

# A Guide to Student Occupational Competency Testing in Pennsylvania 2018-19

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**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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## Introduction

This guide is provided to assist school personnel in preparing for the required student occupational competency testing of all secondary concentrators in approved career and technical education (CTE) programs in the commonwealth. This guide was developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to be used as an informational resource and addresses policies and procedures for participating in federal and state mandated occupational competency testing. Complete materials, guidebooks and required forms are available on the [Student Occupational Competency Testing program website](https://bit.do/SOCT) at <https://bit.do/SOCT>.

## Student Occupational Competency Testing Program Policies

PDE requires all secondary concentrators (refer to the bottom of page 1), anticipated to graduate in the current school year from their approved CTE programs and receive diplomas from their high schools, to take a state-approved occupational competency test. This requirement includes students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

This testing policy meets the requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-270) and Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (Chapter 4.31a). All concentrators, who are anticipated to graduate, are expected to participate in occupational competency testing. Failure to comply will affect Pennsylvania's ability to meet the requirements of the statewide system of measures and standards, and may result in sanctions against a school under Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (Chapter 4.31a), Chapter 339 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (339.4(e)(1)(i)), or the Carl D. Perkins Act (P.L. 109-270).

Accountability of school programs becomes more significant each year to students, parents, instructors, administrators, school boards, and PDE. The occupational competency tests used in this program are based on state, national, and/or industry-based standards. These standards are usually consistent with local curricula, however, local administrators are encouraged to identify gaps between the local curriculum and national standards and exert efforts to close any identified gaps.

## Requirements Governing the Testing of Career and Technical Education Students

Several state and federal requirements dictate the testing of career and technical education students. At the November 1996 meeting of the State Board of Education, an occupational competency measure was approved for all secondary and adult career and technical education program concentrators who are scheduled to graduate. This requirement is outlined in Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (Chapter 4.31a). In addition, the Carl D. Perkins Act (P.L. 109-270) requires that each state develop a system of core performance measures and standards for the purpose of evaluating its secondary, adult, and postsecondary career and technical education programs. Lastly, Pennsylvania is a unified state where federal and state career and technical education programs are part of the Governor's Executive Order for the Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board, which calls for an integrated workforce investment system with core performance measures and standards. Testing results will be used to address the federal and state performance accountability requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Act (P.L. 109-270) and Chapter 339 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (339.4(e)(1)(i)). Specifically, these involve the use of third party end-of-program occupational tests to measure technical skill attainment.

## Definitions

The following definition from *Pennsylvania's Federally Agreed Upon Levels of Performance* (FAULP) document should be used by school personnel to identify students required to participate in this occupational competency testing program:

**Secondary Concentrator** – A student, who by the end of the reporting (current) school year, will be reported as successfully completing at least 50 percent of the minimum technical instructional hours required for PDE program approval.

Concentrator status is based on technical instructional hours successfully completed. The term “successfully completing” equates to receiving a passing grade. If a student receives a passing grade in a marking period or quarter, those hours should be counted even if the student does not receive a passing grade for the whole year. The Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) definition and business rules for “Percentage of Program Completed” can be found in the PIMS Manual.

More information on this definition can be obtained from Kevin Springman in PDE’s Bureau of Career and Technical Education at (717) 783-6623 or [kspringman@pa.gov](mailto:kspringman@pa.gov).

### **Who Should Be Tested?**

Chapter 339 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (339.22)(a)(9)(ii)(c) requires approved programs to end in grade 12. If a student is a secondary concentrator and anticipated to graduate at the end of the current school year, then that student should be tested. Secondary concentrators should be tested whether or not they will complete the program’s technical hours. Secondary concentrators are only permitted to be tested once and this should occur during the school year they are anticipated to graduate. A student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) whose Transition Plan indicates he or she will be staying in school for extended years beyond the 12th grade should be tested in the spring of the final year in school. Students with IEPs who are secondary concentrators should take a NOCTI in the year they are anticipated to graduate.

If a student transfers schools, the school where the student is currently enrolled should determine the amount of the student’s program hours from the former school’s CTE program which can be counted toward the percent of technical hours successfully completed by the student during the CTE program. If the total percent of technical hours successfully completed is 50 percent or greater, then the student is a secondary concentrator and should be tested.

For a student who changes programs, the secondary concentrator definition must be followed when determining if a student is eligible to participate in occupational competency testing. A student is required to test in the program in which he or she is currently enrolled; students cannot test in a program they have withdrawn from or left. For example, if a student switches from a construction trades program to a carpentry program during the senior year and will not meet the secondary concentrator definition in the carpentry program, the student is not to be tested since he or she is no longer enrolled in the construction trades program and is not anticipated to be a secondary concentrator in the carpentry program. However, hours from the construction trades program that also are part of the carpentry program can be applied to the percentage of the carpentry program that was successfully completed. By combining these hours, if the total percent of technical hours successfully completed is 50 percent or greater, then the student is a secondary concentrator and should be tested using the carpentry test. This is a local decision similar to applying hours for a student transferring from a CTE program at another school.

### **Who Should Not Be Tested?**

1. Juniors who are not graduating high school are not to be tested through this occupational testing program.
2. Students who will not meet the definition of a secondary concentrator by the end of the school year in which they are anticipated to graduate.
3. Students who meet the requirements for the Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA).
4. Students who are no longer enrolled in an approved CTE program, including dropouts.

Students who take the PASA are considered exempt from participating in this occupational competency testing program; however, students who take the PASA may be tested with the recommendation of the IEP team. This information is also provided in the Accommodations section in this guidebook (page 16).

## **Mandatory Use of PAsecureID Numbers**

As part of PIMS, PAsecureID numbers have been assigned to all pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade public school students. These unique, permanent student identification numbers:

1. Eliminate the need for a Social Security number to identify a student;
2. Protect personally identifiable information;
3. Improve security and confidentiality; and
4. Enable student records to be safely and appropriately linked between systems and across time to make longitudinal data analysis possible.

PDE's Bureau of Career and Technical Education **requires** student PAsecureID numbers to be used as student identifiers in this testing program for all NOCTI and National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) tests. It is the school's responsibility to ensure all PAsecureID numbers are accurate.

NOTE: Failure to provide accurate PAsecureID numbers will result in student data not being reported on federal and state annual reports which could impact continued career and technical education approval status.

## **Approved Tests**

PDE has identified NOCTI and NIMS as approved occupational testing agencies. Additional information about these approved agencies is provided below.

