

**ACT WorkKeys®
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
2016–17**

The following FAQ has been developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to assist school systems in the administration of ACT WorkKeys. This information should be used in conjunction with other testing materials in the administration of the test, including all information from the test publisher.

- Parents may find more information about ACT WorkKeys at <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/workforce-solutions/act-workkeys/Help.html>.
- Students may find more information, including how to access their complete WorkKeys transcript and ACT WorkKeys score, at <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/UsingWorkKeysScores.pdf>.

Eligibility

1. Who is eligible to take ACT WorkKeys?

All North Carolina public school students who are identified as Career Technical Education (CTE) concentrators or are expected to be concentrators by the time of graduation from high school, are eligible to participate in the ACT WorkKeys assessment. The only exceptions are as follows:

- students deemed medically fragile because of a significant medical emergency and/or condition and are unable to participate in testing (All medical exceptions must be approved by the Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program.)
- students who have previously taken the state administration of the ACT WorkKeys assessment. Note: The State pays for only one ACT WorkKeys weekday in-school test administration per student. Duplicate testing will result in reporting delays.

2. What qualifies a student as a CTE concentrator?

A concentrator is a student who has earned four or more credits in a Career Cluster, at least one of which is a completer course. The student may earn all four credits from foundation courses or three from foundation and one from enhancement courses for the Career Cluster. To access the CTE Cluster document, visit <http://dpi.state.nc.us/cte/curriculum>.

When identifying concentrators, it is important to review not only students currently in grade 12 membership who will graduate at the end of the year, but also any students who are on track to graduate or planning to graduate within the current academic year. For example, mid-year graduates or students in an Early College may be on a different timeline but will be included in the end-of-year graduate file.

3. Are students who are enrolled in the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) program required to take ACT WorkKeys assessments?

OCS students who meet the ACT WorkKeys eligibility criteria are required to participate in the statewide administration of ACT WorkKeys per federal requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

4. Are English Learners (ELs) who are enrolled in their first year in U.S. schools required to take the ACT WorkKeys assessments?

Yes. EL students are included as part of the 95% participation requirement, but they are not included in the Accountability Program.

5. Can schools elect to test an entire grade?

No. Only those students who are identified as CTE concentrators or are expected to be concentrators by the time of graduation from high school are eligible to be tested.

6. May nonpublic schools, home schools, or staff members participate in the statewide administration of ACT WorkKeys?

No. The statewide administration of ACT WorkKeys is for North Carolina public school students only. As with any vendor assessment, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) does not function as a third-party for nonpublic, home school students, or staff members.

Administration Dates, Times, and Requirements

7. What are the administration dates for the ACT WorkKeys assessment?

The testing windows are as follows:

- The online ACT WorkKeys assessment window is November 14, 2016 through February 17, 2017.
- The fall testing window for the ACT WorkKeys paper/pencil standard and accommodated assessment is December 5–9, 2016.
- The spring testing window for the ACT WorkKeys paper/pencil and accommodated assessment is February 6–17, 2017.

8. What happens if a student is absent on test day?

The ACT WorkKeys test coordinator will need to schedule makeup dates for students who are absent on test day. Testing can only occur during the designated testing windows noted in the previous question. Testing outside of the designated window may result in a misadministration and/or cancelled scores.

9. Which ACT WorkKeys assessments are required?

There are three required ACT WorkKeys assessments:

- Applied Mathematics,
- Locating Information, and
- Reading for Information.

10. Are students who have already taken the three ACT WorkKeys assessments through a private entity, such as a community college, required to take the assessments again?

Students who have previously taken ACT WorkKeys and earned a Silver, Gold, or Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) are not required to participate in the WorkKeys administration. However, it is the students' responsibility to notify the school that they do not wish to participate in the test administration. These students may request a WorkKeys testing exception. **Requests for ACT WorkKeys testing exceptions will be honored only through October 28, 2016. Students must allow up to two weeks to process requests.**

Students who earned a Bronze NCRC through a private entity are required to take the ACT WorkKeys assessment during the state administration.

11. Are schools required to administer the Internet version of the ACT WorkKeys assessment?

Schools are not required to administer the online version of the ACT WorkKeys. However, the NCDPI recommends that early colleges and early graduates take the paper-and-pencil assessment paper/pencil in case technical issues occur with the ACT WorkKeys Validus system. The NCDPI Division of Accountability Services will hold all schools responsible for testing CTE concentrators regardless of test connectivity issues.

12. Must a minimum of 95% of students who are projected to graduate as CTE concentrators be tested?

Yes. The 95% participation rule for the School-Based Management and Accountability Program applies.

13. What type of training is required for ACT WorkKeys test coordinators and proctors?

All school ACT WorkKeys test coordinators will be required to attend district-hosted face-to-face North Carolina policy and procedure training with their district test coordinator. School test coordinators will need to contact their district test coordinator for the date and time of this training.

