

Adult Basic Education Professional Teacher's License

Route 4 Guidelines

Introduction

Regulations

In accordance with *603 CMR 47.00: Licensure of Adult Basic Education Teachers*, applicants for the ABE teacher's license in Massachusetts must demonstrate the successful application of the professional standards for ABE teachers as set forth in 603 CMR 47.08 of the regulations.

Purpose

These guidelines are for applicants who choose to pursue the professional license through a Department trained and appointed ABE Review Panel. The panel review process is a performance assessment process administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Application Requirements

1. Submission of
 - a. [Application for the Massachusetts Adult Basic Education Teacher's License](#)
 - b. current resume or curriculum vitae
 - c. official transcript verifying a bachelor's or a master's degree
 - d. [ABE Teaching Experience Verification](#) form
2. Passing scores on the following Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL)
 - a. Communication and Literacy Skills: Reading and Writing
 - b. ABE Subject Matter

Licensure Requirements

1. Proficiency in the professional standards demonstrated via a performance portfolio
2. Portfolios must include:
 - a. qualifying letter received from the Department
 - b. [portfolio affidavit](#)
 - c. explanatory statements
 - d. evidentiary documentation
 - e. teaching demonstration

The Performance Portfolio

Candidates' proficiency of the professional licensure standards is assessed by means of a performance portfolio reviewed by a panel of ABE experts using criteria and evaluation rubrics provided by the Department. The portfolio is the mechanism by which candidates physically compile and arrange evidentiary documentation and narrative Explanatory Statements describing their knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to each professional standard.

Candidates must include within their performance portfolio a signed [portfolio affidavit](#) attesting that the Explanatory Statements and the evidentiary documentation submitted therein are the candidates' original work.

The *Professional Standards and Indicators for Route 4* (page 6) identifies what information and documentation the candidate must submit within their performance portfolio in order to demonstrate proficiency in the standards for this route to the Professional license. Candidates are expected to provide evidence of meeting each standard through Explanatory Statements and evidentiary documentation based on their ABE teaching experience. If submitting prescribed materials used by the program, candidates must be able to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of them to respond to the Explanatory Statements. Simply saying that the material is "required by the program" is not sufficient and will not excuse candidates from addressing the Explanatory Statements.

Read the following sections of the guidelines carefully to ensure that all required components are included in your performance portfolio:

1. Writing Explanatory Statements
2. Providing Evidentiary Documentation
3. Teaching Demonstration.

Portfolio Format and Content

Candidates must submit four (4) copies of their performance portfolio to the Department. After review by the panel, all but one (1) copy of the portfolio will be destroyed. No copies will be returned to the candidate. The original copy will stay on file at the Department.

Format

- Each copy of the portfolio must be submitted in a three-ring binder (no larger than 1”) or be professionally bound. There should be no loose papers in the portfolios
- Portfolios should be labeled on the front and on the spine with the candidate’s name
- Text within the portfolio should have 1” margins and be typed using 12 point Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri
- All pages should be numbered sequentially from start to end (including evidentiary materials)
- If quotations or citations are used, please use appropriate methods: e.g., Modern Language Association (MLA), or American Psychological Association (APA).
- Portfolios in need of significant revision or that exceed the size limitation may be returned.

Content

- **Front of Binder**
 1. display candidate’s name, route to licensure and date of submission on the front cover

- **Binder Sections:** each section should be tabbed and include the following documents:

Tab 1

1. table of contents listing all entries including appendices
2. a copy of the letter sent from the Department verifying eligibility to pursue route four
3. signed and dated copy of the [Performance Portfolio Affidavit](#)
4. current resume

Tab 2 - Explanatory Statements

1. narratives discussing the candidates’ knowledge and skills relevant to each professional standard.
2. a bibliography listing the research and publications referenced for the development of the portfolio

Tab 3 - Curriculum

1. a copy of a unit and/or a series of 3-5 lesson plans using the approved [Department’s standardized template](#). Other templates may be used only if they contain all of the components of the Department’s template.

