



# COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES

*Washington State Board*

## Washington State Basic Education for Adults Assessment Policy

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## What's New

- CASAS Life & Work series for ESL reading & listening have been extended for use through PY2024-25. However, WA providers are only allowed to use forms 27/28R with level ESL I: Beginning Literacy learners. (Pg 10 & 14)
- CASAS Math Goals [913-918 series] has been sunset and is no longer approved for use.
- Sections III. and IV. have been made into subcategories of a new section called Demonstrating Skill Gain in Programs Designed to Use Alternative Placement.

### I. Setting the State Context

To provide the best possible educational services to Basic Education for Adults (BEaA) students and to standardize BEaA program assessment practices across Washington State, the BEaA office of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) developed the following assessment policy.

This policy complies with the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy (USDE/DAEL) program review findings from 2003 and 2011. It also fulfills the USDE/DAEL requirement that each state receiving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II funding annually develops, publish, and implement a written assessment policy (USDE/DAEL Memorandum Regarding State Assessment Policy Guidance, July 21, 2005). That memorandum requires states to describe the assessments local programs are to use, when local programs are to administer pre-tests and post-tests, and the assessment training, administration, and reporting requirements. This assessment policy also complies with the National Reporting System (NRS) State Assessment Policy Guidance in 34 CFR 462 Subpart D, revised June 6, 2011.

The NRS measures the impacts of instruction and ensures accountability through the mandated use of valid and reliable standardized assessments. *The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* states that validity refers to “the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of tests,” and that “reliability refers to the consistency of measurements when the testing procedure is repeated on a population of individuals or groups.”<sup>1</sup>

Following a 2003 federal program review, the Council for Basic Skills (CBS) and SBCTC/BEaA selected the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) as a standardized

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<sup>1</sup> American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education. (1999) *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

assessment instrument. CASAS standardized assessment instruments are the only instruments approved for state and federal adult education accountability and reporting requirements in Washington State BEdA programs. The use of common assessment instruments provides the State Legislature and the NRS with standardized data and progress reports across all of Washington State’s BEdA providers. These valid and reliable instruments are also used for state performance accountability, federal grant funding guidelines, and Student Achievement funding calculations.

Assessment, demographic, enrollment, and attendance data for all students must be entered into the Literacy, Adult, and Community Education System (LACES) data collection and reporting software. LACES tracks and reports enrollment and Measurable Skill Gains (MSG).

BEdA providers in Washington State must use this assessment policy, the [BEdA Handbook](#), CASAS Test Administration Manuals, CASAS Cadre training workshops, LACES trainings and other resource documents available in LACES, SBCTC/BEdA grant assurances, and NRS training as the foundation of local CASAS assessment and reporting procedures, guidelines, and implementation practices.

### **Information and Technical Assistance**

BEdA providers shall collect, review, and report information according to the procedures defined in SBCTC’s [BEdA Handbook](#).

Contact us at [bedareporting@sbctc.edu](mailto:bedareporting@sbctc.edu) for assistance.

## **II. Program Entry and Period of Participation**

Upon program entry and any re-entry after a program exit (i.e., a new “period of participation”) all students served in any way with state or federal adult education funds must be assessed for Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) using the NRS-approved assessment methods described in this assessment policy or in the Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) section on the [BEdA State Reporting and Compliance page of the BEdA Handbook](#).

## **III. Demonstrating Skill Gain in Programs Designed to Use Alternative Placement**

Participants who are enrolled in programs designed to yield the MSG types listed below are exempt from NRS pre- and post-testing:

- Type I.b. Awarding of required high school credits.
- Type I.c. Enrolled in postsecondary education and training.
- Type I.d. Completing a subtest of the GED®

- Type 2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.
- Type 3. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for sufficient credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the state unit’s academic standards.
- Type 4. Satisfactory or better progress report, toward established milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training.
- Type 5. Successfully passing an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills, as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks.

Examples of such programs may include, but are not limited to, integrated education and training programs (IET), workplace literacy programs (WPL), preparatory classes for high school equivalency testing, postsecondary bridge programs, adult high schools utilizing required high school credits, or other adult education programs designed to yield the MSG outcomes listed above. For these types of programs, providers may develop and implement alternative options for placement.

