

FY 2007 Ohio ABLE Assessment FAQ

BEST - Basic English Skills Test

Q: Why is ABLELink not assigning a placement level for my student who scores a **71 on BEST Literacy?**

A: Per the ODE Assessment Policy, 65 is the highest placement score allowed for this test. BEST Literacy can only show completion for EFLs (Educational Functioning Levels) 1 – 5. In this scenario, you would need to test the student with a different assessment, such as CASAS or BEST Plus, since these tests can show completion for level 6.

CASAS – Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System

Q: Why is ABLELink making my **ESOL student an ABE student?**

A: Since CASAS is approved for both ESOL and ABE, ABLELink can't tell whether a student who took the CASAS test is ABE or ESOL. It currently defaults to ABE. ESOL students must be set to manual. Select "manual" as the Tracking Method and then select the assessment from the Tracking Assessment.

Note: Be sure to scroll down to the bottom for CASAS ESOL.

TABE – Test of Adult Basic Education

Q: I entered one of the test parts such as **Applied Math, Math Comp, Spelling, Vocabulary** or **Language Mechanics** scores only, but ABLELink is selecting the scale score for Total Math, Reading or Language as the lowest. Why?

A: Only Reading, Total Math or Language are acceptable subjects for tracking per the ODE ABLE Assessment Policy.

Q: Why are we required to **report scale scores** when we have always used grade level equivalents?

A: Scale scores are more reliable than grade level equivalents for comparing performance over time on the same test. In addition, according to the TABE 9/10 Norms Book (2004), grade level equivalents "do not have comparable meaning in nongraded programs, particularly programs that focus on the education and training of adults." TABE is the only assessment in the Ohio ABLE Assessment Policy of approved tests that has a grade level equivalent. All of the other NRS (National Reporting System) approved tests use only scale scores.

WORKKEYS

Q: ABLELink isn't providing the correct level for my student. We want to use **Locating Information**, but it keeps assigning Writing.

A: Only the first three subjects (Applied Math, Reading for Information and Writing) are acceptable for reporting purposes per the ODE ABLE Assessment Policy.

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- Q: Can I report a student who scores at **level 3 on WorkKeys**?
- A: Per the ODE ABLE Assessment Policy, *"WorkKeys is on the approved Standardized Assessments list for ABE students at EFLs 4, 5 or 6."* If a student tests below level 4, you would need to give an additional TABE or CASAS test for placement and progress reporting.
- Q: I'm getting an **Error 3163** entering WorkKeys scores or during the Update Achievement routine. What should I do?
- A: Contact Technical Support. They will walk you through the fix in a few minutes.

PLACEMENT

- Q: How does ABLELink **determine the level** for a student?
- A: In the automatic method, ABLELink will determine which scale score puts the student in the lowest Educational Functioning Level. This may not necessarily be the lowest scale score.
- Q: What if **more than one scale score** puts the student in the same Educational Functioning Level?
- A: ABLELink will select the lowest scale score among the tests that put the student in the lowest Educational Functioning Level.
- Q: What if the student wants to **work in something other** than what ABLELink selects automatically?
- A: Per the ODE ABLE Assessment Policy, *"If a student has a specific academic goal that differs from the area in which he/she scores the lowest, the student must be tracked in his/her goal area."* In ABLELink, select "manual" as the Tracking Method and then select the alternate assessment from the Tracking Assessment drop-down.
- Q: How do I report students who are **ESOL students but who want to enroll in ABE/ASE classes**?
- A: There is a distinction of transitioning students from ESOL to ABE for reporting purposes and a distinction for providing instructional services. For reporting purposes, you must make the determination at the initial assessment as to whether the student will be coded in ABLELink as an ESOL or ABE student. Once the determination is made, all assessment and policy requirements must be followed for that program year. If the student attends the next program year, you can assess whether new coding and assessment scores would apply. For instructional purposes, a student can attend ESOL classes and/or ABE classes no matter what his/her coding is in ABLELink. The goal is to have students attend classes that best meet his/her needs. Helping students set goals and discussing the appropriate placement level and options with the student are critical in helping students transition from ESOL to ABE.
- Q: If I **don't have an initial test** on a student, how is that student counted on the APR?
- A: The student would not be counted on the APR without an initial test.

