



Accommodated Testing of GED Candidates with Disabilities

Section 11. Accommodated Testing of GED Candidates with Disabilities

Overview

Accommodations are provided for adults who have disabilities that prevent them from expressing in the traditional manner the knowledge and abilities that they possess. Test accommodations do not change the level of competence that the GED Tests measure, so it can be expected that a GED candidate who passes the GED Tests with accommodations will have the same level of academic competence possessed by all adults who earn a similar score on the GED Tests. The GED Chief Examiner at each GED Testing Center is responsible for seeing that adults who have disabilities are aware of and have access to appropriate accommodations when taking the GED Tests.

11.1 Tests for GED Candidates with Disabilities

POLICY: The GED Testing Program has long provided accommodations to candidates who have disabilities and is committed to compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In an effort to make GED Tests accessible to all applicants, accommodations are made for candidates who have diagnosed physical, mental, sensory, or learning disabilities and can provide appropriate documentation from a qualified professional of their impairment and its effect on their ability to take the GED Tests under standard conditions.

Under the ADA, entities that administer standardized examinations must offer the examinations in a place and manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities. This may require reasonable modifications to the manner in which the examination is administered, such as extended testing time, as well as appropriate auxiliary aids and services (i.e., testing accommodations). The goal is to ensure that, for individuals who have documented disabilities, the “test results accurately reflect the individual’s aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the examination purports to measure, rather than reflecting the individual’s impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).” (*ADA Regulations*)

Under the ADA, entities that administer standardized examinations must offer the examinations in a place and manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities.

All potential GED candidates must be made aware of the availability of test accommodations

Consistent with the ADA, the American Council on Education and the GED Testing Service have long believed that every GED candidate should have a fair opportunity to demonstrate his/her knowledge and skills under appropriate test conditions. Under standard GED Testing conditions, some GED candidates who have disabilities may not be able to fully demonstrate what they have learned. This difficulty may be due to a physical, mental, sensory or learning disability.

When such disabilities are properly documented using the applicable GEDTS Request for Testing Accommodations form, and when accommodations are approved by the GED Administrator, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner must arrange to test the GED candidate with the approved accommodations. The additional costs, if any, associated with providing such services may not be charged to the candidate. Fairness to all GED candidates is the underlying principle of the accommodations procedure, both for those GED candidates seeking accommodations and those candidates testing under standard conditions.

All potential GED candidates must be made aware of the availability of these accommodations. The availability of test accommodations and the process for requesting such accommodations must be well publicized. The GED Testing Service publishes a brochure titled *Access the GED Tests Assistance for people with disabilities*.

It is the job of GED Chief Examiners and Examiners to disseminate information about test accommodations.

11.2 Prerequisite Skills for Taking the GED Tests Under Standard Conditions

Taking the GED Tests under standard conditions (described in Sections 4 and 5 of this manual) requires skills and capabilities apart from those being measured by the test instrument itself, including the following specific skills: auditory, visual, and physical.

11.2-1 Auditory or Listening Skills

A GED candidate must have the ability to hear and comprehend spoken information that may include:

- procedural information,
- test-taking instructions, and
- test-marking information and instructions.

11.2-2 Visual or Seeing Skills

A GED candidate must have the ability to see and comprehend written material that may include:

- announcements of test dates and sites,
- directions to the testing room,
- entry ticket information,
- directions for completing answer sheets,
- directions in the test booklet, and
- the questions themselves.

11.2-3 Physical Skills

A GED candidate must have the ability to perform certain physical acts that may include being able to:

- sit for long periods of time;
- simultaneously hold and manipulate several test materials, including an answer sheet, pencil, test booklet, and scratch paper;
- write information, mark small ovals, sign one's name; and
- perform the physical actions required in writing numerals, moving arm, moving head, writing notes, and doing computations on scratch paper.

GED candidates who lack these skills because of a documented disability may be eligible for accommodations.

11.3 Requests for Accommodations

The need for accommodations must be fully documented by a qualified professional diagnosticiana who must document that the GED candidate has a disability and demonstrate how the disability significantly and negatively affects the candidate's ability to take the GED test under standard conditions.

If the qualified professional diagnostician believes that a GED candidate needs an accommodation that is not listed in this manual but that is not explicitly prohibited, then the GED Administrator should contact the GED Testing Service for guidance.

A candidate's request for accommodations and supporting documentation will be held in confidence. No record of accommodated conditions will be provided on a candidate's GED score report or GED credential.

When the GED candidate who is seeking accommodations meets with the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner, the candidate should provide the Chief Examiner or GED Examiner with all necessary documentation. The documentation should be comprehensive in order to avoid or to reduce time delays in making decisions related to the required accommodations. The documentation must indicate that the disability substantially limits some major life activity, such as seeing, hearing, or learning. The following process then occurs:

- a.) The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner reviews the request and determines whether the appropriate Request for Testing Accommodations form is complete.
- b.) If the request is not complete, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner either informs the candidate of the deficiencies in the request (if the initial review takes place while the candidate is present), or mails a notice to the GED candidate, the school, or the advocate outlining what additional information is required.
- c.) Once a request is complete, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner date-stamps the forms and sends the accommodations request form and the Accommodations Tracking Sheet to the GED Administrator.
- d.) The GED Administrator either approves the request, sends the request back to the Official GED Testing Center to request more information, or sends the request to the GED Testing Service in Washington for review.
- e.) If the request needs to be sent to the GED Testing Service, the GED Administrator notifies the GED candidate, the school, or the advocate that such a review may require up to 30 days before an answer is available.
- f.) If the GED Administrator approves the request, he or she will return Request for Testing Accommodations form and Accommodations Tracking Sheet to the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner. The GED candidate is then scheduled and tested with the approved accommodations.
- g.) If the GED Testing Service denies a GED candidate's request for accommodations, the candidate may appeal that decision using the Testing Accommodations Appeal form.

The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner forwards the Accommodations Tracking Sheet to the certified GED Scoring Site after each testing session or when all testing is complete, depending on the requirements of the Scoring Site.

11.4 Required Documentation for Disabilities

11.4-1 Appropriate Documentation Must Be Provided

Individuals who request GED testing accommodations must provide appropriate documentation of their disability and the need for the requested testing accommodations. Requests for documentation should be limited to documentation that

- a.) establishes the existence of a disability as defined under the ADA (i.e., an impairment that substantially limits an individual's ability to perform a major life activity, such as reading, seeing, or learning or physical movement);
- b.) describes how the GED candidate's functional limitations affect his or her ability to take the GED Tests; and
- c.) demonstrates the need for the requested accommodation(s). Staff members of official GED Testing Centers should not ask for documentation of a person's physical or mental health condition that is unrelated to the impaired function for which the candidate seeks accommodation.

