



# Accommodations for the Stanford 9



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## Acknowledgements

### **Customers and Participants in the Accommodations and Reporting Consortium of Stanford 9**

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*NOTE: This report was originally written in October 1999 and became Pearson policy for the majority of state customers using the Stanford 9. The underlying research and data review establishing the policy was conducted by the Pearson Consortium of State Stanford 9 Users and by Pearson staff. It appeared first in the South Dakota Directions for Administering (DFA) and has since appeared in DFAs for other state programs.*

## Background

For more than 25 years, federal law has guaranteed a free and appropriate public education to children with disabilities. In 1994, the United States Congress included limited English proficient (LEP) students in state and district testing (Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1994 [ESEA]). In 1997, the U.S. Congress strengthened its commitment by reauthorizing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). More recently, the reauthorization of the ESEA by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires that both populations be provided accommodations where appropriate.

## Defining Accommodations

Accommodations, according to Tindal and Fuchs (1999), “are changes in standardized assessment conditions introduced to ‘level the playing field’ for students by removing the construct-irrelevant variance created by their disabilities. Valid accommodations produce scores for students with disabilities that measure the same attributes as standard assessments measured in nondisabled individuals.” (p. 7).

Pearson uses the accommodations taxonomy listed below, which was developed by the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO), University of Minnesota.

<b>Timing</b>	Changes to the amount of time allowed for testing (e.g., extended time), breaks between subtests, and frequent breaks.
<b>Scheduling</b>	Changes to when the assessment is given
<b>Setting/Administration</b>	Changes to where the assessment is given
<b>Presentation Format</b>	Changes to how the assessment is given
<b>Response Format</b>	Changes to how a student responds to the assessment
<b>Other</b>	Use of dictionaries/word lists/glossaries

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It is important to note that in the recent evolution of assessment terminology in psychometrics, the use of “accommodations” defines changes in format, response, setting, timing, or scheduling that do not alter in any significant way what the test measures or the comparability of scores (Phillips, 1993). In contrast, “modifications” refers to changes in the assessment that alter what the test is supposed to measure or the comparability of scores (e.g., Braille in some accountability systems) (Phillips, 1993).

IDEA uses the terms “accommodations” and “modifications in administration” interchangeably. It uses the terms “adaptations,” “individual modifications” and “necessary accommodations” as well. Many states use these terms interchangeably. NCLB uses the term “accommodations” (Elliott, 2001; Bielinski & Ysseldyke, 2000; Koretz & Hamilton, 1999; NCEO, April 2001; Thurlow, Elliott & Ysseldyke, 1998).

### An Empirical Basis for Defining Accommodations

In addition to developing a taxonomy of accommodations, Pearson has utilized Tindal’s (Tindal & Fuchs, 1999) classification of research approaches to examine the validity of test accommodations. The approaches are classified as descriptive, comparative, or experimental.

**Descriptive Approach.** With a descriptive approach, accommodations are analyzed logically to consider the disability along with the characteristic of the assessment. According to Tindal and Fuchs (1999), large print is considered to be valid for a student with visual disabilities because it allows access to printed information and lets the student demonstrate what he or she knows by preserving the meaningfulness of the measured content (p. 9).

**Comparative Approach.** With this approach, extant databases are analyzed to gain insight into how accommodations may affect students with disabilities. Koretz (1997) and Koretz and Hamilton (1999) utilized this approach. Both studies indicated that accommodations, at times, overestimated the academic competence of students with disabilities (Tindal & Fuchs, 1999, p. 10). Pearson has utilized this method of data review. While the methodology permits interesting insights into the affects of accommodations, the approach often leaves important questions about validity of specific accommodations unanswered.

**Experimental Approach.** In this approach, the effects of accommodations are examined with controlled research designs, which examine effects for students with and without disabilities, with and without accommodations (Tindal & Fuchs, 1999). Pearson reviewed the studies reported in Tindal and Fuchs (1999), Elliott (2001), Koretz and Hamilton (1999), and Thurlow, Elliott, and Ysseldyke (1998). In addition, Pearson is in the process of developing and conducting similar studies.

### Pearson’s Policy on Accommodations

As shown in the following tables, students with disabilities (Table 1) and limited English proficient students (Table 2) using accommodations marked under “standard administration” can receive norm-referenced scores that are considered to be valid and can be aggregated with those of other students. Those using non-standard administrations receive special score reports, and scores are disaggregated from other students.

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**Table 1.** Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.

Accommodation	Standard Administration	Non-standard Administration
<b>Timing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breaks between subtests</li> <li>• More frequent breaks</li> <li>• Multiple test sessions over several days</li> <li>• Extended time</li> </ul>	x x x	x
<b>Scheduling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time of day</li> <li>• Pacing</li> </ul>	x	x
<b>Setting/Administration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group</li> <li>• Individual setting</li> <li>• Learning/study carrels</li> <li>• Environmental modifications: special lighting, adaptive or special furniture, location with minimal distractions, noise buffers, preferential seating, hospital/home administered</li> </ul>	x x x x	
<b>Presentation Format</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Large print (18 point text)</li> <li>• Interpreting test items (signing, cued speech)</li> <li>• Audiocassette</li> <li>• Repeating directions</li> <li>• Simplification of directions</li> <li>• Interpreting directions (via signing, cued speech)</li> <li>• Secure papers to work area with tape/magnets</li> <li>• Provide cues (e.g., arrows and stop signs) on answer form</li> </ul>	x x x x x x x x	x x x x
<b>Response Format</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual aids: templates, masks, or markers</li> <li>• Amplification equipment (hearing aid, auditory trainer)</li> <li>• Large diameter pencil, pencil grip, special pencil or pen</li> <li>• Braille and then transcribed by scribe</li> <li>• Tape record responses for later verbatim translation</li> </ul>	x x x	x x
<b>Other</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistive or augmentative technology</li> </ul>	Varies	Varies

**Accommodations for the Stanford 9****Table 2.** Accommodations for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students.

Accommodation	Standard Administration	Non-standard Administration
<b>Scheduling</b> • Extra time		x
<b>Setting/Administration</b> • Bilingual dictionary (dictionaries with no definitions) • Separate room • Answer queries as described in manual • Small group setting	 x x x	 x
<b>Response Format</b> • Mark in booklet (teacher/aide transcribes to an answer sheet)	x	
<b>Translations</b> • Written, directions only • Oral, directions only • Words defined	 x x	  x

Pearson recognizes that some students with disabilities or LEP students require the use of accommodations when our assessments are administered. Often, the conditions under which the test was standardized differ from those present when accommodations are used. These differences, in some cases, reach a level sufficient to jeopardize the validity of interpretations. However, based on available evidence, most of the accommodations listed in the tables above are considered to be “incidental to the construct intended to be measured by the test” (American Educational Research Association, 1999, p. 101).

### Available Related Topics in this Series

Case, B. (2003). *Accommodations on Stanford 10 for students with disabilities*. San Antonio, TX: Pearson Educational Measurement.

Case, B. (2003). *Accommodations on Stanford 10 for limited English proficient (LEP) students*. San Antonio, TX: Pearson Educational Measurement.

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