

State Testing – FAQ – ACCOMMODATIONS - SPECIAL TESTING

	Topic Category	Question	Answer
	<p>General Information -- ACT posts PDF copies of Supervisor Manuals, <i>Taking the ACT</i>, and Profile forms for Test Supervisors, Backup Test Supervisors, and Test Accommodations Coordinators at http://www.act.org/aap/statetesting.html. These are available in addition to hardcopies testing staff will receive during workshop training. Generally these are posted by October 1st each year.</p>		
1	Test Accommodations Coordinator (TAC) Roles and Responsibilities	Whose responsibility is it to request testing with accommodations – with National Extended Time it has always been the student's and parents' responsibility, does that responsibility shift to the school now that the test is being given by the school?	Yes, it is the responsibility of the TAC to submit requests for accommodations for all students who need accommodations.
2	Test Accommodations Coordinator (TAC) Roles and Responsibilities	Your list of qualifications for the TAC states that TACs should not be involved in coaching high school athletics (applicable only if any student requesting accommodations participates in athletics). We have a TAC who coaches one sport and a student who participates in a different sport. Can our TAC still serve in this role?	<p>No, a staff member who is involved in coaching athletics may not be a TAC if any of the students who will be requesting accommodations participate in any sport. This is true if the TAC coaches volleyball (for example) and the student participates in basketball (or another sport). The potential conflict of interest is still present and ACT policy is to avoid that conflict. The TAC who is a coach would have to step aside and another staff member would have to be appointed.</p> <p>Also, a coach may not serve as a room supervisor in a one-on-one testing situation if the student being tested is an athlete.</p>
3	Requesting Accommodations	Do I need to send a complete IEP and psychological report with each student's application?	<p>Referring to the document, "Procedures for Requesting ACT Test Accommodations", it states on page one, under Eligibility Requirements, second bullet 'The current IEP/504 Plan must document all accommodations requested are provided in school. Submit a copy of the student's current IEP or 504 Plan that supports the need for all requested accommodations due to the disability.'</p> <p>In Section B of the Request for ACT-Approved Accommodations form, please note that some of the categories REQUIRE full documentation. In addition, full documentation is required for students diagnosed with visual, hearing, psychological, emotional, or physical disorders. If your student has a permanent physical or cognitive disability, an academic learning disability (in reading, writing, or math) or ADHD, or was first diagnosed more than three years ago, you do not need to send complete documentation.</p>
4	Requesting Accommodations	What if the paperwork does not arrive in time? Do you get an extension?	There are no extensions. Deadlines are in place to provide the necessary amount of time to notify the Test Accommodations Coordinator of the approved accommodations, review any changes, pack the materials, and ship to the school.
5	Requesting Accommodations	On section H, our school district only uses categories to place students in special education. Who do I put as the person making diagnosis, name/team, job title, and qualifications?	Section H.a. pertains to the FIRST time the student was diagnosed. If before grade 9, you are required only to record the "age and grade of student" when diagnosed. If diagnosed after grade 8, both sections H.a. and H.b. are required. You will need to record the name of the qualified person placing the student in the special education program. If the school team made the diagnosis for placement purposes, simply note "multidisciplinary team" on the form for "Name/team." If the diagnosis was made by a professional outside of the school, include the person's name and credentials. If the exact date of the diagnosis is unknown, please estimate. For example: "The diagnosis was made during the student's early elementary years" would be an appropriate estimation.
6	Requesting Accommodations	On section H, what do you mean by recently re-confirmed?	"Recently re-confirmed" means re-evaluated by a psychologist, learning disabilities specialist/team. A current IEP/504 Plan on file may serve as reconfirmation. Refer to page 2 of the 'Procedures for Requesting...'

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7	Requesting Accommodations	What do I need to put on part G (Specific Disability or Condition) if I don't have a DSM-IV (four) diagnosis?	Tell us as much as you can about your student. Be specific. Tell us what academic area you are programming for. For example, rather than saying a student has slow processing speed, tell us how that causes him trouble in school. Can he read? Figure? Think? Remember, we are looking for how the student's problem affects him as a student. If he has a learning disability, tell us if it is in Reading, Mathematics or Written Language, ADHD, depression, anxiety, and so forth. Be specific about the disability and how it impacts the student's abilities. Review the Procedures for Requesting ACT Test Accommodations form for eligibility requirements. Remember, you don't need an exact DSM diagnosis. Most students your team identified as eligible for special education won't have one - only the students who were identified by a diagnosing professional external to your school will have a DSM-IV diagnosis. For example, a local psychologist or psychiatrist may provide DSM diagnoses.
