Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide additional guidance for maximizing accessibility in the Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). The *Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines* document is a companion to the *ELPAC Accessibility Framework* document, and is designed to provide educators with support for the selection of available accessibility resources and information on the resources available for test administration.

Overview

The Alternate ELPAC is a standardized measurement of English language proficiency for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The test is administered to an individual student by a trained test examiner. The test design focuses on receptive (listening and reading) and expressive (speaking and writing) skills. Accessibility resources for the Alternate ELPAC are provided using the same ELPAC framework; however, due to the design of the test, many of the typical resources may be unnecessary (refer to the section, Accessibility by Test Design, at the end of this document).

This document is a guideline for the Alternate ELPAC test administration only and should not replace or change what is being done on a day-to-day basis in the classroom. An educator who works with an individual student daily is the one who best understands how to support the student and is also the one familiar with the student's individualized education program (IEP). For additional information, test examiners should refer to the *Directions for Administration* (*DFAs*).

This document was developed by using the accessibility California Alternate Assessment guidelines in conjunction with the considerations for the Alternate ELPAC. For additional information about accessibility resources, refer to the *California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix* web document, posted on the Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix web page on the California Department of Education website.

Accessibility Resources

The Alternate ELPAC accessibility resources presented here follow the existing ELPAC Accessibility Resources for Operational Testing web document. The available universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations are presented in the following tables, with additional guidance in the far-right column labeled: *Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC.*

Universal Tools

Universal tools are available to all test takers. This section provides information on the universal tools available in the ELPAC and the recommendations for use in the Alternate ELPAC (refer to).

Table 1. Universal Tools

Universal Tool	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Breaks	Yes	Yes	Breaks, including testing over more than one day between the domain sections, are permitted. The use of this universal tool may require more overall time for a student to complete the assessment.	Breaks are allowed whenever a student needs one. The teacher should follow a pace that best meets the student's needs. The Alternate ELPAC is not designed by domain.
Expandable items	Yes	No	Each item can be expanded so that it takes up a larger portion of the screen.	It is recommended that all test items be expanded during test administration to improve access to content and support student focus.
Expandable passages	Yes	No	Each passage or stimulus can be expanded so that it takes up a larger portion of the screen.	It is recommended that all test passages use the expandable passages tool to improve access to content and support student focus.
Highlighter	Yes	Yes	The highlighter is a digital tool for marking desired text, item questions, or item answers (or parts of these) with a color.	Highlighters may be helpful for a student who regularly has texts and pictures highlighted as part of daily instruction. For a student using printed picture cards, a highlighter or marker may be used.
Keyboard navigation	Yes	No	Navigation through text can be accomplished by using a keyboard (using the function keys instead of a mouse).	Most test examiners navigate through the test on behalf of the student. However, a student who is able to navigate independently, should be allowed to do so.

Table 1 *(continuation)*

Universal Tool	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Line reader	Yes	Yes	The student uses an onscreen tool to assist in reading by raising and lowering the tool for each line of text on the screen.	This tool is available at all grades but may be distracting to the student.
Mark for review (grades two through twelve)	Yes	No	This tool allows the student to flag items for future review during the assessment.	Mark for review is permitted for all grades. This is useful for those times when a test examiner decides it is best for the student to skip an item within a set and continue to move forward in the test.
Oral clarification of test directions by the test examiner in English	No	Yes	The test examiner provides clarification of test directions to the student, in English.	Given the one-on-one nature of the assessment, this may naturally happen, but it should be used only for test directions and must be in English.
Scratch paper (grades three through twelve)	No	Yes	The use of scratch paper to make notes or record responses is allowable. Only plain or lined paper is appropriate. Assistive technology devices are permitted to make notes.	Scratch paper is permitted for all grades.
Strikethrough	Yes	No	This tool allows a user to cross out answer options. If an answer option is an image, a strikethrough line will not appear but the image will be grayed out.	Strikethrough is permitted for all grades, but may be distracting to the student.
Zoom (in or out)	Yes	Yes	The default font size for all tests is 14 point. The student can make text and graphics larger by selecting the [**Zoom In**] button. The student can select the [**Zoom Out**] button to return to the default or smaller print size. When using the zoom feature, the student changes only the size of text and graphics on the current screen.	It is recommended that the test examiner determine if the zoom feature will make the content visually accessible for the student. If the student requires all items and graphics to be larger, the test examiner may use a projector, SMART board, or large monitor so that all parts of the test are enlarged.

