



Accommodations: Synopsis

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

An accommodation is a change that helps a student overcome or work around the disability. Allowing a student who has trouble writing to give his answers orally is an example of an accommodation. This student is still expected to know the same material and answer the same questions as fully as the other students, but he doesn't have to write his answers to show that he knows the information. Accommodations reduce or eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations.

Accommodations are practices and procedures in the areas of presentation, response, setting, and timing/scheduling that provide equitable access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities.

- I. **Setting Accommodations:** Change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting.
- II. **Timing and Scheduling Accommodations:** Increase the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is organized.
- III. **Response Accommodations:** Allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using an assistive device or organizer.
- IV. **Presentation Accommodations:** Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual.

MODIFICATIONS OR ALTERATIONS VS. ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations do not reduce learning expectations. They provide access. Modifications refer to practices that change, lower, or reduce learning expectations. Modifications can increase the gap between the achievement of students with disabilities and expectations for proficiency at a particular grade level. Using modifications may result in implications that could adversely affect students throughout their educational career.

DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS ON A STUDENT'S IEP

- I. *“Consideration of Special Factors”* [Sec. 614 (d) (3) (B)]. This is where communication and assistive technology supports are considered.
- II. *“Supplementary Aids and Services”* [Sec. 602 (33) and Sec. 614 (d) (1) (A) (i)]. This area of the IEP includes “aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings.

- III. “Participation in Assessments” [Sec. 612 (a) (16)]. This section of the IEP documents accommodations needed to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in general state and district-wide assessments.

INVOLVING STUDENTS IN SELECTING, USING, AND EVALUATING ACCOMMODATIONS

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. It is critical for students with disabilities to understand his/her disability and learn self-advocacy strategies for success in school and throughout life. Students who use accommodations will also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education and at work. The more that students are involved in the selection process, the more likely the accommodations will be used, especially as students reach adolescence and the desire to be more independent increases.

ACCOMMODATIONS DURING INSTRUCTION

The student must be provided the selected accommodations during instructional periods that necessitate their use. **An accommodation may not be used solely during assessments.** Although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be state approved for use on a standardized assessment.

ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

Students with disabilities are to be included in all state wide and district wide assessments. The IEP team determines how the student will participate in state and district wide assessments—with or without accommodations, or by means of an alternate assessment. Assessment accommodations are determined based on the student’s needs. Those accommodations can only be used for state assessment purposes if they are used regularly by the student during instruction and/or classroom testing. The state approved assessment accommodation list is located on the Oklahoma State Department of Education Web site. Students must meet the eligibility requirements found in the *Criteria Checklist for Assessing Students with Disabilities on Alternate Assessments*¹ before taking an alternate assessment.²

RESOURCES

<http://www.ok.gov/sde/achieving-classroom-excellence-act-ace>

<http://ok.gov/sde/assessment>

<http://ok.gov/sde/accountability-assessments>

<http://ok.gov/sde/assessment-administrator-resources-administrators>

Oklahoma State Department of Education
Special Education Services
(405)521-3351
<http://ok.gov/sde/special-education>

¹ <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/OSDE%20Form%202012%20Assessment%20Criteria%20Checklist.pdf>

² <http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Oklahoma%20Special%20Education%20Handbook%20Manual.pdf>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX B TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) OR SECTION 504 PLAN*

Accommodations

WRITING/MULTIPLE-CHOICE ASSESSMENTS

According to the Oklahoma Administrative Code, OAC 210:10-13-2, testing accommodations for IEP and Section 504* students must be those normally **employed as part of classroom instruction on a regular basis, and must be specified in either an IEP or a Section 504 plan.** Given that stipulation, the following are the only accommodations approved by the Oklahoma State Department of Education for use by IEP and Section 504 students in the Oklahoma School Testing Program:

Setting

1. Test administration can be done individually, in small groups (of not more than five students), in a testing carrel, or in a separate location (*such as special resource classroom*) that will minimize student distractions
2. Provide special lighting
3. Provide adaptive or special furniture