An individualized assessment should be made of each request for testing accommodations, based upon the documentation provided and the documentation policies described in this manual. If there are any problems with a candidate's documentation, such as incomplete documentation or discrepancies in the documentation, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner should communicate with the candidate, or those acting on his or her behalf (an advocate), to help them resolve the documentation issues in a timely manner.

11.4-2 Professional Diagnosticians

The administration of diagnostic assessments, determination of specific diagnoses, and recommendation of appropriate accommodations must be made by a qualified professional whose credentials are appropriate to the disability. The name, title, and professional credentials (e.g., degrees, areas of specification, license or certification, employment) should be clearly stated in the documentation. All requests for accommodated testing should include reports on letterhead and are typed, dated, signed, and otherwise legible. Comprehensive training and relevant experience working with the adolescent and adult learning-disabled population are essential to diagnosing and recommending appropriate accommodations. Competence in working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations is highly recommended. It is of utmost importance that evaluators are sensitive to and respectful of cultural and linguistic differences in both adolescents and adults.

11.4-3 Currency of Submitted Documentation

To best assess the current effect of a GED candidate's disability or functional limitations as they apply to the test-taking process, the documentation of a disability must be sufficiently current and appropriate to the particular disabling condition.

Many GED candidates request an accommodated testing on the basis of a traditionally defined learning disability (e.g., excluding ADD/ADHD). The following policies apply with respect to the documentation to be provided by those candidates:

- 1) Documentation of a learning disability must include the results of appropriate psychoeducational assessments. If those results have been generated within the 5 years preceding an accommodation request, and when the individual was 17 years of age or older, they will meet the GEDTS currency requirement for documentation of a learning disability.
- 2) Those persons for whom such documentation is more than 5 years old and was prepared after they were 17 years of age will have their documentation reviewed on a case-by-case basis for purposes of deciding whether it adequately demonstrates current limitations resulting from a learning disability. In such cases, the individual should submit a satisfactory statement from a qualified professional that there is no reason to believe that any change in the disability or need for the requested accommodation has occurred, and an explanation as to why that is so.
- 3) Those persons for whom such documentation was prepared before they were 17 years of age, or regarding whom a qualified professional is unable to say there is no reason to believe that any change in disability or need has occurred, must submit updated evidence of a current disability and a current need for the requested accommodation (i.e., updated psychoeducational assessment results).

11.4-4 Substantiation of Diagnosis

Documentation must provide a comprehensive evaluation, a specific diagnosis, and objective evidence of a substantial functional limitation. The diagnostic report must include specific recommendations for accommodation(s), as well as a detailed explanation of why each accommodation is recommended. The qualified professional diagnostician(s) must describe the effect, if any, that the diagnosed disability has on a specific major life activity as well as the degree of significance of this effect on the individual in a testing situation. The evaluator should support recommendations with specific test results or clinical observations. If no prior accommodation has been provided, the qualified professional and/or the GED candidate should include a detailed explanation of why no accommodation was used in the past and why an accommodation is needed at this time.

11.4-5 Recommendation for Accommodated Testing

The documentation supporting an accommodation(s) request must include specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation of why each accommodation is recommended and how it alleviates the effect of the impairment when taking a standardized test. The diagnostic information provided must be age-appropriate for the population of candidates taking the test. The qualified professional diagnostician must describe the effect, if any, that the diagnosed disability has on a specific major life activity as well as the degree of significance of this effect on the individual in a testing situation.

Although the preferred accommodation of a GED candidate with a disability should generally be given considerable weight, candidates are not automatically entitled to their requested accommodations. Moreover, a particular auxiliary aid or other accommodation should not be provided if it would fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge that the GED Tests are intended to test, or would jeopardize the test security or validity of scores.

11.4-6 Professionals Able to Make Disability Diagnoses

DISABILITY TYPE	LICENSED OR CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL
Learning Disabilities	Psychologists, school psychologists, educational specialists with advanced training
Attention-Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder	Psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians
Physical / Chronic Health Disability	Physicians, specialists in a particular area such as audiologists
Emotional/Mental Disabilities	Psychiatrists, psychologists, school psychologists, licensed professional counselors

11.5 Documentation for General Disability Categories

This section details the specific documentation needed is listed below for each of the following general disability categories:

- Learning and other cognitive disabilities
- ADHD
- Physical / Chronic disabilities
- Emotional / Mental Health

11.5-1 Documentation of Learning and Other Cognitive Disabilities

The GED candidate must provide the results of GEDTS-approved, age-appropriate diagnostic testing performed by a qualified professional diagnostician. Documentation, including all standard scores and percentiles (including subtest scores) that are reliable, valid, and standardized measures, must address the following:

1. A description of the presenting problem(s) and its (their) developmental history, including relevant educational and medical history;
2. A neuropsychological or psychoeducational evaluation, which includes results of a GEDTS-approved cognitive or intellectual assessment using a complete and comprehensive battery;
3. Results of a GEDTS-approved assessment of information processing;
4. Results of a GEDTS-approved complete achievement battery;
5. Other appropriate assessments for consideration of differential diagnosis from co-existing neurological or psychiatric disorders;
6. A specific diagnosis and evidence that other neurological or psychiatric disorders have been ruled out; and
7. A description of the disability, the functional limitations supported by the test results and a rationale for the recommended accommodations specific to the disability and functional limitations.

A well-written interpretive diagnostic summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is a necessary component of the request. Assessment instruments and the data they provide do not diagnose; rather, they provide important elements that must be integrated by the qualified professional diagnostician with background information, the observations of the client during the testing situation, and the current context. It is essential, therefore, that professional judgment be used in the interpretive summary.

11.5-2 Documentation of Attention-Deficit Disorder and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

The GED candidate must provide diagnostic results from an evaluation by a qualified professional diagnostician. Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is an inability to sustain focused attention. Diagnostic symptoms for the disorder are defined in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-Fourth Revision (DSM-IV)*, a manual published by the American Psychiatric Association.

Documentation Requirements

A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation

Professionals who conduct assessments and render diagnoses of ADHD and who recommend accommodations must be qualified to do so. Comprehensive training and relevant experience in differential diagnosis and the full range of psychiatric disorders are essential.

Professionals in psychology, neuropsychology, psychiatry, and related fields would generally be considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose ADHD provided they have comprehensive training in the differential diagnosis of ADHD and direct experience with the ADHD population of adolescents or adults.

Use of diagnostic terminology indicating ADHD by someone whose training and experience are not in these fields is not acceptable. It is also not appropriate for professionals to evaluate members of their own families.

The name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator—including information about license or certification as well as the area of specialization, employment, and state or province in which the individual practices—are necessary.