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- Q: My student has a scale score of 730 on TABE Math Level A. This score is within the range of initial test scores allowed to be entered in ABLELink, but the score is **above the range for level 6** according to the chart in the Assessment Policy. Is this student eligible for ABLE?
- A: According to the ODE ABLE Assessment Policy Appendix C: TABE Level 6 Completion Scores (see below), this student would not be eligible to be tracked in math because he/she exceeds the level 6 completion score for math, no matter which version of the TABE test he/she took. With a score of 730, he/she has skills beyond completion of a secondary school education. Although you are able to enter high scores into ABLELink, you must check the level 6 completion chart to see if the student is eligible.

TABE Scale Scores to Show ABE Level 6
(High Adult Secondary) Completion

TABE	7 Survey	CB	8 Survey	CB	9 Survey	CB	10 Survey	CB
Reading	700	723	682	727	676	713	653	700
Math	712	715	721	715	691	701	668	707
Language	674	709	707	721	621	685	654	692

CB = Complete Battery

PROGRESS

- Q: **How often can I test** a student who isn't showing progress?
- A: According to the ODE ABLE Assessment Policy, *"Posttesting should be administered according to the following guidelines: (1) A student has attended at least 50 hours of instruction, AND (2) The student's portfolio contains evidence of level completion, OR (3) The student has been enrolled for 180 days, OR (4) prior to withdrawal if neither 1, 2 or 3 apply."* Appendix A in the Assessment Policy provides recommended timeframes for pre and posttesting by specific tests as provided by the testing companies. According to the testing companies, most of the ABLE approved tests require 60 – 100 hours of instruction before students show level gain. The goal is to capture students' educational progress, and the shorter the time interval, the harder it is to do.
- Q: What is the Level 6 **"Exit Criteria"** that is referenced in the Assessment Policy?
- A: The exit criteria were developed to give programs guidance on when a student should exit the program. A student is ready to exit the program when he/she has reached the top scale score for Level 6 in whichever subject area(s) are being tracked or when the student meets his/her goals for participating.

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TESTING PROTOCOL

Q: My student said he was in special education in school and needs **extended time** on his standardized tests. What should I do?

A: According to the ODE ABE Assessment Policy, *"Students with documented disabilities who require accommodations may request assessment instruments in alternative formats and alterations in test administration procedures. Documented disabilities mean that a student can present a formal document such as a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other formal record of disability."*

To ensure that test results are valid, reliable and equitable, standardized tests are to be administered using standardized testing procedures. The procedures indicate the exact directions, time limits and scoring criteria to be used with the tests. It is very important that these standardized testing procedures be followed and any deviations from standardized testing conditions be documented so that the scores may be interpreted appropriately. The student's formal documentation (described above) must state that extended time is an appropriate accommodation for the student's disability in order for the program to give extended time in testing situations.

Q: My students who score in the **upper range of a test** are placed into a high EFL. When this happens, how can he/she show level completion on a posttest?

A: Refer to your test administration manual concerning how to interpret scores. The Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) must be taken into account when test scores are being analyzed and interpreted. If the score falls in the upper or lower range of the norms table for a given test, the Standard Error of Measurement will be greater than it would have been if the score had been near the middle of the range. The smaller the Standard Error of Measurement, the more accurate the test score. Students should be retested for accurate placement if they initially test into the upper or lower scale score ranges. At the higher end, the student should be given a higher level test (e.g. from TABE M to TABE D). At the lower end, the student should be given a lower level test (e.g. TABE A to TABE D).

