Testing Accommodations: COVID-19 Addendum

In an effort to keep students, staff, and faculty safe, the Office of Accessibility has moved to limit in-person, accommodated testing during the Fall 2020 semester. Accommodated, in-person testing in the Office of Accessibility and Counseling and Testing Center will be rare and will require pre-approval from the student’s assigned Disability Specialist. The COVID-19 Addendum to the Testing Accommodations Supplement will outline information students need to know in order to access their testing accommodations during the Fall 2020 semester.

Working with Faculty to Coordinate Testing Accommodations:
Coordination and frequent communication amongst the student, Disability Specialist, and faculty member(s) is critical in ensuring testing accommodations are met. Please follow the steps below to work directly with your instructor to coordinate testing accommodations.

1. Introduce yourself to your instructor(s) as early on in the semester as possible and start a conversation about your testing accommodations.
   • Ask your Disability Specialist to help you draft an email or facilitate conversation, and copy them on the email you send to your instructor(s).
2. Find out how your instructor(s) plans to give tests and quizzes, and discuss the best way for your testing accommodations to be included in this plan.
   • Do not hesitate to ask your Disability Specialist for help in identifying ways to ensure your testing accommodations will be included.
3. Notify your instructor via email that you intend to use your testing accommodations for each test and quiz at least 4 business days in advance, and 1 week in advance for midterms and finals.
   • Do not submit a test request in STARS unless you are approved for an in-person testing exemption OR you will be utilizing remote proctoring with a human reader and/or writer.
4. Contact your instructor and Disability Specialist immediately if your testing accommodations are not included.

Remote Proctoring Services:
Students with a reader and/or writer accommodation can access these services remotely in two ways:

1. Screen readers and speech-to-text software – tutorials and trainings regarding how to use these programs are available on the Office of Accessibility website (uakron.edu/access) and by request. The programs below have been identified to work with Brightspace assessments.
   a. Screen Readers:
      Mac Users: VoiceOver
      PC (Windows) Users: NVDA
      Chromebook Users: ChromeVox
   b. Speech to Text:
      Dragon Naturally Speaking
      Dragon Naturally Speaking works when the settings are adjusted to “not use the dictation box”.
   c. Other:
      ZoomText will work to increase font size but not as a reader.
2. Remote human proctors
   a. Remote proctoring with a human reader and/or writer is available for most online assessments via Microsoft Teams video conferencing.
b. Students interested in utilizing remote proctoring services with a human reader and/or writer need to notify their Disability Specialist at least 2 weeks prior to their first test or quiz to allow adequate time for the student to complete a training and the Disability Specialist to coordinate with the instructor.

c. Students utilizing remote proctoring are expected to submit test requests in STARS at least 4 business days in advance for regular tests and quizzes, and at least 1 full week in advance for midterms and finals. Students need to indicate “Remote Proctor” in the Additional Note section of the test request.

  i. While testing staff will still process late exam requests for remote proctoring with a human reader and/or writer, the additional planning required to prepare for testing during COVID-19 will extremely limit the number of late exam requests that can be approved. Please anticipate most late exam requests being denied.

Requesting an Exemption for In-Person Testing:
In-person testing for the Fall 2020 semester will be rare. Requests for in-person testing exemptions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and only requests for in-person testing deemed absolutely necessary will be approved.

Students that would like to request an exemption to test in-person in their assigned testing location need to submit their request to their Disability Specialist via email with the following information:

  1. Which class(es) they are requesting the exemption
  2. The reason(s) for their request
  3. [If available] The date of the first exam for the class(es) and any other pre-set test dates for the class(es)
  4. The mode of delivery (online, in-person, hybrid) for each class they are requesting an exemption

Requests need to be submitted with enough advance notice to allow five (5) business days for the Disability Specialist to process the request and gather any additional information needed, AND to allow the student time to still submit their test request at least four (4) business days in advance for regular tests and quizzes, and one (1) full week in advance for midterms and finals. To allow ample time for processing, students should submit their exemption requests at least two (2) weeks prior to their first exam whenever possible.

Once an exemption is approved, the student will be permitted to test in-person for the approved class(es) until Thanksgiving, after which classes will resume remote instruction. Students are expected to submit test requests on time, and follow any existing and adjusted policies and procedures as described in the Alternative Testing Supplement’s COVID-19 Addendum and STARS E-Agreement.

In the event the Office of Accessibility and/or The University of Akron is required to physically close the office due to an increase in COVID-19 related health concerns, all approved, in-person testing exemptions will cease and the student must work with their faculty member to determine new solutions.

While testing staff will still process late exam requests, the additional planning and cleaning required to prepare for testing during COVID-19 will extremely limit the number of late exam requests that can be approved. Please anticipate most late exam requests being denied. An exam request is considered late if it is submitted in STARS less than 4 business days in advance for regular tests and quizzes, and less than 1 full week in advance for midterms and finals.