Documentation must include the following:

- a.) Evidence of early impairment, which by definition is necessary in *DSM-IV*, is first exhibited in childhood and manifests itself in more than one setting. This disability will have a DSM-IV code of 314.00, 314.01, or 314.9. The specific conditions are identified as follows:
 - Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type, 314.01;
 - Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type, 314.00;
 - Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive Type, 314.01; and
 - Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified, 314.9.
- b.) Evidence of current impairment, including the following:
 - 1.) A statement of the problem, a history of the individual's presenting attentional symptoms should be provided, including evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behaviors that significantly impair functioning in two or more settings.

- 2.) A diagnostic interview, the information collected for the summary of the diagnostic interview should consist of more than self-report, because information from third-party sources is critical in the diagnosis of ADHD. The diagnostic interview with information from a variety of sources should include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:
 - History of presenting attentional symptoms, including evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behavior that has significantly impaired functioning over time;
 - Developmental history;
 - Family history for presence of ADHD and other educational, learning, physical, or psychological difficulties deemed relevant by the examiner;
 - Relevant medical and medication history, including the absence of a medical basis for the symptoms being evaluated;
 - Relevant psychosocial history and any relevant interventions;
 - A thorough academic history of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education;
 - A review of prior psychoeducational test reports to determine whether a pattern of strengths or weaknesses is supportive of attention or learning problems;
 - Relevant employment history;
 - Description of current functional limitations pertaining to an educational setting that are presumably a direct result of problems with attention; and
 - Relevant history of prior therapy.
 - 3.) The relevant testing using reliable, valid, standardized, and age-appropriate assessments,
 - 4.) The number of applicable *DSM-IV* criteria and a description of how they impair the individual,
 - 5.) A specific diagnosis, and
 - 6.) An interpretive summary including a discussion of how the effects of the diagnosed ADHD are mediated by the recommended accommodation.
- c.) Evidence that other neurological or psychiatric disorders have been ruled out.

Because ADHD is presumed to be a neurobiological/behavioral disability, the disability diagnosis must be current. Generally, test results and the accompanying documentation of the nature of the ADHD must have been obtained within the past year. Specific issues of documentation include evidence regarding the intensity, frequency, and duration of the purported ADHD symptomology. In addition, if the GED candidate is taking medication to treat the ADHD, the medication's effectiveness and the degree to which it affects the candidate's daily performance should be noted in the documentation.

It is in a GED candidate's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation that describes the current effect of the disability on academic performance. In most cases, this means that a diagnostic evaluation must have been completed within the past **five years**. Flexibility in accepting documentation that is more than five years old may be important under certain conditions if the previous assessment is applicable to the current or anticipated setting. If documentation is inadequate in scope or content, or if it does not address the individual's current level of functioning and need for accommodations, reevaluation may be required.

Furthermore, observed changes may have occurred in the individual's performance since the previous assessment; new medications may have been prescribed or discontinued since the previous assessment was conducted. In such cases, it will be necessary to update the evaluation report. The update must include a detailed assessment of the current effect of the ADHD and an interpretative summary of relevant information and the previous diagnostic report. If necessary, GEDTS consultants will recommend what aspects of the documentation must be updated or augmented in order to be reviewed more fully.

Interpretative Summary

A well-written interpretative summary based on a comprehensive evaluative process is a necessary component of the documentation. Because ADHD is in many ways a diagnosis that is based upon the interpretation of historical data and observation, as well as other diagnostic information, it is essential that professional judgment be utilized in the development of a summary, which must include:

- a.) a demonstration of the professional having ruled out alternative explanations for inattentiveness, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity as a result of psychological or medical disorders or noncognitive factors;
- b.) an indication of how patterns of inattentiveness, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity across the life span and across settings are used to determine the presence of ADHD;

- c.) an indication of whether or not the candidate was evaluated while on medication, and whether or not the prescribed treatment produced a positive response;
- d.) indication and discussion of the substantial limitation to learning presented by the ADHD and the degree to which it affects the individual in the testing context for which accommodations are being requested; and
- e.) indication as to why specific accommodations are needed and how the effects of ADHD symptoms, as designated by the *DSM-IV*, are mediated by the accommodations.

Test Scores

Test scores or subtest scores alone should not be used as a sole measure for the diagnostic decision regarding ADHD. Selected sub-tests from measures of intellectual ability, memory functions tests, attention or tracking tests, or continuous performance tests do not in and of themselves establish the presence or absence of ADHD. Checklists and/or surveys can supplement the diagnostic profile but in and of themselves are not adequate for the diagnosis of ADHD and do not substitute for clinical observations and sound judgment. All data must logically reflect a substantial limitation to learning for which the individual is requesting the accommodation.

DSM-IV Criteria

According to the DSM-IV, “the essential feature of ADHD is a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development.” A diagnostic report should include a review and discussion of the *DSM-IV* criteria for ADHD both currently and retrospectively and specify which symptoms are present.

In diagnosing ADHD, it is particularly important to address the following criteria:

- Symptoms of hyperactivity/impulsivity or inattention that cause impairment that must have been present in childhood;
- Current symptoms that have been present for at least the past six months;
- Impairment from the symptoms present in two or more settings (for example, school, work, home); and
- Clear evidence of significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning symptoms that do not occur exclusively during the course of a pervasive developmental disorder, schizophrenia, or other psychotic disorder and are not better accounted for by another mental disorder (e.g., mood disorder, anxiety disorder, dissociative disorder, or a personality disorder).

Specific Diagnosis

The documentation must include a specific diagnosis of ADHD based on the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria. The diagnostician should use direct language in the diagnosis of ADHD, avoiding the use of such terms as “suggests,” “is indicative of,” or “attention problems.”

Individuals who report only problems with organization, test anxiety, memory, or concentration in selective situations do not fit the prescribed diagnostic criteria for ADHD. Given that many individuals benefit from prescribed medications and therapies, a positive response to medication by itself does not confirm a diagnosis, nor does the use of medication in and of itself either support or negate the need for accommodation(s).

Because of the challenge of distinguishing normal behaviors and developmental patterns of adolescents and adults (e.g., procrastination, disorganization, distractibility, restlessness, boredom, academic underachievement or failure, low-esteem, chronic tardiness or inattentance) from clinically significant impairment, a multifaceted evaluation should address the intensity and frequency of the symptoms and whether these behaviors constitute an impairment in a major life activity.

If the requested accommodations are not clearly identified in the diagnostic report, the GED Testing Service will seek clarification, and if necessary, more information. The GED Testing Service will make final determination of whether appropriate and reasonable accommodations are warranted and can be provided to the individual.

Confidentiality

The GED Testing Service will adhere to its confidentiality policies regarding its responsibility to maintain confidentiality of the evaluation and will not release any part of the compulsion of the legal process

DSM-IV Diagnostic Criteria for ADHD

Permission is required to reproduce the DSM-IV. Contact the American Psychiatric Association, Washington, DC.

