Adult Education Services

Blended & Virtual/Distance Learning Policy

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ADE AES Educational Technology Overview

Our Mission

The Educational Technology unit of Arizona Department of Education - Adult Education Services (ADE-AES) supports state-funded adult education programs and instructors with technology integration, blended learning, virtual/distance education, and digital literacy by facilitating professional development and offering guidance specific to each unique program.

Introduction to Blended Learning & Virtual/Distance Learning

Blended learning is an andragogical strategy that connects and compliments traditional in-class learning experiences ('contact hours') with out-of-class digital components ('proxy hours'). The benefit of the out-of-class portion of blended learning is flexibility in when, how, and where students access the online components. Virtual (or distance) education is where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for 50% or more of the instructional period. A student's status as a participant in blended learning or virtual/distance learning may change at any point based on the percentage of proxy contact hours.

To help facilitate blended and virtual learning, state-funded programs may utilize online curriculum that has been acquired by the state at no cost to the program. Programs may select alternative online curriculum from the list of approved online curricula; or, if instructors have passed the required Teacher Verification Model training, they may source other suitable curricula deemed to be educationally sound through a rigorous evaluation process. This includes curricula that instructors themselves have created.

Recording Attendance in the State Data Management System

State-funded adult education programs must keep an auditable record of in-class and out-of-class attendance using the state data management system. This attendance may be recorded in the state data management system as a cumulative monthly total by default, or more frequently if so desired. Time spent online and out-of-class, referred to as 'proxy contact hours,' can be reported via one of three National Reporting System (NRS) proxy contact models:

- **Clock Time Model** describes recording usage of **state-approved online curricula** (see page 7) that automatically tracks student usage and can generate reports showing that student's usage over a period of time. Adult education programs enter that time into the state data management system in the 'proxy hours' field.
- **Learner Mastery Model** describes recording usage of **state-approved online curricula** (see page 7) that allocates a fixed number of hours based on passing a test (typically 70% or higher). The fixed number of hours will be recorded in the state data management system in the 'proxy hours' field when the student passes the test.
- **Teacher Verification Model** is where a teacher, upon completion of state-required training, can use their professional judgment and prior experience to determine the time required for students to complete assigned online work (if the assigned work does not have its own means to track time). The estimated hours to complete the assigned work will be recorded in the state data management system in the 'proxy hours' field for students who show evidence of satisfactory completion.

Setting Up Classes in the State Data Management System

When setting up a new class in the state data management system, pay close attention to the 'class format' which impacts the type of attendance data that can be entered for that class. The class format options are as follows:

- **Face-to-Face** – used for classes with students who will only come to a classroom and never use online curriculum outside of class time.
- **Distance Education** – used for virtual/distance classes with students who will mainly receive instruction at a distance/virtually, and who will almost never come into a physical classroom for instruction.
- **Blended Learning** – used for classes that combine face-to-face instruction and an online component to be completed outside of class time.

Monitoring

All hours entered into the state data management system must adhere to Arizona state guidelines and will be **subject to audit** by the Educational Technology and the Program Operations and Compliance units. It is imperative that all hours entered into the state data management system have documentation to substantiate the amount reported. That may include sign-in/sign-out sheets, online curriculum usage reports, evaluations of specific online curricula, and teachers' written notes. All documentation must be kept in an auditable format, either hard-copy or digital, and be available upon request by ADE-AES.

Acceptable Evidence of Contact Hours

- **Direct instruction (face-to-face) contact hours -** Sign-in/sign-out sheets recording student attendance hours must exactly match student attendance hours that are entered into the state data management system. If a student signature is missing for either the sign-in or sign-out field, attendance for that student on that day cannot be entered into the state data management system until their signature is obtained. These attendance sheets must be kept on file for a minimum of 5 years after the current grant contract ends.
- **Instruction at a distance contact hours -** Evidence for these hours will include documents verifying interactions such as webinar attendance logs, chat logs, or written records detailing specific time/date and length of contact. As above, these records and logs must be kept on file for a minimum of 5 years after the current grant contract ends.

Acceptable Evidence of Proxy Hours

- **Clock Time Model and Learner Mastery Model -** Records will be audited by comparing reports generated by the specific state-approved curriculum with data entered into the state data management system's 'proxy contact hours' field. The data in the generated reports must match data entered into the state data management system. Generated reports must be kept on file and provided upon request for a minimum of 5 years after the current grant contract ends.
- **Teacher Verification Model -** Records will be audited by reviewing evidence of instructor completion of the required training and a completed evaluation of the specific digital resource(s) assigned to the student(s). The evaluation must be kept on file for a minimum of 5 years after the current grant contract ends.

