

FAQs for California, WIOA Title II: AEFLA Agencies

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Distance Learning

Are there any special requirements for individuals in Distance Learning programs?

Individuals in Distance Learning programs have the same data collection requirements as other California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA learners – an Entry Record upon enrollment, an Update Record upon 12 or more hours of instruction, and a valid pretest and post-test pair. For these learners, agencies should mark Distance Learning in the TOPSpro Enterprise Classes-Instances Record. These learners also should be reported separately on core performance follow-up data.

What if the learner is enrolled in a class that features distance learning as well as traditional classroom instruction – that is, a learner is in blended learning?

NRS policy prescribes the “50 percent rule.” That is, if more than 50 percent of the instruction is in distance learning, mark Distance Learning. If distance instruction equals 50 percent or less, do NOT mark Distance Learning. Federal reports include only learners with more than 50 percent of instruction as distance learning.

Does instruction received online count as Distance Learning?

Yes.

How do we record hours for instruction received online?

Record hours just as you would hours from traditional instruction. Take the additional step to mark “Distance Learning” described in the FAQ above.

What if our agency has learners who do learning outside the classroom, using educational software, but the total time outside the classroom is less than 50 percent?

In that case, do NOT mark Distance Learning in the Special Programs field. However, if you wish to track this activity, you may designate how hours are accrued in these classes in the TOPSpro Enterprise Class Instance Record.

- You may note at either the class or student level exactly which hours are traditional hours versus which hours are distance learning.

- You may optionally mark “Classroom plus Distance Learning” to track the program under Instructional Setting.
- An attachment included with these FAQs details the different TOPSpro Enterprise features associated with recording distance learning hours versus “regular” attendance hours in TOPSpro Enterprise.

A component of distance learning that is especially challenging to record accurately is when students complete educational software (a few examples are Odysseyware, Aztec, and Burlington English). How do I know how many hours of instruction to mark when students complete these modules?

The most common technique to document instructional hours for these computer applications is to tabulate proxy hours assigned for learner completion of each module (or for the software application.)

Many of these software applications include clearly defined lesson modules with a time pre-programmed for each. Others are not linked to a specific time frame but do provide a recommended time frame for student completion.

- If the hours are directly programmed into each module, the educational software will record the correct number of hours in its system. With some systems, it is possible to directly export these hours from that application and into TOPSpro Enterprise. (Contact your software publisher for more information about the specific features available in your agency’s educational software.)

Example: if a student completes Module 1 of a 12-module software course, and the publisher has programmed Module 1 for one hour, then the application will record that amount of time for that student. Follow your software publisher’s guidelines for creating the file that can be exported into TOPSpro Enterprise.

- If the software publisher does not program specific hours into the application, but does provide recommended hours, then agencies should use the time allotments (or limits) provided and record those numbers into TOPSpro Enterprise.

Example: if a student completes Module 1 of a 12-module software course, and the publisher recommends that Module 1 takes two hours to complete, document two hours for that student in TOPSpro Enterprise once she or he completes that module.

What if the software publisher does not provide recommended times for completion for their modules and/or courses?

In this case, you should meet as an instructional management team locally, determine the amount of time on average students spend on each software module, and document that in your agency's Local Assessment Policy.

*Example: if a student completes Module 1 of a self-paced software course, observe students who complete that module, and identify an "average" amount of time for a student to finish the module. If the "average" student takes two hours to complete the module, then assign two hours to that instructional module, and record that equally for all students who complete that specific module -- and **document your agency's policy and approach in your agency's Local Assessment Policy.***

Example: if a class of ESL students all complete a 12-module educational software program, then follow the same process for all 12 modules as with module 1 in the example above. Be sure to document your agency's process in your Local Assessment Policy. An example appears below:

ESL Career Preparation for Beginners (12 modules – 20 hours total)

Module 1 – Intro to Work (1 hour)

Module 2 – Career Exploration (2.5 hours)

Module 3 – Making Career Choices (1.5 hours)

Module 4 - ...

The listing above is only an example, and is not the required format. The requirement is to be as specific as possible with how you assign each module and to clearly provide an hours total for each increment of the educational software. There is no "magic formula" for determining the exact time but some recommendations include the following:

- Contact your instructional software publisher for guidance on hours. Again, many applications either program time allotment into each module and/or provide a recommended number of hours in the software for each module. (See FAQ above for how to implement the recommendations of software publishers.)
- If the application does not provide hours-related information embedded in the software, the vendor may nonetheless have information that may guide you in determining these totals. Therefore, it still may be useful to contact them.
- The recommended hours you record for each student should reflect an "average" number of hours that the instructional team agrees on.

- Hour totals should NOT be determined by only one person.
- If your agency prefers to tabulate and assign hours on an individual student basis, and not use the proxy hours method, that is permissible. However, if you assign hours that vary by student, you should explicitly state that your agency is using this method in your Local Assessment Policy. This requires more vigilant observation from instructional staff to ensure accurate reflection of the correct amount of instruction for each student and the level of effort each student gives during each instructional session.
- Contact your CDE consultant for more information if you have difficulty recording this information.

CASAS Assessment Issues

Where can I find a detailed list of CASAS assessments authorized for California accountability reporting?

You can find a detailed list in the California Assessment Policy, which you can download at www.casas.org. This document lists, by test series and modality, the CASAS test forms that the CDE allows for accountability reporting (and thereby to collect payment points.)

