

# The ACT® Quick Start Guide for Requesting Accommodations and/or English Learner Supports

## Overview

This document contains information the test accommodations coordinator (TAC) needs to request accommodations and/or English learner (EL) supports on the ACT® test.

## Resources for Requesting Accommodations and/or English Learner Supports

Use this guide in conjunction with the following items to help you request accommodations and/or EL supports for examinees.



### Resources for National and Special Testing

- *Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA)*
- *Test Accessibility and Accommodations User Guide*
- *Consent to Release Information to ACT Form*
- *Teacher Survey Form*



### Resources for State and District Testing

- *Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA)*
- *Test Accessibility and Accommodations User Guide*
- *PearsonAccess<sup>next</sup> System*
- *PearsonAccess<sup>next</sup> User Guide for the ACT Test*
- *Consent to Release Information to ACT Form*
- *Teacher Survey Form*
- *Qualified Exceptions to the Deadline Form*

## Available Accommodations, EL Supports, and Designated Supports

The following test accommodations, EL supports, and designated supports are available for the ACT.



### Available Options National and Special Testing

- National Standard Time with Accommodations and/or EL Supports
- National Extended Time
- National Extended Time with Accommodations and/or EL Supports
- Special Testing



### Available Options State and District Testing

- Accommodations Authorized by ACT
- English Learner Supports
- Designated Supports
- Non-College Reportable Accommodations and/or EL Supports (for some states and districts)

Use the documents below to determine the appropriate accommodations, EL supports, and/or designated supports for your examinees.



*National vs. Special Testing Accommodations*



*English Learner Supports Info Graphic*



*Accommodations vs. State Testing Accessibility Supports*

## Requesting Accommodations and/or EL Supports Authorized by ACT

The online Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA) is used for ACT accommodations and EL supports management. The test accommodations coordinator (TAC) uses TAA for:

- Submitting requests for accommodations and/or EL supports to ACT
- Checking the status of requests
- Reviewing Decision Notifications
- Requesting reconsideration of requests that were not approved initially, if applicable
- Viewing examinee information for planning purposes, as needed

## Deadlines

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It is in the examinee's best interest to work with his/her school to submit a request in the Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA), as early as possible.



National or Special requests, including reconsiderations, must be submitted by the late registration deadline found at: <https://act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration.html>.



State or District testing deadlines, see your *Schedule of Events*.

## Eligibility to Request Accommodations and/or EL Supports

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For college-reportable scores, examinees must request and be approved for accommodations and/or EL supports by working with a school official to submit the request in TAA. Supporting documentation is required for TAA requests.

### Accommodations

For examinees with a valid, current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan that authorizes allowable accommodations, a copy of the IEP or 504 Plan will be sufficient to demonstrate eligibility and need for the same allowable accommodations on the ACT test.

For examinees without a plan at school, or other types of plans including but not limited to an official accommodations plan, health care plan, or individual service plan, supporting documentation must be submitted. See *Criteria for Diagnostic Documentation Guidelines by Disability Type* for additional information.

If accommodations are not needed to access the curriculum at school, it is unlikely they will be granted for the ACT.

### English Learner Supports

ACT follows criteria outlined in federal law for establishing English learner status, mainly criteria identified in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). To be eligible for supports on the basis of limited English proficiency, an examinee must provide proof of enrollment at a school located within the United States\* and one or more of the following:

- Limited English Proficiency documented by an appropriate English language proficiency assessment
- Participation in an English Language program at school
- Receipt of the requested supports on classroom tests via a formalized plan

\* Includes US territories and Puerto Rico.

#### *Supporting Documentation*








Supporting documentation must be current and may include but is not limited to: an EL Plan, official support or accommodations plan, English language proficiency assessment results, and/or confirmation of eligibility or participation in an English language program.

### Information to Have Ready to Submit Requests

Before you log into TAA to submit requests, be sure you have all of the needed information ready. See Table 2 for details on what information is needed to submit a request. Requests must be based on the plan and documentation on file for the examinee. For more information, visit [www.act.org/the-act/accommms](http://www.act.org/the-act/accommms).

A *Consent to Release Information to ACT Form* must be on file at the school before requesting accommodations and/or supports.

## Request Process

- 1  • If the TAC does not already have access to the Test Accessibility and Accommodations System (TAA), access must be requested at success.act.org.
- 2  • The TAC submits requests and supporting documentation to ACT using TAA.
- 3  • ACT receives and reviews requests and documentation.  
• ACT provides a Decision Notification in TAA.
- 4  • The TAC reviews each Decision Notification and provides the examinee with a copy.  
• If denied, the TAC can edit requests for reconsideration using TAA providing additional documentation as requested in the Decision Notification..
- 5  • ACT provides an updated Decision Notification in TAA., the TAC reviews updated Decision Notifications.
- 6  • To assist in planning for test day, the TAC downloads advanced search results in TAA (or PearsonAccess<sup>next</sup> for State and District testing) The TAC certifies they will test examinees who will participate in Special testing..
- 7  • ACT ships paper format test materials to the TAC for examinees who are testing with accommodations and/or supports for State and District testing, or special testing.

