

GED TESTING SERVICE

# Policies and Procedures Manual



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GED®



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## Preface

### Overview

All persons involved in administering the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests) or any portion of the GED Testing Program are required by the terms of the GED annual contract to carry out the policies and procedures set forth in this *GED Testing Service Policies and Procedures Manual*.

Questions, comments, or suggestions concerning this *GED Testing Service Policies and Procedures Manual* should be directed to Partner Outreach Unit, GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036.

### Introduction

The proper administration, supervision, and integrity of the GED Testing Program are joint responsibilities of participating jurisdictional departments or ministries of education, other contracting agencies, and the GED Testing Service (GEDTS). In the case of U.S. federal correctional facilities and military installations, the GED Testing Program is the joint responsibility of the federal agency and GEDTS. Adherence to the policies and procedures established by GEDTS in concert with participating jurisdictions is vital to a successful testing program.

The GED Testing Service endorses and abides by the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement. The GED Testing Service joins NCME in encouraging other organizations and individuals to uphold the principles of the NCME Code that are relevant to those aspects of their professions that relate to the GED Testing Program. A copy of the NCME Code may be viewed on the Internet at [www.natd.org/Code\\_of\\_Professional\\_Responsibilities.html](http://www.natd.org/Code_of_Professional_Responsibilities.html).

### Statement of Purpose

The Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests) are developed by the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education (ACE). The GED Tests are normed using a national sample of graduating high school seniors. The tests are designed to provide an opportunity for adults who have not graduated from high school to earn their jurisdictions' high school-level educational diploma/certificate by measuring the major academic skills and knowledge associated with a high school program of study.



## History of the GED Tests and the GED Testing Program

The first GED Tests were developed in 1942 to measure the major outcomes and concepts generally associated with four years of high school education. Initiated by the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI), the original tests were administered only to military personnel so that returning World War II veterans could more easily pursue their educational, vocational, and personal goals.

The USAFI examination staff, composed of civilian testing experts, worked with an advisory committee established with the support and cooperation of the American Council on Education, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and regional U.S. accrediting associations.

The opportunity to document the attainment of high school–level academic skills served as a significant aid to the many servicemembers whose academic careers had been disrupted during the war. During the 1950s, it became apparent that civilians could also benefit from the program—a need that ACE undertook to fulfill. Civilians were first allowed to take the GED Tests in 1952. From 1945 to 1963, the program was administered by the Veterans’ Testing Service. In 1963, in recognition of the transition to a program chiefly for nonveteran adults, the name was changed to the GED Testing Service.

Since that time, the GED Testing Service has guided and directed a program that has served as many as 1 million candidates annually at more than 3,200 Official GED Testing Centers. Testing is also provided for military personnel stationed overseas, for persons confined in correctional and health institutions, and for U.S. civilians and foreign nationals overseas.

The acceptance of the GED Tests as a valid means of awarding a high school equivalency diploma/certificate is fundamental to the success of the GED Testing Program. All 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, eight U.S. insular areas, 10 Canadian provinces, and three Canadian territories use scores earned on the GED Tests as a basis for awarding high school equivalency credentials. Recent national surveys confirm that most U.S. employers and training programs treat the GED credential in the same manner as a traditional high school diploma. In addition, most U.S. colleges and universities accept reports of GED test results as being the same as high school transcripts for admissions purposes.

For more than 60 years, the GED Tests have provided a means to obtain personal satisfaction, as well as to realize educational and occupational opportunities, for millions of adults who, for many reasons, did not complete their formal high school studies. The GED Testing Program provides high-quality tests and promotes accessible testing services to individuals who may benefit from high school equivalency diplomas/certificates awarded by participating jurisdictions in the United States, Canada, and U.S. insular areas.



The GED Tests are available in standard print forms in U.S. and Canadian English-language editions, in Spanish-language editions, and in French-language editions. The English-, Spanish-, and French-language GED Tests are available in large-print and audiocassette editions. The English- and Spanish-language GED Tests are available in Braille editions.

## GEDTS Advisory Board

The executive director of the GED Testing Service is authorized to appoint a GEDTS Advisory Board, broadly representative of adult and secondary education, research, disability advocacy, correctional education programs, military recruitment, and test development. The Board shall meet to review the nature of the GED Tests and to provide guidance to GEDTS staff in conducting its activities. Membership will be on the basis of rotating three-year terms.