Which test modalities are authorized for California accountability reporting?

California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA agencies should use CASAS Reading GOALS and/or CASAS Math GOALS for ABE and ASE. They should use the CASAS Life and Work Reading and/or the CASAS Life and Work Listening tests for ESL.

Is pre- and post-testing required for students in Distance Learning like for other students?

Yes.

How can agencies administer CASAS pre- and post-testing to learners who are receiving instruction outside the traditional classroom, such as Distance Learning?

The National Reporting System (NRS) does not allow for remote testing. Learners in Distance Learning must go to the program site to complete pre- and post-test requirements. Whether paper-based testing or completing assessment via

CASAS eTests online, a staff person must be present during testing to proctor all students and to ensure all assessment protocol is followed.

- All test sessions using CASAS eTests require that a certified proctor administer each test session – that is, the staff must complete CASAS online certified proctor self-paced training.
- If test sessions use paper-based assessments, there is no formal proctor course like for CASAS eTests, but any paper-based test session must be monitored by a staff person with the same credentials as a CASAS test proctor.

Do the same rules apply for the Locator/Appraisal/Placement testing as for pre- and post-test progress testing?

Yes. Administering CASAS appraisals or locators requires a proctor just like CASAS pre- and post-tests. However, for placement, CASAS recommends using other resources in addition to the CASAS placement test, like writing samples, oral interviews, student education background, and so on – so it is better to use these resources to help with placement rather than use nothing at all.

Recommended Hours Rule for Pre- and Post-Testing

What is the State Assessment Policy on the recommended number of hours between pre- and post-testing?

The California Assessment Policy states that CASAS recommends assessing students after approximately **70-100** hours of instruction, with the following exceptions:

- Programs offering high-intensity courses (for example, a class meets more than 15 hours per week) may choose to test at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction, even though the instructional intervention is more than 100 hours.
- Programs offering low intensity courses with fewer than 70 hours in a semester, quarter, term, or other substantial block of instruction, may choose to administer a post-test at the end of the instructional period.

Programs may assess individual learners who indicate they are leaving the program before the scheduled post-test time to maximize collection of paired test data. However, testing should not occur before a minimum of 40 hours of instruction. The testing of a student with fewer than 40 hours of instruction must be reviewed and approved by local authorized personnel (principal, vice principal, coordinator). These individual student approvals must be kept and made available for review by the CDE.

Q: How can agencies identify students with a pre- and post-test pair and fewer than 40 hours of instruction?

A: Agencies can generate the TOPSpro Enterprise Data Integrity Report and “drill down” to display the list of students for DIR item #22, “Learners with a pre-/post-test pair with less than 40 hours of instruction.” Staff should review this list and correct as many listed issues as possible. The local agency administrator should review this list and must sign and date the list of students for whom she or he approves as an exception to the minimum 40 hours between pretest and post-test.

Q: Does the minimum 40 hours pre- and post-testing rule affect or “change” the requirement for a learner to have 12 hours of instruction?

A: No. All learners must have a minimum of 12 hours of instruction for inclusion in the Federal Tables or to earn payment points. The 40-hour rule relates only to the minimum amount of instruction before post-test administration. Please note that 70-100 hours are recommended.

EL Civics and Integrated Education and Training

What are EL Civics focus areas?

Focus areas in EL Civics refer to the priorities and goals that the ESL instruction is intended to achieve. The three EL Civics focus areas are (1) 231 Civic Participation; (2) 231 Citizenship Preparation; (3) 243 IELCE.

What are COAAPs

Civic Objectives and Additional Assessment Plans (COAAPs) are plans for EL Civics assessments developed by agencies locally to focus on specific areas of community integration that represent priority areas for ESL students in each region. You can find more information about COAAPs here:

<https://www.casas.org/docs/default-source/el-civics/coap-information.pdf?sfvrsn=24?Status=Master>

Which EL Civics areas use COAAPs?

Section 231 Civic Participation and Section 243 IELCE use COAAPs.

May agencies assign COAAP assessments to students enrolled in Section 231 and 243 EL Civics classes in a distance learning format?

Agencies can only administer COAAP assessments in a proctored setting. COAAP assessments are not authorized for completion remotely. The CDE and CASAS are investigating whether any of the COAAP assessments could potentially be implemented and assessed in a distance learning format.

What about Section 231 Citizenship Preparation?

Citizenship Preparation students use the CASAS Citizenship Interview Test (CIT) and the Government and History for Citizenship test forms. These may be administered only in a proctored setting and are NOT authorized for administering via distance learning.

Quarterly and End of Year Reporting

Q: Do the school and college closures related to COVID-19 affect the quarterly or end of year reporting calendar?

No. Third quarter data continues to be due on or before April 30, 2020, and the end of year submission is due on or before July 15, 2020. For now all deliverables are keeping the same deadlines as outlined in the PY 2019-20 CDE Beginning of Year Letter.

Q: What if we have suspended classes for the remainder of the year?

That will affect the content of the data you submit, but not the reporting dates – you should still submit 3Q data on or before April 30th and EOY data on or before July 15th. If you are closing for the year, and are certain that your agency will no longer have any classes available, and no more data to report -- it is okay to submit your data submission early. Keep in mind that follow up reporting is also due the same time as the data – and that entails students who have exited, not current students, so that won't be affected by COVID-19 related closures.