty and staff with a written copy of the assessment policy
- ❑ Ensuring that Certified Test Administration training procedures are adhered to
- ❑ Ensuring that required Oregon Assessment Certification documentation is submitted to CCWD; and
- ❑ Keeping test certification records with the program training records as required by HECC ABS Policy Manual.

CCWD ABS staff will monitor for assessment policy compliance by:

- ❑ Maintaining an updated Oregon Assessment Certification log
- ❑ Monitoring programs for compliance with the Assessment Policy during technical assistance site visits; and
- ❑ Performing ongoing desktop monitoring for compliance with policy.

Quality Control Procedures

Oregon uses the following quality control procedures to verify that appropriate assessment procedures have been followed:

- ❑ Data integrity checks
- ❑ System logic to prevent inappropriate assessments being entered
- ❑ Filtering of incorrect scale score gains
- ❑ Data verification procedures
- ❑ Validating and editing data policies and procedures
- ❑ Record retention policy
- ❑ Training for local program administrators
- ❑ On-site local program reviews; and
- ❑ Recertification requirements for test administrators.

Assessment Certification Process

(See table below for Oregon Assessment Certification Process Requirements)

| Assessment Instrument | BEST Plus 2.0 Initial certification | BEST Plus 2.0 Scoring Refresher Calibration | CASAS Initial certification and recertification (eTests or Paper Tests) | CASAS Paper Test Proctor Certification | CASAS eTest Coordinator Certification | CASAS eTest Proctor Certification | CASAS Remote Proctor Certification |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| Who needs training | All who administer the test | All who administer the test | CASAS Required Training by Role (e.g. Agency Reps, DBAs, Coordinators, Proctors, Instructors) | All who administer paper tests | Each site must have at least one eTest coordinator; all eTest coordinators are required to be certified | All who administer eTests (eTest coordinators do not need Proctor Training) | All who administer the tests remotely |
| Certification frequency | Once | Annually | Once with refresher training every three years | Once (for all new paper test proctors as of 7/1/22) | Once | Once | Once before administering any CASAS test remotely |
| Training schedule | As needed | Determined by program | On demand | On demand | On demand | On demand | On demand |
| Process | Training is provided by state trainer. CCWD provides training for Oregon-specific assessment policy | Local staff views Scoring Refresher videos at local program and scores Recalibration Exercise | CASAS Certification is available online from CASAS.org. CCWD provides training for Oregon-specific assessment policy | Paper Test Proctor Certification is available online from CASAS.org. | eTest Coordinator Certification is available online from CASAS.org. | eTest Proctor Certification is available online from CASAS.org. | Remote Proctor Certification is available online from CASAS. Please note: all remote proctors must take eTest proctor training first and sign a proctor agreement with CASAS before remotely proctoring tests |

Programs are required to submit an [Online Site Agreement](#) with CASAS at launch of eTest and TOPSpro Enterprise implementation, and a supplement to provide location and contact information if/when programs wish to reconfigure and/or add testing sites.

CASAS requires that programs identify one Point of Contact (POC) and one TOPSpro Enterprise (TE) Enhanced user (has full access to all TE functions) per program. This can be the same person or two different people.

The TE Enhanced user is responsible for managing other users' access to the account. The TE Enhanced user must review the **Users Lister** at least annually and add to and/or disable or delete user accounts the as staff changes.

CCWD maintains a database of all assessment training/certification records for the state, including initial certification, recertification, refresher training and Oregon-specific training. Local programs are responsible for ensuring that only certified test administrators administer state approved assessments. The state monitors compliance of this requirement during spot-checks, program reviews and on-site visits. Test Administrators conducting assessments via remote proctoring must complete trainings as recommended by test publishers.