8	Requesting Accommodations	For those students who have an Emotional Behavior Disorder or other psychological disorder, is full documentation required?	Yes, for ACT-Approved Accommodations complete documentation is required for students with psychological or emotional disorders. Please include psychological evaluations, assessment batteries, and a copy of the IEP/504 detailing the history of accommodations provided to the student during the academic day. Be sure to provide detailed results from neuropsychological evaluations, including evaluation dates, used for diagnosis. The only exception to this rule is a diagnosis of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. If this condition <u>was first diagnosed more than 3 years prior</u> to application for accommodations, please submit the current IEP or 504 plan. Complete documentation is not required in this case only.
9	Requesting Accommodations	How will we know if a student is ACT approved?	Preliminary rosters are sent to the TACs according to the date specified on the Checklist of Dates. The preliminary roster describes each student's approved accommodations. Student approval letters and supervisor letters are sent to the school when final rosters and test materials are shipped (refer to checklist of dates). Denial letters are mailed directly to the TAC separately from the rosters, and will be mailed to the school before the preliminary roster is sent.
10	Requesting Accommodations	What if the student's accommodations changed a week before testing, but the paperwork was already sent in?	ACT sends each school a preliminary roster which identifies all students approved for ACT-Approved accommodations, and the specific accommodations and timing for each student. TACs must review the preliminary roster carefully to determine if any errors or omissions occurred, or if there are any questions. If a student's accommodations changed since the original paperwork was submitted, this is the time to make the corrections. Contact ACT with any changes or questions you have. There is a limited period of time after receipt of the preliminary roster in which to request changes (refer to your checklist of dates). Once the preliminary roster adjustment period has lapsed, no changes in approved accommodations will be granted. If you have a change that occurs after the preliminary roster period has lapsed, call ACT for guidance.
11	Requesting Accommodations	Sometimes students transfer into our school before testing. What is the process for transferring the student's test materials from the original school to our school?	ACT will transfer a student's accommodations from one school to the next using the Transfer Form that will be made available on the state or district website. Both the new school and the former school will complete and sign the form, which will release the accommodations and remove the student from the former school's roster and transfer the accommodations and add the student to the new school's roster. Transfers must be requested by the deadline on your Checklist of Dates. If you need a form or have questions, please call our State Testing Accommodations area at 800/553-6244 x1788. Do not transport the testing materials from one school to another.
12	Requesting Accommodations	What if we have a student who breaks his arm or has another type of medical emergency after the deadline for submitting requests for accommodations has passed? Does he have to test with standard time?	If you have a student who has a medical emergency after the deadline to submit requests for ACT-Approved Accommodations has passed, please call us at 800-553-6244 ext 1788. We will discuss the procedures for requesting accommodations for this student under these special circumstances.
13	Test Administration	Must students with accommodations start testing on the first day of the testing window or can they be tested any time throughout that two-week testing window?	Students who receive accommodations may test anytime within the two-week window. It is the responsibility of the Test Accommodations Coordinator to ensure that the administration of the test adheres to the specific approved accommodation(s) as instructed by ACT.

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14	Test Administration	Does the same proctor have to test the same students with accommodations for all sessions?	The person in charge of testing in a particular room is called the Room Supervisor. ACT would prefer that the same room supervisor administer the test for all sessions. But, if this is not possible, it is acceptable for a different room supervisor to administer the test for one or more sessions.
15	Test Administration	Should students be roomed by approved accommodation or by timing code?	Students are always grouped by timing code, and then by types of accommodations. For instance, if you have two students with timing code 3, one who gets a reader, and the other uses Braille, they must test separately so neither will be distracted by the other. It depends on the accommodation. You could have students with the same timing code, but different accommodations, testing in the same room. For example, if a student gets timing code 3 and uses an audio DVD with a headset, he could test in the same room as a student who is Deaf and who has timing code three. Refer to the Timing Code and the Clarification of Accommodation instructions on your ACT-Approved Accommodations Roster to assist you with your room and staffing assignments.
16	Test Administration	If a student with an IEP who has been approved for accommodations suddenly decides he wants to test with no accommodations the morning of the test, what do we do?	The student may choose to test standard-time with the general population. It is important to remember that the student MUST use the standard time test materials rather than the accommodated materials that were assigned to him. Return the assigned accommodation test materials (unused in the zip lock packet) with the rest of the accommodation materials, and note on the accommodations roster "student tested with standard time."