Designated Supports

Designated supports are available to a student for whom a need has been identified by school personnel familiar with the student's needs and testing resources. This section provides information on the designated supports available in the ELPAC and the availability and recommendations for use in the Alternate ELPAC (refer to table 2).

Table 2. Designated Supports

Designated Support	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Amplification	No	Yes	A student may use amplification assistive technology (e.g., headphones, FM system, noise buffers, white noise machines) to increase the volume provided in the assessment platform. Use of this resource likely requires a separate setting. If the device has additional features that may compromise the validity of the test (e.g., internet access), the additional functionality must be deactivated to maintain test security.	There are no additional recommendations.
American Sign Language (ASL) or Manually Coded English	No	Yes	A student who is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) and who typically uses ASL or Manually Coded English can have the test directions signed to the student.	There are no additional recommendations.
Color contrast	Yes	Yes	A student with attention difficulties may need this resource for viewing test content. This resource may also be needed by some students with visual impairment or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). The choice of colors should be informed by evidence that the color selections meet the student's needs.	There are no additional recommendations.

Table 2 *(continuation one)*

Designated Support	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Color overlay	No	Yes	A student with attention difficulties may need this resource to view test content. This resource may also be needed by some students with visual impairment or other print disabilities (including learning disabilities). The choice of colors should be informed by evidence that those colors meet the student's needs.	There are no additional recommendations.
Magnification	No	Yes	A student with visual impairment or other print disability may use this designated support to adjust the size of specific areas of the screen or test book (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, and navigation buttons) with an assistive technology device. Magnification allows increasing the size to a level that meets the student's visual needs. The use of this resource may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.	Test examiners may use a projector, interactive displays, SMART board, or large monitor based on their daily use for instruction. A handheld magnifier can be used for a student using picture cards or real objects.
Masking	Yes	Yes	A student with attention difficulties may need to mask content not of immediate need or that may be distracting during the assessment. This resource also may be needed by students with print disabilities (including learning disabilities) or visual impairment.	There are no additional recommendations.

Table 2 *(continuation two)*

Designated Support	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Medical supports (e.g., glucose monitor)	No	Yes	The educator should follow local policies regarding medical devices and ensure the student's health is the highest priority. Device settings must restrict access to other applications or the test examiner must closely monitor the use of the device to maintain test security. The use of electronic devices may require a separate setting to avoid distractions to other test takers and to ensure test security.	There are no additional recommendations.
Mouse pointer (size and color)	Yes	No	A student who is visually impaired and needs additional enlargement, or a mouse pointer in a different color, to more readily find the mouse pointer on the screen will benefit from the mouse pointer resource. A student who has visual perception challenges will also find this beneficial. The size and color are set during registration and cannot be changed during the administration of the assessment. A student should have ample opportunity to practice during daily instruction with the size and color to determine the student's preference. The mouse pointer can be used with the zoom universal tool. If a student is using a magnification program (refer to designated support, magnification), the mouse pointer resource may not be needed because the enlarged mouse pointer is built in to magnification programs.	There are no additional recommendations.

