



WorkSource Policy
Employment System Administration & Policy

Washington envisions a nationally recognized fully integrated One-Stop system with enhanced customer access to program services, improved long-term employment outcomes for job seekers and consistent, high quality services to business customers. In order to achieve this vision, the Employment Security Department sets a common direction and standards for Washington's WorkSource system through the development of WorkSource system policies, information notices, and technical assistance.

System | WIA 1-B | Wagner-Peyser / Labor Exchange | Trade Act

Policy Number: 1011 Revision 2
To: Washington WorkSource System
Date of Publication: June 27, 2014

Subject: CASAS for Basic Skills Assessments

1. Purpose:

To outline requirements and guidelines concerning the use of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) for academic basic skills assessments within the WorkSource System.

This second revision accomplishes the following:

- Aligns CASAS testing with the National Reporting System (NRS) and the State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (SBCTC), acknowledging the expiration of the CASAS ECS series (as of July 1, 2014).
- Aligns CASAS testing strategies with TEGL 17-05's requirement to provide an option for alternate test formats to individuals with intellectual disabilities, as appropriate.
- Provides a new recommended CASAS testing procedure for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) 1-B Youth (refer to Sec. 3.b.ii. and Attachment A).

Note: CASAS Life & Work (Reading) and Life Skills (Math) are the tests currently approved by the NRS and SBCTC to replace the ECS series. Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) must transition to the new series in alignment with the NRS and SBCTC (refer to Sec. 7 – Action Required).

2. Background:

This policy aligns with section 4.3 of Washington Works: Strengthening the Workforce for Washington's Future, which endorsed CASAS as the assessment tool of choice and recommended that the Employment Security Department (ESD) implement the same requirement for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs.

Customers should be able to move through the Workforce Investment System seamlessly and without unnecessary testing. Duplication is eliminated through the implementation of a common assessment tool

for basic academic skills. This policy decision is another facet of the vision for one-stop vision of system integration.

A basic academic skills assessment measures basic reading and writing in English and basic understanding of arithmetic. CASAS is a test to measure basic academic skills, but it does not measure vocational skills nor does it measure advanced technical skills. Other tests are appropriate for other purposes, and this policy does not limit the appropriate use of other assessments for other purposes.

3. **Policy:**

a. **CASAS for Washington's WorkSource System**

As stated in this policy, CASAS is the required assessment instrument for all programs under Washington's WorkSource System when a standardized basic skills assessment is appropriate. The CASAS series used must align with the series used by the State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to the extent it aligns with the National Reporting System (NRS). Refer to [SBCTC's list](#) of approved CASAS assessments and the [NRS's list](#) of acceptable tests.

Note: CASAS does not measure vocational skills or advanced technical skills. Other tests are appropriate for other purposes, and this policy does not limit the appropriate use of other assessments for other purposes.

b. **CASAS for the WIA 1-B Youth Program**

i. **Testing Requirements**

The appropriate CASAS Appraisal Test, followed by the appropriate Pre-Test, must be provided to all Out-of-School (see definition) youth for the purpose of the literacy and numeracy measure. This Appraisal and Pre-Test determine whether or not Out-of-School youth are Basic Skills Deficient (BSD) for the literacy and numeracy measure but is not required for the purpose of eligibility and enrollment.

The results of the CASAS Appraisal Test determine the appropriate CASAS Pre-Test and can be used to determine eligibility for the WIA Title I-B Youth Program. Following eligibility determination, the **Pre-Test, not the Appraisal Test**, should be used to determine the EFL level of an out-of-school youth. The Pre-Test determines whether or not the individual is BSD for the purpose of the literacy and numeracy measure. Existing CASAS tests can be used if they are no more than 6 months old (from the date of the first youth service).

The CASAS Appraisal Test **CANNOT** be used in lieu of the CASAS Pre-Test to determine the EFL level of an out-of-school youth.

Refer to Section c. and Attachment B for more information regarding accommodations, including the state's policy allowing the use of an alternate CASAS test for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Note: Refer to Policy 1019 and Sec. 3.b.ii. for information regarding initial BSD determinations for eligibility and enrollment. TEGL 17-05 and WorkSource Policy 1002 provide additional information regarding educational functioning levels and the significance of BSD testing for the literacy and numeracy measure (i.e., the CASAS testing that is required after an initial BSD determination at enrollment).

ii. Recommended Procedure

ESD has developed a recommended procedure ([Attachment A](#)) based on the assistance and feedback from local staff as well as technical assistance provided by DOLETA Region 6 concerning definitions and decision paths pertaining to eligibility and the literacy and numeracy measures. The intent is to:

- Streamline the intake process and commit fewer resources pre-enrollment, when possible.
- Reduce the number of CASAS pre-tests (but not appraisals) that would otherwise be provided to make an initial determination of BSD for post-secondary youth who are likely not BSD.
- Reduce confusion and standardize the process for determining 'Basic Literacy Skills Deficient' in SKIES, increasing SKIES data integrity and aligning with guidance received from DOLETA.

