

# Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines

## Purpose

This document provides additional guidance for maximizing accessibility in the Alternate English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) and is a companion to the [*California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix*](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/accessibilityresources.asp). These guidelines 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 framework as the general ELPAC; however, due to the design of the Alternate ELPAC assessment, many of the typical resources may be unnecessary (refer to the section Accessibility by Test Design at the end of this document).

Because 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), this educator is best suited to be the student’s test examiner. For additional information, test examiners should refer to the *Preparing for Administration* (*PFAs*).

This document was developed by using the California Alternate Assessment accessibility guidelines in conjunction with considerations for the Alternate ELPAC. 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. For additional information about accessibility resources, refer to the [*California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix*](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/accessibilitymatrx24-25.docx) web document, posted on the [Student Accessibility Resources](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/accesssupport.asp) web page on the [California Department of Education](https://www.cde.ca.gov/) website.

## Accessibility Resources

The Alternate ELPAC accessibility resources presented here follow the existing [*California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix*](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/accessibilitymatrx24-25.docx) web document. The following tables present available universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations. The Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC column provides additional guidance*.*

### Universal Tools

Universal tools are available to all students on the basis of student preference and selection. 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).

Table 1. Universal Tools

| Universal Tool | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breaks | Yes | Yes | For the ELPAC, breaks—including those during testing over more than one day—between the domains are permitted. Breaks may be permitted for a student who needs additional time to finish testing in a domain to allow for rescheduling. However, breaks in the middle of a domain as identified in a student’s IEP are allowed as an accommodation (refer to table 3). | A student may break whenever they need one. A test examiner should follow a pace that best meets a student’s needs. Note that the Alternate ELPAC integrates the domains, where a single task type assesses multiple domains. |
| Expandable items | Yes | No | A student can expand each item so it takes up a larger portion of the screen. | It is recommended that all test items can be expanded during test administration to improve access to content and support student focus. |
| Expandable passages | Yes | No | A student can expand each passage or stimulus so it takes up a larger portion of the screen. | It is recommended that all test passages can be expanded during test administration to improve access to content and support student focus. |
| Highlighter | Yes | No | A student can use the highlighter—a digital universal tool—for marking desired text, item questions, and 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. |

Table 1 *(continuation one)*

| Universal Tool | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Keyboard navigation | Yes | No | A student can navigate through text by using a keyboard’s function keys (instead of a mouse or other adaptive device). | 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. |
| Line reader | Yes | No | A student can use an on-screen universal 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 grade levels and grade spans. However, it may be distracting to a student. |
| Mark for review | Yes | No | A student can flag items for future review during the assessment.  | Mark for review is permitted for all grade levels and grade spans. This universal tool 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 can provide clarification of test directions to a student in English. | A test examiner may give oral clarification naturally due to the one-on-one nature of the assessment, but it should be used only for test directions and must be in English. |

Table 1 *(continuation two)*

| Universal Tool | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Scratch paper | No | Yes | A student can use blank scratch paper to make notes, write computations, record responses, or create graphic organizers. Note the following about scratch paper:* Only plain paper or lined paper is appropriate for English language arts/literacy and the ELPAC.
* Graph paper is required beginning in grade six; a student can use graph paper on all mathematics assessments.
* A student can use a whiteboard with marker.

As long as the construct being measured is not impacted, a student is permitted to use an assistive technology device, including low-tech assistive technology (Math Window) and digital graph paper, to make notes. A student’s assistive technology device must have its access to the internet disconnected. | Scratch paper is permitted for all grade levels and grade spans. Note that only plain paper, lined paper, a whiteboard, or a student’s assistive technology device is appropriate for the Alternate ELPAC. Note a student’s assistive technology device must have its access to the internet disconnected. |

Table 1 *(continuation three)*

| Universal Tool | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strikethrough | Yes | No | A student can use this digital tool to cross out answer options. Stricken text or a stricken image will be less visible. | Strikethrough is permitted for all grade levels and grade spans. However, it may be distracting to a student. |
| Zoom (in or out) | Yes | Yes | The default font size for all tests is 14 point. A student can make text and graphics larger by selecting the [**Zoom In**] button and return to the default or select a smaller font size by selecting the [**Zoom Out**] button. | A test examiner may determine whether the zoom feature will make the content visually accessible for the student. If a 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 all students when determined for use by an educator or team of educators (with parent/guardian and student input, as appropriate) or specified in the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan. 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 | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| American Sign Language (ASL) or Manually Coded English (MCE) | No | Yes | For the ELPAC, a student who is deaf or hard of hearing and who typically uses ASL or MCE can have the test directions signed as a language support prior to beginning the actual test items. | There are no additional recommendations. |
| Color contrast | Yes | No | A student can adjust the screen background or font color on an electronic device on the basis of the student’s need or preference. This may include reversing the colors for the entire interface or choosing the color of font and background. | There are no additional recommendations. |

Table 2 *(continuation one)*

| Designated Support | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Magnification | No | Yes | A student can adjust the size of specific areas of the screen (e.g., text, formulas, tables, graphics, navigation buttons, and the mouse pointer) with an assistive technology device or software. Magnification allows the student to increase the size of and change the color contrast, including the size and color of the mouse pointer, to a level not provided for by one or more of the zoom universal tool, color contrast designated support, or mouse pointer designated support. | A test examiner may also use a projector, interactive display, SMART board, or large monitor based on daily use for instruction with the student.A handheld magnifier can be used for a student using picture cards or real objects. |
| Masking | Yes | Yes | A student can use the masking digital resource to block off content that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting to the student. A student is able to focus attention on a specific part of a test item by using the masking digital resource.A student can use the masking non-embedded resource to block off content on a paper test that is not of immediate need or that may be distracting to the student. A student is able to focus attention on a specific part of a test item by using the masking non-embedded resource. | There are no additional recommendations. |