For example, a program may use guided self-placement, assessments that are content-driven or performance-driven such as locator tests, criterion referenced tests, diagnostic assessments, authentic assessments, or a program may choose to develop and implement innovative crosswalks between program benchmarks and NRS EFL levels. Students with an alternative placement are reported on the “Alternative Placement” rows under ABE or ESL. Alternative ABE/ESL placement is for programs designed to yield types of measurable skill gains (MSG) other than MSG type 1a. (pre- and post-testing). Participants with an alternative placement will be removed from the post-test denominator when calculating the provider’s post-test rate.

### Examples of Assessment Flexibility

Participant Type	MSG Type	Pre-test Required?	Post-test Required?
<b>Allowable for all participants</b>	<b>Type 1.a.</b> Achievement as measure by pre- and post-test	Yes	Yes
	<b>Type 1.b.</b> Awarding of required HS credits	No	No
	<b>Type 1.c.</b> Enrolled in postsecondary education or training	No	No
	<b>Type 1.d.</b> Pass a subtest of the GED®	No	No
	<b>Type 2.</b> Attainment of a high school diploma or GED®	No	No

<b>IET participants only</b>	<b>Type 3.</b> Attainment of 12+ Postsecondary credits	No	No
<b>IET and WPL participants only</b>	<b>Type 4.</b> Progress Milestones	No	No
	<b>Type 5.</b> Training Completion	No	No

### **MSG Type I.b. Demonstrating Skill Gain Through the Awarding of Required High School Credits**

Providers that are authorized to offer an adult high school diploma may measure and report educational gain through the awarding of required credits as determined by state rule or policy and track them using the HS Credit Option in LACES. An adult high school diploma program has instruction at the Low Adult Secondary and High Adult Secondary (ABE 5 and ABE 6) levels and is a credit bearing secondary education program sanctioned by State law, code, or regulation that leads to a secondary school diploma, such as community and technical colleges.

Students at ABE 5 or ABE 6 levels in an adult high school credit program may be placed and advanced based on credits alone using the HS Credit Option. State and federal gains will be determined by credits reported in the HS Credit Option in LACES. Once the HS Credit Option is activated, programs do not need to test students. If a student’s instructional program changes, the HS Credit Option can be activated even after post-testing occurs or students using the HS Credit Option can return to testing.

Students enrolled in an adult high school diploma program may be placed at ABE 5 or ABE 6 levels based on earned credits. Students with credits at the 9th or 10th grade levels would be considered ABE 5 and students with credits at the 11th or 12th grade levels would be considered ABE 6 and included in the tracking cohort for obtaining a secondary credential.

Students complete ABE 5 by earning enough credits to move to 11th or 12th grade status as determined by state rule or policy. Students complete ABE 6 by earning enough credits to complete the requirements for high school graduation as determined by state rule or policy. These students will be reported as completing ABE 6 when data matched for earning a high school diploma.

- **Required Credit Accrual Percentages**

Washington State requires that at least 50 percent of the students tracked with the HS Credit Option earn some required credit each academic year.

### **MSG Type I.c. Demonstrating Skill Gain Through Enrollment in a Postsecondary Education or Training Program**

Providers that offer postsecondary bridge programs may measure and report Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) for participants who are enrolled in a program below the postsecondary level and

who enroll in State-recognized postsecondary education or training during the program year. Students enrolled in postsecondary bridge programs may be alternatively placed and they are not required to pre- or post-test. Students with an alternative placement are reported on the “Alternative Placement” rows under ABE or ESL.

### **MSG Type 1.d. Demonstrating Skill Gain by Passing a Subtest of the GED®**

Providers that offer high school equivalency preparation courses may measure and report Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) for participants who pass a subtest on a WA State recognized high school equivalency examination (i.e., GED®). Students enrolled in preparatory classes for high school equivalency testing may be alternatively placed and they are not required to pre- or post-test. Students with an alternative placement are reported on the “Alternative Placement” rows under ABE or ESL.

### **MSG Types 3, 4, and 5. Demonstrating Skill Gain in Integrated Education & Training (IET) or Workplace Literacy Programs**

Providers that offer special programming in Integrated Education & Training (IET) or Workplace Literacy may measure and report Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) by Postsecondary Transcript, Workplace Milestone Progress, and Skills or Training Completion. These IET MSG types are defined in the BEdA Handbook on the [State Reporting and Compliance page](#) while special programs are defined in the BEdA Handbook on the [BEdA Instructional Support and Strategies page](#). These MSGs must be reported in LACES. Students enrolled in Integrated Education & Training (IET) or Workplace Literacy programming may be alternatively placed and they are not required to pre- or post-test. Students with an alternative placement are reported on the “Alternative Placement” rows under ABE or ESL.

