

# SOUTHWESTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

## USE OF ASSESSMENTS POLICY 18-07

### DATE OF ISSUE

October 25, 2018

### EFFECTIVE DATE

November 1, 2018

### APPLICABILITY

WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide local Workforce Connection Center (WCC) offices guidance regarding established standards for the use of assessments that minimizes duplication and provides information on the provision of basic and individualized career services for initial and objective assessments. It further provides information on the types of assessments utilized and accepted within the Southwestern area WCC system.

### BACKGROUND

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) affirms the WCC commitment to providing high quality services to customers that provides seamless service delivery and minimizes duplication. As part of the framework to accomplish this it is necessary to establish a uniform methodology and crosswalk for assessments for use and acceptance within the WCC.

### DEFINITIONS

Assessment: For the purposes of WCC offices, assessment is a process to assist staff with identification of strengths, transferrable skills, interests, work values, and personal priorities as they relate to employment.

Basic Skills Assessment: This is an assessment of the proficiency level of an individual in reading, writing, and mathematics. This assessment is conducted through use of a standardized assessment tool such as the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), GAIN, CASAS and MAPT.

Career Assessment: Is a process of assessing the interests, skills, personality traits and values and applying those to occupational options to identify which occupations best match the individual.

Initial Assessment (IA): The gathering of information from observations, personal interviews and any information provided by the customer. IA should be part of the eligibility process and needs assessment.

Needs Assessment: Working with the customer the WCC staff must identify and document barriers that would hinder or prevent the customer from fully engaging in and achieving career objectives. Staff must identify and record those needs and then identify local resources available to meet those needs.

Objective Assessment (OA): Objective Assessment is a comprehensive and exploratory approach to properly evaluate the needs of customers without regard to services or programs available. It should include the full composite of interviews, career exploration, interests, basic skill levels and behavioral observations.

### ACTION

During the enrollment process in the WCC, individuals must receive an assessment. Assessments are a holistic, ongoing process and should not be viewed as a one-time event. They provide valuable information that allows center staff to best guide an individual as they strive to meet their employment goal. The results of assessments must be explained to a job seeker and analyzed to provide guidance in determining action steps and

services to be included in their individual employment plan.

One-Stop Centers are required to provide direct linkage to one stop services provided in the One-Stop system. Appropriate one-stop partners and services for an individual are determined through the assessment process and based off the participant's desire to work with the various partner agencies. Active Resource Coordination is the first step in the development of a seamless service delivery system.

#### **A. Initial Assessment**

Initial assessment is part of the overall intake process and includes the initial determination of the following:

- 1) Basic skills
- 2) Identification of strengths
- 3) Identification of workplace skills
- 4) Career interests
- 5) Work values
- 6) Identification of prior work history
- 7) Family situation
- 8) Service needs

When an Initial Assessment is completed, staff should enter the Initial Assessment service and a case note describing the assessment results.

#### **B. Objective Assessment**

The results from an Objective Assessment assists in the development of a Title I participant's employment plan. An Objective Assessment is not required for Title III Wagner-Peyser participants. Formal assessment results within the last six months, that the participant may have, or a partner agency provides, are acceptable to use in place of new formal Assessments.

**Youth:** An objective assessment must be completed during the youth enrollment process prior to a youth becoming a participant.

The Objective Assessment shall include a review of the following:

- 1) Basic skills (to determine basic skills deficiency, see EAWDB eligibility policy)
- 2) Identification of strengths
- 3) Identification of workplace skills
- 4) Career interests
- 5) Work values
- 6) Identification of prior work history
- 7) Family situation
- 8) Service needs

Encouraged Assessments:

- 1) Digital Literacy
- 2) Financial situation
- 3) Reality check

#### **C. Basic Skills Assessments**

To minimize duplication of effort for customers the SAWDB will accept formalized assessments performed by partner agencies or community colleges so long as the results are provided in a manner that is allowable for documentation purposes (Section D). For the purposes of establishing basic skills deficiency, Attachment A provides a list some of the acceptable assessments and their corresponding EFL from NRS Testing Benchmarks. This Attachment will be updated as other possible assessments are identified and will not require reapproval of the policy.