Table 2 *(continuation two)*

| Designated Support | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Medical supports (e.g., glucose monitor) | No | Yes | A student can access medical supports for medical purposes (e.g., glucose monitor). The medical support may include a cell phone; however, it is not limited to devices and should support a student during testing only for medical reasons. To maintain test security, either the device settings must restrict access to other applications, or the test administrator or test examiner must closely monitor the use of the device. | There are no additional recommendations. |
| Mouse pointer (size and color) | Yes | No | This embedded resource allows the student to use a mouse pointer that has been set to a larger size and/or has a color that has been changed. | There are no additional recommendations. |
| Noise buffers | No | Yes | A student can use a noise buffer such as ear mufflers, white noise, or other equipment to block external sounds. | There are no additional recommendations. |

Table 2 *(continuation three)*

| Designated Support | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Print on demand | No | Yes | A student can have paper copies of passages, stimuli, items, or any combination of these printed. To establish this setting, contact the local educational agency (LEA) Success Agent for the region using information found at <https://ca-toms-help.ets.org/contact/>.  | A paper form of this assessment is not available; however, print on demand is available for a student who may benefit from a printed copy of an 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 and misuse of printed items, enlargement, etc.). |
| Print size | Yes | No | Print size is a test setting that sets the default font size the student should have when starting a computer-based assessment. This setting applies to text questions and stimuli only and not the buttons in the global menu bar. The selected font size, within a range of 1.5× to 3×, becomes the default for all questions in that student’s test. | There are no additional recommendations. |
| Separate setting (e.g., most beneficial time, special lighting or acoustics, adaptive furniture) | No | Yes | A student’s test location can be altered so the student is tested in a setting different from that made available for most students. Separate setting may also include the most beneficial time, special lighting or acoustics, and adaptive furniture. | There are no additional recommendations. |

Table 2 *(continuation four)*

| Designated Support | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Simplified test directions | No | Yes | The test administrator or test examiner can simplify or paraphrase the test directions found in a test administration manual.Referto the *Guidelines for Simplified Test Directions* at [https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/‌guidelines-for-simplified-test-directions.pdf](https://portal.smarterbalanced.org/library/en/guidelines-for-simplified-test-directions.pdf). | A student who needs oral clarification of the test directions in English may benefit from this resource. |
| Streamline | Yes | No | This designated support provides a streamlined interface of the test in an alternate, simplified format in which the items are displayed below the stimuli. | 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. |
| Translated test directions (non-‍embedded) | No | Yes | Translated test directions are a language support. A student can use translated test directions prior to beginning the actual test items. | Test directions can be provided through any native language including sign language. Test directives and directives to a student can be translated (e.g., “sit down” or “look at the screen”), but not test content such as stories, questions, or response options. |

Table 2 *(continuation five)*

| Designated Support | Embedded | Non-embedded | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Turn off any universal tool(s) | Yes | No | The test administrator or test examiner can disable any universal tool(s) that might be distracting or that a student does not need to use or is unable to use. | 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 | California Assessment Accessibility Resources Matrix Description | Recommendations for the Alternate ELPAC |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Alternate response options | No | Yes | A student with some physical disabilities (including both fine motor and gross motor skills) can use an alternate response option that includes, but is not limited to, adapted keyboards, large keyboards, Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys, FilterKeys, adapted mouse, touch screen, head wand, switches, and paper–pencil version. | A student may 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](https://mytoms.ets.org/) (TOMS) website. |
| ASL or MCE | No | Yes | For this non-embedded ELPAC resource, ASL or MCE can be used to present the test questions, and a student can use ASL or MCE for responses. | A student may use a modified version of ASL or MCE during testing if they use it during daily instruction. |
| Breaks | No | Yes | A student with disabilities who has a documented need can take extended breaks in the middle of a domain-level test administration. | A student may take a break if they need one. The test examiner should follow a pace that best meets a student’s needs Note that the Alternate ELPAC integrates the domains, where a single task type assesses multiple domains. |

## Accessibility by Test Design

Test design differences between the ELPAC and the Alternate ELPAC impact the need for accessibility resources. The ELPAC accessibility resources are designed for the Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing domains, while the Alternate ELPAC accessibility resources are designed for receptive (listening and reading) and expressive (speaking and writing) skills and a variety of communication modes. Note that the Alternate ELPAC integrates the domains, where a single task type assesses multiple domains.

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

* Digital notepad: The Alternate ELPAC does not require written responses.
* Writing tools: The Alternate ELPAC does not require written responses.
* Test navigation assistant: Due to the one-on-one test administration of the Alternate ELPAC, the test examiner can help the student navigate through the test by 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: The Alternate ELPAC does not require written responses.
* Pause or replay audio—Listening domain: The Alternate ELPAC does not have a listening domain, speech capture, or audio component on the test.
* Pause or replay audio—Speaking domain: The Alternate ELPAC does not have a 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 test 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, the LEA 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: The Alternate ELPAC does not have an audio component on the test.
* Text-to-speech: Due to the one-on-one nature of the Alternate ELPAC, the test examiner reads the test aloud to the student. This is a standard test administration process.