



Guide for IEP/504 Teams Considering the Scribe (SC) State Test Accommodation (August 2021)

The Scribe (SC) state test accommodation is available for the **long-write essay** found in the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts (ELA) interim and summative assessments. In Part II of the Performance Task (ELA-PT) on the ELA summative test, the long-write essay measures a student's composition skills against the grade-level ELA Common Core standards for Writing.

The provision of the Scribe accommodation allows students who are unable to produce a typed essay response independently, a means for producing a typed composition. The Scribe accommodation allows the use of a human scribe to transfer student's spoken, signed, or otherwise communicated words and commands into typed print. The human scribe cannot provide any grammatical support or organizational framing for the student's response. Students must dictate all grammatical conventions and inform the scribe when to begin and end a sentence or paragraph. Students are allowed to review and revise the scribe-produced text; however, all directions on revision must be precisely dictated to the human scribe without any embellishment or assistance provided to the student by their assigned scribe. Because of the high risk of human error, embellishment, or unintentional edits that might be made by the scribe, and the fact that an alternative accommodation exists (electronic speech-to-text transfer via software), this accommodation requires close scrutiny and clear establishment of student need.

There are two cases in which the Scribe accommodation is warranted for the long-write essay. The first case is for students with significant motor or processing disabilities. The second case is for students with a recent injury (e.g., a broken arm or hand, or have become blind through an injury and have not had sufficient time to learn braille) that prevents them from producing text. In both cases, it is necessary to show: 1) significant need and 2) student inability to use speech-to-text software (see [Speech-to-Text state test accommodation](#)). Without a doctor's note to substantiate any student's condition and need for the human transcription of his/her words for the **ELA long-write essay**, only a student with an IEP or 504 Plan is eligible to request verification of the Scribe accommodation to compose the **ELA long-write essay**.

A human scribe is also available at the designated support level in all content areas of ELA (**except the ELA long-write essay**), math, and science state tests. The Scribe designated support allows the use of a human to select the multiple-choice option indicated by the student or type in the short answer response spoken, signed, or otherwise communicated by the student. Care must be taken to clearly distinguish the Scribe accommodation from the Scribe designated support as they apply to different tests or components of tests.

For additional information about the three levels of accessibility supports—universal tools¹, designated supports², and accommodations³ that are available for state testing see the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines \(UAAG\)](#).

This document contains guidelines for the Scribe accommodation for the ELA long-write essay and is organized into four sections: (I) general principles; (II) legal foundation; (III) critical considerations for teams; and (IV) decision guidance for teams.

Section I: General Principles Regarding State Test Accommodations

The statewide assessments are designed to measure student proficiency and growth over time, curriculum impact and effect, and school achievement and gains. Tests are aligned to standards for learning that are established at the grade-level. Statewide assessments measure our students against those standards and the grade-level expectations for achievement found there. In order to yield valid and comparable results, it is essential that our tests measure what students know and can do when measured to the grade-level standard expectations. In Hawai'i, the Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards are used as the metric. For an understanding of how these standards are used as a basis to generate a grade-level proficiency score in writing, refer to the [Smarter Balanced Scoring Guide for English Language Arts Performance Task Full-Write Baseline Sets](#).

The purpose of state test accommodations is to enable students with disabilities to participate “with adjustments that do not alter the assessed construct” and that are “applied to test presentation, environment, content, format (including response format), or administration conditions” (*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, 2014*). State test accommodations are intended to remove obstacles to student demonstration of knowledge and skills resulting from disability. State test accommodations are not intended to reduce expectations for learning, modify the curriculum, or artificially inflate a student’s test score. **The key for appropriate accommodation provision during statewide assessments is to ensure that the student’s individual needs are met and the assessed “construct” (what a test measures) is not modified or altered.**

Additionally, state test accommodations should:

1. *Not be confused with instructional accommodations that support student learning.* Instructional accommodations may be applied to support emerging skills or reinforce the acquisition of new skills; however, these accommodations are strategically adjusted or removed in the classroom to monitor and/or assess student progress. Removal of the

¹ Universal tools - available to all students based on student preference and selection. Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided digitally as part of the test system (embedded) or separate from the test system (non-embedded). *Note for Test Coordinators: non-embedded universal tools must be available on site to ensure equitable testing conditions and comparability of results.*

² Designated supports - features that are available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated. Educators, parents/guardians, students or educator teams may be used for decision-making.