The process in [Attachment A](#) is recommended, however ESD is not precluding local areas from using a different process or from providing pre-tests prior to enrollment. ESD's intent is to clarify minimum requirements and to suggest efficiencies based on these clarifications.

c. Testing Accommodations for Learners with Disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 require the provision of reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities when needed to provide equal access. Testing accommodations level the playing field, but do not provide any advantage or make any measured task easier. Accommodations in testing alter the conditions for administering a test or change the nature of an assessment instrument to allow students with disabilities an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities. Proper accommodations meet the needs of students without changing what a test is intended to measure.

NOTE: [Attachment B](#) provides guidance on test taking strategies and accommodations, including an alternate CASAS test format available to learners with intellectual disabilities, in alignment with TEGL 17-05.

4. References:

- TEGLs 17-05 and 4-13.
- [WorkSource Policy 1002](#), Common Measures.
- [WIN 0045 Rev. 1](#), Educational Functioning Levels and the Literacy Numeracy Measure.
- [Washington Works: Strengthening the Workforce for Washington's Future, January 2007](#).
- [Washington State Adult Basic Education Assessment Policy, SBCTC, July 1, 2012](#).
- Section 504 in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- ADA Amendments Act of 2008 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

5. Supersedes:

Policy 1011 Rev. 1, CASAS for Basic Skills Assessments

6. Policy Website:

<http://www.wa.gov/esd/1stop/policies/systems.htm>

7. Action:

WDCs must continue to use CASAS as the exclusive assessment instrument in all WorkSource System programs for the measurement of basic academic skills, including test taking strategies and accommodations for individuals with disabilities in alignment with Attachment B. Alternative assessment tools must not be permitted to disrupt smooth and seamless participant services or to impede local service integration.

Specifically, WDCs must discontinue the use of the ECS series and implement the Life and Work (Reading) and Life Skills (Math) Series in alignment with the NRS and SBCTC for all Youth who have not yet tested. This transition should begin immediately as the current ECS series expires on July 1, 2014. The transition must complete by September 1, 2014 at the latest. ECS pre-tests should be discontinued by that date at the latest. For Youth who have taken a pre-test or a post-test with the ECS series they will continue to test with the ECS series. To assist with the transition, ESD recommends the following:

- Continue to coordinate with the college system where possible as SBCTC is implementing the new tests on July 1, 2014.
- Continue to enter the test scores as normal, whether a new or old (ECS) pre-test is used. Because the new tests follow the same scoring model, a Life & Work test result can be entered just as the ECS results are entered. During this transition, the key is to make sure the post-test is in the same series as the pre-test.
- Inevitably some ECS pre-tests have been and will be provided prior to a complete transition, therefore WDCs should maintain an appropriate number of post-tests to coincide with the number of ECS pre-tests provided prior to the transition date (September 1, 2014 being the latest transition date).

Please email SystemPolicy@esd.wa.gov with any questions. Free online CASAS training is available [here](#).

Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) and their contractors, as well as Employment Security Regional Directors, should distribute this guidance broadly throughout the system to ensure that WorkSource System staff are familiar with the content and requirements.

8. Attachments:

[Attachment A](#) - Recommended CASAS Procedure for WIA 1-B Youth

[Attachment B](#) - Accommodating Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

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Attachment A – Recommended CASAS Procedure for WIA 1-B Youth

This procedure is recommended but not mandated. Refer to Sec. 3.b.ii of this policy for additional context.

WIA 1-B Youth CASAS Testing Procedure:

1. Assess all in-school youth for eligibility determination (e.g., the basic literacy skills deficiency barrier), i.e., using an informal interview/case notes or school records. CASAS appraisals are unnecessary, and sometimes inappropriate, as a pre-test will not be required since in-school youth are excluded from literacy and numeracy.
2. Use the CASAS Appraisal for ALL 1-B out-of-school youth at intake for eligibility determination purposes, i.e., initial indication of basic skills deficiency.
3. CASAS Pre-test ALL 1-B out-of-school youth who are not attending post-secondary school (the appropriate pre-test is based on the results of the appraisal); and
4. CASAS Pre-test ONLY those post-secondary youth who are initially identified as basic skills deficient based on the appraisal. According to the literacy and numeracy decision path (TEGL 4-13), a post-secondary youth only needs to be tested for BSD (literacy and numeracy inclusion) if they are initially identified as Basic Literacy Skills Deficient in SKIES. This determination as indicated in SKIES does not *require* the CASAS Pre-Test.

