



Nonstandardized Assessment Administrative Manual

Diploma-Track
Alternative Assessment Program



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Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

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Alternative Assessment Program

The Alaska Nonstandardized Assessment Manual

The Nonstandardized Assessment Overview

The Nonstandardized HSGQE is an extensive collection of work prepared by the student that reflects competency in each of the state standards assessed on the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE). The Nonstandardized HSGQE is available only to disabled students who qualify under the requirements of the department's *Participation Guidelines* for Alaska students. The student and IEP or 504 team must document in the IEP a commitment to this alternative by February 1 of the student's junior year, or upon enrollment in the state if the student enrolls after February 1 of the student's junior year. An IEP or 504 team must file the Nonstandardized HSGQE application for approval no later than September 30, of the school year in which the student expects to graduate. The process for administering the Nonstandardized HSGQE is also described in the *Participation Guidelines*. The *Participation Guidelines* are available upon request from the department or on line at www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/modified.html All Nonstandardized HSGQEs submitted will be scored by a jury of experts under the scoring guidelines.

Nonstandardized Criteria

The Nonstandardized HSGQE is available only to disabled students who

- are working at or near grade level; and
- have taken but are not proficient on the HSGQE; and
- have a documented history of being unable to demonstrate proficiency on a standardized assessment because of one or more of the following conditions:
 - the student has a severe emotional or behavioral impairment or a pervasive developmental or other disability that causes the student to be unable to maintain sufficient concentration to participate in standard testing, even with accommodations or appropriate modifications; or
 - the student cannot cope with the demands of a prolonged test administration because of multiple physical disabilities, severe health-related disabilities, or a neurological disorder; or
 - the student has a significant motor or communication disability that causes the student to need more time than is reasonable or available for testing, even with the allowance of extended time.

General Requirements

In order to earn a level of proficiency, a student must submit a Nonstandardized HSGQE that:

1. demonstrates competency in each state standard tested on the HSGQE; and
2. reflects performance levels of proficiency as measured by a passing score on the HSGQE; and
3. documents the student has independently addressed required performance standards and descriptors in the subject being assessed as described in each area explained in this guide; and

4. prepares separate portfolios for each content area. The state will provide the needed containers for the portfolio(s). These will be mailed to the requesting teacher once the Nonstandardized application is approved.

The collection of work that constitutes the Nonstandardized HSGQE must be submitted to the department by March 15. Results of the Nonstandardized HSGQE will be available by May 15, except for seniors, which will be available by May 1. A portfolio may include evidence produced over a period of more than a single school year, beginning no earlier than grade ten. Evidence may be added to an existing collection, or replaced with higher quality work and resubmitted until a student reaches a score of proficiency.

Components of the Nonstandardized Assessment

The student's reading, math, or writing Nonstandardized HSGQE must be submitted in a portfolio format and in triplicate (one copy for each juror). When submitting tapes, projects, and the like, it will not be necessary to duplicate those items. However, it is necessary to mark one of the three copies as the **master portfolio** indicating it will contain the tapes, projects, and the like. Each portfolio copy must include the following items:

- a Portfolio Cover Sheet (Resource Guide) containing required information about the student being assessed. This is the first page within the portfolio;
- two Verification of Evidence Forms (Resource Guide) signed by content-specific teachers from the district, claiming that all conditions have been met and the Nonstandardized HSGQE can be forwarded to the department for review by a state jury;
- student's transcript and current semester-course schedule;
- a table of contents listing the materials included in the collection of work; and
- all pages numbered;
- an Evidence Cover Sheet (Resource Guide) attached to each sample of evidence that documents the performance standards and descriptors to be evaluated; and
- samples of evidence addressing all performance standards. Each sample must include the following information:
 - student's name
 - date of completion
 - original assignment or student instructions for each piece of evidence
 - teacher evaluation of evidence (rubric and/or feedback)
 - (optional) samples are coded in the margins highlighting evidence of standards and descriptors (i.e. R1a or W2b)

Performance Standard and Descriptor Tables

The following "Requirements in Each Content Area" includes a table for each performance standard and proficiency descriptor in reading, writing, and mathematics. These standards and descriptors indicate what a proficient student must demonstrate through the evidence submitted in the portfolio. Suggested scoring guides for each content area are located in the Resource Guide. The Resource Guide is located at the department's website <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/modified.html>.