## GED Testing Program Policies

In addition to the policies and procedures described in Sections 1 through 9 of this manual that guide the administration and operation of GED testing programs and testing centers, the following six policies broadly define the expectations for all GED Testing Program personnel.

**POLICY:** GED testing programs shall be conducted in accordance with (1) all policies and procedures as developed by the GED Testing Service contained in this manual and (2) policies and procedures established by the respective jurisdictional agency responsible for administering the GED Testing Program. Jurisdictional policies and procedures may in no way undermine, nor in any way be used to circumvent GEDTS policies and procedures. The GED Testing Service has the authority to suspend GED Testing Program operations in a jurisdiction, disestablish the jurisdictional GED Testing Program, or close local testing centers temporarily or permanently if violations of the annual contract are not readily resolved.

**POLICY:** It is the responsibility of the staff of the GED Testing Service to review the existing procedures and policies at least annually and to recommend to the executive director changes and new policies, as needed or as required. It is also the responsibility of the GEDTS staff to interpret policies and to develop procedures for implementing them.

**POLICY:** Written authorization to use the GED Tests for any purpose not described in the **Statement of Purpose** must be obtained in advance from the GED Testing Service. Misuses of the tests include but are not limited to their use (1) for the purposes of grade placement or promotion; (2) as measures of student progress in instructional programs; (3) as a means of awarding academic credit (e.g., Carnegie units); or (4) as a means of awarding alternative credentials to currently enrolled high school students.



**POLICY:** Since GED is a registered trademark of the American Council on Education (ACE), all jurisdictional staff involved in GED testing and staff at an official GED testing center shall comply with all **GED Trademark Usage Guidelines**.

**POLICY ON RESPONSIBILITIES OF GED EXAMINEES and OWNERSHIP OF TESTS, SCORES, and OTHER DATA:** The American Council on Education (ACE) is the sole owner of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests) and the responses to those tests, including all test questions, essay prompts, and essays. The GED Tests are not the property of the examinee. The test questions and essay prompts administered at testing centers are the valuable, copyrighted property of ACE. As a condition of testing, an examinee agrees to maintain the confidentiality of all test questions and essay prompts administered to him or her. An examinee may not receive any unauthorized assistance while taking the GED Tests. An examinee may not discuss specific test items or essay prompts with anyone other than the GED Examiner. An examinee must return all testing items to the GED Examiner at the conclusion of testing.

A disclosure of test questions in any form by any means in violation of this confidentiality agreement undermines the integrity and security of the GED Tests and is strictly prohibited. Any unauthorized access, reproduction, distribution, or disclosure of test questions by an examinee before, during, or after taking the GED Tests is a violation of U.S. and international intellectual property laws and treaties. Available remedies will be pursued by ACE as appropriate, which may include criminal prosecution, a civil lawsuit seeking damages, and/or canceling or invalidating the examinee's test scores and notifying entities that have received the examinee's test scores.

In addition, a number of third parties perform services relating to the GED Testing Program. These third parties provide the GED Testing Service, a program of ACE, with information from or about examinees that is collected on forms that are prepared by ACE or the GED Testing Service, or on modified versions of those forms. The information includes, but is not limited to, candidate demographic details, test scores, accommodation requests, and GED Option testing authorizations. This information is also owned by the GED Testing Service, as it is reflected in the GED Testing Service records.

ACE reserves the right to update, change, and amend ownership policies at any time.



**POLICY ON PRIVACY:** The GED Testing Service (GEDTS), a program of the American Council on Education, recognizes the privacy interests of GED examinees. GEDTS is committed to respecting that privacy and keeping examinees informed about our data privacy policies.

Except as set forth below, the personally identifiable information an examinee provides when registering for the GED Tests is not made available to third parties without the examinee's permission. An examinee's personally identifiable information includes his or her name, address, identification number, date of birth, test dates, and test scores.