Note: The initial indication in SKIES of basic literacy skills deficient ‘yes’ would not have to be changed if a CASAS Pre-Test later indicates non-BSD. The appraisal is still valid for eligibility determination and enrollment and the CASAS test score will automatically filter for the Literacy and Numeracy measure. This aligns with the Literacy and Numeracy decision path, which requires an initial indication of Basic Literacy Skills Deficient and confirmation of BSD (e.g., CASAS Pre-Test).

Please email SystemPolicy@esd.wa.gov if you have any questions or suggestions to improve this process.

Attachment B - Accommodating Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

a. Requirements:

- Testing aides and/or accommodations must be made available to individuals whether requested through formal documentation (i.e., documentation of a disability and/or past accommodations) or based on an undocumented need.
- Learners with disabilities must be provided opportunities to test, including the use of needed testing accommodations. Sec. 2.c. of this attachment provides test taking strategies and accommodations, including an alternate CASAS test format available to learners with intellectual disabilities, in alignment with TEGL 17-05.
- Learners with disabilities are not required to reveal their disabilities in order to participate in a program. However, to ensure appropriate accommodations are made, learners who request accommodations for disabilities may be required by staff to reveal their disabilities and/or provide documentation.

All documentation of individuals' needs for specific testing accommodations for disabilities must be confidentially and securely maintained in alignment with WorkSource Information Notice 0023.

b. Test Taking Strategies and Accommodations:

Below are some examples of test taking strategies that may be utilized when and where appropriate for all learners. These test-taking aides do not affect the administration of the test.

- One test per day
- Quiet room
- Magnifying glasses/lenses/sheet
- Clear and/or colored overlays
- Straight-edge
- Adhesive notes/flags
- Highlighters
- Visor
- Earplugs

CASAS provides specific tests in a format appropriate for students with disabilities. Alternate test forms developed by CASAS do not modify test standards and may be appropriate, although rare, when test taking strategies are inadequate:

- All CASAS test booklets are available in large-print format.
- A version of the Life and Work reading test is available in Braille.
- Computer based tests are available in reading, math, and listening.
- To accommodate individuals with intellectual disabilities, the Adult Life Skills (ALS) Appraisal Test 352, followed by the appropriate ALS Pre-Test, may be used instead of the standard series. This test accommodates learners who are considered to be pre-beginning literacy and should only be used when other test taking strategies and accommodations are not sufficient. DOLETA and ESD fully expect standard CASAS testing, with appropriate accommodations, to be sufficient for most disability accommodations. Contact SystemPolicy@esd.wa.gov with any questions regarding scoring or data entry.

The table below may help staff identify appropriate accommodations for learners with disabilities. The appropriate accommodation should be based on needs and requests of individual learners and

not on a specific disability category. Any testing accommodation for a disability must address or remove the barrier that hampers the learner’s ability to demonstrate performance on the test. The list is not an exhaustive list of disabilities or possible accommodations.

Disability	Test Administration Procedures	CASAS Test Forms Available and Approved
Specific Learning Disability and/or ADHD such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, receptive aphasia, hyperactivity, written language disorder, attention deficit disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended time • Alternate schedule • Frequent breaks • Scribe • Alternate room • Computer (<i>with spelling and grammar check disabled</i>) • Simple calculator (<i>for level A/B only</i>) 	Large-print forms and Answer Sheet for ALL Approved CASAS tests
Deaf or Hearing Impaired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign language interpreter (<i>for test directions only</i>) • Head phones (<i>for those taking the listening test</i>) 	N/A
Blind or Visually Impaired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnifier/Template • Text-to-speech software • Video magnifiers • Scribe/Reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level A/B Reading test in contracted Braille format • Large-print CASAS tests • CASAS listening test series (Levels A, B, and C)
Mobility Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended time • Alternate site/equipment • Scribe/writer/communication board 	N/A
Intellectual Disabilities such as traumatic brain injury, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one administration • Extended time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASAS Adult Life Skills (ALS) Series

NOTE: The accommodations listed are suggestions only and can be used in addition to use of regular CASAS tests or alternate formats.

CASAS will provide advice regarding appropriate accommodations and use of test formats or test administration directions as alternative formats and directions are developed and approved.

If a situation arises that is not covered by this assessment policy, contact Ginny Posey at CASAS:

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