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The following diagnostic criteria for ADHD are specified in the *DSM-IV*:

A. Either (1) or (2):

- a). Six (or more) of the following symptoms of inattention have persisted for at least 6 months to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

Inattention

- a. fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities
 - b. has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities
 - c. does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
 - d. does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions)
 - e. has difficulty organizing tasks and activities
 - f. avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework)
 - g. loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools)
 - h. is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
 - i. is forgetful in daily activities
- b.) Six (or more) of the following symptoms of hyperactivity-impulsivity have persisted for at least 6 months to a degree that is maladaptive and inconsistent with developmental level:

Hyperactivity

- a. fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat
- b. leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected
- c. runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness)
- d. has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly
- e. is “on the go” or often acts if “driven by a motor”
- f. talks excessively

Impulsivity

- a. blurts out answers before questions have been completed
 - b. has difficulty awaiting turn
 - c. interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games)
- B. Some hyperactive-impulsive or inattentive symptoms that caused impairment were present before age 7 years.
- C. Some impairment from the symptoms is present in two or more settings (e.g., at school [or work] and at home).
- D. There must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.
- E. The symptoms do not occur exclusively during the course of a pervasive developmental disorder, schizophrenia, or other psychotic disorder and are not better accounted for by another mental disorder (e.g., mood disorder, anxiety disorder, dissociative disorder, or a personality disorder).

The DSM-IV specifies a code *designation* based on type:

- **314.01 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Type:** if both criteria A1 and A2 are met for the past 6 months.
- **314.00 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Type:** if criterion A1 is met but criterion A2 is not met for the past 6 months.
- **314.01 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive- Impulsive Type:** if criterion A2 is met but criterion A1 is not met for the past 6 months.

Coding note: For individuals (especially adolescents and adults) who currently have symptoms that no longer meet full criteria, “In Partial Remission” should be specified.

- **314.9 Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Not Otherwise Specified:** This category is for disorders with prominent symptoms of inattention of hyperactivity-impulsivity that do not meet criteria for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

11.5-3 Documentation of Visual or Seeing Impairment

The GED candidate must provide diagnostic results from a complete ocular examination performed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. Documentation must address the following factors:

- a.) The history of the impairment and visual diagnosis;
- b.) Test results, including visual acuity, complete ocular motility exam (versions, tropias, phorias, stereopsis), slit lamp exam, visual field, pupil exam, optic nerve, and retina exam;
- c.) A specific ocular diagnosis;
- d.) A description of the functional limitations and supporting evidence that the abnormality impedes functioning in settings such as standardized testing;
- e.) A discussion of the extent to which the limitation has been addressed through glasses, contact lenses, or other treatment; and
- f.) A specific recommendation for accommodation(s) and accompanying rationale.

11.5-4 Time Limits for Large-Print Edition

Instructions for administering the large-print edition of the GED Tests with standard time limits are exactly the same as those for administering the standard print editions. Some candidates who have disabilities who use the large-print edition may be granted extra time to complete the GED Tests. Examiners should consult the approved request for testing with accommodations to determine what time limits should be set.

11.5-5 Time Limits for Audiocassette Edition

GED candidates who will use the audiocassette editions of the GED Tests are encouraged to practice using this format by using the Official GED Practice Tests audiocassette. The GED Chief Examiner or Examiner should also be familiar with the audiocassette player and the cue-and-review function. The instructions for the audiocassette edition are the same as those for the regular print editions of the GED Tests, with the following considerations:

- a.) Time limits for the audiocassette edition are generally twice as long as the standard time. Additional time may be approved under certain circumstances.
- b.) Methods for recording answers may vary; some candidates will record their answers on the regular answer sheet booklet, some may dictate to a scribe, and some may use approved mechanical devices to record their responses to the multiple-choice and the essay prompts. GED Chief Examiners and Examiners should adapt the standard instructions accordingly.
- c.) GED candidates who are approved to use audiocassette editions, such as candidates who have learning disabilities or vision impairments, may use the large-print reference that accompanies the audiocassette edition of the GED Tests. The reference manual contains all of the text a candidate hears on the tape.

11.5-6 Time Limits for Braille Edition

GED candidates who use the Braille edition of the GED Tests follow the same instructions as those for the regular print editions. Candidates are granted extended time to use the Braille edition. Methods of recording answers may also vary as described in the instructions for using the audiocassette edition.

11.6 Accommodations for GED candidates Who Are Blind or Have Visual Impairments

If a GED candidate is unable or only minimally able to see the printed test copy, the GED Administrator may approve the following adaptations, either singly or in combination:

- a.) An accommodated edition of the GED Tests (i.e., audiocassette, Braille, or large-print) may be administered. Use of the audiocassette edition should continue to be the accommodation normally provided to individuals who have vision impairments or other disabilities that require that the GED Tests be presented orally. This will ensure consistent delivery of GED testing material and also reduce the risk of test compromises of the GED Tests. Jurisdictions should therefore provide the audiocassette edition of the GED Tests when a candidate documents the need to have the GED Tests read orally, unless the candidate has demonstrated in his or her documentation that the audiocassette version, with extra time, would not effectively communicate the GED Tests' questions to the candidate. Although an infrequent occurrence, it is possible that the audiocassette edition, with extra time, will not be an effective means of communicating the content of the GED Tests to a given candidate because of his or her specific circumstances. In that situation, a qualified reader (to be selected by the GED Chief Examiner or a GED Examiner) may be provided as an alternative accommodation, provided that the candidate has documented a specific need to have the GED Tests read to him or her. The reader must read the questions verbatim and cannot otherwise communicate with or provide any assistance to the GED candidate during the testing period. Sight-impaired GED candidates completing the Braille or audiocassette editions of the GED Tests are permitted to use an abacus, talking calculator, stylus and slate, or a Braille in place of scratch paper.



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- b.) Aids that permit GED candidates who have severe vision impairments to read the printed test editions may be used. Visual adaptive devices, such as an Opticon®, a magnifying device, or electronic aids, may be used with any edition of the GED Tests to meet the candidate's needs. Closed circuit TV may be used to assist those who have some residual vision, and many computer-controlled adaptive devices may be permitted.

If a GED candidate is unable to complete the standard answer sheet, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner may make the following modifications:

- 1) The candidate may record answers using any Braille-writing device or any computer-controlled Braille.
- 2) The candidate may dictate the answers to multiple-choice questions and the essay to the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner or scribe, who can mark the answer sheet for the candidate.
- 3) The candidate may record the answers using whatever adaptive device is most appropriate. The GED Chief Examiner or Examiner can later transfer the answers to the answer sheet for scoring. The Chief Examiner or Examiner need not rewrite essays in longhand printed from a Braille keyboard in these situations. However, when a typed essay is sent to the jurisdiction's essay-scoring site, the essay must be accompanied by a letter explaining that the typed essay is part of a nonstandard test administration. The Chief Reader at the Official Scoring Site will ensure that essay readers appropriately review essays written by candidates with disabilities.