Tab 4 - Assessments

1. description, samples and analysis of assessments used to place learners
2. samples of formative and summative assessments used to evaluate learners

Tab 5 – Effectiveness

1. samples of student work, student feedback and class evaluations
2. samples of feedback from classroom observations, supervision, annual evaluations

Tab 6 – Teaching Demonstration

1. an brief narrative explaining why this particular lesson was chosen (to set the context for the panel)
2. a brief narrative reflecting on the effectiveness of the lesson including anything the teacher would do differently
3. [class profile](#)
4. [lesson plans](#) using the Department’s standardized form
5. an outline of the unit from which the lesson was chosen
6. copies of learner materials (handouts and assessments) used during the lesson
7. any prior assessments or student feedback used to inform the lesson
8. the teaching demonstration DVD, labeled with candidate’s name and the date of the demonstration placed in a separate hole-punched plastic document protector

Tab 7 – Additional Evidence (if relevant)

1. professional development certificates of completion
2. course description from catalog
3. transcript

Writing Explanatory Statements

The primary section of the performance portfolio is the *Explanatory Statements*. In these brief narratives, candidates discuss and describe their knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to each professional standard.

Length

Explanatory Statements should be no longer than 2 pages per standard with the exception of standards (a)2 and (d)2 which have two parts. The 2 page limit applies to each part which could result in 4 pages for these standards. Portfolios exceeding this length will be returned to the candidate for revision.

Content

1. Explanatory Statements must provide convincing evidence through discussion and descriptive examples of candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the standard.
2. Explanatory Statements must be targeted specifically to the professional standards being demonstrated. Candidates should clearly label the standards within the portfolio. For example, *Standard (a)1. Incorporates theories of and research in adult development in designing effective instruction appropriate to the learning environment.*
3. Respond to the appropriate set of Explanatory Statements (ABE or ESOL) based on the content of the lesson plans submitted in the portfolio (e.g., candidates submitting math lesson plans would respond to the ABE Explanatory Statements).
4. It is candidates' responsibility to:
 - a. ensure that information is presented in clear, concise language and organized in a logical sequence so that evaluators do not have to search for relevant information.
 - b. make explicit connections for the evaluators between your Explanatory Statements and your evidentiary documentation, and, when applicable, your teaching demonstration.
 - c. provide adequate direction when referring to evidentiary documentation (e.g., see Tab 4, Sample 3). If using the same documentation for more than one standard, only include the documentation once.

Providing Evidentiary Documentation

Evidentiary documentation is material used to support the existence of knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge in practice. A single source of documentation may be used to support proficiency in more than one standard; however, candidates should not include any documentation that is not directly relevant to the standards being demonstrated.

Required Evidence

Certain documentation (e.g., a series of lesson plans, formative and summative assessments) is required for each standard as outlined the *Professional Standards for Route 4* section of these guidelines.

Additional Evidence

The following documentation may also be included in the performance portfolio to support the candidate's proficiency in the professional standards; however, candidates should not include any documentation that is not directly relevant to the standards being demonstrated. Candidates are cautioned not to overwhelm their portfolios with extraneous documentation. Be judicious in the selection and use of additional documentation and explicitly connect the documentation to the standards being demonstrated.

✓ **Formal and Informal Learning Experiences**

If formal or informal learning experiences are relevant to the professional standards being demonstrated, candidates must appropriately reference them within the *Explanatory Statements* and provide a description of the relevance of such experiences and how they have been of professional value.

Formal learning experiences must be documented with certificates of completion, or transcripts and official course descriptions. These may include, but are not limited to:

1. workshops/trainings
2. courses
3. professional development activities

Informal learning experiences may include, but are not limited to written summaries of:

1. self-directed learning
2. working with a coach/mentor
3. collaborative projects

✓ **Materials for Use with Learners and Learner Work**

1. assignments and handouts
2. surveys
3. assessments
4. photographs of student projects
5. technology

✓ **Professional Accomplishments**

Documentation of achievements, awards, publications or research.

✓ **Commendations**

Documented by learners, peers, and supervisory evaluations.

Demonstration of Teaching

Certain standards have been identified as those most appropriate to be demonstrated through actual teaching. While in some instances these standards may be demonstrated through other means, the demonstration is to confirm that candidates are able to use them in practice.