- **Required Percentages for IET/WPL Participants**

Washington State requires that at least 50 percent of the students have earned an MSG or have documented continued participation and compliance with your IET/WPL program standards.

## **IV. General Testing Assessment Requirements**

Students whose MSG progress will be tracked by MSG Type 1a (pre- and post-testing) are to use CASAS assessments to appraise and assess all BEdA students in Washington State. SBCTC and community partners accept the validity of the approved CASAS tests as a standard used to determine an individual’s need for adult basic education. This section lists the allowable assessments, describes reporting requirements, outlines training for test administration, and explains accommodation requirements for assessing students with disabilities.

- **Assessments Permitted**



The following CASAS assessments may be used in Washington State for accountability reporting through June 30, 2025. The NRS determines tests suitable for use and the period for which that use is approved.

- Life and Work Reading (only forms 27/28R and only for level ESL I: Beginning Literacy)\*
- Listening STEPS (620 series for ESL only)
- Reading STEPS (620 series for ESL only)
- Reading Goals (900 series for ABE/ASE only)
- Math Goals 2 (920 series for ABE/ASE only or co-enrolled ESL)

\*Note: Once a student at ESL I: Beginning Literacy level using forms 27/28R achieves a scaled score above 179, the program must switch to assessing the learner with Reading STEPS.

These assessments meet the NRS requirements and:

- Are appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult students,
- Have standardized administration and scoring procedures,
- Have alternate, equivalent forms for pre- and post-testing, and
- Have evidence linking them to the NRS Educational Functioning Levels.

#### ○ **Test Administration Modalities**

CASAS tests may be administered face to face or through Remote Testing following [CASAS guidelines](#) and training requirements. Providers may choose to develop procedures to implement virtual test proctoring. Providers that choose to use this modality must have procedures to ensure that (1) the student who is testing can be properly identified, (2) the CASAS test that is used is properly secured, and (3) the virtual proctor can properly administer the test. Test security measures would require that only secure electronic versions of a test are administered by a virtual proctor and are deemed secure by the test publisher.

#### ○ **Uniform Times for Test Administration**

Washington State requires the use of CASAS appraisals for eligibility to (or when mandated to) enroll in ABE programs.

#### **Appraisal and Pre-Test**

Both the appraisal or locator and the pre-test must be given prior to the student completing 12 hours of instruction. The appraisal or locator must be given first to determine the level/form of the pre-test to be used. Neither the appraisal nor locator can be used in lieu of the CASAS pre-test to determine program eligibility.

### **Pre-test**

Pre-tests must be given before any substantial instruction has occurred, so all educational gains are captured. Administer a new pre-test if a student has not had a test or instruction for two quarters. Also reassess a student if during the student's absence a significant learning intervention occurred that may invalidate the student's previous assessment results.

### **Post-test**

Post-tests are used to measure educational gain and advance students across educational functioning levels. Post-tests are to be administered at the end of each quarter if students have been enrolled in 5 or more credits (50+ instructional hours) and made satisfactory progress in the class(es) or if the students have attended for 45 or more hours. Students should only be post-tested in the subject area(s) in which they received instruction.

- **Required Post-Test Percentages**

Washington State requires that local adult education providers post-test at least 50 percent of the students who are pre-tested each academic year.

- **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities or Other Special Needs**

Local providers must ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to test accommodations and follow the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) processes and procedures set forth at their organization. However, individuals are *not required* to reveal their disability and may elect to participate in a program without accommodation.

[Testing accommodations](#) modify the administration procedures or learner response that allow individuals with different abilities to demonstrate their true skill level on standardized tests without changing what a test is intended to measure. Any accommodation must be available across pre- and post-testing to ensure that the interpretation of learner performance on each assessment is comparable. New to testing accommodations? [Download](#) a step-by-step guide from CASAS.