- 1. Research.** GEDTS and third parties authorized by GEDTS may access and use examinee data for research purposes, including research directed toward improving or reporting on the effectiveness of the GED Testing Program. Any such access to examinee information will be subject to a confidentiality requirement that prohibits the disclosure or publication of any information that allows individual examinees to be identified. Unless an examinee has indicated otherwise on the demographics form, GEDTS may contact an examinee to determine whether he or she is willing to participate in surveys that also are intended to improve or report on the effectiveness of the GED Testing Program.
- 2. Legal Proceedings.** GEDTS may disclose and provide access to personally identifiable examinee information in response to a subpoena or other order in a judicial or other governmental proceeding, or as otherwise required by law. To ensure test security, GEDTS may also disclose and provide access to personally identifiable information in order to detect, investigate, or prevent fraud or other unlawful activity or violations of GEDTS testing policies.

GEDTS has established safeguards to help prevent unauthorized access to or misuse of the examinees' personal information maintained by GEDTS, but cannot guarantee that examinees' personally identifiable information will never be disclosed in a manner inconsistent with this data privacy policy (for example, as a result of unauthorized acts by parties that violate applicable law or relevant web policies).



# GED Testing Program Staff: Qualifications, Selection or Replacement, Training, and Responsibilities

## Overview

The GED Testing Program is sponsored jointly by the GED Testing Service (a division of the not-for-profit American Council on Education) and state, provincial, or territorial departments or ministries of education, or other jurisdictional agencies. The chief administrative officer at each respective jurisdiction designates a GED Administrator who is directly responsible for the operation, management, and secure administration of the GED Testing Program throughout the jurisdiction. GED Chief Examiners, GED Examiners, and GED Proctors are appointed locally with approval of the GED Administrator and GED Testing Service. Working together, this group of local, jurisdictional, and GEDTS staff form the GED Testing Program and help nearly 500,000 individuals each year earn a high school equivalency credential.

## 1.1 Qualifications of the GED Administrator

**POLICY: Chief administrative officers of state, provincial, or territorial agencies participating in the GED Testing Program shall appoint a qualified individual to administer and oversee all aspects of GED testing in his or her respective jurisdiction.**

New GED Administrators are professional and experienced educators who must hold a master's degree and have experience in adult education, educational administration, testing, or counseling, and who must be knowledgeable about the GED Testing Program or educational testing and measurement.

GED Administrators should be full-time employees charged with responsibility for the GED Testing Program. Each GED Administrator must have the authority to enter into contracts that pertain to the GED Testing Program on behalf of the jurisdiction.

## 1.2 Selection or Replacement of a Jurisdiction's GED Administrator

The GED Administrator is a jurisdiction's authorized liaison with the GED Testing Service. The chief administrative officer of the participating jurisdictional agency shall formally notify the GED Testing Service of the appointment and the effective appointment date of the GED Administrator in an original letter on the appropriate jurisdictional letterhead.



When it becomes necessary to appoint a temporary or acting GED Administrator, the jurisdiction must notify the GED Testing Service within one business day of the appointment and the expected length of time of the temporary or acting appointment.

Failure to appoint a replacement or acting GED Administrator may require the temporary suspension of GED Testing in the jurisdiction until an appointment is made.

### 1.3 Training of the GED Administrator

New GED Administrators will receive training from the GED Testing Service. Training will begin within four weeks after the GED Testing Service is notified of the appointment.

### 1.4 Responsibilities of the GED Administrator

The GED Administrator is responsible for policy implementation, administration of the program, and supervision of all official GED testing centers within the jurisdiction. The GED Administrator is the person with whom the GED Testing Service has regular and direct contact regarding policies, procedures, and issues. The GED Testing Service relies upon the GED Administrator to ensure that all official GED testing centers in the jurisdiction conform to GED Testing Service policies and procedures, as well as to any jurisdictional or local requirements.

The GED Administrator's specific duties are as follows:

#### 1.4-1 Administration

The GED Administrator shall:

- A) Administer the GED Testing Program within the jurisdiction in conformity with the *GED Testing Service Policies and Procedures Manual*.
- B) Approve locations for official GED testing centers.
- C) Approve the appointment of GED Chief Examiners, GED Examiners, and GED Proctors.
- D) Coordinate all jurisdictional contracts.
- E) Monitor contracts and orders of secure testing materials placed by official GED testing centers.
- F) Contract with an official scoring site for electronic and essay scoring for the jurisdiction.
- G) Ensure the maintenance of accurate and complete GED candidate records.
- H) Develop test administration cost information to support a reasonable and equitable testing fee.