Table 2 *(continuation three)*

Designated Support	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Noise buffers	No	Yes	A student (not groups of students) may wear equipment to reduce environmental noises. A student may have this testing variation if regularly used in the classroom. A student who uses noise buffers will need headphones unless the student is tested individually in a separate setting.	There are no additional recommendations.
Print on demand	No	Yes	A student or newcomer with a disability may need paper copies of either passages and stimuli or items. A very small percentage of students need this designated support. The use of this designated support may result in the student needing additional time to complete the assessment.	A paper form of this assessment is not available, however print on demand is available for students who may benefit from a printed copy of the item. Print on demand is delivered at the item level for test administration. The print-on-demand option must be requested in advance of the test administration; otherwise the print-on-demand function will not be enabled. The *DFAs* contain additional guidance on the standardized use of print on demand (e.g., use/misuse of printed items, enlargement, etc.).
Separate setting (e.g., most beneficial time, special lighting or acoustics, adaptive furniture)	No	Yes	A student who is easily distracted (or may distract others) in the presence of other students, for example, may need an alternate location to be able to take the assessment.	There are no additional recommendations.

Table 2 *(continuation four)*

Designated Support	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Simplified test directions	No	Yes	A student who needs oral clarification of the test directions in English may benefit from this resource. A student who needs this resource may benefit from testing in a separate setting to avoid distracting other test takers.	There are no additional recommendations.
Streamline	Yes	No	Streamline may benefit a small number of students who have specific learning or reading disabilities, or a visual impairment, that have been identified through an IEP. In streamline, the text is presented in a more sequential format. A student using this resource should have familiarity interacting with items in a streamline format.	There are no additional recommendations.
Translated test directions (non-embedded)	No	Yes	A student who has limited English language skills (whether or not designated as an English learner [EL] or EL with disabilities) can use translated test directions. In addition, a biliterate adult trained in the test administration manual can read the test directions to the student. The use of this resource may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.	Test directions can be provided through any native language including sign language.

Table 2 *(continuation five)*

Designated Support	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Turn off any universal tool(s)	Yes	No	A student who is easily distracted (whether or not designated as having attention difficulties or disabilities) may be overwhelmed by some of the universal tools. Knowing which specific tools may be distracting is important for determining which tools to turn off.	There are no additional recommendations.

Accommodations

Accommodations are resources available to a student who has a documented need, as specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan. This section provides information on the accommodations available in the ELPAC and the availability and recommendations for use in the Alternate ELPAC (refer to table 3).

Table 3. Accommodations

Accommodation	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Alternate response options	No	Yes	A student who has some physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills) may need to use the alternate response options accommodation. Some alternate response options are external devices that must be plugged in and compatible with the assessment delivery platform.	A student can use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices, picture cards, answer choice cards, objects, and manipulatives. A list of objects and manipulatives is available in appendix A of the *DFA*. Picture cards are available on the Test Operations Management System website.

Table 3 *(continuation one)*

Accommodation	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
ASL or Manually Coded English	No	Yes	A student who is DHH and who typically uses ASL or Manually Coded English may need this accommodation when accessing text-based content in the assessment. **The use of this accommodation may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.** For many students who are DHH, viewing signs is the only way to access information presented orally. It is important to note, however, that some students who are hard of hearing will be able to listen to information presented orally if provided with appropriate amplification and a setting in which extraneous sounds do not interfere with the clear presentation of the audio presentation in a Listening test.	There are no additional recommendations.
Braille	No	Yes	A student with visual impairment and whose IEP or Section 504 plan requires the use of paper versions, embossers needed to print test content on demand that are needed for the administration of the computer-based ELPAC, will have paper–pencil tests available.	The test examiner can request print-on-demand functionality to produce a braille version of the test locally.

Table 3 *(continuation two)*

Accommodation	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Breaks	No	Yes	A student with disabilities may need to take breaks during the ELPAC domain-level test administrations. Extended breaks in the middle of a domain-level test administration are allowed as an accommodation for a student with a disability who has a documented need. The ELPAC test examiner may need to introduce special administrative considerations to support a student who needs this resource.	Breaks are allowed whenever a student needs one. The teachers should follow a pace that best meets the student's needs.
Large Print	No	Yes	A student with visual impairment can use printed large-print Test Books and Answer Books.	A paper form for this assessment is not available. However, teachers can produce a large-print paper version of the item by requesting print on demand.
Scribe	No	Yes	A student who has a documented significant motor or processing difficulty, or who has had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm), that makes it difficult to produce responses may dictate responses to a human who records, verbatim, what the student dictates according to scribing guidelines. The use of this resource may result in the student needing additional overall time to complete the assessment.	There are no additional recommendations.