Guidelines for Creating High-Quality Portfolio Products

Portfolios are an effective way to bring assessment into harmony with instructional goals and performance standards. A student will fare better in this process if the teacher aligns assignments to the standards and assesses assigned work using the scoring guides located in the Resource Guide. These guides lend themselves to the performance standards and will assist in evaluating the descriptors. It is important to note, these are only suggested scoring guides to use in the regular classroom and were not created for the Nonstandardized Assessment. However, they do offer a language and format, which might assist when addressing the performance standards and descriptors. If a rubric created by a teacher is used, it must reflect the language of the performance standards and descriptors.

When selecting items for the portfolio, consider a range of media, strategies, and approaches which document student understanding. High-quality work is accomplished when the student embraces rich subject matter and participates in activities that require decision-making, multiple steps, and completion of open-ended questions. This type of data provides clear, detailed, and effective evidence. Portfolios that consist primarily of worksheets, quizzes and the similar type, may not provide depth or a comprehensive picture of the targeted standard.

Portfolio products must be, to the maximum extent possible, the original work of the student. Work that demands little effort of the student or is produced by others shows little understanding and minimal knowledge. The intent of the portfolio is to measure the student's understanding of the performance standards' criteria through evidence of in-depth and rich samples of learning.

Requirements in Each Content Area

Reading

- A total of up to six samples responding to the following reading genres: narrative (i.e., classic or contemporary), expository (i.e., magazine, newspaper, online), technical (i.e., instructional/procedural manual), informational material (i.e., autobiography, biography, reference works), and two student choices. The **combination** of these must address all of the reading performance standards plus each descriptor at least once (see following table). Copies of short stories should be included to aid the jury.
- The samples must be of a length adequate to assess the standards.
- Reading material must be at 8th grade or higher. Evidence must also include **non-fiction and fiction** samples based on high-school literature. **Important:** Reading material that is also published as cinematic form will not be accepted.
- Each sample must include the assignment and scoring rubric that identifies the performance standards addressed. Teachers may benefit from using the suggested classroom scoring guides in the Resource Guide to support learning.
- The rubric must reflect the overall assessment. Do not submit work that is not proficient at the local level.
- It may be beneficial to attach all drafts, which led to the final proficient assignment. These drafts should reflect teacher feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Some samples may be created in other content areas in addition to literature class (i.e., vocational courses, writing, math, or any other courses offered in your school that require reading skills and address the standards). Suggested formats of evidence might include but not limited to: written essays, cloze exams, video/DVD projects, interviews, PowerPoint presentations, letters to editors, Socratic seminars, debate participation, tape/CD recordings, web design, or visual arts (murals, collages, photographs), etc.

Do not include worksheets, short answer tests, quizzes, or other evidence that demonstrates a student’s ability to summarize and/or recall information. Provide only evidence that demonstrates in-depth, student-generated thinking that addresses specific reading standards. Cloze exams, applications, charts, forms, graphs, etc. are acceptable provided they demonstrate the latter. Contact the alternative program manager at EED with any questions or clarifications in this area.

Reading Performance Standard and Descriptor Table

Performance Standard	Performance Descriptors
R4.1 Use of Context Clues	A proficient student: a) uses context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words within a text.
R4.2 Summarize Information; Make Connections	A proficient student: a) summarizes events presented in a passage. b) determines and describes an author’s position and/or viewpoint and applies it to a hypothetical situation. c) identifies relevant details and main ideas in a passage or parts of a passage. d) summarizes technical information from a set of directions into a chart. e) determines the purpose of a text. f) infers connections between ideas and events. g) interprets charts, graphs, tables, and illustrations. h) interprets information and applies it to new situations.
R4.3 Support Main Idea; Critique Arguments	A proficient student: a) locates supporting evidence in text. b) sorts and categorizes information. c) applies information from a text. d) uses evidence to determine and support key ideas. e) describes the purpose behind language in an advertisement. f) differentiates between arguments based on opinions and arguments based on facts.
R4.4 Read and Apply Multi-Step Directions	A proficient student: a) follows multi-step directions to complete a task. b) determines and explains the reasons for using specific methods to complete a task. c) identifies and sequences information from a variety of sources. d) locates specific information from multi-step directions from one or more sources. e) uses information from a chart to fill out a form.