Offering universally available accommodations to test administration procedures may lower barriers for individuals with hidden disabilities and those who do not have disability documentation. The following accommodations do not affect the administration of the test and may be used with all students or be required for equal access to the tests:

Accommodation in test-aids includes:

- Magnifying glasses/lenses/sheet
- Clear and/or colored overlays
- Straight-edge (ruler), blank card or card with cutout window
- Blank adhesive note tags/flags
- Highlighters
- Visor
- Earplugs

Accommodations in administration procedures may include:

- Allowing extra time,
- Repeating directions,
- Breaking an assessment into two sessions,
- Using a separate room,
- Giving frequent breaks, or
- Providing a sign language interpreter (for test administration directions only).

Accommodations in learner response may include:

- Using a sound amplification device,
- Using a test reader and scribe to record answers,
- Using a simple calculator for math,
- Typing on a Braille keyboard,
- Using speech-to-text software, and
- Using a touch-screen monitor.

CASAS will provide advice regarding appropriate accommodations and alternate test formats. Never change a test format locally, such as scanning a test booklet and enlarging the font size or transcribing the test into braille. Alternate test formats must meet standardized test development procedures approved by CASAS.

For information on allowable accommodations for specific students, contact [casas@casas.org](mailto:casas@casas.org).

## V. Guidelines for CASAS Assessments

This section contains detailed information to local programs on how to administer each assessment approved by SBCTC. The information includes administration procedures, scoring procedures, how assessment scores are linked to NRS levels for pre-tests and post-tests, post-

test time and training requirements for each assessment. In addition, this section outlines quality control guidelines to ensure that assessments are administered properly.

- **Information Included for Each Assessment**

The following sub-sections provide information on the assessments required for each program, the required use of an appraisal, appropriate pre- and post-testing procedures, training for administering the assessments, process for determining NRS educational functioning levels, and calculation of NRS level gains.

- **NRS Educational Functioning Levels, Gains, and Test Forms by Skill Areas, Levels & Series**

The CASAS scaled score ranges in the following tables correspond to the NRS levels. NRS guidelines require appropriate placement of students into instructional areas. Students are placed in an educational functioning level based on their lowest pre-test score. Educational functioning level (EFL) gains are calculated by comparing a student's entering educational functioning level, as measured by a student's lowest paired CASAS pre-test with the student's highest post-test in that same subject during the period of participation (PoP). If that post-test is at a higher EFL level, then an EFL gain is achieved. Additionally, an EFL gain may be achieved in a prior period of participation based on a test taken at a later date if the original pre-test in the first period of participation is still valid according to this Assessment Policy.

The following tables show which test forms are appropriate for specific student populations. Multiple forms are listed at each level, and these are alternate forms for pre- and post-testing. The following tables are broken out by subjects required for each student population. The tables show levels, scores, alternate forms, and appropriate appraisal test(s) for each CASAS test series.

*Test scores **must** be in the valid range of scores for the test given. Scores below the valid range for a test are invalid and cannot be used. In that case, the student must be retested using the appropriate assessment to determine a valid score. Scores above the accurate range (Diamond scores) on pre-tests are considered valid. **Diamond Scores, a.k.a. conservative estimate scores, are valid on pre-tests, although it may underestimate the ability level of the student. Retesting with the next highest-level form is highly recommended.** Similarly, scores above the accurate range on post-tests are estimated and should be used with caution.*

### ESL Reading

<b>ESL Level</b>	<b>Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>CASAS Level</b>	<b>CASAS Scores</b>	<b>Life &amp; Work Series</b>
ESL 1	Beginning ESL Literacy	A	153-180	27, 28

<b>ESL Level</b>	<b>Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>CASAS Level</b>	<b>CASAS Scores</b>	<b>Reading STEPS</b>
ESL 1	Beginning ESL Literacy	A	160-183	621, 622
ESL 2	Low Beginning ESL	A	184-196	621, 622
ESL 3	High Beginning ESL	B	197-206	623, 624
ESL 4	Low Intermediate ESL	C	207-216	625, 626
ESL 5	High Intermediate ESL	D	217-227	627, 628
ESL 6	Advanced ESL	E	228-238	629, 630

### ESL Listening

<b>ESL Level</b>	<b>Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>CASAS Level</b>	<b>CASAS Scores</b>	<b>Listening STEPS</b>
ESL 1	Beginning ESL Literacy	A	158-181	621, 622
ESL 2	Low Beginning ESL	A	182-191	621, 622
ESL 3	High Beginning ESL	B	192-201	623, 624
ESL 4	Low Intermediate ESL	C	202-211	625, 626
ESL 5	High Intermediate ESL	D	212-221	627, 628
ESL 6	Advanced ESL	E	222-231	629, 630

