Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS)

Massachusetts Adult Education Assessment Policies

CLAS-E Writing and CLAS-E Reading

Test Administration Procedures

Fiscal Year 2026
(July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026)

Contents

CLAS-E Writing

Before CLAS-E Writing Administration

Required Test Materials
The following test materials may be purchased using on the test publisher's website:

- o CLAS-E Locator Test
- o CLAS-E Locator Test Directions
- o CLAS-E Test Books, Forms C and D, Levels 1 through 4
- o CLAS-E Expository Writing Folios, Forms C and D, Levels 1 through 4
- o CLAS-E Test Directions for Forms C and D, Levels 1 through 4
- o CLAS-E Scoring Tables Book, Forms C and D
- o CLAS-E Writing Scoring Guide, Forms C and D
- o Scoreze Answer Sheets for local scoring OR Scannable Answer Sheets for scanning and sending to the publisher for scoring

The following required test materials may be acquired from the CLAS-E Writing training or from the CEA-UMass Amherst's blog:

- o Tips for Taking the TABE CLAS-E (test takers and test administrator version)
- o Supplementary Scoring Guide for CLAS-E Expository Writing

When to Alternate CLAS-E Test Levels and Forms
The CLAS-E Interview Part B and the Locator Test Part 1 must be used for the first CLAS-E Writing test given to learners. The Locator does not need to be given on subsequent tests.

When testing students at mid-year (optional) and/or for the end-of-year (post-test), alternate test forms must be given so that no student gets the same test form twice in a row. It would be easy for learners to remember the form from one test administration to the next.
- o For example, pre-test with Level 3 Form C and post-test with Level 3 Form D.
- o It is permissible to pre-test with Form C, administer a mid-year optional test with Form D, and post-test with Form C within a fiscal year.

During CLAS-E Writing Administration

Certified test administrators can administer the CLAS-E Writing to their own students.

Use of the CLAS-E Locator
Students taking the CLAS-E Writing test for the first time are required to take the CLAS-E Part B Interview/Screening Tool and the Locator. Students do not have to use the Locator on subsequent Writing tests.

Programs must not use any program- or teacher-developed CLAS-E answer sheets because depending on the answer sheet, learners may gain an unfair advantage—or experience a disadvantage—from the program-developed answer sheet.

Test Administration Procedures and Time Limits

Test administrators must administer and score the TABE CLAS-E Writing Assessment test exactly according to the UMass CEA CLAS-E training and the publisher's test directions. Test administrators must not deviate from the script or test directions as they are presented in the training and the publisher's instructions in any way. Strictly adhere to the time limits given in test administration materials. See allowable testing times here: TABE_CLAS-E_Forms_C_D_Test_Adminsitration_Times.pdf .

Remote Test Administration

The TABE CLAS-E Writing test can be administered in person or remotely. Paper-based CLAS-E Writing tests cannot be administered remotely and the test modality for TABE CLAS-E Writing cannot change under any circumstances. TABE CLAS-E online tests can be administered remotely or in person. See FY26 assessment policy 3 for more details on test modality and remote testing guidelines.

After CLAS-E Writing Administration

Scoring the CLAS-E Multiple Choice Tests

There are two types of answer sheets the test publisher provides:
1. TABE CLAS-E Answer Sheets, scoreable by the TABE local scanning tool (which needs to be downloaded)
2. TABE CLAS-E Scoreze Answer Sheets, self-scoring, no stencil needed.

Programs should choose the answer sheet option best suited for their needs.

Please note:
- The TABE CLAS-E Answer Sheet (option 1 above) is used when doing the Multiple Student Upload within DRC INSIGHT's Student Management area for online testing. On page 1 of this scannable answer sheet, **the required demographic items are: Last Name(s), First Name(s), DOB, Gender, ID.** If these are not included, the answer sheet will not scan. The remaining demographic fields are optional and do not have to be used.
- The SCOREZE Answer Sheet (option 2 above) is not scannable and therefore programs can choose which demographic information items to have students bubble in, in addition to the required student's first and last name field.

Scoring the CLAS-E Expository Writing Tests

Certified CLAS-E Writing test administrators **may score the Multiple-Choice section of their own students' tests**. **Certified CLAS-E Writing test administrators may not score their own students' expository writing tests**.