- I) Monitor jurisdictional GED testing centers, to include test administration, record keeping, and storage of secure materials, through regular site visits.
- J) Assist GEDTS in contacting testing centers to ensure prompt payment of all invoices.
- K) Assist GEDTS in contacting testing centers to ensure prompt return of materials at the end of each contract year.
- L) Ensure that testing centers adhere to all applicable GEDTS policies and procedures as well as state laws and regulations governing GED testing.
- M) Provide GEDTS-approved examiner training.<sup>1</sup>
- N) Ensure timely review of requests for testing accommodations.
- O) Assist in joint research activities with the GED Testing Service.
- P) Administer the test two times a year.

### 1.4-2 Outreach

The GED Administrator shall:

- A) Develop a marketing and publicity plan and cooperate with the GED Testing Service in national public relations activities.
- B) Ensure accessibility to GED testing for all populations.
- C) Serve as liaison with adult education instructional programs in order to keep teachers informed of developments in the GED Testing Program.
- D) Promote cooperative programs with adult education to provide graduation and scholarship programs for GED graduates.
- E) Develop cooperative links with higher education and the workplace to promote accessibility for GED graduates.
- F) Promote the Employers of Choice national recognition program.

### 1.4-3 Staff Development

The GED Administrator shall:

- A) Hold annual meetings of all GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners within the jurisdiction.
- B) Provide training for all newly appointed GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners prior to their first test administrations.
- C) Provide ongoing staff development.

<sup>1</sup> GED Administrators are not required to be directly involved in all examiner training. However, the GED Administrator must ensure that GEDTS-approved training is provided.



### 1.4-4 Test Security

The GED Administrator shall:

- A) Inspect each official GED testing center before it is established and before approving a change of location.
- B) Approve and review contracts with official GED scoring sites.
- C) Review emergency plans and written receiving plans annually for each official GED testing center in the jurisdiction.
- D) Monitor one-fourth of test centers annually.
- E) Close official GED testing center(s) or cancel contracts with official GED scoring site(s) when a violation of security procedures occurs and whenever circumstances warrant such action.
- F) Oversee investigations of security violations appropriately, including onsite visits whenever feasible.
- G) Participate in GEDTS audits of official GED testing centers, electronic scoring sites, and essay scoring sites.

### 1.4-5 Attendance at National Meetings

Each GED Administrator is mandated to attend the annual GED Administrators' conference sponsored by the GED Testing Service as outlined in the *Memorandum of Understanding* between GEDTS and each jurisdictional agency. The GED Testing Service provides a subsidy to each administrator to cover a major portion of the travel expenses incurred in attending this conference. The GED Administrator may designate an authorized representative to attend the national conference in his or her place by notifying the GED Testing Service.

## 1.5 Staff Required for an Official GED Testing Center

The official GED testing center staff consists of the following: GED Chief Examiner, GED Examiner(s), and GED Proctor(s). The selection of staff members to operate an official GED testing center is essential to the integrity of the GED Testing Program. Access to GED Tests is limited exclusively to GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners, or GED Proctors under the direct supervision of a GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner. Any teacher involved in GED preparation classes cannot be a GED Chief Examiner, GED Examiner, or a GED Proctor.

**POLICY: Persons instructing potential candidates for the GED Tests, particularly as teachers in Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Literacy, GED instruction, secondary education programs, adult secondary education programs, and alternative high school education programs, and developmental education staff cannot be appointed as GED**



**Chief Examiners, GED Examiners, or GED Proctors, or otherwise have any access to any secure GED testing materials. Any exception must be approved by GEDTS.**

In some jurisdictions, support staff is used to register students and assist with test site/room preparation. In such cases, these staff should receive training as GED Proctors and be identified as such. Under no circumstances should these staff be allowed to handle testing materials without direct supervision of a GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner.

## 1.6 Appointing Staff Members for an Official GED Testing Center

The chief administrative officer for each agency or institution that hosts an official GED testing center (e.g., the superintendent of the school district or the president or dean of the college where the official GED testing center is located) signs the annual contract and is responsible for selecting the GED Chief Examiner.

Official GED testing center staff members are employees of the agency or the institution that hires them, not of the GED Testing Service. Their compensation, conduct, and supervision are, therefore, the exclusive responsibility of the hiring agency or institution.