Assessment

WIOA compliance requires all state-funded adult education programs to administer progress tests to all students receiving instruction, including virtual/distance and blended learning students. Testing must be conducted at an authorized testing location by a certified test administrator, which can be challenging for virtual/distance students who live in remote locations. Consider partnerships that can make this process more manageable. In the event that the program partners with another entity, such as a public library, all assessment policy rules apply to the partner. This includes test administration by a certified administrator. Please feel free to discuss your assessment - related concerns with the ADE AES Assessment unit.

An initial assessment must be given to students within the first 12 hours of attendance in the subject(s) that instruction will be given. A progress test for those subjects will then be given to determine the learner's Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) following these guidelines:

- **TABE 11 & 12 Online**
  - **ABE levels 1-4** - Plan to progress test once a student has more than 40 hours of contact and at least one month has passed since their prior test.
  - **ASE levels 5 & 6** - Plan to progress test once a student has more than 30 hours of contact and at least one month has passed since their prior test.

- **TABE CLAS-E**
  - **All ELAA levels** - Plan to progress test once a student has more than 50 hours of contact and at least one month has passed since their prior test.

Contact Information

Arizona Department of Education - Adult Education Services

- Corina Avila Corina.Avila@azed.gov 602-364-2709
  Director, Educational Technology
- EdTech Inbox AESEdTech@azed.gov
- Christian Garibay Christian.Garibay@azed.gov 602-364-2817
  Director, Assessment & HSE Services
- Nicole Kelsheimer Nicole.Kelsheimer@azed.gov 602-364-1694
  Director, Program Operations & Compliance

Glossary

Blended Learning - Learning that connects formal, in-person learning with out-of-class, online learning components.

Clock Time Model - Assigns proxy contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to, or engaged in, an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time.

Curricular Resources - Learning material aligned to state's adult ed. content standards that is used by instructors and students.

Instruction at a Distance - Any substantial contact made with a student that supports their success from a distance to include but not limited to: tutoring, mentoring, and motivating. Professional judgement is used to determine whether the contact was substantive enough to document in the state data management system.

Learner Mastery Model - Assigns a fixed number of proxy contact hours based on the learner passing a test on the content of each lesson.

Proxy Contact Hours - Any out-of-class hours of instruction adhering to either the Clock Time Model, Teacher Verification Model, or the Learner Mastery Model.

Teacher Verification Model (TVM)- Assigns a predetermined number of proxy contact hours for each assignment based on teacher determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment.

Virtual/Distance Learning (DL) Students - For federal reporting purposes, a student is classified as a DL student if over 50% of attendance hours are 'proxy hours,' as opposed to 'contact hours.' Student status as a classroom or DL student may change at any point based on the percentage of proxy hours. Both the student's face-to-face and proxy hours will be included in the annual NRS report, according to the NRS Guidelines for Distance Education. Final determination of a student's status is determined at the end of the fiscal year for reporting purposes.

Approved Online Curricula

Learner Mastery Model			
Curriculum	**Proxy Hours Criteria**	**Proxy Hours Reporting**	**Validation by**
USA Learns	Learners must meet a 70% proficiency or greater for all units to earn reportable hours.	Course 1: 3 hours/unit Course 2: 3 hours/unit Practice English & Reading:1 hour/unit USA Learns Citizenship:1 hour/unit	California Department of Education (CDE) & ADE/AES

Clock Time Model

All of the below software utilizes 'Time On Task' to report proxy hours. Links included for information only.

ALEKS (MHC) - https://www.aleks.com/

Arizona Career Readiness Credential (ACRC) - https://acrc.az.gov/

Aztec Software - http://www.aztecsoftware.com/products-services/high-school-equivalency/ged/

BurlingtonEnglish - https://www.burlingtonenglish.com/

Edmentum (Previously named PLATO) - https://www.edmentum.com/

EdReady - https://nroc.org/what-we-offer/edready/

ESL ReadingSmart - http://welcome.eslreadingsmart.com/

GED® Academy - https://www.essentialed.com/products/ged-academy.php

McGraw-Hill HSE Achieve - https://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/segment/adulted.html

Odysseyware - https://www.odysseyware.com/

Rosetta Stone - https://www.rosettastone.com/k12/home/

SkillsTutor - https://www.paxenpublishing.com/skillstutor/

Teacher Verification Model

Any other online curricular resources that have been vetted by an instructor who has completed the required ADE-AES course can be utilized for proxy hours. Curricular resources can include existing resources found through internet searches, resources compiled into a single location within a learning management system (LMS) or webpage, and resources created by the instructor.