#### **D. Documentation**

In order for offices to utilize assessments provided by other entities an actual copy of the results must be obtained for the E-file then the following steps performed:

- 1) Assessment result copies should be uploaded to the documentation portion of the NMWCOS and entered into the assessment portion of the NMWCOS utilizing the appropriate file naming

conventions established by the SAWDB and document tags.

- 2) Assessment results should also be entered into the assessment portion of the NMWCOS. If there is not an assessment in NMWCOS that fits the assessment provided, include a summary in case notes and upload as previously described.
- 3) When an Objective Assessment service is recorded a note indicating the assessments completed and the overall results should be entered.

*If an Adult or Dislocated Worker, refuses to complete a basic skills assessment to determine their basic skills levels within 60 days of eligibility, they may still receive program services under basic or individualized career services. However, if a participant is eligible for training services such as ITA or OJT but refuses to complete the basic skills assessment and 60 days has passed, we will not provide training services until the assessment is completed.*

**INQUIRIES**

WIOA Administrative Entity; (575) 744-4857.

**ATTESTED**

This policy was approved through board resolution on October 25, 2018

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SAWDB Board Chair Signature

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Date

ATTACHMENT A

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels  
 Updated February 2018

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Beginning ABE Literacy (Level 1)</b></p>	<p><b>TABE<sup>1</sup> (9–10) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9):</b></p> <p>Reading: 367 and below                      Total Math: 313 and below                      Language: 389 and below</p> <p><b>Wonderlic GAIN<sup>2</sup> scale scores:</b></p> <p>English: 200–406                      Math: 200–314</p> <p><b>CASAS<sup>3</sup> Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b></p> <p>Reading: 200 and below                      Math: 200 and below</p> <p><b>Tests Aligned to New ABE EFL Descriptors<sup>4</sup></b></p> <p><b>TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 0–1):</b></p> <p>Reading: 300–441                      Mathematics: 300–448                      Language: 300–457</p> <p><b>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores:</b></p> <p>Reading: 203 and below</p>

<sup>1</sup> TABE = Tests of Adult Basic Education

<sup>2</sup> GAIN = General Assessment of Instructional Needs

<sup>3</sup> CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix B of the NRS Technical Assistance Guide for more information on the new EFL descriptors.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p><b>Beginning Basic Education (Level 2)</b></p>	<p><b>TABE (9–10) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 2–3.9):</b>                      Reading: 368–460                      Total Math: 314–441                      Language: 390–490</p> <p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 201–210                      Math: 201–210</p> <p><b>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores:</b>                      English: 407–525                      Math: 315–522</p> <p><b>MAPT<sup>5</sup> scale scores:</b>                      All tests: 200–299</p> <p><b>Tests Aligned to New ABE EFL Descriptors</b></p> <p><b>TABE (11–12) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 2–3):</b>                      Reading: 442–500                      Mathematics: 449–495                      Language: 458–510</p> <p><b>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 204–216</p>

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<sup>5</sup> MAPT = Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Low Intermediate Basic Education (Level 3)</b></p>	<p><b>TABE (9–10) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 4–5.9):</b>                      Reading: 461–517                      Total Math: 442–505                      Language: 491–523</p> <p><b>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores:</b>                      English: 526–661                      Math: 523–669</p> <p><b>MAPT scale scores:</b>  <b>All tests: 300–399</b></p> <p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 211–220                      Math: 211–220</p> <p><b>Tests Aligned to New ABE EFL Descriptors</b></p> <p><b>TABE (11–12) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 4–5):</b>                      Reading: 501–535                      Mathematics: 496–536                      Language: 511–546</p> <p><b>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 217–227</p>

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>High Intermediate Basic Education (Level 4)</b></p>	<p><b>TABE (9–10) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 6–8.9):</b>                      Reading: 518–566                      Total Math: 506–565                      Language: 524–559</p> <p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 221–235                      Math: 221–235</p> <p><b>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores:</b>                      English: 662–746                      Math: 670–775</p> <p><b>MAPT scale scores:</b>                      All tests: 400–499</p> <p><b>Tests Aligned to New ABE EFL Descriptors</b></p> <p><b>TABE (11–12) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 6–8):</b>                      Reading: 536–575                      Mathematics: 537–595                      Language: 547–583</p> <p><b>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 228–238</p>