**NOCTI Tests** – These tests consist of two components. The multiple-choice component assesses factual knowledge, technical information, and the understanding of principles and problem solving. The performance component allows students to demonstrate the skills they have learned to function in their desired job. NOCTI tests are nationally normed and must be given in their entirety. Reported scores on NOCTI tests are both criterion-referenced and norm-referenced. NOCTI tests are designed around criteria for job readiness. Raw scores are provided for the criteria as well as local, state and national norms. To be considered a complete test taker for the PIMS completion code, students must take both the written and performance components of the test.

**NIMS Credentialing Tests** – PDE has mandated the use of NIMS Machining Level 1 tests as the acceptable occupational competency test for students in machining-related approved CTE programs. The NIMS credentialing tests are drawn from industry-validated metalworking standards. Both performance and theory tests are developed and piloted by the industry. To be considered a complete test taker for the PIMS completion code, students must take at least three NIMS Level 1 Machining credentialing tests.

## **Ordering and Costs**

**NOCTI Tests** – PDE will assume the costs of online multiple-choice tests, performance test booklets, scoring and reporting services for schools meeting the requirements of this testing program. Costs are automatically assumed by PDE when orders are processed directly through Penn State Greater Allegheny using the online PDE order form which is found on NOCTI's Client Services Center. Costs of materials and supplies required for performance tests are the responsibility of the school.

Tests must be ordered at least four weeks prior to the scheduled testing date(s) to allow for processing, shipping, and to avoid any additional shipping charges to the school, including rush order fees imposed by NOCTI. Although these fees vary depending on each order, most fees are approximately 10 percent of the total cost of the order. Also, schools are responsible for assuming the costs associated with all unused tests. Schools will be billed for these unused tests by Penn State Greater Allegheny at the current cost per test.

**NIMS Credentialing Tests** – For each student, PDE will assume the cost of the first attempt for each NIMS Level 1 Machining test and scoring and reporting services for this occupational

competency testing program. Costs associated with additional attempts for each credentialing test will not be assumed by PDE. In addition, PDE will not assume the optional one-time registration fee of \$40 for students who wish to receive NIMS credential certificates indicating their successful completion of each credential.

The specific promotion code **EC49** and a valid PAsecureID must be used to register students on the NIMS online testing system. This code must be used only by secondary students who are part of this statewide testing program. The cost of the first attempt of each credentialing test will automatically be assumed by PDE when using this code. Costs associated with additional attempts for each credentialing test will be billed directly to the school by NIMS. These additional attempts are considered to be retakes and are not allowable. Instructors who are interested in taking any of the NIMS credential tests for their own certification **are not** permitted to use this promotion code.

### **Defined Roles and Responsibilities**

**PDE** – In order to meet federal and state requirements for data reporting of the Carl D. Perkins Act (P.L. 109-270) and Chapter 4 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code (Chapter 4.31a), PDE has developed this mandatory statewide testing program for students enrolled in approved career and technical education programs. PDE directs and administers the requirements of this testing program. In addition, PDE reports the required federal and state data.

**Penn State Greater Allegheny** – This center oversees the management and organization of this statewide testing program including: verifying and processing test orders; communicating with school personnel; providing informational materials; maintaining all testing program records; continuing a liaison relationship with testing agencies; verifying the return of all test materials; and providing student certificates to schools.

**NOCTI** – This testing agency is a PDE-approved agency for student occupational competency testing and provides job-ready tests and student data to Pennsylvania. NOCTI tests are composed of a multiple-choice component and a performance component. The online multiple-choice component measures the technical knowledge acquired by students. The performance component allows students to demonstrate their acquired skills by completing actual jobs using the tools, materials, machines, and equipment of the occupation. [NOCTI's Client Services Center](#) is a one-stop tool for managing a successful assessment program and can be accessed at <https://clientservices.nocti.org>. Through the Client Services Center, test site coordinators can access key resources, place orders, manage online user codes, and access score reports.

**NIMS** – This credentialing agency is a PDE-approved agency for student occupational competency testing in machining-related approved CTE programs and provides tests and student data for Pennsylvania. NIMS tests are made up of an online theory component and a performance component.

**School Administrator** – This individual oversees the occupational competency testing program at a school. A school administrator must sign the Testing Agreement indicating commitment to the occupational testing program by:

1. Ensuring proper training for the school's test site coordinator;
2. Approving selection of and ensuring proper training of proctors and evaluators;
3. Overseeing the conduct of school staff and testing personnel; and
4. Reporting security violations or suspected violations to testing agencies and PDE.

**Test Site Coordinator** – This individual oversees the testing program at a school. The test site coordinator is responsible for the overall facilitation, promotion, guidance, and monitoring of the testing program. The test site coordinator must adhere to the policies and procedures in this guide and those set by the testing agencies. The test site coordinator acts as the liaison to manage the testing program for the school. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Serving as the school's contact person for all test activities;
2. Attending training provided by PDE;
3. Overseeing test administration;
4. Coordinating test ordering;
5. Assuring that testing is scheduled within the testing window;
6. Confirming receipt of testing materials and notifying Penn State Greater Allegheny of any discrepancies;
7. Maintaining security of all test materials before, during and after testing;
8. Reviewing test security policies with school staff, instructors, proctors, and evaluators;
9. Scheduling and conducting training sessions for proctors and evaluators;
10. Monitoring test administration;
11. Ensuring that all student and test information data is accurately completed including test title, student name, and PAsecureID;
12. Ensuring accuracy of all student demographic information;
13. Ensuring that all online tests have been released to the testing agency for scoring;
14. Assuring that students with IEPs are correctly tested and receive required accommodations;
15. Immediately notifying administrators of any security issues and reporting security violations to testing agencies and PDE;
16. Distributing score information to administrators and instructors;
17. Organizing test materials for shipment to Penn State Greater Allegheny and test answer sheets (if applicable) for shipment to NOCTI;
18. Verifying that all test materials have been returned to Penn State Greater Allegheny;
19. Manually transferring performance test ratings to NOCTI's online system; and
20. Maintaining testing records.

**Proctor** – This person is a designated individual who oversees the administration of online tests consistent with established procedures and policies. Responsibilities include:

1. Reviewing NOCTI's *Proctor Guide for Online Testing* to become familiar with the instructions and procedures for test administration;
2. Conducting the testing process in accordance with established procedures and policies;
3. Informing students of proper test taking procedures;
4. Discussing test security with students;
5. Monitoring students during test administration;
6. Monitoring the multiple-choice testing session to prohibit talking or cheating in order to minimize disturbances and distractions;
7. Documenting relevant discrepancies, comments, or irregularities; and
8. Reporting any suspected security violations to the test site coordinator.

Per NOCTI's [Security Policy](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security), [http://bit.do/NOCTI\\_Security](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security), the following individuals are prohibited from serving as proctors for their own students or students in a similar CTE program:

1. Secondary instructors of the program being assessed; and
2. Paraeducators and instructional assistants of the program being assessed.