³ Accommodations - available only to those students with IEP/504 Plan documentation of need.

instructional accommodation during classroom assessment in many cases is the only way to acquire an accurate measurement of the student's current level of skill.

2. Be shown to specifically overcome a student's disability. The student should have used the support in the past with success in both classroom assessments and interim assessments that are measuring the same skills (construct). *This evidence should be documented under the Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP) in the student's IEP/504 Plan.*
3. Be assigned only when supported with substantial evidence of need. Documentation of student disability mediation and classroom use during tests of the same construct must be found in the IEP/504 record. *This evidence should be documented in the "Services or Accommodations and Related Services" and the "Statewide Assessment" pages of the student's IEP/504 Plan record.*

State test accommodations are different from *modifications*. Modifications are allowances made for IDEA students that provide for adjustment(s) to the curriculum or assessment that change what is to be learned or what is to be measured. Examples of testing modifications that reduce expectations for learning and affect the construct of the test include: 1) simplification, clarification, or explanation of test questions or items; 2) use of spell-checking devices on a test of the student's spelling skills; and 3) use of a calculator on a test of the student's computational skills. While modifications may be used with caution during instruction to support students as they develop their knowledge and skills over time, they are not used in the general summative test.

Section II: Legal Foundation for State Test Accommodations

Under the IDEA, State has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that children with disabilities are provided appropriate accommodations on Title I, Part A assessments, where necessary, as determined on an individualized case-by-case basis by their IEP/504 team.
- Develop guidelines for the provision of appropriate accommodations. Under 34 CFR §§300.160(b)(2), the State's guidelines must identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

These State guidelines apply to the provision of appropriate accommodations under the IDEA on regular and alternate assessments (34 CFR §300.160 (a)).

Section III: Critical Considerations Before Assigning SC State Test Accommodation for ELA Long-Write Essays

Decisions about assigning the SC state test accommodation should be based on the general principles and laws governing state test accommodations presented in Sections I and II and the specific SC guidelines found below.

Purpose of the Scribe (SC) State Test Accommodation

The purpose of the SC state test accommodation is to provide students with a motor or processing disability or recent injury that impedes their ability to type out an essay response, an avenue for participating in the ELA assessments of long-write essays. The SC test accommodation allows these students the use of a human to transfer what a student communicates into print. All punctuation, writing conventions, and edits must be directly communicated to the scribe by the student. Without this accommodation, these students would be unable to produce the text-based essay that is needed to generate a writing score on the ELA assessment.

Construct Measured by the ELA Summative Test Performance Task (Part II)

A test construct is what a test measures. For example, Part II of the ELA Summative Test Performance Task (ELA-PT) measures students' ability to compose an essay in response to a writing prompt. The writing score that is generated based on students' response provides information on how well "students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences" pursuant to the Writing claim in the [Claims for the English Language Arts/Literacy Summative Assessment](#). For specifics on the three traits of writing that are being measured by the ELA-PT across all grade-levels, view the ELA summative test blueprints found in the [Smarter Balanced English Language Arts \(ELA\) general assessment](#).

Documented Level of Need for the SC State Test Accommodation

The SC test accommodation should only be assigned for the ELA long-write essay when a student has a condition that prevents them from independently producing a typed response. There are two cases in which students may qualify for this accommodation. The first case is for students with significant motor or processing disabilities. The second case is for students with a recent injury that prevents them from typing a response. In both cases it is necessary to show:

1. Significant need;
2. Inability to use speech-to-text software; and/or
3. Regular use of a human scribe by the student during all classroom assignments and assessments that require an extended written response. The consistent use of a human scribe during classroom instruction and assessments of composition skill must be evidenced in the IEP/504 record or substantiated by medical record. The medical record (doctor's note) must state the student's specific medical condition and need.

Please note the STT test accommodation is the preferred option to the SC accommodation for those students with physical, processing disorders, and/or injury. The STT test accommodation offers the advantages of direct transfer of student response, increased student independence, and improved test item security.