If a candidate with visual impairments wishes to take the Spanish-language edition of the GED Tests, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner should contact the GED Testing Service for guidance:

Assistant Director of Special Populations
GED Testing Service
One Dupont Circle NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 939-9490; fax (202) 659-8875
E-mail: ged@ace.nche.org

11.7 Documentation of Auditory or Hearing Impairment

The GED candidate must provide diagnostic results from a full hearing test performed by a qualified professional. Documentation must address the following factors:

- a.) relevant medical history, including date of hearing loss;
- b.) related educational development, especially the effects on reading ability and processing speed;
- c.) a specific diagnosis;
- d.) a description of the candidate's functional limitations (with and without any hearing aids or other assisting devices); and
- e.) a specific recommendation for accommodation(s) and the accompanying rationale.

11.8 Accommodations for GED Candidates Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

If the GED candidate is deaf or hard of hearing, the GED Administrator may approve the following adaptations, either singly or in combination.

Because of the nature of the accommodations to which deaf and hard-of-hearing candidates are entitled, GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners should be aware that advance planning is required for testing candidates who are deaf or hard of hearing. Such activities include, but are not limited to arranging for videotaping and video viewing equipment, providing a sign-language interpreter or transliterator of the candidate's language choice, and other accommodations such as those described below:

- a.) A signed, captioned videotape of GED Tests instructions is available for deaf candidates to use if they prefer. The GED candidate may operate the remote control to pause and review the tape as necessary.
- b.) The GED candidate may read all printed instructions and information that would ordinarily be read aloud by the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner and may ask questions in writing about procedures on GED Tests.
- c.) A certified professional interpreter with the language preference of the GED candidate must be provided by the Official GED Testing Center, if requested, to interpret instructions and administration information. This interpreter must be certified as a speech transliterator or oral interpreter (CT or CI), with such certification obtained through the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or a comparable state organization (or in Canada, through the Canadian Evaluation System). The interpreter must act solely as a go-between and may *not* interpret any part of the actual test (i.e., stimulus materials, item stems, or possible responses). The interpreter

must be available during testing to answer any questions that the candidate may have about the instructions or administration information. The interpreter may convey information only between the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner and the GED candidate. The Chief Examiner or Examiner should speak directly to the candidate. The Chief Examiner or GED Examiner should speak clearly and distinctly at a normal volume and pace, pausing periodically to ensure that the candidate understands instructions before proceeding. It is rarely necessary to allow time for the interpreter to communicate what has been said.

- d.) Upon request and with appropriate documentation, double time is granted to all deaf and hard-of-hearing candidates for whom Edited American English (EAE) is a second language. Individuals who have grown up deaf or hard of hearing will have experienced learning and language development very differently from persons with normal hearing. This effect cannot be repaired or redressed with continued study. The GED Administrator may approve additional extended time or may recommend doubling the time, when recommended by an appropriate professional. Additional time may not be necessary for all deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals.
- e.) A deaf candidate may request the use of a video camera, videocassette recorder, and monitor to use in composing the essay. Equipment may be provided by the Official GED Testing Center, by the GED candidate, or by an outside organization. If the Official GED Testing Center provides the videotape used to record the essay, the Center must retain the tape. If the GED candidate provides the videotape, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner must view the tape before the beginning of the test to ensure that the tape is blank; he or she must erase the tape entirely after the written essay score is reported and before returning the videotape to the candidate.
- f.) When a GED candidate who is deaf uses video equipment to compose his or her essay, he or she must still produce a final draft on paper. The video camera, tape deck, and monitor provide a deaf candidate with a way to produce an outline and rough draft in sign language. The candidate signs to the camera in his or her accustomed language style. Then, upon playback, the candidate may review the tape rough draft to produce the completed essay in EAE.

11.9 Use of an Interpreter on the GED Tests

A certified sign-language interpreter may be used to interpret test instructions and the essay topic (not the multiple-choice test questions) to GED candidates who are deaf or hard of hearing. Relatives or friends of the candidate may not serve as interpreters. However, longstanding professional relationships between a candidate and interpreter do not disqualify the interpreter. The interpreter must be certified by a national or regional certifying agency. When an interpreter is hired, it should be made clear that the interpreter will be signing only instructions. In most cases, one interpreter is sufficient. (See *Sign Language Associates Guidelines* in the appendix.)

11.10 Code of Interpreters Ethics

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. has set forth the following principles of ethical behavior to protect and guide interpreters and transliterators and the people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Underlying these principles is the desire to insure for all the right to communicate. The Code of Ethics applies to all members of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. and to all certified non-members.

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Interpreters/translitterators shall keep all assignment-related information strictly confidential.

Interpreters/translitterators shall render the message faithfully, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker using language most readily understood by the person(s) whom they serve.

Interpreters/translitterators shall not counsel, advise, or interject personal opinions.

Interpreters/translitterators shall accept assignments using discretion with regard to skill, setting, and the consumers involved.

Interpreters/translitterators shall request compensation for services in a professional and judicious manner.

Interpreters/translitterators shall function in a manner appropriate to the situation.

Interpreters/translitterators shall strive to further knowledge and skills through participation in workshops, professional meetings, interaction with professional colleagues, and reading of current literature in the field.

Interpreters/translitterators, by virtue of membership or certification by the RID, Inc., shall strive to maintain high professional standards in compliance with the Code of Ethics.

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11.11 Documentation of Other Physical Disorders

The GED candidate must provide diagnostic results from an appropriate medical examination that documents the relevant medical history, provides a description of functional limitations, and states a specific recommendation for accommodation(s) and the accompanying rationale. Each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

If the GED candidate has impairments that can hinder his or her ability to perform the physical skills needed to take the GED tests under standard conditions, the GED Administrator may approve the following adaptations, either singly or in combination:

- a.) If the GED candidate is unable to reach the Official GED Testing Center, the GED Chief Examiner (or Examiner) and the GED candidate may arrange for testing at a site that is physically accessible and environmentally suitable to the candidate.
- b.) If the GED candidate is unable to manipulate the test booklet, mark the answer sheet, or write the essay, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner will administer the GED Tests using appropriate strategies agreed upon with the GED candidate.
- c.) If the GED candidate is unable to write the numbers or symbols necessary to solve mathematics problems, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner may write them as directed by the candidate. Only those numbers and symbols requested by the candidate may be recorded.