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Low Adult Secondary Education (Level 5)</b></p>	<p><b>TABE (9–10): scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 9–10.9):</b>                      Reading: 567–595                      Total Math: 566–594                      Language: 560–585</p> <p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 236–245                      Math: 236–245</p> <p><b>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores:</b>  <b>English: 747–870</b>                      Math: 776–854</p> <p><b>MAPT scale scores:</b>                      All tests: 500–599</p> <p><b>Tests Aligned to New ABE EFL Descriptors</b></p> <p><b>TABE (11–12) scale scores</b>  <b>(grade level 9–10):</b>                      Reading: 576–616                      Mathematics: 596–656                      Language: 584–630</p> <p><b>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 239 – 248</p>



Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>High Adult Secondary Education (Level 6)</b></p>	<p><b>TABE (9-10): scale scores (grade level 11-12):</b>                      Reading: 596 and above                      Total Math: 595 and above                      Language: 586 and above</p> <p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 246 and above                      Math: 246 and above</p> <p><b>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores:</b>                      English: 871-1000                      Math: 855-1000</p> <p><b>MAPT scale scores:</b>                      All tests: 600-700</p> <p><b>Tests Aligned to New ABE EFL Descriptors</b></p> <p><b>TABE (11-12) scale scores (grade level 11-12):</b>                      Reading: 617-800                      Mathematics: 657-800                      Language: 631-800</p> <p><b>CASAS Reading GOALS scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 249 and above</p>

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ESL Literacy	<p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 180 and below                      L&amp;W Listening: 162–180</p> <p><b>BEST<sup>6</sup> Plus 2.0:</b> 88–361  <b>BEST Literacy:</b> 0–20 (SPL 0–1)</p> <p><b>TABE CLAS-E<sup>7</sup> scale scores<sup>8</sup>:</b>                      Total Reading and Writing: 225–394                      Total Listening and Speaking: 230–407</p>
Low Beginning ESL	<p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 181–190                      L&amp;W Listening: 181–189</p> <p><b>BEST Plus 2.0:</b> 362–427  <b>BEST Literacy:</b> 21–52 (SPL 2)</p> <p><b>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:</b>                      Total Reading and Writing: 395–441                      Total Listening and Speaking: 408–449</p>
High Beginning ESL	<p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 191–200                      L&amp;W Listening: 190–199</p> <p><b>BEST Plus 2.0:</b> 428–452  <b>BEST Literacy:</b> 53–63 (SPL 3)</p> <p><b>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:</b>                      Total Reading and Writing: 442–482                      Total Listening and Speaking: 450–485</p>

<sup>6</sup> BEST = Basic English Skills Test

<sup>7</sup> TABE CLAS–E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English

<sup>8</sup> Refer to the TABE CLAS–E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening and speaking tests. Table shows only total scores.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
<p><b>Low Intermediate ESL</b></p>	<p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 201–210                      L&amp;W Listening: 200–209</p> <p><b>BEST Plus 2.0:</b> 453–484  <b>BEST Literacy:</b> 64–67 (SPL 4)</p> <p><b>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:</b>                      Total Reading and Writing: 483–514                      Total Listening and Speaking: 486–525</p>
<p><b>High Intermediate ESL</b></p>	<p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 211–220                      L&amp;W Listening: 210–218</p> <p><b>BEST Plus 2.0:</b> 485–524  <b>BEST Literacy:</b> 68–75 (SPL 5)</p> <p><b>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:</b>                      Total Reading and Writing: 515–556                      Total Listening and Speaking: 526–558</p>
<p><b>Advanced ESL</b></p>	<p><b>CASAS Life and Work Reading scale scores:</b>                      Reading: 221–235                      L&amp;W Listening: 219–227</p> <p><b>BEST Plus:</b> 525–564 (exit 565 and higher)  <b>BEST Literacy<sup>9</sup>:</b> 76–78 (SPL 6)</p> <p><b>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:</b>                      Total Reading and Writing: 557–600                      Total Listening and Speaking: 559–600</p>

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<sup>9</sup> Students can be placed into advanced ESL using Best Literacy but the test does not assess skills beyond this level so students cannot exit Advanced ESL with this test. Retesting of students who enter this level with another assessment is recommended.