

# ELPAC Administration Guidance for IEP Teams and Section 504 Teams



While this document is not exhaustive, it is meant to help support discussions leading to team decisions for the administration of the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). Different types of participation decisions for the initial and summative assessment may need to be made by the team. In order to access one or more of the domains of the ELPAC, students may need special testing resources. These resources may be universal tools, designated supports, and/or accommodation(s). The resources are listed on *Matrix Four: Universal Tools, Designated Supports, and Accommodations for the ELPAC*, which can be found at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ai/documents/elpacmatrix4.doc>.

For the ELPAC to provide a valid measure of a student’s English language proficiency, the individualized education program (IEP) team should discuss and document the use of the following:

- Universal tools
- Designated supports
- Accommodations
- Unlisted resources for accommodations listed in a Section 504 plan or IEP
- Possible exemption from the ELPAC domain(s)
- Alternate assessment for one or more ELPAC domain(s) for students who have an IEP and are the most significantly cognitively disabled<sup>1</sup>

The use of accommodations, alternate ELPAC domain assessments (only for students with an IEP who are significantly cognitively disabled), disability exemptions for ELPAC domains should be noted in a student’s IEP or Section 504 plan. A change in the testing situation that is considered an accommodation, alternate assessment, or a disability exemption must be marked on the demographics page of the Answer Book for each appropriate ELPAC domain.

## Exemptions for ELPAC Domains

Exemptions for the ELPAC domains are described as follows:

- In some situations, a student’s disability may preclude the student from being able to take one or more of the domains. In this situation, a disability exemption may be most appropriate for that student. The *ELPAC Administration Student Accessibility Checklist* will help guide Section 504 and IEP teams in determining whether a student is exempt from taking a domain of the ELPAC. It should be noted that for a student to be assigned an Overall score, the student will need to be assessed with the ELPAC in at least one domain for both the Oral and Written Language composites. For a student to be considered as having been assessed in Oral Language, the student must have been assessed in either the Speaking or Listening domain. For a student to be considered as having been assessed in Written Language, the student must have been assessed in either the Reading or Writing domain. When Section 504 plan or IEP teams determine that the entire Oral Language composite—Speaking and Listening—or the Written Language composite are to be exempted, the teams should consider the use of an assessment that is alternate to the ELPAC.

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<sup>1</sup> Unlike the requirements for the use of alternate assessments for English Language Arts, Math, and Science, ELPAC alternate assessments are not subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act’s 1 percent rule.

- Per federal regulations, if an English learner has a disability that precludes assessment of the student in one or more domains of the English language proficiency assessment required under Section 1111(b)(2)(G) of the Every Student Succeeds Act such that there are no appropriate accommodations for the affected domain(s)<sup>2</sup> (e.g., a nonverbal English learner who, because of an identified disability, cannot take the Speaking domain of the assessment), a state must assess the student's English language proficiency on the basis of the remaining domains in which it is possible to assess the student (*Code of Federal Regulations* Title 34 Section 200.6[h][4][ii]).
- Examples of disabilities that may require an exemption are a student who has been deaf since birth and is not able to participate in the Listening or Speaking domain of ELPAC because of the disability, and a student who is blind and does not read braille who is not able to participate in the Reading or Writing domain of the ELPAC because of the disability.
- Care must also be taken in deciding which domains may be exempted. Exempting both domains calculated for the Oral Language score (Listening and Speaking) or both domains calculated for the Written Language score (Reading and Writing) will not allow for the calculation of an Overall ELPAC score.<sup>3</sup>
- In the event that IEP teams decide that it is necessary to exempt two or more domains, they should consider the use of an assessment alternate to the ELPAC.

### Alternate Assessments for ELPAC Domains

- Alternate assessments, which are decided on locally, are reserved for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. Because alternate assessments fundamentally alter what the ELPAC measures, students will receive the lowest obtainable scale score (LOSS) on each domain for which an alternate assessment is used. Using an unapproved unlisted resource on an ELPAC administration also is considered an alternate means of assessing the English proficiency level of students with disabilities, and a LOSS will be calculated for each domain. A LOSS score in one or more domains may lower the student's performance level on the ELPAC as well as their overall score, which could have ramifications for reclassification.
- Overall scores on the ELPAC will reflect the LOSS for each domain for which an alternate assessment is used. Caution should be used in interpreting results when an alternate assessment is used for a domain because the LOSS may lower the Overall performance level on the ELPAC. The Overall score may not reflect the student's actual performance level in English.

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<sup>2</sup> As determined on an individualized basis by the student's IEP or Section 504 plan team.

<sup>3</sup> For an Overall score calculation to be generated, only one domain from the Oral Language score (Listening or Speaking) and one from the Written Language score (Reading or Writing) may be exempted.