Performance Standard	Performance Descriptors
R4.7 Make and Support Assertions	A proficient student: a) identifies clear assertions (statements, opinions, or interpretations). b) identifies evidence and details from a text to support assertions.
R4.8 Analyze and Evaluate Themes	A proficient student: a) analyzes the themes of reading passages. b) identifies and interprets details that support the theme. c) compares and contrasts information and ideas in a text.

Note: A reading portfolio may include evidence produced over a period of more than a single school year, beginning no earlier than grade ten. Evidence may be added to an existing collection, or replaced with higher quality work, and resubmitted until a student reaches a score of proficiency.

Scoring for Reading

The reading portfolio requires up to six samples of evidence (narrative, expository, technical, informational material, and one student choice). The **combination** of all six pieces will address the performance standards more than once and each descriptor no less than once. A juror using the Nonstandardized Reading Holistic Scoring Guide assesses the portfolio as a whole. In order for the student to be rated proficient, two out of the three jurors must rate the entire portfolio proficient. The jury will be comprised of three content experts within the state and, when necessary, a disability expert for consultation.

Writing

- A total of up to six samples addressing each of the following writing genres: narrative, persuasive, informative, descriptive, and two student choices. The **combination** of these must address all of the writing performance standards plus each descriptor at least once (see following table). By attaching the drafts, all performance standards will be addressed.
- Each sample must include the assignment and scoring rubric that identifies the performance standards addressed. Teachers may benefit from using the suggested classroom scoring guides in the Resource Guide to support learning.
- The samples must be of a length adequate to assess the standards.
- The rubric must reflect the overall assessment. Do not submit work that is not proficient at the local level.
- Essays need to include specific details:
 - multiple drafts of each sample that indicate a progression of the student's thinking in each successive draft. Each draft must be presented in chronological order; and
 - show independent edits by the student, with meaningful revisions incorporated into subsequent drafts. These drafts should reflect teacher feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Some samples may be created in other content areas (i.e., vocational courses, reading, math, or any other courses offered in your school that require writing skills and address the standards). Suggested formats of evidence might include but not limited to: Persuasive (i.e., argument, editorial), expository (across curriculum writing assignments – reading, science, health, social

studies), descriptive (i.e., biography, lab reports, field report, essays), narrative (i.e., memoir, autobiography).

Do not include worksheets, short answer tests, quizzes, or other evidence that demonstrates a student’s ability only to summarize and/or recall information. Provide evidence that demonstrates in-depth, student-generated thinking that addresses specific writing standards. Contact the alternative program manager at EED with any questions or clarifications in this area.

Writing Performance Standard and Descriptor Table

Performance Standard	Performance Descriptors
W4.1 Write Compositions W4.2 Demonstrate Elements of Discourse	A proficient student: a) writes narrative, informative, persuasive, and descriptive responses. b) states and defines a topic or position. c) uses reasonably clear details and support to explain ideas. d) uses a logical sequence of ideas. e) uses words that adequately convey meaning. f) uses some variation of sentence length and structure. g) uses spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar correctly for the most part and does not make errors that alter the meaning of the text.
W4.3 Use Conventional English	A proficient student: a) identifies and corrects sentence fragments and run-ons. b) uses correct capitalization in a variety of types of writing. c) identifies and corrects some errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar. d) identifies and corrects errors in verb tense consistency, subject-verb agreement, and regular and irregular verb usage. e) identifies and corrects errors in the usage of adverbs and adjectives. f) identifies simple sentences that are structured correctly and convey the intended meaning.
W4.4 Revise Writing	A proficient student: a) organizes a paragraph by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o eliminating sentences that are off-topic. o placing sentences in a logical order. o adding transitions. b) combines two or three simple sentences into a single sentence by using subordinate clauses or prepositional phrases. c) identifies a sentence with correct placement of subordinate clauses. d) adds supporting details to develop a topic. e) maintains meaning when revising writing.

Note: A writing portfolio may include evidence produced over a period of more than a single school year, beginning no earlier than grade ten. Evidence may be added to an existing collection, or replaced with higher quality work, and resubmitted until a student reaches a score of proficiency.