Programs may hire other non-staff certified CLAS-E scorers to help with pre- and post-testing at the program. To obtain a list of certified scorers from outside your program, contact the CEA-UMass Amherst.

Programs will contact and negotiate a rate of pay directly with the scorer and compensate the scorers directly.

Scorers must use the *CLAS-E Expository Writing Rubric*, *Notes to the Scorer, Supplementary Scoring Guide*, and benchmark writing samples each time they score. To ensure consistent CLAS-E Expository Writing Folio test scores statewide, all test administrators must achieve inter-rater reliability, so that all practitioners throughout the state are uniform in their scoring. All scorers need practice and require refresher work before any testing session to maintain their uniformity of scoring. The goal is for all scorers to calibrate themselves to the rubric and training materials, not to each other.

The *Rubric*, *Notes to the Scorer*, *Supplementary Scoring Guide*, and benchmark writing samples in the TABE CLAS-E *Writing Scoring Guide* and the CEA-UMass Amherst training materials are the standards by which to score. When in doubt (e.g., if the benchmark writing samples do not appear to agree with the CLAS-E rubric), follow the rubric.

Once all five items have been scored, add all items and round up if necessary for the final total score.

For ease of use, the *CLAS-E Notes to the Scorer* from the *Writing Scoring Guide* have been reformatted by Levels 1-4, with the notes taken verbatim from the *Writing Scoring Guide*. Programs must use this version that will be provided during the initial CLAS-E Writing Scoring training.

Re-Testing Guidelines
For all TABE tests, users should consult the publisher's guidance to determine when students should be retested at a higher or lower level. This guidance is available online: https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Best_Practice_Guide.pdf.

Generally, if at pre-test a student scores very low on a TABE level test and their result is marked as O/R (Out of Range), it indicates that their performance is well below the level the test is designed to assess. In such cases, the publisher recommends administering the next lower level of the TABE test immediately or soon thereafter, to obtain a more appropriate pretest score.

Conversely, if at pre-test a student receives a scale score marked with a single asterisk (*), it means they performed at a very high level for the test level they took, leaving little or no room for measurable gain at that level. The publisher advises that these students should be retested immediately or soon thereafter using the next higher TABE level.

In some instances, if a student retests at a lower level and receives a high score with an asterisk at that lower level, the program should retain the original low score on the higher-level test. Although the score is low, it provides sufficient room to demonstrate measurable skills gain over time.

Important Note: Checking for Retesting is only needed during the first time a student is tested using the CLAS-E Writing (e.g., at the pre-test).

For easy reference, see the table below.

CLAS E Writing Re-Testing Guidelines

CLAS-E Writing Level 1		
If the student's scale score is 416 or below, **DO NOT RETEST**		If the student's scale score is 417 or above, **RETEST with LEVEL 2**
CLAS-E Writing Level 2		
If the student's scale score is 438 or below, **DO NOT RETEST**		If the student's scale score is 439 or above, **RETEST with LEVEL 3**
CLAS-E Writing Level 3		
If the student's scale score is 386 or below, **RETEST with LEVEL 2**	If the student's scale score is between 387 and 466, **DO NOT RETEST**	If the student's scale score is 467 or above, **RETEST with LEVEL 4**
CLAS-E Writing Level 4		
If the student's scale score is 441 or below, **RETEST with LEVEL 3**		If the student's scale score is 442 or above, **DO NOT RETEST**

Recalibrate Each Time Scoring is Done

CLAS-E testers must recalibrate each time they score the Expository Writing test to ensure consistent scoring accuracy among all CLAS-E test scorers. Before scoring tests, scorers must recalibrate themselves to the *Writing Scoring Guide's* Rubrics, *Notes to the Scorer*, *Supplementary Scoring Guide*, and benchmark writing samples. Recalibration means re-familiarizing and aligning with what the rubric defines for each score. When in doubt (e.g., if the benchmark writing samples do not appear to agree with the CLAS-E rubric), follow the *Rubric*. The *Supplementary Scoring Guide* is distributed during the CLAS-E Writing Scoring training and may also be downloaded from the CEA-UMass Amherst's blog.