Teaching Standards for Route 4
(c) 5. Sets forth learning objectives, instructional methods and their rationale in the design of instruction and makes them available to colleagues and learners.
(c) 6. Uses a variety of instructional methods, techniques and tools that facilitate adult learning.
(c) 7. Uses strategies to develop critical thinking and complex problem solving.

Criteria

The teaching demonstration must:

1. be conducted with a class consisting of five or more students
2. demonstrate the professional standards as identified by the route to licensure
3. be one of the lessons submitted within the performance portfolio
4. be submitted with the following documentation:
 - a class profile identifying the type of class, program setting and population
 - explanation of why this particular lesson was chosen (to set the context for the panel)
 - the lesson plan
 - outline of the curriculum/instructional unit from which the lesson was chosen
 - relevant information regarding theory or research that informed the lesson plan
 - copies of learner materials used during the lesson
 - any prior assessments or student feedback used to inform the lesson
 - written reflections including anything the teacher would do differently

In the case of multi-level classrooms, candidates should provide a summary of each student and the learning objectives for each differentiated lesson.

Candidates may use the documentation and materials from the teaching demonstration to demonstrate proficiency in other standards within their performance portfolio. Only one demonstration lesson per candidate is permissible and only in extenuating circumstances will the candidate be permitted to conduct an additional demonstration lesson. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Department.

Methods

Candidates have two options for demonstrating their teaching:

1. video recording
2. mock demonstration

Method 1: Video-recorded Teaching Demonstration

If recording a teaching demonstration, one copy of the video must be submitted with each copy of the performance portfolio. The video must:

1. focus on the teacher from the learners' perspective, with brief footage that establishes the physical learning environment
2. be recorded on a DVD or flashdrive or uploaded to a shared cloud account
3. not be edited
4. be no less than 30 minutes and no longer than 45-minutes
5. be of such quality that evaluators can clearly see and hear the candidate and learners. Any videos that cannot be clearly seen or heard will not be accepted and a video of better quality will be required for resubmission
6. be viewable on a computer, TV and/or DVD player.

Candidates must obtain permission from the program director before video-recording. Candidates must also obtain written consent from learners before recording ([ABE Learner Consent Form](#)). All forms should be kept on file at the program in case any issues arise at a future date. Do not submit consent forms to the Department.

Video-recording "hints" to improve quality:

1. extra light is imperative
2. an external microphone helps to pick up learner questions and comments
3. conduct a practice run to assess light and audio levels as well as camera angles
4. eliminate background noise as much as possible

Method 2: Mock Teaching Demonstration

Candidates who are not currently teaching or who are not able to secure permission to record video in their program may conduct a mock teaching demonstration using the members of the review panel as learners.

1. Notify the ABE Licensure Coordinator prior to the date of the demonstration if any equipment will be needed (overhead projector, laptop, newsprint).
2. Candidates should spend 5-10 minutes introducing their lesson to the review panel. Include the context of the lesson, the setting, a profile of the learners, and any previous lessons and assessments that informed their lesson.
 - Candidates may choose to give review panelists profiles of learners to act out as part of the mock demonstration.
 - Candidates may also choose to provide a photograph or a floor plan of their classroom in order to help panelists visualize the teaching setting.
3. Candidates will then conduct a 45 minute teaching demonstration with the review panelists acting as learners and asking questions as learners. Review panelists will not ask evaluative questions during the demonstration.
4. At the conclusion of the mock demonstration, candidates will have 5-10 minutes to wrap up by discussing what will come next, any follow up assessments that will be conducted, and what they would do the same or differently next time.
5. Candidates will be asked to leave the room for a few minutes while the panelists discuss the demonstration. If the panelists have questions, candidates will be asked to respond at this time.
6. Candidates will not be informed of the review panel's recommendations at this time.

Professional Standards and Indicators for Route 4

Standard(a): Understanding the Adult Learner

(a)1. *Incorporates theories of and research in adult development in designing effective instruction appropriate to the learning environment (e.g., classroom, workplace, shelter).*

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a unit and/or a series of lesson plans (3-5) showing how relevant theories and/or research in adult education were used to plan instruction for adult learners.

