Updates at ETS:
New Tele-Assessment Guidance and Tips for Assisting Test Takers with Accommodation Requests

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Session Overview

- Introduction to ETS

- Accommodations Request and Review Process

- Supplemental Information

- Tele-Assessment Guidance

- Q&A

Introduction to ETS

What is ETS?

- ETS is the world's largest high-stakes testing agency receiving over 15,000 requests for accommodations each year

- We administer Praxis, GACE (Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators), GRE (Graduate Record Exam), TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), and HiSET (High School Equivalency Test)

- We take an individualized approach when reviewing documentation and determining the need for accommodations on these tests

Who's Who at ETS?

- Office of Disability Policy
  - Sets policies and procedures

  - Internal Reviewers
    - Performs initial review of applications

  - External Reviewers
    - 30+ reviewers

- Disability Services
  - Call center
  - Processing

Accommodation Request and Review Process

Accommodation Updates

- 25% extended test time now available for all programs

- At-home testing
  - Computer requirements available online
  - Tests proctored by ProctorU
  - Applicants indicate preference for testing in a test center or at home during application process

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Steps to Apply for Accommodations

- Complete the necessary forms
    - Test registration form
    - Accommodations request form

- Review the documentation requirements
    - Determine if you need to submit documentation, and if so, that it meets the requirements

- Submit the documentation (if necessary)

Accommodations Review Process

- The documentation review process is different for each testing agency.

- What happens when an application arrives at ETS?
  - Once application is submitted, processors review and notify the test taker if something is missing
  - Internal reviewers perform an analysis of the documentation and make decision to approve, request more information, or send to external reviewers
  - If documentation is sent to external reviewers, they complete a review and make recommendations
  - Test takers are informed in writing via email if all, some, or none of their request is approved

ETS Has a Short-Cut

- The Certification of Eligibility: Accommodations History (COE) form can be used to bypass the full review process for test takers with LD, ADHD, ASD, TBI, physical disabilities and psychiatric disabilities when requesting 50% or less extended test time and/or breaks

- The COE is also accepted for blind/low vision and deaf/hard-of-hearing test takers for accommodations specific to those disabilities

- The documentation on file at the post-secondary institution must align with ETS documentation guidelines, including our recency requirements

When Does ETS Require Documentation?

Documentation is needed when any of the following are true:

1. When the test taker has a medical disability/chronic health condition or selected "other" as the nature of their disability
2. When the test taker is requesting accommodations other than 50% or less extended time and breaks
3. When the test taker's documentation is slightly outdated
4. When the test taker was first diagnosed with a disability in the last 12 months
5. When the test taker is unable to submit the COE form

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When Does ETS Require Documentation? (con't)

- **Documentation should only be submitted if it is required**

- Guidelines for documenting specific disability categories are available on our website (www.ets.org/disabilities)

General Documentation Criteria

- Must be completed by an evaluator qualified to make the diagnosis

- Should clearly state the diagnosed disability or disabilities

- Describe the current functional limitations

- Be current per the guidelines

General Documentation Criteria (con't)

- Include summary of historical information

- Include a list of test instruments, if applicable

- Describe the specific accommodations requested

- Adequately support the need for each of the testing accommodations requested

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Supplemental Information

Other Types of Supporting Documentation

- Personal statement
  - Guidance for writing a personal statement can be found at https://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/personal-statement.pdf

- Tips for Test Takers with Disabilities brochure available at https://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/tips_for_test_takers.pdf

Other Types of Supporting Documentation

- Letters of support
  - Disability services providers at institutions of higher education
    - Guidance for writing a letter of support available at https://www.ets.org/disabilities/disability_service_providers/writing_support_letters/

- Tips for Disability Service Providers brochure available at https://www.ets.org/s/disabilities/pdf/tips_disability.pdf

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Tele-Assessment Guidance
for Psychological, Psychoeducational and
Neuropsychological Assessment

Assessment Landscape

- **Pre-pandemic**
  - Assessment – distinguishing professional activity of psychologists (Krishnamurthy et al., 2004; Meyer et al., 2001)

  - Paradoxically – paucity of information on competencies. First competency guidelines 2004; *APA Revised Competency Benchmarks (APA, 2011)

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Assessment Landscape (con't)

- Research on preparation of interns suggests that the competencies are insufficient (Ready & Veague, 2014; Ready et al., 2016)

- High error rate on Wechsler tests alone w/ practicing psychologists (Roberts & Davis, 2015; Oak et al., 2018)

Enter COVID-19

- Situational anomie

- Mixed messages re: tele-assessment - no central messaging

- Stakeholders' competing needs

- E.g., Krach et al. (2020)
  - Government agencies – don't use or, if so – be cautious
  - Professional organizations – use w/ caution
  - Test publishers – USE (with or without caution)

Pandemic Response

- Executive orders re: interstate practice

- Guidelines for telehealth/tele-assessment
  - APA

  - IOPC

  - Essentials of Tele-Assessment (Wright & Raiford, 2021)

  - Telepsychology Competencies Credential Co-sponsored by The Trust and National Register (1/2022)

Tele-Assessment Guidance: Purpose

- To contribute toward standards in the emerging field of tele-assessment

- To provide guidance to evaluators

- To provide guidance to test takers

The guidance is a fluid document, which will change as the field evolves

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Introduction

"ETS is committed to serving test takers with disabilities. We recognize that multiple situations may make it difficult for test takers to participate in an in-person evaluation and that tele-assessment may provide a reasonable and more accessible alternative… "

Introduction (con't)

"...This tele-assessment guidance is intended to help test-takers and evaluators in instances when tele-assessment may be appropriate. This guidance should be used in conjunction with ETS Disability Documentation Guidelines for the specific disability(ies) for which the test-taker is seeking accommodations."