CLAS-E Writing Scoring Monitor

Programs must designate one person as the CLAS-E Writing Scoring Monitor. The monitor compiles all the scores and maintains them in one place. She/he ensures that scoring procedures are followed, and notes if any of the readers' scores **differ from each other by more than one point**. If this occurs, the CLAS-E Writing Scoring Monitor follows up to determine the final score and makes sure these two readers go through the calibration process again. The CLAS-E Writing Scoring Monitor can be the program's assessment coordinator, the lead teacher or the program's director.

Scoring Consistency

Program staff must track scoring consistency on a regular basis. If consistency slips, the staff trained in the CLAS-E and the Scoring Monitor need to discuss how to immediately rectify the inconsistency. The CLAS-E Scoring Monitor should track how many third readings are needed and the overall performance of readers. Programs are encouraged to contact UMass CEA to discuss and/or to provide additional training if needed. If a reader is frequently off by more than one point, then the program's CLAS-E Scoring Monitor should immediately contact UMass CEA for technical support.

Exit Criteria for NRS Advanced ESL Level Students

A scale score of 536 and above in CLAS-E Writing Level 4 (both Forms C and D) is the exit criteria for students in the Advanced ESL level. Once students attain a score of 536, they need to exit the program at the end of the fiscal year or be tested with a different test (e.g. BEST Plus 3.0).

TABE CLAS-E Writing Scale Scores for NRS Educational Functioning Levels Chart

ESL Educational Functioning Level	TABE CLAS-E Writing Scale Scores*	SPL Level
ESL Level 1 (Beginning ESL Literacy)	200 – 384	0 – 1
ESL Level 2 (Low Beginning ESL)	385 – 414	2
ESL Level 3 (High Beginning ESL)	415 – 437	3
ESL Level 4 (Low Intermediate ESL)	438 – 461	4
ESL level 5 (High Intermediate ESL)	462 – 500	5
ESL Level 6 (Advanced ESL)	501 – 670	6

* CLAS-E Writing Scale Scores are the combination of the multiple-choice assessment and the expository writing folio scores.

CLAS-E Reading

Before CLAS-E Reading Administration

Required Test Materials

The following test materials can be purchased directly from the test publisher [here](#):

- o   CLAS-E Locator Test
- o   CLAS-E Locator Test Directions
- o   CLAS-E Test Books, Forms C and D, Levels 1 through 4
- o   CLAS-E Test Directions for Forms C and D, Levels 1 through 4
- o   CLAS-E Scoring Tables Book, Forms C and D
- o   Scoreze Answer Sheets for local scoring OR Scannable Answer Sheets for scanning and sending to the publisher for scoring

When to Alternate CLAS-E Reading Test Levels and Forms

The CLAS-E Interview Part B and the Locator Test Part 1 must be used for the first CLAS-E Reading test given to learners. The Locator does not need to be given on subsequent tests.

When testing students at mid-year (optional) and/or for the end-of-year (post-test), alternate test forms must be given so that no student gets the same test form twice in a row. It would be easy for students to remember the form from one test administration to the next.
- o   For example, pre-test with Level 3 Form C and post-test with Level 3 Form D.
- o   It is permissible to pre-test with Form C, administer a mid-year optional test with Form D, and post-test with Form C within a fiscal year.

During CLAS-E Reading Administration
Certified test administrators may administer the CLAS-E Reading to their own students.

Use of the CLAS-E Locator
Students taking the CLAS-E Reading test for the first time are required to take the CLAS-E Part B Interview/Screening Tool and the Locator, whether or not they have taken CLAS-E writing.

Programs must not use any program- or teacher-developed CLAS-E answer sheets because depending on the answer sheet, learners may gain an unfair advantage—or experience a disadvantage—from the program-developed answer sheet.

Test Administration Procedures and Time Limits
Test administrators must administer and score the TABE CLAS-E Reading Assessment test exactly according to UMass CEA CLAS-E training and test publisher's instructions. Test administrators must not deviate from the script or test directions as they are presented in the training or the publisher's instructions in any way. Strictly adhere to the test time limits. You can find the CLAS-E Reading allowable test times here: TABE_CLAS-E_Forms_C_D_Test_Adminsitration_Times.pdf.