E. Accommodating Students with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

Accommodations in testing alter the conditions for administering a test, allowing test takers with disabilities to demonstrate their skills and abilities more accurately. Proper accommodations meet the needs of examinees without changing what a test is intended to measure. Programs must comply with federal laws established by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Local Adult Education Programs

Local programs are responsible for providing fully accessible services and for ensuring that these services meet reasonable criteria. Adult learners with disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodations and for submitting documentation of their disability at the time of registration, program entry, or after diagnosis. The need to use an accommodation should be documented in official learner records, such as the Individual Program Education Plan (IPP) or Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The documentation must show that the disability interferes with the learner's ability to demonstrate performance on the test. The information can come from a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, and other clinical records. Programs can contact the local division of vocational rehabilitation or a secondary school to request documentation of a disability provided express written permission is granted by the student. If students are unable to provide required documentation, programs should follow their own internal accommodations procedures.

CAL Accommodations in Test Administration Procedures

Accommodations in test administration procedures for BEST Plus 2.0 include using hearing aids but do not include allowing students to read prompts from the computer screen. As BEST Plus 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 and no accommodation can be made for students who cannot hear or speak. Students who cannot hear or speak should not be assessed using BEST Plus 2.0.

CASAS Accommodations in Test Administration Procedures

Local test administrators may provide or allow some accommodations in test administration procedures or environment for disabilities without contacting CASAS.

Accommodations procedures are applicable to all CASAS tests and include:

- ❑ accommodations in test time
- ❑ supervised breaks
- ❑ a sign language interpreter for test administration directions only
- ❑ alternate room for testing
- ❑ colored overlays
- ❑ large print test booklets and answer sheets; and
- ❑ extended time.

Additionally, CASAS test forms that may be appropriate for learners with disabilities include CASAS eTests and computer-based tests, CASAS large-print tests include Beginning Literacy Reading Assessment and Secondary Level Assessment test booklets in math. Large-print answer sheets are also available. A test form in Braille is available for learners who have a visual impairment and can read Braille. It is not an allowable accommodation to provide a reader for a CASAS reading test to a learner with low literacy skills or blindness.

The paper *Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities* provides more detailed information on providing accommodations.

Please see Appendices for Guidelines for Providing Accommodations for CASAS and BEST Plus 2.0

3. Guidelines for Each Assessment

Assessment Name: **Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)**

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Applicable Program | ABE/ASE/ESL |
| Subject | Listening & Reading |
| Administration Procedure | Individual or group |
| Expiration Date | Reading GOALS – February 5, 2025 Math GOALS – March 7, 2024 Life and Work (ESL) February 2, 2024 |
| Scoring Procedures | Printed answer keys and scoring charts are available for administrators. Scoring software is also available. Raw scores of correct responses are converted into scale scores. |
| Scores linked to NRS levels | See Table 3A and Table 3B on page 18 (above). |
| Posttest time | 40 hours required, 70-100 hours Recommended |
| Training Requirements | View CASAS Required Training by Role (e.g. Agency Reps, DBAs, Coordinators, Proctors, Instructors). Note: additional training is required for remote proctoring of test (see publisher’s guidelines). All test administrators in Oregon Title II-funded programs must also complete an Oregon-specific training (see ABS Policy Manual, Section 6.5). |
| Forms Available | See Table 1 on page 6 (above). |
| Locator/Appraisal Required | Yes, Appraisal/Locator Forms 80, and 900R, 104R (see Table 1 , page 6, above). |

Assessment Name: **Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 2.0**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------|---------------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|
| Applicable Program | ESL | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Subject | Speaking and Listening | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Administration Procedure | Individual | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Expiration Date | Feb. 2, 2024 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scoring Procedures | Computer assisted and Print: Learner responses are identified, rated on a scoring rubric by the reviewer, and entered into the computer. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scores linked to NRS levels | <table> <tr> <td>ESL 1</td> <td>400 and below</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESL 2</td> <td>401-417</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESL 3</td> <td>418-438</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESL 4</td> <td>439-472</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESL 5</td> <td>473-506</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESL 6</td> <td>507-540</td> </tr> </table> | ESL 1 | 400 and below | ESL 2 | 401-417 | ESL 3 | 418-438 | ESL 4 | 439-472 | ESL 5 | 473-506 | ESL 6 | 507-540 |
| ESL 1 | 400 and below | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESL 2 | 401-417 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESL 3 | 418-438 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESL 4 | 439-472 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESL 5 | 473-506 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESL 6 | 507-540 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Posttest time | 60 hours minimum, 80-100 hours recommended | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Training Requirements | Training will be held under the supervision of a CAL qualified assessor. Training sessions will be held annually. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Forms Available | Computer Assisted: Adaptive questions respond to the learner's ability Print: D, E, & F | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Locator/Appraisal Required | No | | | | | | | | | | | | |