11.12 Other Accommodations

11.12-1 Extended Time

The GED Tests were developed so that approximately eighty-five (85) percent of all GED candidates are able to finish comfortably within the prescribed time limits under standard conditions. GED candidates with disabilities will often need extra time when taking the GED Tests. The time limits are extended under alternate modified conditions when the audiocassette or Braille editions are used. Candidates with disabilities often require extended time to answer questions and may become easily fatigued. The amount of extended time requested must be stated on the appropriate accommodations form(s) at the time of application. The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner, while being sensitive to the GED candidates' needs, must also ensure that each candidate moves through the test at a reasonable rate. He or she should periodically advise each GED candidate of the time remaining.

At a minimum, double time is granted to GED candidates who have visual impairments who are using the audiocassette and Braille editions of the GED Tests and to GED candidates whose hearing impairment affects the speed at

which they interpret written language. Time and a half is commonly granted to GED candidates with specific learning disabilities. Candidates who have physical or psychological impairments will receive extended time as is warranted by a professional assessment of their needs. Variations from these guidelines are permitted on a case-by-case basis. For example, a candidate who has cerebral palsy may need triple time to take the individual tests one day at a time.

11.12-2 Private Room

There are two reasons why a private room may be approved. One is for a candidate who has the potential to be disturbed in a group setting. A person who has documented Tourette's syndrome that results in verbal utterances beyond that person's control, for example, would also be provided with a private room. This request would have been approved in advance based on a review of information provided on the applicable Request for Testing Accommodations form(s). A person who has ADHD might request a private room to remove distractions that can negatively interfere with success on the GED Tests. This request would have been approved in advance based on documentation provided on the applicable GEDTS accommodations form(s).

Another case is when the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner perceives at the time of testing that a GED candidate's behavior has the potential to be disturbing to others in the testing room. In such a situation, the Chief Examiner or GED Examiner may ask if the candidate would prefer to take the test(s) in a private room. Although every effort should be made to have the person test in a more isolated setting in such a situation, Chief Examiner or GED Examiner is cautioned not to demand that the candidate conform to a nonstandard test setting.

In the rare instance that a GED candidate would refuse the change to a private room, other candidates who complain of being disturbed should be granted access to another testing room. In all instances, while testing in a private room, candidates must remain under full and constant supervision by a GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner.

11.12-3 Frequent Breaks

Frequent breaks are breaks that must be taken by a GED candidate while the GED Tests are in progress. Some candidates, because of documented physical discomfort or a documented inability to concentrate for extended periods of time, require frequent breaks during the test. For example, a person with a physical discomfort, such as a bad back, may require time to stand and leave the testing room in order to relieve pain. While allowed frequent breaks during the Tests, the GED candidate must still remain under full and constant supervision by the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner. One possible exception to this rule might arise when testing occurs in a hospital or rehabilitation facility where the candidate requires medical attention during the break.

11.12-4 Attentiveness to Test Security

Although every effort should be made to be attentive to the needs of GED candidates with disabilities, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner must remain attentive to test security when administering the tests with accommodations.

In all cases, the qualified professional diagnostician who has documented the disability or need must clearly specify the frequency and duration of the breaks required in each test session.

11.13 Use of a Scribe to Record Answers on the GED Tests

A scribe records the answers to multiple-choice questions and/or the essay as dictated by the GED candidate. This accommodation is appropriate for those candidates who have documented difficulty writing as a result of visual or physical impairments or specific learning disabilities. For adults with limited use of their arms, the scribe is also responsible for turning the pages of the test booklets or for operating the audiocassette player.

11.13-1 Instructions for the Use of a Scribe

The use of a scribe may be approved as an accommodation for a GED candidate with a documented disability to do the following:

- record answers to the multiple-choice questions; and/or
- record the essay portion of the Language Arts, Writing Test.

The goal of this accommodation is to provide a fair opportunity for testing and to allow an individual with a specific disability the capability to show his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities. This accommodation puts an individual with a disability on an equal playing field and does not provide an advantage to the person who uses a scribe. In addition, the use of a scribe should not create a disadvantage to the person with the disability.

The scribe's duty is to faithfully record the GED candidate's responses without correcting them. The scribe must be an accurate and fair secretary, neither diminishing the fluency of the candidate nor helping to improve the writing. If the scribe is recording the answers to the multiple-choice questions, he or she must accurately record the candidate's responses and may be asked by the candidate to reiterate the appropriate number marked.

When a scribe is asked to record the essay portion of the Language Arts, Writing Test, GED candidates that have a disability must also have the opportunity, as other GED candidates, to plan, draft, and revise their essays. This means that a scribe may write an outline or other plan for the essay as dictated by the candidate. When the essay is finished, the candidate must read the essay and dictate revisions to the scribe. If the GED candidate who has a disability cannot read his or her essay, the scribe must read the essay aloud and allow the candidate to dictate revisions. Essays may not be dictated into a tape recorder for later transcription by the scribe because this would preclude the candidate's opportunity to revise his or her composition.

A scribe should also explain to the GED candidates what the candidate and the scribe can and cannot do, and what each candidate's responsibilities are in this situation. The following lists reiterate what a scribe and a candidate can do and cannot do when recording answers on the GED Tests.

11.13-2 What GED Candidates and Scribe Can and Cannot Do

The scribe

- a.) must, at all times, mark and/or write exactly what the GED candidate dictates.
- b.) must not mark an answer unless he or she is clear it is the answer the GED candidate has indicated. For example, in the math portion of the test, when marking one of the graphs, make sure you do not assume which quadrant to mark an answer. Ask the candidate in which part, section, or quadrant you should mark in the answer given.
- c.) must not prompt the candidate toward a better answer or essay. Such prompts might include the following: "Are you sure you wanted me to mark number one?" "Let's list reasons to support your position," or "Do you want to give more examples?" Prompting would give the candidate an unfair advantage.
- d.) may respond to questions from the GED candidate such as, "Where are we on my outline?" by pointing to and reading aloud from the outline or by describing a recently completed part of the essay: "We just described the effects of automobile pollution that you listed as your first example."
- e.) should ask for the spelling of homonyms such as "to," "two," and "too" and "there," "they're," and "their." If a GED candidate uses a word that is unfamiliar to the scribe or uses a word that the scribe does not know how to spell, the scribe should ask the candidate to spell it.
- f.) may, after two or three sentences, stop the GED candidate from telling the scribe that the first word of the sentence is capitalized and what the specific punctuation should be at the end of the sentence. Once a scribe is sure that the candidate has these skills, stopping them can support the candidate in more comfortably and verbally organizing his or her thoughts.