Remote Test Administration
The TABE CLAS-E Reading test can be administered in person or remotely. Paper-based CLAS-E Reading tests cannot be administered remotely and the test modality for TABE CLAS-E Reading can change under specific and rare circumstances. TABE CLAS-E Reading online tests can be administered remotely or in person. See FY26 assessment policy 3 for more details on test modality change and remote testing guidelines.

After CLAS-E Reading Administration
Scoring the CLAS-E Reading Tests
Certified CLAS-E Reading Test Administrators may score their own students' CLAS-E Reading tests.

There are two types of answer sheets the test publisher provides:
3. TABE CLAS-E Answer Sheets, scoreable by the TABE local scanning tool (which needs to be downloaded)
4. TABE CLAS-E Scoreze Answer Sheets, self-scoring, no stencil needed.

Programs should choose the answer sheet option best suited for their needs.

Please note:
- The TABE CLAS-E Answer Sheet (option 1 above) is used when doing the Multiple Student Upload within DRC INSIGHT's Student Management area for online testing. On page 1 of this scannable answer document sheet, **the required demographic items are: Last Name(s), First Name(s), DOB, Gender, ID.** If these are not included, the answer sheet will not scan. The remaining demographic fields are optional and do not have to be used.
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Generally, if at pre-test a student scores very low on a TABE level test and their result is marked as O/R (Out of Range), it indicates that their performance is well below the level the test is designed to assess. In such cases, the publisher recommends administering the next lower level of the TABE test immediately or soon thereafter, to obtain a more appropriate pre-test score.

Conversely, if at pre-test a student receives a scale score marked with a single asterisk (*), it means they performed at a very high level for the test level they took, leaving little or no room for measurable gain at that level. The publisher advises that these students should be retested immediately or soon thereafter using the next higher TABE level.

In some instances, if a student retests at a lower level and receives a high score with an asterisk at that lower level, the program should retain the original low score on the higher-level test. Although the score is low, it provides sufficient room to demonstrate measurable skills gain over time.

Important Note: Checking for Retesting is only needed during the first time a student is tested using the CLAS-E Writing (e.g., at the pre-test).

For easy reference, see the table below.

TABE CLAS-E Reading Assessment Re-Testing Guidelines Chart

CLAS-E Reading Level 1		
If the student's scale score is 394 or below, **DO NOT RETEST**		If the student's scale score is 395 or above, **RETEST with LEVEL 2**
CLAS-E Reading Level 2		
If the student's scale score is 429 or below, **DO NOT RETEST**		If the student's scale score is 430 or above, **RETEST with LEVEL 3**
CLAS-E Reading Level 3		
If the student's scale score is 355 or below, **RETEST with LEVEL 2**	If the student's scale score is between 356 and 455, **DO NOT RETEST**	If the student's scale score is 456 or above, **RETEST with LEVEL 4**
CLAS-E Reading Level 4		
If the student's scale score is 428 or below, **RETEST with LEVEL 3**		If the student's scale score is 429 or above, **DO NOT RETEST**

Exit Criteria for NRS Advanced ESL Level Students

A scale score of 527 and above in CLAS-E Reading Level 4 (both Forms C and D) is the exit criteria for students in the Advanced ESL level. Once students attain a score of 527, they may not remain in the program the following fiscal year if their PAA is ESOL Reading, although they may return next year if they need to improve in a different skill area (e.g., speaking, writing).

CLAS-E Reading Scale Scores for NRS Educational Functioning Levels Chart

ESL Educational Functioning Level	TABE CLAS-E Reading Scale Scores	SPL Level
ESL Level 1 (Beginning ESL)	200 – 354	0 – 1
ESL Level 2 (Low Beginning ESL)	355 – 388	2
ESL Level 3 (High Beginning ESL)	389 – 427	3
ESL Level 4 (Low Intermediate ESL)	428 – 448	4
ESL Level 5 (High Intermediate ESL)	449 – 488	5
ESL Level 6 (Advanced ESL)	488 -580	6

Contact Information and Support

- CLAS-E trainings questions: Kat Tremblay, April Zenisky: aclstesthelp@educ.umass.edu
- CLAS-E policies questions: Dana Varzan-Parker: dana.varzan-parker@mass.gov
- CLAS-E certification and recertification procedures
- CLAS-E Trainings Schedule: SABES Calendar
- CLAS-E Good to Know Assessment Guides
- CLAS-E Test order forms