A. Assessment Integrity and Security

Test Administration Manuals

Oregon requires that local adult education programs follow the Test Administration guidelines for each test series used the Test Administration Manual (TAM) published by CASAS and the Test Administrator Guide published by CAL. All local adult education programs must maintain copies of the appropriate administration manuals for all assessments used and for every testing site.

Test Security Agreements

The local adult education program director is responsible for safeguarding all standardized assessment materials, including testing booklets and answer sheets which contain marks or responses. Oregon requires that all certified test administrators sign a test security agreement. This agreement includes the following stipulations:

- ❑ Programs may not use displays, questions, or answers that appear on any test, discontinued or current, to create materials designed to teach or prepare learners to answer test items. Instead, programs should use instructional resources provided by test vendors and other support materials, to link curriculum, assessment and instruction.
- ❑ It is not permissible for teachers to review specific test items with students in discussing test results, or include actual test items in any instructional materials. Teachers should focus on the competencies and the underlying basic skills in preparing students for testing.
- ❑ All paper test materials must be kept in a secure lockable location and computer testing materials in secured computer testing stations.
- ❑ Any test booklets/test series or materials that are damaged, expired or no longer in use must be shredded.
- ❑ All answer sheets and writing samples are treated as confidential until shredded.
- ❑ No duplication of any test form or any portion of any test form is permitted for any reason.

Entry of Assessment Data

Entry of Assessment Data Oregon requires that CASAS and BEST Plus 2.0 assessment data be entered into TOPSpro Enterprise within 30 days of collection. See Section 6.6 of the [Oregon ABS Policy Manual](#).

B. Distance Education-Specific Assessment Policy

The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development has adopted the definition of distance education provided by the *National Reporting System Implementation Guidelines, July 2007*:

Distance education is formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software.

Oregon's Assessment Policy applies to all Adult Basic Skills students in WIOA Title II funded programs, whether they are in face-to-face classes, hybrid classes or distance education. Assessments are generally conducted through face-to-face interaction with a trained test administrator in a secure setting. However, assessments may be proctored remotely, provided they are conducted in accordance with the test publisher's (NRS approved) guidelines. Programs wishing to administer CASAS assessments remotely must complete an Agency Agreement with CASAS and individual proctors must sign a Proctor Agreement. Please see Section D (above) for state training and certification requirements for remote proctors.

Requirements for Measuring Contact Hours for Distance Learners

Students in distance learning courses must have at least 12 hours of contact with the program before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes (TOPS/NRS). Contact hours for distance learners can be a combination of direct contact and distance contact (e.g., through telephone, video, teleconference, or online communication), where student and program staff can interact and through which learner identity can be verified.

Students who receive a blended approach of instruction must be classified as either a distance learning student or a traditional classroom student, not both. Therefore, if a student takes both distance learning and classroom-based courses throughout the year, a student will be classified as a distance learning student if more than 50% of the instructional hours are at a distance. As a result, the student must be reported as a distance learner in the TOPS system.

Reporting Distance Learning Contact Hours

Distance Learning contact hours must be associated with one of three OCTAE (Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education)-approved distance learning models of instruction:

- ❑ **Clock Time Model** – Assigns contact hours based on time that learner is engaged in a software program that tracks time.
- ❑ **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.
- ❑ **Learner Mastery Model** – Assigns a fixed number of hours based on the learner passing a test on the content of the lesson.

Each local ABS program will determine the model or models that it will employ for distance learning course offerings. Each ABS program that wishes to operate a distance learning program and count students as distance learners for federal reporting must submit an application to CCWD for approval prior to implementing the course(s).

Approved Software for Distance Education

A list of approved software for use with distance learning courses can be found on the CCWD website <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/institutions-programs/ccwd/Pages/abs-resources.aspx>

Purchasing Procedures for Each Assessment

Only certified administrators may order CASAS and CAL assessments authorized for use in Oregon from CASAS and CAL for their programs.