The GED candidate must

- 1) have the ability to say that they will not write to the prompt provided because of objections due to cultural, religious, or other reasons. Another prompt should then be provided.
- 2) indicate the beginning and end of each sentence appropriately until the scribe asks them to stop as stated above.
- 3) indicate the beginning of each paragraph.
- 4) spell technical words associated with the topic, such as chemical terms, geographic locations, and people's names. For example, if the essay topic related to nutrition, such as "carbohydrate," "protein," and "niacin" should be spelled aloud by the candidate. The word "fat" would not have to be spelled.
- 5) have an opportunity to review and revise the draft.

How explicit does the GED candidate have to be about spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure in the essay?

Good writing demands fluency. The scribe's job is to record the candidate's production accurately without making the task more complicated. Clearly, a well-educated scribe could improve the mechanics of a poor essay or prompt the candidate with questions that help them improve their essay. This help is not appropriate. However, even the work of a capable candidate who has had to spell out every word and provide information as to the initial capitalization and end punctuation of every sentence would begin to sound stilted. Therefore, the scribe should strike a balance.

GED candidates able to demonstrate a mastery of certain conventions, such as starting a sentence with a capital letter and ending it with appropriate punctuation, or capitalizing the letter "I" when referring to themselves, need not continue to specify these conventions throughout the essay writing process. At a certain point, a scribe should tell the GED candidate that he or she no longer needs to specify these conventions and the scribe should apply them automatically thereafter.

The essay may not be typed, word processed, or recorded in shorthand. It should be written in longhand, so that the essay readers who score it will not know that the essay was written with accommodations. Cross-outs and insertions are permitted and are not penalized in any GED candidate's essay. Under no circumstances may a dictionary or other reference aid be used in the composition of an essay.

11.14 Use of a Talking Calculator by Candidates Who Are Legally Blind

As noted in other sections, all GED candidates are allowed to use a calculator provided by the Official GED Testing Center on Part I of the GED Mathematics Test. This calculator may not be used by candidates on Part II of the GED Mathematics Test and must be turned in before Part II is distributed.

GED candidates who are legally blind are entitled to use a talking calculator or abacus, in place of the designated calculator, on both parts of the GED Mathematics Test.

GED candidates who have physical and learning disabilities may be granted the use of a calculator as an accommodation on Part II of the Mathematics Test only by written permission of the GED Testing Service.

A GED candidate's need to use a calculator as an accommodation on Part II of the Mathematics Test must be documented by a qualified and licensed professional and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

11.15 Accommodations Not Requiring Approval by GEDTS-Trained Personnel

The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner may permit the use of certain adaptations and devices without prior approval from the GED Administrator, the GED Testing Service, or GEDTS-trained and GEDTS-certified personnel. These adaptations and/or devices include the following items.

11.15-1 Colored Transparent Overlays

These devices, which resemble tinted overhead transparencies, are widely used by persons with visual impairments and those with learning disabilities who have difficulty decoding written words and symbols.

11.15-2 Clear Transparent Overlays and a Highlighter

The combination of clear (untinted) overlays and a highlighter can be used with the candidate who needs to use a highlighter while reading. The highlighting takes place on the clear overlay and protects the test booklet from becoming marked. All used overlays must be collected at the end of each testing session.

11.15-3 Temporary Adhesive with Spatial Directions

GED candidates can affix temporary “sticky” notes (for example, Post-it® Notes) on the answer sheet to accommodate a disability affecting spatial orientation. For example, the candidate might flag the sheet for top, bottom, right, and left. For security reasons, the Official GED Testing Center must supply these adhesive notes to a GED candidate.

11.15-4 Earplugs

GED candidates may use earplugs as an aid in concentration. Some large-volume or busy testing centers routinely distribute disposable earplugs to all candidates.

11.15-5 Large-Print Test Edition

GED candidates may use the large-print edition of the GED Tests under normal time limits, upon request to the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner. It is recommended that each Official GED Testing Center order at least one large-print test battery per year for this purpose.

11.15-6 Magnifying Device

GED candidates may use their preferred type of magnifying device during test taking. If a GED candidate uses a magnifier during a standard testing session, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner should take additional care to stagger test forms and must seat the candidate in a way that precludes other candidates from seeing that candidate's test materials.

11.15-7 Priority Seating

GED candidates may request to be seated near the front of the room in order to better hear instructions, or in some other location to avoid distractions.

11.15-8 Fluorescent Lighting

GED candidates may request permission to wear hats or caps to limit the effects of fluorescent lighting. (The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner must document that a request was made by a candidate.)

11.15-9 One Test per Day

GED candidates may take one GED Test per day upon arrangement with the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner at the designated Official GED Testing Center.

11.15-10 Straightedge

GED candidates may use a plain, unmarked straightedge made from any safe material as an aid in spatial orientation and reading. If the straightedge is an additional piece of scratch paper issued by the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner, it must be collected at the end of the testing session and must be destroyed along with any other scratch paper.

11.16 Other Devices as Deemed Appropriate

The GED Testing Service allows all other devices without permission as long as they compensate for the disability, do not provide an unfair advantage, and do not compromise the validity or reliability of the GED Tests.

GED candidates are allowed to use other adaptive devices such as pencil holders, wrist braces, and graph paper, so long as the device does not provide an unfair advantage to the test-taker.

Because the Official GED Testing Center may not have the GED candidate's preferred device on hand, the candidate may be permitted to bring his or her own magnifier, overlays, or the like, to the testing session. It is the prerogative of the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner to examine these materials to ensure that the materials do not contain any unauthorized testing aids.

The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner is responsible for tracking the use of these aids by candidates. All requested uses of the large-print edition, including those not requiring documentation of a disability, are to be counted in the Official GED Testing Center's Annual Statistical Report.

11.17 Accommodations That Are Not Allowed

The following accommodations are not allowed during administrations of the GED Tests.

11.17-1 Computers

Computers represent "unreasonable accommodations" for the GED Tests because computers present the risk that test items may be stored on hard drives. Should such violations occur, the cost to test security would be great. For this reason, computers may not be used to write essays or record test answers except as described below.

11.17-2 Word-Processing and Spell-Checking Programs

Word-processing and spell-checking programs may never be used on the GED Tests.

Under extreme circumstances the GED Testing Service may grant exceptions to the prohibition of the use of computers, a word-processing program or a spell-checking program. Request for such accommodations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

In the past, computer use has been permitted for quadriplegic individuals who were unable to move any parts of their bodies or speak but who could communicate with the assistance of a computer controlled by eye contact. In some instances, GED candidates who have visual impairments have written their essays using a Braille connected to a computer that prints the essay in regular type. Other computer-controlled reading machines have also been allowed. These accommodations require approval from both the GED Administrator and the GED Testing Service.

11.17-3 Rulers

Measuring devices such as rulers and scales may not be used because they may serve as an unauthorized aid in certain portions of the tests.

11.18 Use of Readers on the GED Tests

The GED Tests are available on audiocassette, and this version should be the first available option offered. If a GED candidate needs a reader, then the following rules will apply.

