

Overview

Score delays and cancellations frequently result when testing staff fail to follow the policies and procedures in the supervisor manual(s). This document is intended to help you avoid the most common of these “pitfalls.”

All Testing

Below is a list of common pitfalls for all types of testing.

Common Pitfall	How to Avoid this Pitfall
Student completes pretest on test day or after testing	Complete the PSAE Day 1 (ACT Plus Writing) pretest session before the test date. You may need to schedule two pretest sessions to accommodate any students who may have missed the initial session. For questions on test day, contact ACT before beginning testing.
School mixes standard time and accommodations materials	Keep materials for Standard Time testing and Accommodations testing separate. Standard Time test materials for Day 1 and Day 2 are shipped to the Test Supervisor. Accommodations test materials for Day 1 (ACT-Approved and State-Allowed, if applicable) and Day 2 are shipped to the Test Accommodations Coordinator. ACT-Approved Accommodations test materials are assigned to a specific student and must be used only by that student. If you have a question about which test materials to use, contact ACT prior to distributing them to students.
Test materials are transported or shared between schools	Use only materials assigned and shipped to your school. Test materials may not be transferred or shared between schools without prior authorization from ACT, even if an alternative school is affiliated with the “main” high school.
Students are seated facing each other	Seat students so they are facing the <i>same</i> direction. Staff must be able to clearly see every student.
Tests are administered out of sequence	Administer the tests in the order prescribed in the supervisor manual(s); Test 1 (first), Test 2 (second), Test 3 (third), Test 4 (fourth). The ACT Writing test on PSAE Day 1 must be given after the PSAE Day 1 (ACT) multiple choice tests.
One room supervisor monitors multiple rooms at the same time	Each room supervisor may assume responsibility for only one test room so that he or she is able to react to any problems or questions that occur in the room.
Student is dismissed for possession of cell phone or electronic device	Ensure that students do not bring cell phones or other electronic devices into test rooms or possess them during breaks.

Standard Time Testing

Below is a list of common pitfalls for Standard Time testing.

Common Pitfall	How to Avoid this Pitfall
Verbal Instructions do not start by 9:00 a.m.	Begin reading the Verbal Instructions no later than 9:00 a.m. in every room. If students at your school are not normally scheduled to be in school during morning hours, arrangements must be made for these students. If a problem arises that will delay the start of testing, contact ACT immediately.
School synchronizes timing of tests across all rooms	Each room supervisor is responsible for reading the Verbal Instructions and timing the tests in his or her own room, following the instructions in the supervisor manual(s).
A delay in testing occurs between Test 1 and Test 2 due to staff checking calculators	Check for prohibited calculators as students are entering the testing room. If your school chooses to provide calculators, distribute them as you admit students to the room. During Test 2, the room supervisor must walk around the room and check to make sure students are using only a permitted calculator.



Common Pitfall	How to Avoid this Pitfall
The break between Test 2 and Test 3 is longer than 15 minutes	Make sure students are seated and ready to begin testing 15 minutes after the end of Test 2. If a break runs long complete an <i>Irregularity Report</i> explaining the situation or call ACT for assistance.
Test Supervisor fails to order makeup test materials	Refer to your <i>Checklist of Dates</i> for the order deadline. If you do not receive an email with instructions on ordering makeup materials by the initial test date contact ACT immediately. Schools that do not order makeup test materials on time will not be able to test on the makeup test date.

Accommodations Testing

Below is a list of common pitfalls for Accommodations testing.

Common Pitfall	How to Avoid this Pitfall
Testing is administered before or after the testing window	Refer to your <i>Checklist of Dates</i> for the two-week accommodations testing window, and administer testing only within that window. Students testing outside of this window will not receive scores.
ACT-Approved Accommodations for PSAE Day 1 are provided to a student who is not approved	Use the final ACT-Approved Accommodations roster for PSAE Day 1, provided with your secure shipment, to determine who can be given ACT-Approved Accommodations. The roster identifies the accommodation(s) approved and the test format for each student. ACT-Approved Accommodations materials for PSAE Day 1 are prepackaged and specifically assigned to an individual student. Students who are not on the roster must test with standard time test materials in a standard time room or, if applicable, with State-Allowed Accommodations for PSAE Day 1 in a state-allowed room.
Students with different timing codes test in the same room	Different rooms are required for different timing codes, formats, or accommodations. Use your final ACT-Approved Accommodations roster for PSAE Day 1 as a guide. For PSAE Day 1, do not mix ACT-Approved Accommodations and State-Allowed Accommodations students in the same room, if applicable. As accommodations testing can occur anytime during the two-week window, plan staff and rooms accordingly.
Student completes one test section over multiple days	Administer each test section in a single day. If a student must leave before a test section is complete contact ACT for further instruction.
Student does not test individually per their accommodation requirement	Test students approved for a reader or stop-the-clock breaks individually, regardless of the assigned timing code. Students using DVDs may test as a group if they use their own headphones, can control the progress of their own players, and begin each test at the same time.
Verbal Instructions are not read to students using DVD materials	Verbal Instructions from the supervisor's manual(s) must be read to all students. Verbal Instructions are not recorded on the DVD materials.

Contacting Us

For questions about:

- Standard time testing, contact ACT electronically via the Contact Us web page at www.act.org/aap/state/contact.html or call ACT at 800.553.6244, ext. 2800
- Accommodations testing, email ACT at ACTStateAccoms@act.org or call ACT at 800.553.6244, ext. 1788.
- Participation requirements or eligibility, email the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) at psae@isbe.net or call ISBE at 866.317.6034.