Acknowledgement forms provided by NOCTI should be reviewed and signed by each proctor and retained by the school.

**Evaluator** – This person is a business and industry representative who evaluates the performance component of the NOCTI test. Evaluators should be experts in their field with a minimum of three years recent experience. Evaluators must be available for training and the scheduled performance session. Each evaluator should be:

1. Knowledgeable in the program being tested;
2. Qualified to evaluate student performance objectively;
3. Capable of setting up the necessary equipment and supplies;

4. Familiar with the administration of performance-type testing; and
5. Able to follow directions for conducting evaluations.

The evaluation should be consistent with the established procedures and policies including NOCTI's [Security Policy](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security), [http://bit.do/NOCTI\\_Security](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security), and other test administration guidelines for selecting performance evaluators. Evaluators rate student performance on each specific task for each job on the test as the task is completed. Responsibilities include:

1. Reviewing NOCTI's *Evaluator Guide* provided with each test to become familiar with the student and evaluator instructions, scoring criteria, and procedures for test administration;
2. Working with the school's test site coordinator to ensure that the performance jobs are set up appropriately;
3. Administering the testing process consistent with established procedures and policies;
4. Ensuring compliance with safety guidelines and protocols;
5. Discussing test security with students;
6. Informing students of proper test taking procedures;
7. Monitoring students during the testing session;
8. Monitoring testing time;
9. Maintaining a presence in the testing area to discourage talking or cheating;
10. Protecting students from disturbances and distractions as they complete the performance jobs;
11. Evaluating and recording each student's performance in accordance with the criteria provided in NOCTI's *Evaluator Guide* for the specific test being administered;
12. Documenting relevant discrepancies, comments, or irregularities;
13. Returning test materials to test site coordinator; and
14. Reporting any suspected security violations to the test site coordinator.

The following individuals are prohibited from serving as performance evaluators:

1. Secondary instructors
2. Paraeducators and instructional assistants
3. Instructor's family members
4. Recent program graduates
5. College students
6. Substitutes
7. Recently retired instructors (three years)

Using the program's occupational advisory committee (OAC) members as performance evaluators is strongly encouraged. Other appropriate evaluators would include non-instructional district staff, local business persons or postsecondary instructors. **Use caution when selecting performance evaluators. The evaluator's role or relationship with the program, teacher and/or students must be considered. Any potential conflict of interest or evaluator selection that may cause the integrity of the testing program to be questioned should be avoided.** Acknowledgement forms provided by NOCTI should be reviewed and signed by each evaluator and retained by the school.

**Instructor** – The instructor should be accessible during the test administration process for liability purposes and to assist with tasks that the proctor/evaluator cannot complete (locate extra materials, shut off power, give students a restroom pass). To maintain the integrity of the tests, instructors are **not** permitted to have access to any test booklets, answer sheets, performance rating worksheets, or evaluator guides. The instructor must **not** facilitate, observe or participate in the evaluation or administration of the performance component. The instructor should meet with the test site coordinator to make decisions and logistical considerations for successful test administration including:

1. Selecting tests based on program content, test blueprints and the *Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk*;

2. Scheduling testing dates/times, including makeup dates, if needed;
3. Determining if multiple-session testing is appropriate to accommodate schedules;
4. Identifying suitable and qualified proctors and evaluators based on NOCTI requirements;
5. Notifying parents/guardians about test administration;
6. Preparing students with study guide materials and encouraging them to do their best;
7. Setting up the performance component supplies/materials according to the NOCTI *Instructor Prep Pack*;
8. Reviewing score reports and providing individual reports to students; and
9. Ensuring that accommodations for students with IEPs have been identified and provided.

## Testing Window

**NOCTI** – Post-tests are to be administered in the spring from March 1 – April 30, 2019. All evaluators' performance ratings must be entered and student online tests released electronically for scoring by May 15, 2019. All test materials must be returned to Penn State Greater Allegheny by May 15, 2019. Semester-about programs should assess their students during the final CTE program semester. If students graduate from their CTE programs in January, they should be tested between November and January.

**NIMS** – NIMS Level 1 credential tests can be administered beginning in the first year that a student is enrolled in an approved CTE program and continue throughout the student's enrollment in the program. Testing is to be completed by April 30, 2019. Student data must be reported to Penn State Greater Allegheny by May 15, 2019.

## Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk

PDE has created a *Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk*, which aligns each Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code to all available tests. Only the eligible test(s) for each CIP code listed on the crosswalk is approved to be used in 2017-18. A CIP code that does not have an approved test is exempt from testing. The crosswalk should be followed when completing the *Students Verification Form* and *PDE Test Order Form*. The Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk will be released in September 2017 and available on the [Student Occupational Competency Testing program website](https://bit.do/SOCT) at <https://bit.do/SOCT>.

## Test Makeup

Test makeups are permitted for students who were absent during the initial testing date. Schools are to determine 1) when makeup tests are to be scheduled during the testing window and 2) if more than one makeup session is needed. Test security must be ensured to protect the validity of every test.

## Test Retakes

Test retakes are not permitted. If test site coordinators have questions regarding this policy, contact Kevin Springman in PDE's Bureau of Career and Technical Education at (717) 783-6623 or [kspringman@pa.gov](mailto:kspringman@pa.gov).

## Returning Test Materials

To ensure test security, the following materials are required to be shipped to Penn State Greater Allegheny no later than 15 days after the school's testing date and by May 15, 2019:

1. Used and unused NOCTI performance test booklets;
2. Used and unused NOCTI evaluator guides;
3. Unused answer sheets, if applicable; and
4. *Test Materials Return Form*.

Schools will be charged a handling fee for incorrectly shipping test materials to NOCTI.

## Related Test Instruments

1. **Calculators** – Students may use the calculator built into NOCTI’s multiple-choice test system or a non-programmable calculator during NOCTI tests. For NIMS testing, the calculator developed for machinists from Calculated Industries is permitted to be used.
2. **Formula Sheets** – NOCTI does permit the use of formula sheets during testing, unless specified in a particular test. When a formula is required for an item, it is provided as part of the related item(s) for that test.
3. **Electrical Code Book** – Students are permitted to use the *Electrical Code Book* with related tests.
4. **Electronic Devices** – Following the *PDE Electronic Devices Policy* for tests, all cell phones, smartphones, and other prohibited electronic devices are to be collected as students enter the testing area. Thus, school districts and schools should do the following:
  - a. Notify and ensure parents and students fully understand the policy regarding electronic devices, including cell phones;
  - b. Inform parents and students that the consequence for using and/or having a cell phone or other electronic device during the test administration will result in the student not receiving a score;
  - c. Inform parents and students that, if the student uses a cell phone or electronic device in any manner during the administration of the test, the cell phone or electronic device will be confiscated until such time that the parent or guardian can come to the school, and in the presence of the parent or guardian, the cell phone or other electronic device will be viewed to ensure that no information or material regarding the test is present;
  - d. Inform parents and students that violation of the policy will result in discipline and that discipline will vary depending on whether test materials have been compromised; and
  - e. Inform parents and students that any item on a test that has been compromised, and can no longer be used will have to be replaced, and the parents and students may be responsible for the cost of replacement.