Documented Familiarity with Scribe, Including Student Ability to Review and Edit

If students are to use the SC state test accommodation for the *long-write essay*, they must know how to work with a human scribe to dictate, review, and edit the transcription. The Scribe will not be able to assist students with anything except the literal transfer of the student's communicated words. The student must provide specific directions for organization and provide all edits and corrections to the produced text. Scribes must follow the specific guidelines found in the [Scribing Protocol for Hawai'i Statewide Assessment Program](#).

Section IV: Guidance for IEP/504 Teams for Verifying the Need for SC State Test Accommodation on the ELA Long-Write Essays

This section provides IEP/504 Teams a tool with a set of questions to help guide the SC test accommodation decision-making process. The questions are intended to support team discussion and to help frame criteria that can serve as supporting evidence when considering student SC state test accommodation needs. These questions and the answers that are generated may be used to determine when and if there is sufficient evidence of student need supporting the provision of the SC state test accommodation. The intent is for IEP/504 Teams to use the questions found in Table 1 as a starting point from which to engage in dialogue, examine evidence, record data, and indicate the team decision based upon knowledge of the student and the evidence found in the student's IEP/504 Plan. A preponderance of evidence as well as care should be used when making this team decision. (Table 1 is not intended to be a tally sheet.)

Table 1: Questions to Guide IEP/504 Team Decision about the Need for the SCRIBE (SC) State Test Accommodation for the ELA Long-Write Essay

The purpose of this table is to guide the IEP/504 team discussions about student test accommodation need and help generate appropriate decisions and recommendations regarding the SC state test accommodation. The completion of this table is optional.

Questions	Team Response	Evidence/ Comments
1. Is there evaluative information indicating that the student’s disability severely limits the student’s ability to produce a typed essay response?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Does the student have a documented motor or processing disability, resulting in the student being unable to produce a typed essay response?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Does the student have a recent physical injury (e.g., broken arm or hand, or have become blind through an injury and have not had sufficient time to learn braille) resulting in the student being unable to produce a typed essay response? Is a doctor’s note available to support the student’s condition and need?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Is the student able to use speech-to-text software to produce a typed essay response?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Does the student always use the Scribe (SC) accommodation during classroom assessments of writing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Is there evidence that the student’s composition improves when a human scribe is used to record the student’s spoken, signed, or communicated words?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Is there an expectation that the student will need the SC accommodation when pursuing post-secondary career opportunities and/or higher education?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
8. Has the student provided input or stated a preference for having a scribe assigned to them during classroom assessments of writing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
9. Are there additional considerations for recommending the SC state test accommodation for this student, specific to his/her unique disability-related needs or condition?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Select the IEP/504 team recommendation that is decided to be most appropriate for this student.

- Print on Demand (POD) state test accommodation should be recommended for this student to receive paper copies of test items.
- More information is needed before making this decision.

Please list the names and titles of the IEP/504 team and other persons who were part of the state test accommodation decision-making team for the student.

Name	Title	Date

Follow-up on this decision-making meeting by documenting any selected state test accommodations in the student’s IEP or 504 record, which is stored in the [electronic Comprehensive Student Support System](#) (eCSSS). Refer to the [eCSSS Directions](#) for documenting evidence to support the need for state test accommodations.

If the IEP/504 team makes the decision to recommend the SC state test accommodation for a student, then the School Testing Coordinator (TC) should consult the “Hawaii State Test Accommodations Identification and Request Process for Test Coordinators and School Assessment Teams” document available on the [Accessibility and Accommodations resources page](#) on the [AlohaHSAP.org](#) portal website for guidance to submit state test accommodation requests.

In addition to the documented evidence in the IEPs/504 plans and the consultations with the Exceptional Support Branch and the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design, the Assessment Section verifies state test accommodations in accordance with the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). As stated in 34 CFR §300.160(b)(2):

The State’s guidelines must identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and instruct IEP teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

The Assessment Section recommends that [test accommodation verification requests](#) be submitted one month prior to the opening of the test window. In all cases, state test accommodation requests should be submitted to the Assessment Section no later than 14 days prior to state (interim or summative) testing.

If you have any questions, please email Elaine Lee at Elaine.Lee@k12.hi.us or call the HIDOE Assessment Section at (808) 307-3636.