Presentation

1. Large-print or contracted Braille (The Test Administrator must transcribe answers verbatim into the standard scorable answer document/test book that was provided in the large-print or Braille kit.)
2. Use of assistive devices/supports: magnifier, auditory amplification devices, such as hearing aids or noise buffers
3. Read or sign test items if test is not a reading test. OCCT Grades 3–8 Reading, OCCT ACE English II, ACE English III, and OMAAP English II multiple-choice tests may not be read aloud as an accommodation.
 - A Test Administrator reading items must read over the student’s shoulder, not from a separate test book.
 - **A read aloud is preferred as an individualized accommodation but should never be used in a group larger than 5 students.**
 - An online audio accommodation on the computer is available. Earphones must be used.
4. Color overlays to reduce glare
5. Simplification/repetition/signage of directions (*not test questions or answer choices*)
6. Student may ask for clarification of directions (*not test questions or answer choices*)
7. Braille students only may be provided with an abacus
8. Use a calculator on OCCT Grades 3–8 Mathematics test (see Grades 3–8 Calculator Use Accommodations in Appendix B)
9. Audio calculator for site impaired students
10. Provide cues (arrows, stop signs) on answer form
11. Use templates to reduce the amount of visible print
12. Secure paper to work area with tape or magnets
13. Reread directions for each page of questions
14. Masks or markers to maintain place
15. The Test Administrator assists the student in tracking and/or monitors the placement of student responses on the answer document.

Timing/Scheduling

1. Time of day when student is most responsive
2. Flexible schedule (except for the Writing prompt for OCCT Grades 5 and 8, OCCT ACE English II/III and OMAAP English II)

***Section 504 applies only to OCCT students.**

APPENDIX B

STUDENTS WITH AN IEP OR SECTION 504 PLAN (CONTINUED)

3. Administer subject area test over several sessions (except Writing tests)
4. Allow frequent breaks during testing

Response

1. For OCCT tests, mark answers in test book and not on answer document, for later transfer by a Test Administrator to answer document
2. Slant board or wedge for positioning
3. Utilize assistive technology communication device
4. Braille
5. Pencil grip
6. Colored overlays
7. Abacus (*for students using Braille*)
8. Give oral or signed responses to be marked on Multiple-Choice scorable answer document/test book by Test Administrator
9. Dictate words to scribe (*Writing test only for OCCT Grades 5 and 8, OCCT ACE English II/III and OMAAP English II*). (The Test Administrator must transcribe words verbatim into a scorable answer document/test book.)
10. Utilize typewriter, word processor, or computer without the “help” features, such as spell check, an electronic dictionary, or a thesaurus. After student completes the writing response for OCCT Grades 5 and 8, OCCT ACE English II/III and OMAAP English II), it should be printed off for transcription. The response should be cleared from the computer and not saved in any manner. The Test Administrator must transcribe words verbatim into a scorable answer document/test book. Place the original typed student response inside the front cover of the scorable answer document/test book.
11. Student tapes response for verbatim transcription at a later time (*Writing test only for OCCT Grades 5 and 8, OCCT ACE English II/III and OMAAP English II*). Tapes need to be destroyed by District Test Coordinator.

Note: A TP must be present for all administrations of the OSTP (including small-group administrations) and is required to sign the Test Administrator/Proctor Test Security Form.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX B STUDENTS WITH AN IEP OR SECTION 504 PLAN (CONTINUED) CALCULATOR USE ACCOMMODATION for Grades 3–8

- Students may not share calculators.
- Students may use their own calculators or those provided by the school.
- Calculators that make noise must have the sound feature turned off.
- Calculators that have paper tape must have the tape removed.
- Calculators with power cords must have the cord removed.
- All calculators must have the memory cleared before and after the test session.
- Any programs or applications must be removed prior to the test session.

Prohibited Calculators

- Pocket organizers
- Handheld or laptop computers
- Electronic writing pads or pen-input devices
- Calculators built into cellular phones or other electronic communication devices
- Calculators with a typewriter keypad (QWERTY format)
- Calculators with built-in computer algebra systems (CAS), such as, but not limited to:
 - Casio: Algebra fx 2.0, ClassPad 300, and all model numbers that begin with CFX-9970G
 - Texas Instruments: All model numbers that begin with TI-89, TI-92, or TI-Nspire (CAS)
 - Hewlett-Packard: HP-48GII and all model numbers that begin with HP-40G or HP-49G
- Calculators with programs or applications that cannot be removed or disabled (e.g., Polynomial Root-Finder and Simultaneous Equation Solver on TI-86)

Test Security and Validity

- Using a calculator that does not meet the above requirements invalidates the test results and is a violation of test security and test validity. Any violation will be reported to the State Superintendent and may result in revocation of teaching and/or administrative certificates.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS

Oklahoma has developed the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP) in order to broaden the inclusion of children with disabilities in the state assessment program. The Criteria Checklist is intended to assist IEP teams in determining whether a student should participate in the regular assessment, with or without accommodations, or in an alternate assessment and to address documentation requirements under IDEA. For additional information on the OAAP, contact the Special Education Office at (405) 521-3351.