School personnel and students must understand that the integrity of the test cannot be compromised. There have been reports of test information being communicated via cell phones and, for this reason, PDE requests the full cooperation of all school personnel in complying with this policy.

If a violation of this policy occurs: 1) confiscate the electronic device; 2) terminate the student’s testing session; 3) remove the student from the testing area; and 4) report the violation to PDE and the testing agency.

## Photocopying NOCTI Test Materials

NOCTI test booklets and evaluator guides are not permitted to be photocopied or duplicated, including taking a photograph of any test materials. NOCTI test materials, including current and previous test versions, are protected by federal copyright law which prohibits unauthorized reproduction and use of copyrighted materials. Refer to NOCTI’s [Security Policy](#) at [http://bit.do/NOCTI\\_Security](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security) for additional information.

## NOCTI Multiple-Choice Test Requirement

NOCTI multiple-choice tests are required to be taken online. In preparation for online tests, the test site coordinator should meet with proctors to review the *Online Testing Proctor Guide*. Online tests must be administered in a proctored environment. Online tests provide the following benefits:

1. elimination of hardcopy test booklets
2. time savings during administration preparation and follow-up
3. immediate results; and
4. text-to-speech capability and extended-time for IEP accommodations.

Complete score reports, including individual and group analysis, are provided within two weeks

after tests are released by the test site coordinator in [NOCTI's Client Services Center](https://clientservices.nocti.org) at <https://clientservices.nocti.org>.

If a school has a situation where using online tests is not feasible, the test site coordinator must submit a detailed explanation requesting the use of hardcopy versions of the multiple-choice test. If the school's request is accepted by PDE, the use of the hardcopy versions of the test will be permitted. In addition, the school will be responsible for paying the price difference per test billed by NOCTI for using the hardcopy version. If the waiver is not accepted, the school will be required to use the online version.

Requests should be submitted on school letterhead and sent to Penn State Greater Allegheny. Orders will not be processed until a decision by PDE has been made. This will affect the four-week test order window required by NOCTI.

### **Administration and Technical Requirements for NOCTI Online Testing**

NOCTI assessments must be administered in a proctored environment, and proctor selection must adhere to the NOCTI Security Policy and test administration guidelines. Access to resources through the Internet, local network, mobile devices, or electronic storage media is strictly prohibited during test administration. Because modern HTML5 compliant browsers, such as Firefox, Chrome, Internet Explorer 10 and others supported by NOCTI's QuadNet™ Online Testing System allow access to multiple websites NOCTI recommends that testing sites explore network configuration options that will restrict access to the Internet and other areas of the local network where resources may be available during test administration. Appropriate network configuration, along with proctored administration, will ensure a secure and fair testing experience for all participants. Complete information about online testing computer setup requirements be can accessed by test site coordinators in the Resources section of the Client Services Center.

### **Test Security**

In Pennsylvania, it is the responsibility and requirement of the test site coordinator and all school personnel to ensure the security of tests and test materials to protect the validity and integrity of the tests and the testing process. Maintaining security is a critical component of the occupational competency testing program. Any deviation from procedures meant to ensure validity and security is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of test security. School personnel with authorized access to test materials cannot discuss, disseminate test information, or otherwise reveal the contents of the test to anyone. Instructors, including instructional staff, are prohibited from:

1. Serving as test site coordinator, proctors and evaluators;
2. Viewing tests, performance jobs and related scoring criteria;
3. Asking students questions about the test; and
4. Having access to NOCTI's Client Services Center.

**NOCTI Security** –NOCTI's *Site Coordinator Guide for Student Assessment* contains additional detailed administration and security procedures for test site coordinators as well as NOCTI's *Security and Testing Agreement*. These documents are available for download through [NOCTI's Client Services Center](https://clientservices.nocti.org) under the resources section at <https://clientservices.nocti.org>.

**Securing NOCTI Test Materials** – All test materials received must be accounted for and kept in a secure location. This includes test booklets, user codes, passwords, and log-in credentials. Appropriate security measures should include:

1. Inventory materials upon receipt.
2. Keep materials in a secure location until test administration.
3. Implement a check-out/check-in process for distributing materials to proctors and evaluators the day of testing.
4. Keep materials in a secure location until shipped to Penn State Greater Allegheny.

5. Promptly ship materials to Penn State Greater Allegheny. (Refer to page 7 for more detail.)
6. Ensure instructors are not in possession of any materials.

**NIMS Security** – The NIMS website provides additional information on policies and procedures. Visit the [NIMS website](http://www.nims-skills.org) at [www.nims-skills.org](http://www.nims-skills.org) for detailed information. Test site coordinators should work with the program instructor to manage the NIMS testing process.

**Reporting Security Violations** – If a security breach is discovered or suspected, PDE and the testing agency must be contacted immediately. It is the responsibility of the test site coordinator and school administrators to gather all relevant information related to the security breach and then contact PDE and the testing agency. School personnel should be prepared to provide an overview of the security breach including how the breach occurred, the affected test titles, and any action taken by the school once the breach was discovered.

## NOCTI Testing Process

Conducting occupational competency testing requires planning and organization. The testing schedule and administration must be handled in a professional and secure manner since students and outside evaluators are involved. Advanced planning and a timeline that fits the school's calendar will expedite the process. Meetings should be held with instructors to determine test dates and times, test selection, and materials needed. Test ordering through Penn State Greater Allegheny should be completed in a timely manner. The following is the recommended sequence of activities.

### Before Test Administration

As indicated on page one, all secondary concentrators are required to take a PDE-approved occupational competency test.