## 1.7 Educational Requirements for GED Chief Examiners, GED Examiners, and GED Proctors

### 1.7-1 Requirements for GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners

**POLICY: GED Chief Examiners must hold at least a bachelor's degree from a nationally accredited college or university and shall have experience in teaching, training, counseling, or testing. GED Examiners must have a bachelor's degree from a nationally accredited college or university and experience in teaching, training, counseling, or testing; at least an associate degree from a nationally accredited college or university and three years of experience in teaching, training, counseling, or testing; or college-level coursework and experience as a testing proctor at the discretion of the jurisdictional GED Administrator.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> The GED Administrator must verify the qualifications of each GED Chief Examiner and GED Examiner. Newly appointed GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners shall receive in-service training and shall serve under either an experienced GED Chief Examiner or the GED Administrator during at least two full GED testing sessions before assuming duties as GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner.



### 1.7-2 Training Requirements for GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners

**POLICY:** Jurisdictional agencies shall ensure the provision of (1) training for all new GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners prior to their first test administration sessions, and (2) at least one annual training session for all GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners.

### 1.7-3 Requirements for GED Proctors

**POLICY:** GED Proctors shall have a high school diploma or GED diploma/certificate. GED Proctors are selected by the GED Chief Examiner and must be approved by the state administrator. GED Proctors are not permitted to conduct a testing session under any circumstances. GED Proctors may not substitute for GED Examiners. GED Proctors shall always work under the direct, constant supervision of a GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner.

### 1.7-4 Training Requirements for GED Proctors

**POLICY:** GED Chief Examiners shall provide training sessions for all GED Proctors prior to any assistance during test administration.

## 1.8 Responsibilities of GED Chief Examiners, GED Examiners, and GED Proctors

It is important that each GED Chief Examiner, GED Examiner, and GED Proctor understands his or her role specific to the GED Testing Program.

### 1.8-1 General Responsibilities of GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners

GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners shall:

- A) Comply with all jurisdictional policies and procedures.
- B) Manage and oversee a high-quality testing program that ensures access for all qualified candidates and ensures the integrity of the GED Tests and their administration.
- C) Maintain the overall quality of the testing program at official GED testing centers.
- D) Ensure that all staff members under their supervision comply with the contractual obligation to follow the policies of the *GED Testing Service Policies and Procedures Manual*.
- E) Respond to the needs of the community and comply with all applicable legal requirements relating to the activities of official GED testing centers.



## 1.8-2 Specific Responsibilities of GED Chief Examiners and GED Examiners

- A) At the beginning of each contract year, the GED Chief Examiner must:
1. Sign the GED Annual Contract (Form L-1) and the Test Security Memorandum, (Form L-27) and obtain the signatures of the chief administrative officer and the GED Examiner(s).
  2. Place an accurate order and arrange for prompt payment for all testing materials.
  3. Create and implement a written receiving plan for secure testing materials and train all official GED testing center staff members to follow the plan. The plan must include how to receive and store secure materials if the GED Chief Examiner or GED Examiner is not present when materials arrive.
  4. Upon receipt from the GED Testing Service, immediately inventory and place into secure storage all secure testing materials within one business day.
  5. Develop a written, GED-specific emergency plan (see Section 3.11 of this manual), and train all official GED testing center staff members to follow the plan.
- B) During test administrations, the GED Chief Examiner or Examiner must:
1. Verify the identity and eligibility of each GED candidate.
  2. Maintain testing surveillance logs, seating charts, and other documentation as required.
  3. Maintain the security of all GED testing materials.
  4. Prepare a written inventory of all secure testing materials used during each test administration and maintain the inventory documentation in the permanent secure storage area.
  5. Conduct testing sessions in accordance with GEDTS policies and procedures as set forth in this *GED Testing Service Policies and Procedures Manual* and in any supplemental memorandums from the GED Testing Service.
  6. Control testing sessions by following all GED Testing Service policies and procedures for conducting a testing session under standard conditions or, when appropriate, with accommodations for candidates with disabilities. (See Sections 5 and 8 of this manual.)
- C) Throughout the contract year, the GED Chief Examiner must:
1. Select, train, and monitor GED Examiners and GED Proctors.
  2. Administer complete battery of GED Tests no fewer than four (4) times each year, unless the official GED testing center administers GED Tests fewer than four times per year.
  3. Inventory and check the condition of all secure testing materials when received from the GED Testing Service; prepare a written inventory at the beginning and end of each testing session and on a monthly basis when the tests are not in use.















































































































