### ABE/ASE Reading

<b>ABE Level</b>	<b>Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>CASAS Level</b>	<b>CASAS Scores</b>	<b>Reading Goals Series</b>
ABE 1	Beginning ABE Literacy	A	165-203	901, 902
ABE 2	Beginning Basic Ed.	B	204-216	903, 904
ABE 3	Low Intermediate Basic Ed.	B	217-227	903, 904
ABE 4	High Intermediate Basic Ed.	C	228-238	905, 906
ABE 5	Low Adult Secondary	D	239-248	907, 908
ABE 6	High Adult Secondary	D	249-263	907, 908

### ABE/ASE or co-enrolled ESL Math

<b>ABE Level</b>	<b>Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>CASAS Level</b>	<b>CASAS Scores</b>	<b>Math Goals 2 Series</b>
ABE 1	Beginning ABE Literacy	A	170-192	921, 922
ABE 2	Beginning Basic Ed.	B	193-203	923, 924
ABE 3	Low Intermediate Basic Ed.	C	204-213	925, 926
ABE 4	High Intermediate Basic Ed.	D	214-224	927, 928
ABE 5	Low Adult Secondary	E	225-235	929, 930
ABE 6	High Adult Secondary	E	236-253	929, 930

## ○ **Test Administration Procedures**

### **Locators and Appraisals**

Local providers must administer a CASAS locator or appraisal prior to pre-testing a student. Locator and appraisal scores indicate which pre-test form to administer. Locators or appraisals are to be given during the initial orientation and goal-setting activity and must be given prior to the student completing 12 hours of instruction.

Prior to administering an appraisal for an ESL student, assess the student's basic English proficiency. Some lower-level students may not have sufficient English skills in listening necessary to successfully take a listening appraisal. The [CASAS ESL Intake Process](#) provides guidelines for assessing students' basic English proficiency and selecting the appropriate appraisal and pre-tests. Depending on the assessment in Step I of the process, some lower-level students may skip the appraisal and be administered the appropriate pre-test.

### **Pre-test**

Students must take a pre-test before completing 12 hours of instruction in order to measure all educational gains. Pre-testing may occur during the intake process or immediately upon the student's enrollment or instructional placement.

Pre-test all students in the primary subject in which they will receive instruction using the appropriate CASAS test. See the following examples:

- A student receiving instruction in math only would need to take a math subject test.
- A student in an ESL program mostly focused on reading and grammar would only need to take a reading subject test.
- A student in a GED® program studying all subjects would only need to take the reading subject test.

However, programs may elect to test students in multiple subjects if it meets program needs.

Students returning to a program should be pre-tested if they have not had instruction for two quarters, or if a significant learning intervention occurred that may invalidate the student's previous assessment results. This testing should be done using an alternate test form from the form last administered to the student.

Invalid pre-test scores are those indicating too few correct responses in any of the test forms. See the CASAS Next Assigned Test charts for scaled scores with an asterisk next to it. This will indicate an invalid score for a pre-test where re-testing is required.

Diamond scores are valid for pre- and post-tests but should be used with caution as they may underestimate the ability level of the student.

## Post-test

Post-test students at the end of a quarter if students have been enrolled in 5 or more credits (50+ instructional hours) and made satisfactory progress in the class(es) or if the students have persisted for 45 or more hours of instruction. Programs with high intensity and rigor which offer 90 or more hours of instruction per quarter may post-test more frequently if needed to measure progress. To document learning gains, post-test students *only* in the subject(s) in which they have received instruction. CASAS requires students to take a post-test with an alternate test form at the same level or next higher level using the CASAS Suggested Next Test (See CASAS Test Administration Manual).

If a student does not seem ready for testing at the end of a quarter, an adult educator may use professional judgment to delay testing for that student. **This determination must be documented in the student file.**

The provider must maintain documentation of all tests given and classes attended for monitoring and program review purposes. At the end of a program year, post-test scores will serve as pre-tests for the new program year.

## Post-test Exceptions

**No one enrolled in less than 50 hours of instruction or with fewer than 45 instructional hours is to be post-tested.** Any exceptions are to be limited and rare. The State BEdA Office will monitor the use of exceptions including taking appropriate corrective actions with program providers for excessive use or misapplication of exception provisions.