1. **Gather Student Information** – PDE requires the use of PAsecureIDs for occupational tests. It is imperative that accurate PAsecureIDs are used for all students.
2. **Determine Tests** – Use the *Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk* to select the appropriate test for each CIP code/program. Information on the contents of NOCTI tests can be found in the [test blueprints](#) located at <http://www.nocti.org/Blueprint.cfm>.
3. **Identify Accommodations** – Review students' IEPs to ensure that required accommodations are provided.
4. **Determine Multiple Session Administration** – NOCTI tests may be administered in multiple sessions. This feature was created to accommodate schools that want to break the test administration into sections in order to give students short breaks or for school schedules where the time it takes to administer the test exceeds the time available in the school day. Schools are permitted to break test administration into a maximum of three sessions. Multiple session administration must be designated on the PDE test order form. Additional information can be found in the *Online Systems Guide for Site Coordinators* on [NOCTI's Client Services Center](http://clientservices.nocti.org) under the resources section at <https://clientservices.nocti.org>.
5. **Complete Required Forms** – Complete PDE's *Students Verification Form* and the PDE test order form. More information on these forms is located on page 12 of this guidebook.
6. **Select and Train Proctors/Evaluators** – It is essential for the test site coordinator to meet with proctors and evaluators before the testing day. This meeting should ensure that proctors and evaluators have a thorough understanding of the testing process and procedures. School administrators should verify the qualifications and integrity of proctors and evaluators. Proctors and evaluators cannot share or discuss test content with instructors. Roles and responsibilities of proctors and evaluators are outlined on pages 5 and 6. Refer to NOCTI's [Security Policy](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security), available at [http://bit.do/NOCTI\\_Security](http://bit.do/NOCTI_Security).
7. **Prepare for Test Day** – Encourage each instructor to review the test blueprint and instructor prep packet. Prepare students by encouraging them and explaining the testing process. Ensure instructors have all materials prepared and set up for the performance component.

## During Test Administration

1. **Multiple-Choice Component**
  - a. Ensure proctors are in assigned areas
  - b. Monitor/circulate throughout testing areas
  - c. Troubleshoot technical issues
  - d. Ensure test security
  
2. **Performance Component**
  - a. Ensure evaluators are in assigned areas
  - b. Distribute testing materials and booklets to evaluators
  - c. Monitor/circulate throughout testing areas
  - d. Troubleshoot technical issues
  - e. Collect all testing materials from evaluators
  - f. Ensure test security
  
3. **Off-site Performance Testing** – It is permitted for students to be tested on the performance component off-site either at another school or a local company. The off-site location should have all necessary materials and equipment for completing the performance jobs required for the test. The test site coordinator or an appropriate designee is required to accompany students to the off-site location and must remain at the location for the duration of the test administration to ensure security procedures are followed. The test site coordinator or designee is responsible for distributing and collecting test materials at the off-site location. Considerations should include security of test materials, integrity of the test session, and adhering to school policies.

## After Test Administration

All tests must be completed and materials returned by May 15, 2019. If hardcopy multiple-choice tests were approved and administered, answer sheets must be received at NOCTI for scoring no later than 15 days after the testing date and by May 15, 2019.

1. **Performance Ratings** – The test site coordinator is responsible for ensuring that all evaluator performance ratings are manually entered into NOCTI's Client Services Center and tests are released for scoring. The student performance rating sheets, completed by evaluators, should be kept in a secure location by the test site coordinator until final score reports are received and verified by the test site coordinator. After verification of scores, performance rating sheets must be destroyed by the test site coordinator.
2. **Return Test Materials** – To ensure security, all used and unused performance booklets, unused answer sheets and evaluator guides must be returned to Penn State Greater Allegheny no later than 15 days after the testing date and by May 15, 2019. A [shipping label](http://bit.do/Shipping_Label) is available at [http://bit.do/Shipping\\_Label](http://bit.do/Shipping_Label). Shipping costs are the responsibility of the school. It is highly suggested to ship test materials using a trackable mail service; i.e., UPS or FedEx. Shipments not received by Penn State Greater Allegheny will be reported as unreturned test materials.

## NIMS Testing Process

The NIMS credentialing tests certify a student's skills as measured against the NIMS Standards. Test site coordinators should manage the NIMS testing process just as they do the NOCTI process, including all policies and security measures.

NIMS certifications require both performance and theory exams. The performance component is administered locally by each school in accordance with the NIMS policies and procedures available the [NIMS website](http://www.nims-skills.org) at [www.nims-skills.org](http://www.nims-skills.org). The performance exam will be the manufacturing of a part, the set-up and operation of a machine or the writing of a program that will manufacture a specific part. A third-party committee evaluation is conducted to validate that a part made by a student to prints approved by NIMS meets all specifications with allowable tolerances. A positive evaluation of a part establishes a student's eligibility to take the required

related theory examination for the credential being sought. Performance exams are required for all NIMS credentials – except Measurement, Materials and Safety. Most Machining Level 1 performance exams require the student to machine a part based on a NIMS-provided print. Costs of materials and supplies required for the performance component of the test are the responsibility of the school.

The multiple-choice online test will be administered through the use of the NIMS online testing system. Test site coordinators or instructors must register all students taking the NIMS Level 1 tests as part of this occupational competency testing program on the [NIMS website](http://www.nims-skills.org) at [www.nims-skills.org](http://www.nims-skills.org). Students enrolled in the approved CTE programs listed below are required to use the NIMS Level 1 credentialing tests.

1. 48.0501 Machine Tool Technology/Machinist
2. 48.0599 Precision Metal Working, Other

Earning NIMS credentials requires a performance test and an online theory test. The performance requirements and theory tests are drawn directly from the NIMS Standards and are written and piloted by industry. Machining Level 1 credentials are designed to meet entry-level requirements for on-the-job skills. These 11 credential test areas are:

1. Measurement, Materials and Safety
2. Job Planning, Benchwork and Layout
3. CNC Mill Operations
4. CNC Milling Programming Setup and Operations
5. CNC Lathe Operations
6. CNC Lathe Programming Setup and Operations
7. Drill Press I
8. Grinding I
9. Milling I
10. Turning I (Between Centers)
11. Turning I (Chucking)

NIMS test results are provided electronically to PDE. Students should be encouraged to make their first attempt on each NIMS credentialing test when they are sufficiently prepared. Additional attempts will not be reported to PDE for inclusion in federal data reporting. Test site coordinators are responsible for verifying student data and submitting PDE's electronic *NIMS Verification Form* by May 15, 2019. The [NIMS Verification Form](http://bit.do/NIMS-VF) is available at <http://bit.do/NIMS-VF>.

## Required Forms

Below is a description of the required forms used for this testing program. All of the required forms can be found on the [Student Occupational Competency Testing program website](https://bit.do/SOCT) at <https://bit.do/SOCT>.

**NOCTI Security and Testing Agreement** – A new NOCTI *Security and Testing Agreement* must be submitted each time the information on the agreement changes including test site coordinator change, administrator change, address and email updates, etc. The [Security and Testing Agreement](http://bit.do/Testing_Agreement) is available at [http://bit.do/Testing\\_Agreement](http://bit.do/Testing_Agreement).