APPENDIX A

Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities

Purpose

The accountability standards in the 1998 Workforce Investment Act include the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 to improve access to adult programs and achieve employment outcomes for learners with disabilities. Other legislation addresses provisions related to testing accommodations for learners with disabilities, including the ADA Amendments of 2008, Section 504 in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. These laws ensure equal access for all learners in education programs, including learners with disabilities. Accommodations provide an opportunity for all test takers to demonstrate their skills and ability. The accommodations may alter test administration procedures without changing what the test is intended to measure.

The following guidelines address methods for administering CASAS assessments using accommodations for learners with documented disabilities. The suggested accommodations for disability categories consist of the provisions below.

1. Accommodations in test administration procedures.
2. Use of appropriate CASAS test forms.

Local Program Responsibility

Local test administrators must consider the individual needs of the learner when they provide accommodations. The responsibility of fulfilling learner requests for accommodations is that of the local program following state guidelines, not of CASAS. However, CASAS will work with state and local programs to develop additional tests that are in a format reflecting the manner in which learners acquire and report information needed to function in everyday life. For example, if a learner is legally blind and reads information using Braille, then a standardized reading test in a Braille format is appropriate for testing. CASAS has developed an assessment in Braille format that reflects functional literacy situations in the life and work of a person who is blind.

Local programs are responsible for providing fully accessible services and have the responsibility to ensure that these services meet reasonable criteria. In addition, the program administering the test must provide any necessary accommodations at no cost to the learner. The costs are negligible for most of the common accommodations that learners will request. The program may wish to contact district or state rehabilitative or health and human welfare programs for diagnostic services such as for learning disabilities.

Local program, district, and state accountability data collection systems should include CASAS test results for learners with disabilities. However, all public reports of test results must follow confidentiality laws and report scores without reference to name, address, or Social Security number of the learner. Local and state programs may also want to collect accountability data on

which and how many accommodations or alternate test forms are provided during test administration for program improvement purposes.

Adult learners with disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodations and for submitting documentation of their disability at the time of registration, program entry, or after diagnosis. The need to use an accommodation should be documented in official learner records, such as the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Individual Program Plan (IPP), or Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The information could come from public school records, a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, and other clinical records. Adult programs can often contact the local division of vocational rehabilitation or a secondary school to request documentation of a disability. The documentation must show that the disability interferes with the learner's ability to demonstrate performance on the test.

Local programs should provide the same accommodations when they administer CASAS assessment as they do for the learner during instruction and as documented in annual plans such as individual education plans. For example, if the learner acquires information and receives instruction with the assistance of a sign language interpreter, then an interpreter is also necessary to provide directions for standardized testing. However, interpreters *do not sign the test questions themselves* because the purpose of the assessment is to determine level of basic reading literacy skill.

It is important that a learner practice using the appropriate accommodation during instruction *before* using the accommodation during the assessment. Also, it is important to *ask learners* what accommodations will work best in their situation.

CASAS has a variety of standardized performance-based assessment instruments to use with learners who do not demonstrate their skills well on multiple-choice tests. Standardized performance-based instruments are available for special purposes such as demonstration of writing and speaking skills and functional life skills for adults who have developmental disabilities.

ACCOMMODATIONS IN TEST ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

Local test administrators may provide or allow some accommodations in test administration procedures or environment for documented disabilities without contacting CASAS. Test administrators often use these same strategies as *test taking strategies* for other learners who do not have documented disabilities. Students may request to take only one test per day or to test in an alternate quiet room. Learners may also use a variety of strategies when they take a test, such as a plain straight-edge ruler, magnifying strips or glass, colored overlays, ear plugs, and other devices as deemed appropriate.

Sample accommodations in test administration procedures or environment are shown in Table 1. Examples of these accommodations are extended time, supervised breaks, or sign language interpreter *for test administration directions only*. The accommodations listed are suggestions only. Accommodations are based on needs of individual learners and *not* on a disability category. Any testing accommodation must be consistent with documentation in the annual plan, such as

an IEP. These strategies do not alter the validity of the test results. The local test administrator does not need to contact CASAS when providing these accommodations.