11.18-1 Instructions for a Reader of the GED Tests

The use of a reader may be approved on a case-by-case basis as an accommodation for a GED candidate who, because of a severe disability, is unable to use the audiocassette version of the GED Tests. The request for the reader must be made by a certified professional who has knowledge of the candidate's ability. The goal of this accommodation is to provide a fair opportunity to an individual with a severe disability to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills.

The reader's duty is to read all questions and answer choices of the GED Tests without compromising the reliability or validity of the GED Tests. The reader must never go beyond the printed text to provide additional information, or read with inflection in such a way as to provide the answer.

The reader must be totally objective and therefore not known by the candidate.

The reader must:

- a.) read at a consistent pace.
- b.) at all times avoid any interpretation of the text by varying tone and volume.
- c.) not in any way give away any answers.
- d.) read all five answer choices to each question in a monotone voice.
- e.) read to only one student at a time.
- f.) reread the question or answer choices if requested by the candidate. When requested, the reader must reread the entire question or all five of the answer choices.
- g.) be formally trained in translating math figures and graphics to spoken language without providing additional information.
- h.) have a script from the audiocassette edition that describes all visual sections of the test. The reader must stick to the script.

The candidate

- a.) must listen carefully.
- b.) may request entire questions or all five answer choices to be reread. The candidate may not request to have individual sentences in question or specific answer choices reread.
- c.) may not ask the reader for any additional information about questions or answers as they are read.
- d.) may request a large-print version of the test and refer to that version to look at math figures and other graphics.

11.19 Steps in the Approval Process Using the GEDTS Model

- a.) The GED candidate submits the appropriate accommodation form(s) to the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner.
- b.) The GED Chief Examiner or Examiner determines that documentation is complete on each.
- c.) The GED Chief Examiner or Examiner forwards the forms to the GED Administrator for the initial screening review.
- d.) The GED Administrator informs the GED candidate of approval or non-approval, and/or a request for further information or an update for the existing information.
- e.) When further information is presented, the GED Administrator sends a letter of approval or non-approval or submits the request to the GED Testing Service for an expert review.
- f.) A clinical case review in Washington, D.C., is available for those cases that do not fit the GEDTS model.
- g.) An appeals panel review in Washington, D.C., is available for any request that has been denied at the state, provincial, or national level.
- h.) If a request for accommodation is considered unique and/or controversial, it can be brought to the National GED Disabilities Advisory Committee for inclusion on its agenda.

11.20 Instructions for Completing an Accommodations Tracking Sheet

GED Chief Examiners and Examiners must fill out an Accommodations Tracking Sheet (ATS) for every GED candidate who requests accommodations. The ATS must be forwarded with the appropriate accommodation form(s).

Before filling out the first page of the ATS, the GED candidate or guardian must sign the candidate verification section (page two, Part I). The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner should clearly explain to the candidate that his or her identity will never be revealed or shared in any way. The candidate should understand that the information will be used to improve support for all individuals who have disabilities. By understanding how many individuals who applied for accommodations were approved, how many candidates took the GED Test using those accommodations, and how many candidates passed the tests, the GED Testing Service will therefore be able to improve outreach efforts and help other candidates with disabilities.

Once the candidate verification section is filled in and signed, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner should supply all information requested, which should be available from the Request for Testing Accommodation form(s). Page one, Part I requests the date and the GED candidate's name. Page two, Part I requests the candidate's ID number and the type of ID used, candidate's birth date, and the 10-digit Official GED Testing Center code.

Part II of the ATS requests specific information about the disability and the accommodations requested. On page one, Part II, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner should record ALL specific learning disabilities, physical/chronic health or emotional/mental health disabilities, and/or an Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV)* codes should also be listed and the appropriate numbers marked. If the codes are not provided on the accommodation forms, the Chief Examiner or Examiner may leave that section blank and continue on with Part II of the ATS.

At the bottom of page one, Part II, the following information is requested: the accommodation requested; whether the accommodation was approved or not approved; whether the request for specific accommodation was returned for more information; and/or whether the candidate appealed a decision on any or all accommodations requested. The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner should initially indicate which accommodations have been requested, then enter all information as it is determined for each individual accommodation requested.

The last section of page one, Part II, requests information about the accommodation request and if a clinical review by an expert in the field of the specific disability was needed. This information will be filled in by GED Testing Service staff in Washington, D.C., when a clinical review is necessary and it will be signed. If no clinical review is needed, the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner should mark “no” and sign the ATS on the line provided.

Part III—the last page of the ATS—requests information about the GED candidate when testing. The five boxes listing “Date of Testing” correspond to the five individual GED tests a candidate takes as listed on that page. The date of each test may be the same. However, some candidates with disabilities take individual tests on different days. In addition, it is important to enter the accommodation(s) actually used by the GED candidate for each of the five tests. Different accommodations may have been requested, including accommodations the candidate decides not to use on the GED Tests. GED Chief Examiners or GED Examiners should enter only those accommodations used on each specific test.

Once a GED candidate completes all the GED Tests, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner should sign and date the ATS form and send it along with the answer sheet and answer booklet to the Official Scoring Site.

11.21 Official GED Testing Center’s Responsibilities for Accommodated Testing

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, an Official GED Testing Center must ensure that testing services are provided to candidates with disabilities in order to continue to qualify as an Official GED Testing Center.

11.21-1 Publicity for Accommodated Administrations

Official GED Testing Centers must widely publicize the availability of accommodated editions of the GED Tests so that all potential candidates are aware of their opportunities. GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners are especially encouraged to elicit the cooperation of special education, vocational rehabilitation, and adult education agencies as part of this publicity effort.

11.21-2 Testing Schedules for Accommodated Administrations

The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner and the GED candidate receiving accommodations must determine a mutually convenient time to schedule an accommodated administration of the GED Tests. The GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner is expected to take the initiative to discuss with the GED candidate the details of the accommodated administration. In many cases, accommodated testing administrations must take place in individual sessions.

Although a GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner may feel uncomfortable asking questions of candidates with disabilities, it is appropriate to ask for the information needed to make someone comfortable. Call your GED Administrator or the GED Testing Service for additional guidance.

11.22 Cost of Accommodated Editions of the GED Tests

The lease fee for testing with accommodations is the same as that for the standard print editions of the GED Tests. However, because the demand for the Braille edition is limited, the GED Testing Service recommends that departments and ministries of education be established as Official GED Testing Centers. These Official GED Testing Centers can then order at least one copy of the Braille edition, which the Official GED Testing Centers may share with any Official GED Testing Center within their jurisdictions as needed.

Official GED Testing Centers—except for those located within a jurisdiction's Ministry of Education or a Department of Education—may not send or share any GED Tests with another Official GED Testing Center.