**Pennsylvania Students Verification Form** – This electronic form must be submitted prior to ordering tests. It will be used to verify student data and determine budgetary plans for Student Occupational Competency Testing. All schools with approved CTE programs are required to complete this form. Use the *Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk* to choose the appropriate test for each approved program. If there are no concentrators anticipated to graduate in any program, this form is still required to be completed. Order forms will **not** be processed until this form has been received and approved. The [Students Verification Form](http://bit.do/StudentVF) is available at <http://bit.do/StudentVF>. Submit this form electronically by Feb. 28, 2019. This form can be submitted prior to the deadline, but it must be returned one week prior to submitting the

Pennsylvania *Test Order Form* to allow time for approval. Penn State Greater Allegheny will contact the school within three business days if the form cannot be approved.

**Pennsylvania NOCTI Test Order Form** – Test orders are to be placed using Pennsylvania’s order form on [NOCTI’s Client Services Center](https://clientservices.nocti.org) under the “Ordering” section at <https://clientservices.nocti.org>. Tests must be ordered at least four weeks prior to the scheduled test date(s) to allow for processing and shipping and to avoid any additional financial charges to a school.

**Pennsylvania NIMS Verification Form** – All schools with approved CTE programs that align to NIMS on the *Pennsylvania Student Test Crosswalk* are required to submit this electronic form. This form must be submitted by May 15, 2019. The [NIMS Verification Form](http://bit.do/NIMS-VF) is available at <http://bit.do/NIMS-VF>.

**Pennsylvania Test Materials Return Form** – All schools must complete the information requested on this form. An area is included on the form for the test site coordinator to indicate test dates, verification of the return of test booklets and online test codes for unused multiple-choice tests. This form, and all used and unused NOCTI test booklets and evaluator guides, must be mailed to Penn State Greater Allegheny immediately after test administration. This form and all test materials must be received by Penn State Greater Allegheny by May 15, 2019. The [Test Materials Return Form](http://bit.do/2018-19TMRF) is available at <http://bit.do/2018-19TMRF>.

## Scores and Certificates

Career and technical education programs provide an exceptional learning environment for students to acquire both knowledge and skills. Measuring these skills is an essential part of preparing students for their chosen career field and/or postsecondary education upon completion of their CTE program of study. School administrators can use test data to recognize student achievement, promote continuous program and instructional improvement, and meet state and federal requirements. Care should be taken in interpreting the results of the test. Students’ scores reflect performance on a single day under standardized administration processes.

Incomplete or partial test scores will not be reported to PDE. NOCTI test takers must complete both the multiple-choice and performance components and NIMS test takers must complete at least three credentialing tests to be reported to PDE.

## Pennsylvania Occupational Performance Level Descriptors

The following performance levels will be used:

1. **Advanced Level** – This level reflects the technical skills, knowledge and abilities required to successfully perform the duties of an entry level job, in a safe and effective manner with minimal supervision.
2. **Competent Level** – This level reflects the technical skills, knowledge and abilities required to adequately perform duties on the very first day of a job, in a safe and effective manner with an appropriate amount of “new employee” supervision.
3. **Basic Level** – This level does not meet the competent level.

## Pennsylvania Certificates

1. **Pennsylvania Skills Certificate** – The Pennsylvania Skills Certificate was established by PDE to recognize CTE students who have demonstrated high achievement in their chosen technical area.
2. **Pennsylvania Certificate of Competency** – The Pennsylvania Certificate of Competency was established by PDE to recognize CTE students who have achieved a competent skill level in their chosen technical area.

## **Pennsylvania NOCTI Student Test Cut Scores**

In order to meet the competent or advanced performance levels, students must score at or above the cut scores listed in the *2017-18 Pennsylvania Student Test Cut Scores* document on **both the multiple-choice and performance components**. This document will be available on the [Student Occupational Competency Testing program website](https://bit.do/SOCT) at <https://bit.do/SOCT> in April 2018.

Pennsylvania uses a criterion-referenced approach to develop cut scores for each NOCTI test. These cut scores are established at the competent level for a minimally competent student. This minimally competent student reflects the technical skills, knowledge and abilities required to adequately perform duties on the very first day on the job in a safe and effective manner. Students who perform at, or above this cut score will be considered at, or above the competent level. In addition to determining a cut score for the competent level, there is a need to establish a cut score for the advanced level, in order to determine which students will receive the Pennsylvania Skills Certificate. All other students will be considered to be performing at a below competent level.

NOCTI tests are revised approximately every two to three years. A new cut score must be determined each time a test is revised and when a new test is developed, including Pennsylvania customized tests. For each new/revised test, a committee of 10-12 subject matter experts (SMEs), comprised of active OAC members, is coordinated to review and evaluate the test. The SMEs' evaluation ratings are calculated by determining a competent range, with a minimum competent score and a maximum competent score. The advanced level is set 0.1 percentage points above the maximum competent score. The basic level is set 0.1 percentage points below the minimum competent score. Starting in the 2012-13 school year, the below basic range began to be phased out. The basic level will now extend from the lowest score to the minimum competent score.

For Pennsylvania customized tests with no cut score due to insufficient Pennsylvania SME participation, the CIP code/program is not eligible to post-test under this occupational competency testing program. Consequently, program test data will not be available for secondary concentrators in the program and these students will not meet the CTE completer student definition or be eligible for a Pennsylvania certificate. Efforts to recruit Pennsylvania SMEs will continue until a required number participate. When a sufficient amount of Pennsylvania SMEs participate in the cut score development process, a cut score will be developed and approved programs will be eligible to post-test.

For national NOCTI tests where no cut score can be determined due to insufficient Pennsylvania SME participation, national SME data provided by NOCTI is used with Pennsylvania's calculation process to develop a Pennsylvania cut score. Efforts to recruit Pennsylvania SMEs will continue until a required number participate. When a sufficient amount of Pennsylvania SMEs participate in the cut score development process, the cut score will be recalculated using the Pennsylvania SMEs.

In 2017-18, a PDE policy decision was made to cap all NOCTI student cut scores which exceed 90.0% at the Advanced Level. All written and performance student cut scores that were above 90.0% in 2016-17 were adjusted to 90.0%. Beginning in 2018-19, NOCTI student written and performance cut scores will not exceed 90.0%.

**Multiple-Choice Test Cut Score** – The cut score for the multiple-choice component of the test is determined using a statistical model, called the Nedelsky method, which is specifically designed for tests which use multiple-choice items. SMEs are trained on the Nedelsky method, and the actual test review is done using NOCTI’s Online Criterion-Based Cut Score System.

SMEs are instructed to individually review each question by eliminating the incorrect choices (distractors) that a minimally competent student should be able to identify as incorrect. Each question is then given a numerical value between zero and one, depending on the number of items eliminated. The sum of these values is denoted as the SME’s probable score of a minimally competent student. Individual SME scores are collected by NOCTI’s online system.