All school ACT WorkKeys test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors are required to review the appropriate Administration Manual's for the paper-and-pencil and/or online test administration(s). After reviewing the Manuals, test coordinators and proctors may attend either of the two live question-and-answer sessions and/or the WorkKeys online batch loading webinar. An initial live kickoff webinar, a schedule of the question-and-answer sessions and the WorkKeys groups and batch loading webinar information are posted on the ACT WorkKeys schedule of events which can be found at <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/state-and-district-solutions/north-carolina.html#wk>

14. What type of score report do students receive after taking ACT WorkKeys?

All students who complete a portion of the assessment will receive an individualized student score report. Students who meet the eligibility requirements will receive a National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), which is collaboratively produced and distributed through ACT, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and local education agencies. Students must enter a valid e-mail address so they will receive their information as soon as the assessments are scored.

Accommodations**15. What is the procedure for accommodations requests?**

ACT WorkKeys accommodations do not require ACT approval. All ACT WorkKeys accommodations are determined locally based on needs documented in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or on needs associated with a student's English Learner (EL) documentation.

16. Must test coordinators notify ACT WorkKeys about approved accommodations?

Notification to ACT is not required. Accommodations must be coded on the answer documents and on records of all accommodations, including the ACT WorkKeys accommodations forms (found in the *ACT WorkKeys Administration Manual*). These records/forms should be kept on file in the student's cumulative folder for at least three years after the test date.

17. Are accommodations allowed for ACT WorkKeys online testing?

The only accommodation that is allowed for ACT WorkKeys Online is extended time. Students who require other accommodations will need to test using the paper/pencil version.

18. Do students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Section 504 Plans need to include accommodations for the administration of ACT WorkKeys?

Accommodations for ACT WorkKeys should be included in students' IEPs or Section 504 Plans. ACT WorkKeys has specific accommodations policies that may differ from those of the North Carolina state-developed assessments, and school committees must take these policies into consideration when making accommodation decisions.

All accommodation decisions for the ACT WorkKeys assessments should be supported by classroom and testing accommodations documentation.

19. Do accommodations apply to all three ACT WorkKeys tests?

The accommodations granted to a student for ACT WorkKeys apply to all three assessments.

20. Are accommodations for students identified as English Learners (ELs) permitted for ACT WorkKeys assessments?

English as a Second Language (ESL) is not considered a disability by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and does not warrant accommodations. English Learners may use a word-to-word bilingual (English/native language) dictionary only.

21. May students request that the test administrator read aloud for the ACT WorkKeys *Reading for Information* assessment?

The ACT WorkKeys Reader's Script is the equivalent of North Carolina's *Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud (in English)* accommodation. Approved use of the ACT WorkKeys Reader's Script accommodation (i.e., documented in the IEP or Section 504 Plan) will result in reportable scores.

22. Can schools order an audio DVD for individual students with the read-aloud accommodation?

Schools can order DVDs with audio tracks for ACT WorkKeys assessments. It is the responsibility of the test coordinator to verify that the DVD matches the test booklet before testing. Examinees using audio DVDs may all test in the same room as long as they wear headphones and are in control of their own materials and machine. As with all testing materials, DVDs may not be copied.

23. Must students with the read-aloud accommodation be tested individually?

If an examinee uses a reader, the assessment must be administered one-on-one in a separate room. Prior to the exam, the reader must sign the ACT WorkKeys Special Testing Reader's Agreement in the *ACT WorkKeys Administration Manual for Paper Testing*. Readers must read from the reader script exactly as it is printed with no interpretation or additional information provided.

24. Can a student be approved to test over multiple days?

Yes, although it is important to remember that an examinee is not permitted to stop an assessment prior to completion and finish it the next day. An assessment must be fully completed in one testing session.

Medical Exceptions

25. Must a request for a medical exception be submitted to the NCDPI for students required to take ACT WorkKeys?

A medical exception must be submitted to and approved by the Division of Accountability Services in order for a student to receive a medical exception for ACT WorkKeys.

Ordering and Managing Materials

26. How do I access ACT WorkKeys online testing?

During the week of October 10, 2016, ACT will send an e-mail to ACT WorkKeys test coordinators with the ACT WorkKeys Online realm information.

27. Is it ok to transfer ACT WorkKeys test materials to other schools who are experiencing a shortage or move accommodated materials with a student who transfers schools?

ACT WorkKeys materials must not be moved from the receiving school. If a school experiences a shortage of materials, it must order more materials through ACT. If an accommodated student transfers to another school, the school must return the transferred student's unused materials to ACT, and the new school must order new accommodated materials for the student.

Access to Communications

28. How can I communicate directly with ACT WorkKeys?

Monthly testing notices will arrive via email to all WorkKeys test coordinators around the tenth (10th) of each month. These notices will include updates and reminders of key tasks throughout the testing cycle. You can also contact ACT WorkKeys directly via phone 1-800-967-5539, or e-mail workkeys-nc@act.org. For state testing policy questions, school test coordinators should contact their district test coordinators.