It is *not* an appropriate accommodation in test administration procedures to *read a CASAS reading test* to a learner. The purpose of a reading test is to assess reading skill levels and to determine the learner’s appropriate instructional level, not to assess knowledge of a subject area. Programs may call CASAS to provide information on these or other suggested accommodations.

Use of Appropriate CASAS Test Forms

It is important to use an appropriate test form that best meets the learner’s goals and manner of receiving and reporting information. Most learners with a disability can take some form of a CASAS test. CASAS provides large-print versions of all tests. Large-print tests and CASAS eTests® are examples of test forms often used for learners with documented disabilities based on need as well as for *all* learners.

When Appropriate CASAS Tests Are Not Available

Please contact CASAS to obtain permission *before* changing the test format locally, if the test form is not currently available from CASAS. CASAS requires approval because changes in test format affect the standardization and statistical measures for the test. CASAS will provide advice regarding appropriate accommodations that are not currently available to test administrators. Contact CASAS at 858-255-1036 for further information on appropriate accommodations for using CASAS tests.

TABLE 1. PROVIDING ACCOMMODATIONS USING CASAS ASSESSMENT

| DISABILITY | TEST ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES | CASAS TEST FORMS AVAILABLE |
|--|--|--|
| Learning problems: dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia or other Specific Learning Disability, ADHD, aphasia, traumatic brain injury, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy or other disorder that can affect learning or testing behavior | Extended time (1.5) Alternate schedule Frequent supervised breaks Scribe/writer/alternate room Computer — spelling and grammar check disabled Simple calculator | Large-print forms and Answer Sheet for all CASAS tests Oral assessment for Citizenship Interview Test Large-Print Answer Sheets for Reading for Citizenship CASAS eTests® |
| Deaf or Hearing Impaired <i>A student whose hearing impairment is such that s/he cannot hear the listening test is exempt from taking the listening test</i> | Sign language interpreter <i>for test directions only for Listening tests</i> Head phones for those taking a listening test | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Blind or Visually Impaired <i>A student whose visual impairment is such that s/he cannot read the reading test and who does not read Braille is exempt from taking the reading test</i> | Magnifier/Template Video magnifiers Scribe/reader <i>for the test directions only for Reading tests</i> | Level A/B Reading test in contracted Braille format Large-print CASAS tests CASAS Listening test series (Levels A, B and C) CASAS eTests® |
| Mobility impairment | Extended time Alternate site/equipment Scribe/writer Communication board | CASAS eTests® |
| Mental/Emotional Disability: bipolar disorder, major depression, PTSD, anxiety/phobias, etc. | Extended time (1.5) Alternate schedule Frequent supervised breaks Scribe/writer/alternate room Computer — spelling and grammar check disabled Simple calculator | CASAS eTests® |

Note. The accommodations listed above are suggestions only and in addition to use of regular CASAS tests. Accommodations are based on needs of individual learners and *not* on a disability category. Any testing accommodation should be consistent with documentation in the annual plan, such as an IPP. Alternate test forms developed by CASAS do not modify test standards. For exceptions to this policy please contact CASAS.

APPENDIX B

Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using BEST PLUS 2.0 Assessment for Learners with Disabilities

What are appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities?

Reasonable Accommodations Laws such as 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 Plus 2.0 and 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. The test administrator cannot show the prompts on the screen or in the test booklet to a person with a hearing impairment nor may a sign language interpreter be used. A permissible accommodation for BEST Plus 2.0 would be the use of hearing aids. Likewise, a test administrator cannot explain the content of a picture cue prompt to a person with a visual impairment. An appropriate accommodation would be the use of a magnifying glass to enlarge the image. BEST Plus 2.0 is not appropriate for use with individuals whose visual impairment prevents them from seeing the picture cue prompts even when enlarged or otherwise enhanced. Skipping picture questions is not a reasonable accommodation for individuals with visual impairments. For more information, please see BEST Plus 2.0 Test Usage Policy (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2016).