Only when there is a valid reason that a student will not reach 45 hours of instruction will an exception to post-test the student be allowed.

Examples of valid reasons that a student will not reach 45 hours of instruction:

- Student has completed all but the last test of the GED<sup>®</sup> battery and is ready to take the last GED<sup>®</sup> test. The student has stated that he/she will not return to class after completing the test.
- Student has accrued 45 or more hours between spring and summer quarters (across program years).
- Student has exited the program or is planning to exit before the end of the term and will not accrue at least 45 hours.
- Student needs updated post-test score for application to postsecondary program (e.g., I-BEST).

○ **Training Requirements for Administering CASAS**

In Washington, CASAS Cadre members are the information link between SBCTC and all faculty and staff at BEdA programs.

- CASAS Cadre members at each program are responsible for helping to ensure that local staff are trained through CASAS online trainings or a CASAS-certified State or National trainer or someone at the organization who can train in-person with a CASAS-certified trainer.
- All staff assigned the role of CASAS Cadre member and all staff who administer tests must complete their initial training as required by [CASAS](#). And, to maintain their training, they must subsequently retake the CASAS trainings at least every two years.
- All new CASAS Cadre members must attend a New Member CASAS Cadre Training and then subsequently an annual state Cadre recertification meeting conducted by SBCTC/BEdA staff.
- CASAS Cadre members are encouraged to utilize the online CASAS trainings with local staff and supplement it with additional information from the Washington State Assessment Policy. Local staff working with CASAS assessments must be retrained at least every two years or more often if procedures or materials change. All local staff must also follow the CASAS and SBCTC/BEdA Office Test Security Policy (Appendix A).
- Individuals administering CASAS tests must take the required trainings identified by CASAS and listed in the chart below. Note that programs electing to use Remote Testing must also ensure proctors complete Proctor Remote Testing Certification.

CASAS Implementation training is available in four modules specific to the needs of test administrators, instructors, and other staff. Agencies must complete Module 1 and either Module 2 or Module 3 to order and use CASAS tests.

Module 1: Implementation Basics

Module 2: CASAS eTests Implementation

Module 3: Paper Test Implementation

Module 4: Test Results and Reports (this training)

User Role	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4
Tester – Administer eTests only	✓	✓		Recommended
Tester – Administer Paper only	✓		✓	Recommended
Tester – Administer eTests and Paper	✓	✓	✓	Recommended
Instructors, Counselors, Career Coaches	Recommended			Recommended

✓ = Required training



Local providers must retain records of all persons trained in CASAS assessment for review by state staff as requested. These records should include CASAS-issued certificates and, if trained locally, a training agenda indicating the place where the training occurred, the date and time of the training, and participant list.

Additional training opportunities are offered by the SBCTC/BEdA Office at least annually that address reporting data for NRS in LACES, our web-based reporting system, NRS measures and data collection, and using data for program decision making and improvement.

### ○ **Quality Control Procedures**

The following sections describe quality control procedures required by SBCTC/BEdA for entering assessment data and purchasing assessment materials. Additional data quality reports are available in the state reporting system, LACES.

### **Reporting Assessment Data to SBCTC**

BEdA providers funded by the SBCTC/BEdA Office must enter enrollment, attendance and assessment data into LACES at least quarterly, but are encouraged to enter their data monthly. Quarterly data entry deadlines for LACES are established each year and published on the [SBCTC website](#).

The SBCTC/BEdA Office uses the following quality control procedures to ensure appropriate local assessment and data collection:

- Local programs should complete the *Quarterly Data Review and Checklist* to identify test record data that is incomplete or inaccurate.
- Data integrity reports built into LACES assist local adult education providers to identify missing demographics and test results that make a student not federally reportable.
- System logic built into LACES prevents inappropriate assessments being entered.
- LACES also calculates conversions from test scores to educational functioning levels and both level completions and significant point gains.
- Local adult educators are trained in NRS assessment, data collection, reporting definitions and requirements, in using data for program improvement, and using data to identify issues and problems.
- CASAS Cadre members for each provider are recertified each year, and train others in their organization who administer, score, use, and interpret CASAS assessments results.
- Local basic education providers annually submit a Data Quality Checklist assessing their own quality control procedures.
- State BEdA staff regularly review local data integrity reports and conduct other data reporting and integrity checks.