Scoring for Writing

The writing portfolio requires up to six samples of evidence (narrative, persuasive, informative, descriptive, and two student choices). The **combination** of all six pieces will address the performance standards more than once and each descriptor no less than once. A juror using the Nonstandardized Writing Holistic Scoring Guide assesses the portfolio as a whole. In order for the student to be rated proficient, two out of the three jurors must rate the

entire portfolio proficient. The jury will be comprised of three content experts within the state and, when necessary, a disability expert for consultation.

Mathematics

- Five or more samples of evidence for each standard, as described in the Mathematics Performance Standards and Descriptor Table below, must be included in the assessment and must address each of the descriptors at least once. No more than 35 samples are to be submitted. Some samples may be used for more than one standard.
- When appropriate, the sample must include a scoring rubric that identifies the performance standards addressed. The rubric must reflect the outcome of the assessment. Answer keys must be included.
- Only submit work that is proficient at the local level.
- Mathematical evidence needs to include additional details:
 - student’s thinking and problem solving (i.e., show all work).
 - evaluation assigned by the teacher (i.e., all work is graded).

Avoid drill and practice worksheets. This would include a repeated practice of a problem of the same type (i.e., ten problems adding integers). Some samples may be created in other content areas (i.e., vocational courses, science, business, or any other courses offered in your school that require math skills and address the standards). Contact the alternative program manager at EED with any questions or clarifications in this area.

Mathematics Performance Standards and Descriptor Table – updated 2009

Performance Standard	Performance Descriptors
M1 Numeration	A proficient student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reads, writes, models, and orders positive and negative numbers including fractions, decimals, percents, square roots, and numbers with simple exponents. b) converts between fractions, decimals, and percents. c) compares, orders, and uses data containing mixed units of measurement (hours and minutes, feet and inches, metric units). d) expresses numbers in scientific notation. e) applies basic order of operations and rules of divisibility.
M2 Measurement	A proficient student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) accurately measures and draws distances and angles using a ruler or protractor. b) estimates and converts measurements of length and weight within the same system or between systems (standard and metric). c) identifies the appropriate tool and /or unit of measure with which to measure objects. d) solves problems involving rate, distance, time, scale, and money. e) reads, writes, and uses money notation, determining possible combinations of coins and bills to equal given amounts; counts back change for any given situation.
M3 Estimation and Computation	A proficient student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) adds, subtracts, multiplies, and divides numbers in various forms: positive and negative numbers, fractions, decimals, and percents. b) solves multi-step problems using ratios and proportions. c) rounds numbers appropriately to solve problems. d) simplifies expressions involving simple exponents.

Performance Standard	Performance Descriptors
M4 Functions and Relationships	A proficient student: a) analyzes, extends, and applies visual, numeric, and geometric patterns. b) evaluates and simplifies algebraic expressions and equations. c) converts representation of data between graphs, tables, and linear equations. d) solves linear equations, simple inequalities, and systems of linear equations.
M5 Geometry	A proficient student: a) identifies and applies properties of angles, polygons, and lines (including parallel, perpendicular, and intersecting lines). b) uses formulas to calculate perimeters, circumferences, and areas. c) applies the properties of equality and proportionality to solve problems involving congruent or similar shapes.
M6 Statistics and Probability	A proficient student: a) selects and uses appropriate scales of graphs. b) reads data and predicts trends from tables, graphs, and charts. c) analyzes, interprets, and appropriately labels bar graphs, line graphs, and circle graphs to display data. d) determines the probability of an event. e) selects an appropriate sampling group.
M7 Problem Solving, Communication, Reasoning and Connections	A proficient student: a) uses appropriate symbols to justify solutions to mathematics problems. b) uses a variety of problem-solving strategies (guess-and-check, working backwards, diagrams, patterns, etc.). c) solves multi-step problems in real-world context.

*Note: A mathematics portfolio may include evidence produced over a period of more than a single school year, beginning no earlier than grade ten. Evidence may be added to an existing collection, or replaced with higher quality work, and resubmitted until a student reaches a proficient score.

