




ADULT CAREER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES (ACCES)
ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND POLICY
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TO: Adult Education Program Managers 
FROM: Robert Purga, Supervisor of Adult Education
SUBJECT: Test accommodations guidance for students with diagnosed disabilities for the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), BEST Plus and BEST Literacy.
DATE: February 28, 2012

The New York State Education Department's Adult Education Programs and Policy (AEPP) Office allows its funded adult education programs (programs) to offer students with disabling conditions the opportunity to take tests with accommodations. To be eligible for test accommodations on the TABE, BEST Plus or BEST Literacy, students must have a formal diagnosis from a qualified professional.

General guidelines:

- Programs should **not** refer to the procedural requirements set forth in the *Chief Examiner's Manual for NYS GED® Test Administration* or the accommodation process found on the NYS GED® Testing Office web site. This a separate and distinct process that applies only to the GED® test;
- Programs must consider the individual needs of the person requesting the testing accommodation in determining whether the modification will be permitted;
- When determining whether or not a particular testing accommodation should be provided, programs must refer to the procedural requirements set forth by the test publisher: for the TABE tests, refer to the CTB-McGraw-Hill document, *Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration 2005*; for the BEST Plus and BEST Literacy, refer to the Center for Applied Linguistic's *Test Accommodations* policy memo. Both documents are attached and are also available on our web site at: <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/aepp/assessment.html>
- Programs are responsible for making the final determination as to whether a particular test accommodation should be provided.

Since most of the questions the AEPP Office receives concern accommodations for the TABE tests, we want to direct programs' attention to the Appendix of *Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration 2005*, CTB McGraw-Hill, which describes three classification categories of test accommodations. This Appendix also gives specific examples for each category. Please pay particular attention to Category 3:

Category 3 accommodations change what is being measured and are likely to have an effect that alters the interpretation of individual criterion- and norm-referenced scores. This occurs when the accommodation is strongly related to the knowledge, skill, or ability being measured (e.g., having a reading test read aloud).

Since Category 3 accommodations change what is being measured, they are not recommended. Specific examples of Category 3 accommodations from the *Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration 2005* include:

- On a Reading (decoding) test, use a tape recording of stimulus material, questions, and/or answer choices.
- Have directions, stimulus material, questions, and/or answer choices paraphrased.
- For a mathematics computation test, use of a calculator or arithmetic tables.

Please note that while calculators are not recommended when taking the Mathematics Computation component of the TABE tests, general TABE test administration instructions allow **any** test taker to use a calculator on the Applied Mathematics component.

Category 1 and 2 accommodations include accommodations that may not significantly affect the validity of tests and, therefore, may be used. Examples include students taking the tests alone or in a study carrel, and students taking extra time or taking sections of the tests at different times or on different dates. Please refer to the Appendix of *Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration 2005* for the complete lists for all three categories.

All programs must keep a record in a student's Education and Employment Plan (EEP) of all test accommodations given, including date of tests, type of tests, and type of accommodation used. These guidelines should not affect identifying a student as having a learning disability for National Reporting System (NRS) purposes, which can be done using the Washington 13 screening tool or other informal methods.

If you have questions regarding this guidance, please contact Claudia Dean in the Adult Education Programs and Policy (AEPP) Office at (518) 474-8940.

Attachments:

- CTB-McGraw-Hill's *Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration 2005*
- Center for Applied Linguistic's *Test Accommodations* policy memo