ETS Tele-Assessment Guidance
for Psychological, Psychoeducational and
Neuropsychological Assessment

Evaluations conducted by tele-assessment should:

1. Be conducted in alignment with the ethical principles and standards of the evaluator's profession;

2. Be administered by a qualified evaluator;

3. Be based on a sound rationale;

4. Describe steps taken to protect test security;

ETS Tele-Assessment Guidance (con't)

5. Consider intersectionality;

6. *Honor the experience of disability in the approach to tele-assessment;

7. Verify that the validity issues associated with tele-assessment have been explained to the examinee;

8. Verify that the examinee was oriented to the evaluation process and use of technology for the assessment, including the recommended use of a two-camera approach;

*Honoring Disability: Universal Design (APA, 2022; APA, 2019)

- **Disability Act 2005 - Universal Design**

"a) the design and composition of an environment so that it may be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest possible extent, in the most independent and natural manner possible, in the widest possible range of situations, and without the need for adaptation, modification, assistive devices or specialized solutions..."

*Honoring Disability: Universal Design (APA, 2022; APA, 2019) (con't)

- "...modification, assistive devices or specialized solutions, by any persons of any age or size or having any particular physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability; and b) means, in relation to electronic systems, any electronics-based process of creating products, services or systems so that they may be used by any person" (Authority & Design, 2015 as cited in APA, 2022).

*Honoring Disability

(con't) (APA, 2022)

Strive for:

- Barrier-free communication environment

- Awareness of opportunities and challenges posed by assistive technology

- Respect for intersectional identities

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*Honoring Disability

(con't) (APA, 2022)

Strive for:

- Consider disability-related factors in selecting assessments and evaluating/applying norms

- Test adaptation for accessibility as appropriate, while preserving validity to the extent possible

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ETS Tele-Assessment Guidance (con't)

9. Address the following information:

- Telehealth platform used (i.e., HIPAA compliant)

- Method used to verify examinee identity

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- Location(s) where assessment was conducted

- Any technology disruptions or other situational factors, which may have impacted the examinee's task performance

- Any examinee or evaluator factors, which may have impacted the examinee's task performance

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10. Include a statement of evaluator confidence in assessment validity and findings.

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Sources, e.g.:

- American Psychological Association, APA Task Force on Guidelines for Assessment and Intervention with Persons with Disabilities (2022). *Guidelines for Assessment and Intervention with Persons with Disabilities.* Retrieved from https://www.apa.org/about/policy/guidelines-assessment-intervention-disability.pdf.

- APA Guidance on psychological tele-assessment during the COVID-19 crisis.

Sources, e.g. (con't)

- APA Resolution on Support of Universal Design and Accessibility in Education, Training and Practice (2019). Retrieved from https://ww.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-support-universal-design-accessibility-education

- APA, 2020. Considerations for assessment training competencies in health service psychology programs in the age of COVID-19.

Sources, e.g. (con't)

- Brearly, T.W., Shura, R.D., Martindale, S.L., Lazowski, R.A., Luxton, D.D., Shenal, B.V. & Rowland, J.A. (2017). Neuropsychological test administration by videoconference: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Neuropsychology Review*, 27(2), 174 – 186.

- Cullum, C.M., Hynan, L.S., Grosch, M., Parikh, M., and Wiener, M.F. (2014). Journal of International Neuropsychological Society, 20(10), 1028 – 1033. Doi: 10.1017/S1355617714000873.

Sources, e.g. (con't)

- Disability Act 2005

- InterOrganizational Practice Committee Recommendations/Guidance for Teleneuropsychology (TeleNP) in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. https://doi.org/10.1093/arclin/acaa046

Sources, e.g. (con't)

- InterOrganizational Practice Committee Guidance/Recommendation for Models of Care During the Novel Coronavirus Pandemic

- NASP Guidance for Delivery of School Psychological Telehealth Services

- NASP Guidance on Virtual Service Delivery

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Sources, e.g. (con't)

- Ontario Psychological Association Guidelines for Best Practices in Psychological/RemoteTeleassessments, Version 1

- Society for Personality Assessment Tele-Assessment of Personality and Psychopathology

Sources, e.g. (con't)

- The British Psychological Society Division of Neuropsychology Professional Standards Unit Guidelines to colleagues on the use of Tele-neuropsychology

- Wright, A.J., & Raiford, S.E. (2021). *Essentials of psychological tele-assessment*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Questions/Discussion

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Thank you!