**Table 1.** Diagnosed Disabilities

Special Education Eligibility Categories		ACT Disability Categories
Cognitive Impairment or Intellectual Disability	Cognitive/ Intellectual Disability	Intellectual Impairment (FSIQ ≤ 85)
Traumatic Brain Injury/Post Concussive Syndrome		Traumatic Brain Injury Post Concussive Syndrome
Specific Learning Disability - Reading	Learning Disability	Reading Disorder/Dyslexia
Specific Learning Disability - Mathematics		Math Disorder
Specific Learning Disability - Writing /Written Expression		Disorder of Written Expression
Speech and Language Disorder		Speech/Language Disorder
Physical Impairment, Orthopedic Impairment, Orthopedic Disability, or Severe Multiple Impairment: Physical or Health	Motor Disability	Cerebral Palsy Muscular Dystrophy Quadriplegia/Paralysis of Upper Extremities
Other Health Impairment: ADHD or ADD	Psychological Disability	Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD)
Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorders		Autism Spectrum Disorder
Emotional Impairment, Emotional Disability, Emotional Disturbance, Serious Emotional Disturbance, or Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities		Anxiety Disorder Depression Emotional/Behavioral Disorder (school team)
Tourette's Syndrome		Tourette's Syndrome/Tic Disorder
Visual Impairment or Severe Multiple Impairment: Visual (Blindness) or Deaf-Blindness	Sensory Disability	Blind/Legally Blind (in both eyes) Visual Impairment
Hearing Impairment, Hard of Hearing, or Severe Multiple Impairment: Hearing (Deafness) or Deaf-Blindness		Deaf Hearing Impairment
Other Health Impairment: Diabetes Other Health Impairment: Migraines Other Health Impairment: Epilepsy	Physical/ Motor Disability	Diabetes Migraines Epilepsy/Seizures
Other Health Impairment including but not limited to: asthma, heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia	Other Disability	Other

**Table 2.** Documentation by Disability Category Overview (refer to [www.act.org/the-act/accommms](http://www.act.org/the-act/accommms) for complete documentation guidelines)

<p><b>Learning Disabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete</b> test/subtest results, with <b>standard scores</b> and percentiles from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An intellectual assessment using a valid and comprehensive battery</li> <li>○ An achievement battery</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Evidence that alternative explanations were ruled out</li> </ul>	<p><b>Visual Impairments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific ocular diagnosis</li> <li>• Record of complete, current (<b>within past 12 months</b>) ocular examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist including: chief complaint, history of illness, visual acuity, ocular motility exam (versions, tropias, phorias, stereopsis), slit lamp exam, visual field, and pupil, optic nerve, and retina exam</li> <li>• History of treatment for the disorder, including any evaluations or therapy notes (e.g. vision therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy), and a statement about whether or not the condition is stable or progressive, and whether the examinee needs extended testing time, or the opportunity to take vision breaks during testing</li> <li>• If the diagnosed condition is purported to affect reading, results of a <b>measure of reading</b> (decoding, rate, and comprehension)</li> </ul>
<p><b>ADD/ADHD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of early impairment</li> <li>• Evidence of current impairment, including presenting problem and diagnostic interview</li> <li>• Evidence that alternative explanations were ruled out</li> <li>• Results from valid, standardized, age-appropriate assessments</li> <li>• Number of DSM-IV or DSM-5 criteria and how they impair the individual</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hearing Impairments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic results from a full hearing test performed by a qualified professional within the past three years</li> <li>• Relevant medical history, including date of hearing loss</li> <li>• Specific diagnosis</li> <li>• Description of functional limitation (with and without any hearing aids or assistive devices or treatments)</li> <li>• Related educational history, including information regarding reading and language skills</li> <li>• Specific recommendation for accommodation(s) and accompanying rationale</li> </ul>
<p><b>Psychiatric Conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific diagnosis age of onset and course of illness</li> <li>• Psychological tests used</li> <li>• History of treatment for the disorder</li> <li>• Treatment including medication and/or psychotherapy</li> <li>• How the impairment affects functioning across settings</li> <li>• Due to the variable nature of these conditions, documentation must be <b>current within the past year</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Autism Spectrum Disorder</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original diagnosis (e.g. date/age/grade, diagnosing professional, symptoms/impairment, course of treatment)</li> <li>• Current and prior psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluations</li> <li>• A history of special education interventions (e.g. specialized instruction, self-contained classrooms or schools, one-to-one aides, exemptions from proficiency or graduation exams)</li> <li>• Current information regarding adaptive behavior, attention, executive functioning, language skills, and mental health</li> <li>• Rationale for accommodations, based on current impairment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) or Post Concussive Syndrome (PCS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of <b>current</b>, continued educational impairment relating to requested accommodations, <b>supported by objective data</b> (psychological or neuropsychological testing, observations, rating scales, etc.)</li> <li>• Date of incident/accident</li> <li>• Status and diagnosis upon hospital admission</li> <li>• Length of hospital stay</li> <li>• Discharge date, review of type and outcome of outpatient therapy (occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy), if applicable</li> <li>• Medical documentation for the qualified treating professional within the past year</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tourette's Syndrome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History regarding type, frequency, intensity, and duration of motor, visual, and/or verbal tics</li> <li>• If medication or other factors (lighting, noise, etc.) are known to exacerbate the examinee's condition, provide documentation to describe</li> <li>• If the tics are cause for academically-relevant concerns (slow reading rate, diminished fluency, or poor attention/concentration), provide evidence from diagnostic tests, rating scales, and teacher observations to objectively support anecdotal findings</li> </ul>
<p><b>Speech and Language Disorders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific diagnosis, including presenting problems</li> <li>• Developmental and educational history</li> <li>• Evidence of supporting the current impact on reading, written communication, and/or learning</li> </ul>	