- State staff conducts on-site monitoring.

### **Purchasing Procedures for Each Assessment**

Local BEdA providers must order CASAS assessment materials authorized for use in Washington State directly from CASAS. An appropriately trained staff member registered with CASAS must sign the order form.

**Refer to the most recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CASAS for bulk pricing information.**

## **VI. Distance Education**

Distance education is defined as formal learning activities that take place where the students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both. The learning activities take place at a distance replacing activities that would have occurred in the classroom with both instructor and students present.

Providers are urged to offer all students the opportunity to participate in instruction at a distance. This instructor-supported instruction can be delivered purely online, or as a combination of actual classroom contact and contact through another medium where student and program staff can interact, and the identity of the student is verifiable. Distance learning may be conducted in synchronous and asynchronous modes and materials can be conveyed through a variety of media including, but not limited to, pre-recorded video, audio or video conferencing, ITV, virtual worlds, web-based instruction, and computer-based instruction.

Students, both those designated as distance education students and those where technology is used to replace some portion of classroom time must be pre-tested before 12 hours of instruction and post-tested at the end of the quarter if the student has accrued 45 verifiable hours of instruction.

In order for providers to report proxy contact hours in LACES for distance education students, Washington State has developed a policy for proxy contact hours to be counted in one of the following ways. Providers may allow one or both options in their programs as long as the method is appropriate for the assigned curriculum. Proxy contact hours should not exceed the total number of contact hours of the class or course of study.

1. The Teacher Verification Model which 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. Proxy contact hours are assigned for each type of curriculum used prior to assignment to students.
2. Learner Mastery Model which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the learner passing an assessment on the content of each lesson. Learners work with the curriculum and materials and when they feel they have mastered the material, take an

assessment. A high percentage of correct answers (typically 70% - 80%) earn the credit hours attached to the material. Proxy contact hours are assigned for each lesson prior to the learner attempting it.

For both Teacher Verification and Learner Mastery models, instructors must predetermine and document how they count hours for completed assignments and assessments. This determination must be included in the course syllabus and made transparent to students. Sample Syllabus Statements for Courses with Distance Education are available in the *Student Contact/Attendance Hours* section on the [BEa Handbook Local BEa Reporting and Compliance](#) page.

On a limited basis, providers can petition SBCTC for permission to use the Clock Time method as described here. Contact the BEa department, [bedareporting@sbctc.edu](mailto:bedareporting@sbctc.edu), for approval.

- The Clock Time Model assigns contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to, or engaged in, an online or standalone software program that tracks time. The software tracks the time students spend interacting with the instructional material and disconnects after a preset period of inactivity.

Distance education student participation (attendance) is entered in LACES as Dist. Ed. hours. Web-enhanced courses that use technology to enhance instruction in the classroom are not classified as distance education and hours should be entered as F2F in LACES.

In Washington State, students defined as distance education students for NRS reporting purposes receive over 50% of their total instruction through distance education in all of their course work during an academic year. This will be calculated automatically in LACES.

## VII. References

- National Reporting System (NRS) State Assessment Policy Guidance in [34 CFR 462](#) Subpart D, revised June 6, 2011.

## Appendix A: CASAS and SBCTC/BEEdA Test Security Policy

The SBCTC/BEEdA Office requires that administrators and testing personnel follow these practices and ensure that additional agency staff are aware of and follow said practices.

### General Security for All CASAS Tests

- **The local adult education program director assumes responsibility for overseeing the security of all CASAS-developed assessment materials** - including paper/pencil and eTest applications and devices. Agency directors and other primary administrators must maintain a specific test security policy that discusses the proper handling and use of test materials at their testing entity.
- **All CASAS materials must be stored in a locked, preferably fireproof, file cabinet accessible to the program director or the director's designee(s).** All testing materials, including but not limited to test booklets, CDs, cassette tapes, answer sheets, answer keys, and CASAS eTest dongles must be kept in a secure, locked storage area at all times outside the testing situation. No unauthorized personnel should be allowed access to testing materials. **CASAS Tests contain copyrighted material that may not be reviewed, discussed, or explained to test-takers at any time during the test-taking process or shared with test-takers or site personnel outside the testing environment.** Discussing information related to the content of specific test items or test forms is prohibited and a direct violation of CASAS standard test administration principles of behavior.
- **Entire assessments, individual questions, or possible answer choices may not be copied under any circumstances or used as practice in any capacity or for any purpose.** Any specific test questions or information contained within the tests are not to be made available to the public. Federal copyright law prohibits unauthorized reproduction and use of copyrighted test materials. Reproducing test materials is a violation of federal copyright law. CASAS Tests may not be used for any purpose other than the authorized assessment of legitimate test-takers.
- **Testing personnel must ensure that they follow all test administration directions and language as dictated in the appropriate CASAS Test Administration Manual.**
- **All rooms used for test administration must be quiet, orderly, comfortable, and have adequate seating, lighting, and temperature.** Any information regarding the content measured on the test or test-taking strategies displayed in the room must be covered or removed. The testing room should be configured so the proctor can easily view the testing materials or the computer screens of all test takers.