Explanatory Statements

1. Briefly discuss a theory or specific research regarding the biological, psychological, or social development of adults (as opposed to child growth and development).
2. Describe how the theory or research cited in your response to (a)1.1 informs your instructional design.

(a)2. *Incorporates theories of and research in adult learning and learning disabilities in designing effective instruction appropriate to the learning environment.*

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a unit and/or a series of lesson plans (3-5) showing how relevant theories and/or research in adult learning and learning disabilities were used to plan instruction for adult learners

Explanatory Statements

ABE Portfolios

Part One - Adult Learning

1. Briefly discuss a theory or research on adult learning that informs your instructional design.
2. Describe how you applied this theory/research to the instructional practices illustrated in the lesson plans submitted in this portfolio.
3. Discuss two socio-cultural and/or personal factors (e.g., gaps in prior education, age, trauma) and how they affect adult learning.
4. Explain how these factors informed the design of the lessons in this portfolio.

Part Two - Learning Disabilities

1. Explain how your knowledge of learning disabilities informs your instructional design.
2. Describe how you have modified or would modify instruction to meet the needs of a student with a documented or suspected learning disability.

ESOL Portfolios

Part One - Adult Learning

1. Using Standard 1 of the *Massachusetts Professional Standards for Teachers of Adult ESOL* as a reference, discuss the research-based principles of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) that inform your instructional design.
2. Describe how you applied these SLA principles to the instructional practices illustrated in the lesson plans submitted in this portfolio.
3. Discuss two socio-cultural and/or personal factors (e.g., gaps in prior education, age, trauma) and how they affect the capacity to acquire language.
4. Explain how these factors informed the design of the lessons in this portfolio.

Part Two - Learning Disabilities

1. Explain how your knowledge of learning disabilities informs your instructional design.
2. Describe how you have modified or would modify instruction to meet the needs of a student with a documented or suspected learning disability.

Standard (c) Instructional Design and Teaching Approaches

(c) 5. Sets forth the learning objectives, instructional methods, and their rationale in the design of instruction and makes them available to colleagues and learners.

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a unit and/or a series of lesson plans (3-5) that explicitly identify the learning objectives and instructional methods.

Explanatory Statements

ABE Portfolios

1. Explain how you determined the learning objectives for the lessons submitted in this portfolio.
2. Briefly describe how these learning objectives align with the overall unit design and the needs of this particular group of students.
3. Discuss how you share learning objectives with students.
4. Explain how you share your lesson plans and instructional unit designs with colleagues.

ESOL Portfolios

1. Explain how you determined the language and content learning objectives for the lessons submitted in this portfolio.
2. Briefly describe how these learning objectives align with the overall unit design and the needs of this particular group of students.
3. Discuss how you share learning objectives with students.
4. Explain how you share your lesson plans and instructional unit designs with colleagues.

(c) 6. Uses a variety of instructional methods, techniques, and tools that facilitate adult learning.

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a unit and/or a series of lesson plans (3-5) that explicitly identify instructional methods, techniques and tools.

Explanatory Statements

1. Describe the various instructional methods used in the lessons submitted in this portfolio that provide opportunities for all students to engage in meaningful communication and interaction within authentic contexts.
2. Explain how these instructional methods accommodate students' range of academic needs and learning styles.
3. Discuss how these instructional methods support the learning objectives of the lessons in this portfolio.
4. Address the ways in which the materials and resources used in these lessons (including technology) complement the instructional methods.

(c) 7. Uses strategies that are effective for learners to develop and use critical thinking skills and to solve complex problems.

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a unit and/or a series of lesson plans (3-5) that describe strategies for critical thinking skills
2. Two samples of learner work demonstrating the ability to apply critical thinking or complex problem solving skills

Explanatory Statements

1. Describe the specific strategies employed in the submitted lessons and how they help students develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.
2. Give two examples of how students apply these skills in a variety of contexts in their daily lives.