The scores from the panel are reviewed by a psychometrician to determine the competent level cut score. Cut scores are finalized by PDE and released to schools and NOCTI. NOCTI uses these cut scores to generate score reports for each school.

**Performance Test Cut Score** – The Angoff method is used to determine the competent cut score for the performance component of each test. SMEs are asked to estimate the level at which a minimally competent student can perform the required tasks. The scores from the panel are reviewed by a psychometrician to determine the competent level cut score.

### Determining Performance Level

In the example below, if a student takes the NOCTI Cabinetmaking test and scores a 38.3 percent on the multiple-choice component and a 72.7 percent on the performance component, the student would achieve the basic level. If a student scores a 38.4 percent on the multiple-choice component and a 72.8 percent on the performance component, the student would achieve the competent level. If the student scores a 49.9 percent on the multiple-choice component and an 86.6 percent on the performance component, the student would achieve the advanced level.

Cut Scores		Secondary MULTIPLE-CHOICE			Secondary PERFORMANCE		
Test Title	Code	Basic Level	Competent Level	Advanced Level	Basic Level	Competent Level	Advanced Level
Cabinetmaking	3014	38.3% and below	38.4%	49.9% and above	72.7% and below	72.8%	86.6% and above

A student must score at the advanced level on **both** the multiple-choice and performance components of the test to be eligible for the Pennsylvania Skill Certificate. The Pennsylvania Certificate of Competency will be awarded to students scoring at the competent level on both the multiple-choice and performance components **or** scoring at the advanced level on either the multiple-choice or performance components and at the competent level on the other component.

### Receiving Certificates Using NOCTI Tests

NOCTI will supply the list of students who earned a Pennsylvania certificate and individual student scores to the test site coordinator, and at the same time, will notify Penn State Greater Allegheny of students who have achieved the advanced and competent levels. Certificates will be sent to the school when all test materials are returned, and all required forms are submitted and approved. The deadline for returning materials is May 15, 2019.

## Receiving Certificates Using NIMS Tests

PDE and NIMS have partnered to provide NIMS credentialing tests in Machining Level 1 areas. This includes both performance and theory components. These credential tests are:

### Basic Skills Tests

1. Measurement, Materials and Safety
2. Job Planning, Benchwork and Layout

### Machining Skills Tests

3. Manual Milling Skills 1
4. Turning Operations: Turning Between Centers
5. Turning Operations: Turning Chucking Skills
6. Grinding Skills 1
7. Drill Press Skills 1
8. CNC Turning: Programming Setup and Operations
9. CNC Milling: Programming Setup and Operations
10. CNC Turning: Operator
11. CNC Milling: Operator

Both PDE and NIMS recognize the 1. Measurement, Materials and Safety and the 2. Job Planning, Benchwork and Layout tests list above as being basic skills tests as opposed to machining skill tests (numbers 3-11 above); therefore, **only one of these two tests (numbers 1 and 2 above) may be counted towards a Pennsylvania certificate**. Students that take only the NIMS machining skills tests (numbers 3-11 above) are eligible for a Pennsylvania certificate if they meet the requirements below.

PDE has determined that only the first attempt for each NIMS credentialing test will be reported and used in determining students' eligibility for Pennsylvania certificates. Additional attempts are considered to be test retakes, which are not permitted (refer to page 7 for more detail) and are not accepted by PDE.

The following performance level requirements are used:

1. **Advanced Level** – In order to achieve a Pennsylvania Skills Certificate, a student must pass **four** or more credentialing tests.
2. **Competent Level** – In order to achieve a Pennsylvania Certificate of Competency, a student must pass **three** credentialing tests.
3. **Basic Level** – Any student not meeting the requirements for the competent level.

Certificates will be sent to test site coordinators when the *NIMS Verification Spreadsheet* is submitted and approved to Penn State Greater Allegheny. (Refer to page 13 for more detail.)

## Accommodations

Students with IEPs must be included in the test process. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) mandate that students with disabilities be included in state- and district-wide tests. **If a student with an IEP participates in the Keystone Exams, then that student must also participate in this occupational competency testing program.** Allowable accommodations for all students are described in the *Accommodations Guidelines 2018 PSSA and Keystone Exams*. It is strongly suggested that schools review this entire document and solicit support from school district special education certified personnel in order to provide allowable accommodations to all students. The complete [Accommodations Guidelines 2018 PSSA and Keystone Exams](http://bit.do/PDE-accomm-guidelines-2018) is available at <http://bit.do/PDE-accomm-guidelines-2018>. The [Accommodations Guidelines for English Learners \(ELs\)](http://bit.do/PDE-Accomm-Guidelines-2018-ELs) is available at <http://bit.do/PDE-Accomm-Guidelines-2018-ELs>.

Students who take the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA) are considered exempt from participating in this occupational competency testing program; however, students who take the PASA may be tested with the recommendation of the IEP team.

Any required accommodations included in a student's IEP must be provided on both the written and performance components of the occupational competency test. It is important that IEPs for secondary concentrators who take an occupational competency test contain the appropriate test-taking accommodations. IEPs should list clear and specific accommodation information necessary for occupational testing. Often these accommodations are removed from the IEP once the student has completed their Keystone Exams.

Once a student has been identified as a secondary concentrator who is anticipated to graduate in the current school year, the test site coordinator, the instructor, and the IEP team should discuss accommodations for administering the test while maintaining the security of the test.

1. The readability of all tests correspond to the reading level necessary to be job-ready as judged by industry experts. As a result, NOCTI does not recommend reading the multiple-choice component of the examination to a student unless required in the student's IEP. It is, however, the responsibility of the test site coordinator and special education personnel to determine if reading the test to the student is appropriate following the accommodations guidelines in the *PSSA and Keystones Accommodations Guidelines*. English Learners (ELs) accommodations should align with those in the *Accommodations Guidelines for English Learners*.
2. If the student's disability requires a large print version of the test, the request must be made to Penn State Greater Allegheny at the time of ordering. Students will respond directly in the large print test booklet. The test site coordinator, not the instructor, is responsible for transferring the responses to the student's answer sheet.

An accommodation can only be provided if it is 1) indicated in the student's IEP under Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and 2) used throughout the student's regular instruction/curriculum. Accommodations cannot be included in an IEP only for NOCTI testing. All testing accommodations must be the same as those defined for a student's regular curriculum; i.e., a reader for tests in academic courses also applies to the CTE program.