17	Test Administration	On test day, the student decides he does not want to have the test read to them, or use the cassettes. What timing code do I use for testing the student?	The student has the option to decline the use of the approved accommodation. The same timing code would be used, even if the student chose not to use the audio accommodation (cassette, DVD, or Reader Script). Additionally, the student may elect to use the audio accommodation on only one or two of the tests.
18	Test Administration	Can accommodated testing happen over multiple days for the same student? Must it be during school hours, or can it be after school or weekends?	ACT reviews all requests for testing over multiple days. If a student is approved for multiple days, he must take the ACT tests within the two-week testing window. The ACT for State Testing may be administered during regular school hours, or before or after the student's school day. It's important to remember, each test must be completed in one testing session. One cannot stop a test prior to completion, and finish it the next day.
19	Test Administration	When testing accommodated students, can you move on with the test if the student is ready or do you have to wait for the full time to elapse? Do all kids wait until all are finished with a section to move on or can they move on their own?	It depends on whether you are testing a single student or a small group. It also depends upon the timing code. If testing students with Timing Code 6, which is self-paced time-and-a-half testing in a single session, the students move through the test sections at their own pace. Each student can move on to the next test section when they have finished the previous section after they have notified the test supervisor. (they cannot go back to a previously finished section once they have finished). For all other timing codes, if testing a <u>single student</u> and the student finishes a section before time is called, record the finish time for that section. The room supervisor may then ask the student if he is ready to move on to the next section. If so, the room supervisor reads the verbal instructions for the next section and testing for that section begins. If <u>testing a group</u> of accommodated students in the same room (other than Timing Code 6), the room supervisor should instruct the students who finish the section early to sit quietly until the last student in the group finishes the section or time is called. Once the last student in the room has completed the section, the room supervisor may proceed to the next section or stop testing for that day and resume testing the following day on the next section. Please refer to the Supervisor's Manual.
20	Test Administration	Are there any breaks during the testing day?	Standard time testers receive a 15 minute break after Test 2 (and a 5 minute stretch break before the Writing Test if included in your state administration). Timing Code 6 students may break at any time, but the clock continues to run. Students approved for Stop-the-Clock breaks may break as approved. Students approved for extended-time over multiple days (TC 2, 3, 7) should be encouraged to take their breaks between tests, but they can take a break during a test section. The clock continues to run. Students may go to the bathroom during a test, but the clock continues to run.

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21	Test Administration	We need more details on "Stop the clock breaks". What are the guidelines?	Stop-the-clock breaks are an accommodation for students who do not need extended time to test, but whose conditions may interfere with full use of testing time. For example, a student with diabetes might need to take time to check insulin levels or have a snack. A student with ulcerative colitis might need several restroom breaks. A student with an anxiety disorder may need to take a break now and then to manage his anxiety. If approved for this accommodation, the student indicates the need for a break to the test supervisor who notes the time away from the test, so the student gets the full amount of time for each test without penalty. If a student is approved for stop-the-clock breaks, this will be indicated on the ACT-Approved roster.
22	Test Administration	If my school has a limited number of staff available for testing, can one test administrator supervise the testing of two rooms at the same time by standing between the rooms and watching from that location (e.g., from the hallway)?	No, a separate room supervisor is required for each testing room. The room supervisor must be present in the room at all times during testing (and while test materials are present in the room). The timing and instructions for each room must be handled by the individual room supervisor and it is never permitted to share room supervisors between rooms.
23	Test Administration	If we have a student who is approved for testing over multiple days, and we have a limited amount of time to administer the test on one of the days, is it OK to change the order of the test sections so that we can combine one long section with a shorter section on the same day in order to stay on schedule?	No, the test sections must always be given in the prescribed order: English (Test 1), Math (Test 2), Reading (Test 3) and Science (Test 4). (If the writing test is also administered as part of your state administration, it must always be the last test (Test 5), given after all the multiple choice tests have been completed.)
24	Test Administration	Scribes: Is a separate room needed for this student? The student can read, but needs a scribe due to their disability.	"Scribe" can be defined in several ways. Two of the most common accommodations defined for a scribe are: 1. The student marks responses in the test booklet. Following the test, the room supervisor must transfer the responses to the scoreable answer document while being observed by the student. This student would be able to test with other students. 2. The student would verbally respond and the room supervisor would grid the choice on the scoreable answer document, or the room supervisor would transcribe the essay response in the appropriate section of the answer folder. This session must be recorded and blank cassette tapes are provided by ACT for this purpose. A separate room would be needed for students responding verbally.