Table 3 *(continuation three)*

Accommodation	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Speech-to-text	No	Yes	A student who has a motor or processing disability (such as dyslexia), or who has had a recent injury (such as a broken hand or arm), that makes it difficult to produce text or commands using keys may need alternative ways to work with computers. The student will need to be familiar with the software and have had many opportunities to use it prior to testing. Speech-to-text software requires that the student go back through all generated text to correct errors in transcription, including the use of writing conventions; thus, prior experience with the accommodation is essential. If a student uses the student's own assistive technology device, all assessment content should be deleted from this device after the test, for security purposes. For many of these students, using voice recognition software is the only way to demonstrate composition skills.	The one-on-one administration allows the student to dictate to the test examiner or use AAC devices to express a response to the test examiner.

Table 3 *(continuation four)*

Accommodation	Embedded	Non-embedded	ELPAC Accessibility Frameworks Description	Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC
Speech-to-text (continued)	(continued)	(continued)	Still, the use of speech-to-text does require that the student knows writing conventions and has the review and editing skills required of students who enter text via the computer keyboard. It is important that a student who uses speech-to-text also be able to develop planning notes via speech-to-text and view what is produced while composing via speech-to-text.	(continued)
Word processor (Writing domain) (grades three through twelve)	No	Yes	A student who uses word processing software for responses on the Writing domain for grades three through twelve must have the spelling and grammar check turned off.	A word processor is permitted for all grades. A student may use alternate writing options, including a word processor, paper and pencil, adapted pencils, an AAC device, picture cards, and any other method the student typically uses for writing. **Note:** The test examiner will score the student response and enter the student score into the test delivery system. Spelling and grammar are not part of the construct being measured.

Accessibility by Test Design

Test design differences between the ELPAC and the Alternate ELPAC impact the need for accessibility resources. While ELPAC accessibility resources are designed for the Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing domains, Alternate ELPAC accessibility resources are designed by taking into consideration receptive (listening and reading) and expressive (speaking and writing) skills and a variety of communication modes.

The following universal tools are either provided through the test design or are not applicable for the Alternate ELPAC:

- Digital notepad: Written responses are not required to be entered by students as a component of the Alternate ELPAC.

- Writing tools: Written responses are not a required entered component of the Alternate ELPAC.

- Line reader: This tool is available but may be distracting to the student.

- Test navigation assistant: Due to the one-on-one nature of the Alternate ELPAC, the test examiner can help the student navigate through the test following the *DFA*. This is a standard administration process for any state-mandated alternate assessment in California.

The following designated supports are either provided through the test design or are not applicable for the Alternate ELPAC:

- Designated interface assistant: This is not available because there is no written response capture.

- Pause or replay audio—Listening domain: This is not available because there is no Listening domain, speech capture, or audio component on the test.

- Pause or replay audio—Speaking domain: This is not available because there is no Speaking domain, speech capture, or audio component on the test.

- Read aloud: Due to the one-on-one nature of the Alternate ELPAC, the test examiner reads aloud to the student. This is a standard administration process.

The following accommodations are either provided through the test design or are not applicable for the Alternate ELPAC:

- Audio transcript (includes braille transcript): Audio transcripts are not available because there is no audio component in the test.

- Braille (embossed and refreshable): This is not available for the Alternate ELPAC. If a student needs braille, LEAs should use the print-on-demand feature to print test content and produce the braille locally. All printed test content must be destroyed after the completion of that student's test administration.

- Closed-captioning: Closed-captioning is not available because there are no audio or video files used.

- Text-to-speech: Text-to-speech is not available for the Alternate ELPAC; instead, the test examiner reads the entire test aloud to the student.