Standard (d) Learner Assessment and Evaluation

(d) 1. *Creates and uses formal and informal assessments for the purpose of placing learners at the appropriate instructional level.*

Evidentiary documentation

1. Sample of one commercially produced formal assessment or one informal assessment used for initial or advancing placement
2. Results and interpretation of assessment used (provide specific examples)

Explanatory Statements

ABE Portfolios

1. Describe an assessment (informal or formal) you have developed and/or used for the purpose of determining your students' instructional levels.
2. Explain how you address the academic needs of students who score at different instructional levels in reading, writing and/or math.

ESOL Portfolios

1. Describe an assessment (informal or formal) you have developed and/or used for the purpose of determining your students' instructional levels.
2. Explain how you address the language needs of students whose oral test scores differ significantly from their literacy test scores.

(d) 2. *Creates and uses formative and summative assessments to evaluate learner progress.*

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a unit and/or a series of lesson plans (3-5) showing what formative or summative assessments were used to determine if students met the learning objectives
2. An example of formative assessment results and your interpretation of them
3. An example of summative assessment results and your interpretation of them

Explanatory Statements

Part One - Formative

1. Describe the formative assessments used in the lessons submitted in this portfolio.
2. Explain how these assessments connect to the learning objectives.
3. Explain how the results of the formative assessments are used to plan further instruction.
4. Discuss how the results are shared with students to inform their ongoing learning goals.

Part Two - Summative

1. Describe a summative assessment you developed for a unit you have taught. Discuss its strengths and weaknesses.
2. Explain what you learned about student progress from the results of the summative assessment.
3. Discuss how this data informed your instructional practice.

(d) 4. *Evaluates the effectiveness of instruction and modifies it based upon results and student feedback.*

Evidentiary documentation

1. Copy of a series of lesson plans (3-5) showing at least two examples of modifications
2. Two examples of learner feedback from written evaluations or conference notes

Explanatory Statements

1. Describe at least three ways in which you evaluate the effectiveness of your instruction. Include the strategies used for the lessons submitted in this portfolio.
2. Share an example of a modification you have made to your instruction based on student feedback.
3. Share an example of a modification you have made to your instructional practices based on data from evaluations (e.g. feedback from classroom observations, supervision, annual evaluations).
4. Explain how these modifications improved your instruction, student engagement, and student progress.

Evaluation Rubric

Each member of the Licensure Review Panel conducts an in-depth review of the three components of the candidate's portfolio:

1. Explanatory Statements,
2. evidentiary documentation, and
3. teaching demonstration.

Rating the Explanatory Statements (IP)

After gathering evidence from these three components, panelists rate each indicator using the following rubric:

Rating	Description	Result
Developing	Little to no evidence to demonstrate proficiency of the standard. Significant to moderate concerns are noted.	Further professional development and/or teaching experience are needed before reapplying for a license.
Proficient	Sufficient evidence to demonstrate proficiency of the standard. Minor to no concerns are noted.	Award a license.
Exemplary	Strong evidence to demonstrate proficiency of the standard. No concerns are noted. Potential exemplar for the standard.	Award a license and/or recommend candidate as a peer coach and/or review panelist.

Rating the Professional Standards

Once each indicator has been rated, a summative rating for the standard itself is determined. To be considered proficient in a standard, a candidate must receive ratings of proficient or exemplary for all the indicators within the standard. If any indicator is rated as developing, the candidate has not demonstrated proficiency in that standard.

For example:

Standard (a) 1. Incorporates theories of and research in <i>adult development</i> in designing effective instruction appropriate to the learning environment.	
Indicator of Proficiency	Rating
<p>1. <i>Briefly discuss a theory or specific research regarding the biological, psychological, or social development of adults (as opposed to child growth and development).</i></p> <p>Candidate articulates a sufficient understanding of adult development by referencing appropriate theories and/or research that influence his/her professional practice.</p>	Proficient
<p>2. <i>Describe how the theory or research cited in your response to standard (a)1.1 informs your instructional design.</i></p> <p>Candidate clearly demonstrates how adult development research/theory informs instructional design.</p>	Developing

Because the candidate received a *developing* rating for IP2, there is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate proficiency in Standard (a)1. The candidate is eligible to resubmit a response to IP2 after further professional development for incorporating theory into practice.