Scoring for Mathematics

The math portfolio requires up to five samples of evidence for each performance standard. Each sample must address one or more of the standards. The **combination** of the five or more pieces will address the Mathematics Performance Standards more than once and descriptors no less than once. A juror using the Nonstandardized Mathematics Holistic Scoring Guide assesses the portfolio as a whole. In order for the student to be rated proficient, two out of the three jurors must rate the whole portfolio proficient. The jury will be comprised of three content experts within the state and, when necessary, a disability expert for consultation.

Timeline

A timeline for your convenience has been created. Target dates for gathering evidence may prove helpful in meeting the March 15, deadline. (A portfolio may include evidence produced over a period of more than a single school year.)

Winter

January: IEP OR 504 team convenes and determines whether the Nonstandardized HSGQE will be the required assessment. Deadline for commitment is February 1, of student's junior year.

Begin collecting samples for possible use.

Spring

May Review results of HSGQE - IEP or 504 team submits a Nonstandardized HSGQE application if needed. Deadline for Nonstandardized applications is September 30, of the student's expected graduating year.

Fall

September: Teachers and student organize folders by subject in which to store work samples, data, etc. Begin collecting samples.

October: Set up a calendar with target dates for collecting instructional data. Continue collecting student work samples.

Dec/Jan: Assess needs and review target dates.

February: Finish gathering evidence by the end of the month. Begin selecting and organizing portfolio products with student involvement.

March: Prepare required forms (table of contents, Evidence Cover Sheet) Finish organizing portfolio products. Complete two Verification of Evidence forms using the jury scoring guides. Make two copies of the final portfolio (three total; one for each juror). Identify the master portfolio (original copy).

March 15, deadline for mailing portfolio.

Procedures for Mailing the Portfolio

All boxes must be posted certified mail (mailing costs to be incurred by the district). Certified mail will ensure delivery and a tracking system will be in place if the portfolio is missing or questions about the mailing deadline.

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Note: all resubmitted portfolios are due on the same date, March 15. Contact the alternative program manager at EED for the details and procedures.

Glossary of Terms and Phrases used in Nonstandardized Assessment Administrative Manual

504 Plan - A legal document falling under the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is designed to plan a program of instructional services to assist students with special needs who are in a regular education setting. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Program (IEP) as is required for special education students.

Adaptation – Any device or change provided to a student for testing: “Adaptation” includes an accommodation or a modification.

Accommodation –A change in format, response, setting, timing, or scheduling that does not alter in any significant way what the test measures or the comparability of scores.

Alternative Assessment Program – The Modified HSGQE and the Nonstandardized HSGQE.

Cloze Procedure - a test for diagnosing reading ability; words are deleted from a prose passage and the reader is required to fill in the blanks [syn: cloze test].

Descriptor – A word or phrase used to identify and/or expand a performance standard.

EED – Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

Holistic Method – In assessment, assigning a single score based on an overall assessment of performance rather than by scoring or analyzing dimensions individually. The product is considered to be more than the sum of its parts and so the quality of a final product or performance is evaluated rather than the process or dimension of performance. A holistic scoring rubric might combine a number of elements on a single scale.

HSGQE – High School Graduation Qualifying Examination

IEP – Individualized Education Program

Modification –A change in the content, format, and/or administration of a test that alters what the test is designed to measure or the comparability of scores. Generally, a modification makes an assessment invalid. The HSGQE may be taken with approved modifications because it is a special case.

Modified HSGQE – The HSGQE given with modifications that have been approved by EED through an application process.

Nonstandardized HSGQE – An assessment that requires a student to prepare an extensive collection of work. Proficiency on the Nonstandardized HSGQE requires competency in every one of the state standards that are tested on the HSGQE.

Participation Guidelines (PG) – A booklet providing guidance to school district officials, administrators, teachers, and other persons responsible for making decisions about the participation in assessments of students on an Individualized Education Program (IEP),

students on federal 504 Plans and students with limited English proficiency. It also provides guidance for deciding if a student requires a testing accommodation, modification, the Modified HSGQE or the Nonstandardized HSGQE.

Percentage of Independence or Assistance – An observation that quantifies a student’s academic performance. The independent performance is documented as a student having received no cues or prompts from a peer or adult while completing an academic assignment.

Proficiency – Achievement of the performance criteria required.

Worksheet – A repeated practice of a problem or objective.