25	Test Administration	Can the TAC change a timing code that ACT has approved if a student doesn't want to test with the approved accommodation?	No. Timing codes should not be changed by the TAC, even if a student wishes to test with fewer/lesser accommodation(s) than were approved. ACT has shipped specific materials for each student testing with accommodations. The student must test with these materials and the assigned timing code, or the student may test with standard time, and the unused materials must be returned to ACT with an explanation. If a timing code is in question please notify ACT during the window in which the preliminary roster is to be checked by the TAC for accuracy.
26	Test Administration	One of our students receives services at a different facility outside of our school. Can we transport his testing materials to the remote site in order to administer the test to him?	No, test materials may not be transported to any location other than your school where they were delivered, without written permission from ACT. In order to test a student or group of students at an off-site location, the school must submit a Proposal for Off-Site Administration for consideration by ACT.
27	Test Administration	Our TAC is not able to serve in that role and needs to step down. How do we get another TAC appointed?	TAC change profile forms are available online: http://www.act.org/aap/statetesting.html Note: these should only be used AFTER the renewal or new school profile form has been submitted to ACT and a change in staff takes place.

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28	Food/Drink/Lunch	If a student is diabetic or has a medical condition, what are the guidelines regarding food or drink in the testing room?	Allowing a student who is diabetic to have snacks or drinks in the testing room is an example of a locally approved accommodation (see Standard Time Supervisor's Manual, p. 16). A locally approved accommodation does not require ACT approval. You may make a local decision when the accommodation is on a student's plan, does not require special materials (e.g. reader script or large print), and does not require extended time. Examples of locally approved accommodations are such things as a wheelchair accessible room, color overlays, etc. Remember, large type is not a local decision. Accommodations for Large type test materials require the school to complete a request for ACT-Approved accommodations, and ACT requires evidence of a visual problem to approve large type.
29	Food/Drink/Lunch	With extended time, students sometimes test 5 hours on one day – what about lunch? Can students go to lunch even if they haven't completed testing?	Students approved for timing code 6 may break at any time, however the clock is kept running. For timing codes over multiple days, students may break between test sections. Stop-the-clock breaks are NOT permitted unless approved by ACT.
30	DVD/Cassette Tapes	Do you provide CDs instead of cassette tapes?	No. CD versions of the test are not available, but Audio DVDs are an option in addition to cassette tapes. Audio DVDs are an ALTERNATIVE to audiocassettes. DVDs can hold a much larger number of tracks and content than a CD and provide a higher level of security.
31	DVD/Cassette Tapes	Can DVD on computers be used in place of DVD players?	You may use stand-alone DVD players, but we <u>recommend</u> using a computer lab. The computers will need to have a DVD-ROM drive or similar playback device that can play DVDs. "CD-ROM Only" drives will not work. Although we have no specific software requirements, you need to have a program that can play DVDs. Consult with your tech support person if you have questions about a specific program. We encourage you to order a practice test in the audio DVD format so you are familiar with how they operate and can resolve any technical issues prior to testing. We provide guidelines and track listings with each set of DVDs. Plan to have students take the practice tests so they will be comfortable using DVDs on test day.
32	DVD/Cassette Tapes	Can you test multiple students in the same room that have ACT-Approved accommodations for headphones with DVD or cassette usage?	Examinees approved for cassettes or audio DVDs may test as a group if they control the progress of their own players, use individual headphones, and begin each test at the same time. ACT-Approved examinees using a reader MUST test individually -- a reader is always a one-on-one situation., meaning they must test in a room by themselves.
33	DVD/Cassette Tapes	Can't I just use one player for the whole group?	No - Even if you are running a practice session, each student should have his own earphones and player, since all students will work at different paces and will want to replay different portions of the tests. You may test as a group, but each student must operate his own playback device, wear headphones, and can only receive assistance from you for navigation issues or accidental stoppage of the disc or tape.