### **NOCTI Allowable Accommodations**

The following accommodations are available for NOCTI tests for students with IEPs:

1. **Text-to-Speech (TTS)** – NOCTI online multiple-choice tests are available for delivery in Text-to-Speech format. This online delivery option provides the test taker with the ability to view questions and answer choices in a larger font and hear questions and answer choices via a computerized voice that speaks the questions and the answer choices. Text-to-Speech is intended to be an online delivery alternative for students with IEPs. Some examples include, test takers who may have a learning disability, such as dyslexia, or who may have difficulty reading. When planning online test administration, consideration should be given to the level of noise that will be generated due to the Text-to-Speech option. Headphones for each Text-to-Speech test taker are recommended. Information on Text-to-Speech online tests, computer/equipment specifications, and instructions for administration may be found at NOCTI's Client Services Center.
2. **Readers** – A human reader may be used to read and clarify, as appropriate, all sections of the test to students who have been identified as needing this accommodation. However, the reader may not provide clues or any other form of feedback to the student. Students having this accommodation should be tested individually. When using online tests, questions are scrambled therefore, a reader is required for each test taker.

NOTE: There is a difference between TTS and a human reader. TTS must be indicated in the IEP if it is to be used as an accommodation. If the IEP indicates a reader is required, a human reader must be used. If an IEP indicates a student needs a reader or TTS, then either can be used.

3. **Extended Time** – Extended time should be given if required in the IEP. Defining "extended time" should be very specific and should leave no allowances for differing interpretation. If extended time is listed in a student's IEP for Keystone testing situations, then it will also apply to NOCTI testing and must be defined based on the specific needs of the student and must be clearly worded with specific language. The IEP team is required to make these decisions based on that specific student's disability deficits. The amount of time granted should be delineated on the IEP (i.e., time and a half, extra 15 minutes, extra 30 minutes, etc.). It should be based on how the disability impacts performance. Time cannot be extended more than one school day. Time extensions are permitted for both the multiple-choice and performance component for the test. IEP teams should ensure that an accommodation for extended time is written to reflect the functional characteristics of the specific student.

NOTE: If extended time is indicated in a student's IEP, it can be provided for the performance test. Students should receive credit if they complete the job within their extended time, even if the test rubric indicates a specific timeframe; i.e., 20 minutes.

4. **Visual Assistance** – NOCTI online test takers can click on a graphic or diagram to enlarge it for easier viewing. In some cases, a hardcopy or large print test booklet is necessary to satisfy IEP requirements. Contact Penn State Greater Allegheny to order hardcopy or large print tests.
5. **Performance Component** – A reader, as defined above, is permitted to be used for the performance component. An accommodation is not permitted if it negates the validity of the test (i.e., reading a reading test to a student). Since the performance component is assessing the ability of the student to perform a particular skill; i.e., car repair or preparing a menu, then having the task performed for the student by another person would negate the validity of the test.
6. **English Learners (ELs)** – Each school must involve the appropriate school personnel in the determination of appropriate accommodations for ELs. The English as a Second Language (ESL)/bilingual teacher, the ESL/bilingual education coordinator, other classroom teachers, the test site coordinator, a parent, the principal or counselor and the student (when appropriate) may be involved in this determination. Identifying the appropriate accommodations should be a collaborative process and should include a content area teacher consulting with English as a Second Language/bilingual teachers. For dually-identified students, the IEP team should be aware of the ELs-specific needs and should cooperate in identifying ELs-specific accommodations.
7. **Interpreters** – Tests can be reviewed prior to test administration by an interpreter (similar to performance test evaluators). Test materials must remain in possession of the test site coordinator before and after the review. Copyrighted materials CANNOT be duplicated.

### **NIMS Allowable Accommodations**

[NIMS accommodations](https://www.nims-skills.org/resources/testing-guide/423) are available at <https://www.nims-skills.org/resources/testing-guide/423>. NIMS offers the following accommodations for learners with IEPs:

1. **Readers** – A third party (not an instructor) may sit with a student to read the exam aloud. In similar fashion, translators may sit in with any student needing language assistance during testing.
2. **Visual Assistance** – A hardcopy version of any exam, along with a Scantron form, permitting the student to take an exam on paper.

## Resources

### Pennsylvania Testing Program Website

Pennsylvania testing requirements, materials, guidebooks, and forms are available on the [Student Occupational Competency Testing program website](https://bit.do/SOCT) at <https://bit.do/SOCT>. This website includes information on: PDE requirements, test site coordinator resources, general resources, test security, required forms, accommodations, NOCTI resources, NOCTI test blueprints, NIMS resources, NOCTI pre-tests and study guides, cut scores and certificates, Pennsylvania cut score development activity, informational and training videos, and NOCTI pilot testing.

### NOCTI Resources

The NOCTI information and materials listed below can be found on the [Student Occupational Competency Testing program website](https://bit.do/SOCT) at <https://bit.do/SOCT>.

1. *List of Technical Specifications for the Online Testing System* – This document describes the system requirements needed for NOCTI online tests. It also outlines the system, network, and browser configurations.
2. *Online Test Administration Guidelines* – This document provides detailed task-related information to use NOCTI's online test system as quickly as possible.
3. Test Blueprints – Test blueprints include the competencies on which the test is based, scopes for both components of the test, sample questions and sample job/performance assignments.
4. Other Publications and Materials – Materials are available from NOCTI that provide information on the testing process. The following publications are available on [NOCTI's Client Services Center](https://clientservices.nocti.org) at <https://clientservices.nocti.org>:
  - a. Instructor Prep Packs
  - b. Site Coordinator Guide for Student Assessment
  - c. Proctor Guide for Online Testing
  - d. Proctor Guide for Paper/Pencil Testing
  - e. Evaluator Instructions for Performance Testing
  - f. Performance Test Rating Entry Instructions

Teacher's Corner – NOCTI provides a variety of helpful services and tools to assist with program and student success for instructors. Visit <http://www.nocti.org/TeachersCorner.cfm>. A password for instructors to access the Teacher's Corner can be obtained on NOCTI's Client Services Center at <https://clientservices.nocti.org> by the test site coordinator.

### NIMS Resources

Visit the [NIMS website](http://www.nims-skills.org) at [www.nims-skills.org](http://www.nims-skills.org) and under the credentialing tab download the *Guide for Educational Training Programs*, *Guide to Establishing a MET-TEC Committee*, *Accommodations for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)* and other resources; view the Credentialing 101 Video Tutorial; and download the Credentialing 101 Kit.

## **Contacts**

### **Pennsylvania Department of Education**

Bureau of Career and Technical Education  
333 Market Street, 11th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126  
(717) 783-6623

[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov)

Kevin Springman, Educational Research Associate – [kspringman@pa.gov](mailto:kspringman@pa.gov)

### **Education Resource Center, Penn State Greater Allegheny**

4000 University Drive  
101 Ostermayer Lab  
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(412) 675-9065

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