- **Testing personnel must remain in the testing room throughout an entire test session.** Proctors must ensure that test-takers follow all testing rules during the testing session.
- **A proctor may never disclose any personally identifiable information about test-takers to anyone beyond what is required while completing proctoring responsibilities.**

### **Paper Specific**

- The BEdA provider will maintain an inventory of all CASAS materials and will supply information about it as requested.
- If test booklets have been marked in or torn, agencies should **shred** these test booklets. If an agency is transitioning to a new test series, CASAS requests that agencies shred old test booklets and destroy related testing materials including CDs. Agencies may not retain test materials for use as practice tests or for instructional purposes.

### **eTest Specific**

- **Test proctors are not to initiate CASAS eTests Online on registered testing machines prior to the beginning of the test administration.**
- **Registered machines not used during the test administration (e.g., test-takers are absent) must remain closed.** After each test administration, the registered testing machine must be closed.
- **Seating should be arranged approximately three feet apart to discourage viewing other test-takers' computer screens.** All computer workstations should be set up prior to scheduled test administrations.

### **Remote Test Specific**

- Follow [CASAS Remote Testing Guidelines](#) and security procedures.

## Appendix B: Suspended Operations Policy

Suspended operation means a temporary suspension of any or all operations due to an emergency that adversely affects operations, public health, or the well-being and safety of employees and students. Events which might require suspending operations include, but are not limited to:

- Severe weather or natural disaster
- Spread of a communicable disease
- Fire or related hazard
- Immediate threat to the safety of the campus community
- Damage to or failure of infrastructure, equipment, or mechanical systems

During the suspended operations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, providers are exempt from the requirement to pre- and post-test distance learning students from March 1, 2020, until Governor Inslee's Reopening process allows for testing to recommence on campuses and in our community-based organizations. Providers will count the number of students not able to be tested in each program year and report an unduplicated count in their end of year Federal Report. Providers should administer an NRS-approved test in accordance with this Assessment Policy as soon as feasible. Providers can enroll new students without administering an NRS-approved pre-test, but the provider must still determine if the student is eligible\* for AEFLA services. A local program may use locally designed assessment methods to provisionally assign an NRS Educational Functioning Level (EFL) for the purpose of placing students into the NRS when an approved NRS test cannot be administered.

A participant can achieve an MSG using several methods that may be available even if the participant was provisionally placed in an EFL without taking a pre-test.

First, a participant in a program designed to achieve MSGs other than Type I.a. (pre- and post-testing) can achieve a MSG based on earning required high school credits through the HS Credit Option, enrolling in postsecondary education, (3) passing a subset test of the GED<sup>®</sup>, achieving 12 postsecondary credits, passing progress milestones, and completing training or earning a training certificate.

In the case of pre- and post-testing, a participant cannot achieve an MSG if the participant's EFL placement was provisionally assigned using an informal assessment method. MSG can only be achieved if the provisionally assigned EFL is later adjusted based on an NRS-approved pre-test score. The participant may, however, achieve an MSG with a provisionally assigned EFL under the other methods.

Second, a participant can achieve an MSG by attaining a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (i.e., GED<sup>®</sup>).

\*Section 203(4) of the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014](#) (WIOA) defines “eligible individual” as “...an individual—(a) who has attained 16 years of age; (b) who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and (c) who—(i) is basic skills deficient; (ii) does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or (iii) is an English language learner.” WIOA (Pub. L. 113-128) available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-113publ128/pdf/PLAW-113publ128.pdf>