34	State-Allowed Accommodations	What's the difference between ACT-Approved and State-Allowed accommodations?	ACT-Approved Accommodations yield a score that can be reported to colleges, scholarship agencies, and other entities in addition to being used for state testing purposes. Scores from State-Allowed administrations may only be used for state purposes. They may not be reported to colleges and other entities. Some IEP testing accommodations cannot be used if scores are to be college reportable, for example paraphrasing test questions, limiting forced choices, or interpreting the test items.. Also, remember that ESL/ELL students who are not additionally disabled must test either with State-Allowed accommodations or under standard conditions.
35	State-Allowed Accommodations	Please explain the difference between a "college reportable" score and an ACT score that is not "college reportable"?	ACT scores earned from testing with ACT-Approved Accommodations may be used to report to colleges and other entities for use in college admission decisions and/or scholarship purposes. State-Allowed scores are only used for District and/or State accountability, and for other District or State purposes. It is important that students and parents understand the limitations of testing with State-Allowed accommodations.
36	State-Allowed Accommodations	If a student doesn't get ACT-Approved Accommodations, do they automatically get State-Allowed Accommodations? How is this decided?	If they are denied ACT-Approved Accommodations they are NOT automatically given State-Allowed accommodations. The school must complete and submit by the deadline an Application for State-Allowed Accommodations form in order for ACT to know what test materials to ship and how the student will be testing. This application should be submitted only after the school receives notification that the student has been denied ACT-Approved accommodations. ACT will provide a reasonable period of time after the denial letter is received by the school to submit the application for State-Allowed Accommodations.

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37	State-Allowed Accommodations	Will a student be allowed to use State-Allowed accommodations without having first applied for ACT Approved accommodations?	Yes, the Test Accommodations Coordinator can submit an Application for State-Allowed Accommodations without having to first submit a Request for ACT-Approved Accommodations. This may be appropriate for students with LEP/ESL/EEP who do not also have disabilities, and students with very severe disabilities where IEP testing accommodations would change what the test is designed to measure. Since it is impossible to know whether a particular student will – at some point - go on to post-secondary education and have the need for an ACT test score on record, we suggest the decision to go directly to requesting State-Allowed accommodations, without first applying for an ACT-Approved accommodations, be made with great care.
38	State-Allowed Accommodations	What is an example of a State-Allowed Accommodation? The ACT-Approved Accommodations has everything on its form that the State-Allowed form does. Please explain the difference.	State-Allowed Accommodations are available for students who did not meet the eligibility requirements of ACT-Approved Accommodations. Those students may have testing accommodations that are inconsistent with a college reportable score such as having test items explained, the number of foils reduced, simplifying the item language, translating items into another language, or allowing extended time for a LEP/ESL or EEP student. State-Allowed Accommodations allow the Test Accommodations Coordinator to request test materials without going through the approval process.
39	State-Allowed Accommodations	Why is there no timing code for the State-Allowed students? Which timing code should I use?	ACT does not assign a timing code to State-Allowed accommodations. The school may test them with any timing code or timing they feel is most appropriate and is in accordance with the students' plans. Remember that State-Allowed students must NOT test with Standard Time (non-accommodated) or ACT-Approved students in the same room. To do so would violate ACT guidelines and the answer documents for all students in the room will not be scored.
40	State-Allowed Accommodations	For those students who will be approved for State-Allowed accommodations, is there any type of documentation that must be sent with the application?	The State-Allowed Accommodations process does not require an approval by ACT and no supporting documentation is required. The accommodation granted by the school should be part of the student's accommodation plan. If you apply for State-Allowed Accommodations for a student, the student will be granted the accommodations by ACT. ACT sends each school a preliminary roster which identifies all students designated by the school for State-Allowed accommodations. TACs must review the preliminary roster carefully to determine if any errors or omissions occurred, or if there are any questions. Contact ACT with any changes or questions you have.
41	State-Allowed Accommodations	If we have 3-4 students that have State-Allowed Accommodations and the same timing code, can they be tested in the same room?	Generally, students with the same timing code can be tested together. But remember, State-Allowed students do not have assigned timing codes. They can be tested together if they have similar timing requirements on their IEP's or 504 plans.
42	State-Allowed Accommodations	When administering the ACT to State-Allowed students, can the test be read to a small group of students (2-3) at one time as opposed to one-on-one?	Tests administered to State-Allowed students may be administered in accord with the student's accommodations plan. If a small group of students all receive the accommodation of a reader, it is acceptable to read to the students in a group under State-Allowed accommodations (except in the state of Illinois). It is never acceptable to read the test to a group of students who receive the ACT-Approved accommodation of a reader -- this must be one-on-one testing.