



# Voluntary System of Accountability

## CAAP Guidelines

---

### Testing Times

CAAP tests are available for administration on dates selected by the institution. Testing is limited to an administration period of two weeks. All extensions **must be approved** by ACT.

### Administration Options

There are a variety of ways institutions can administer CAAP. For purposes of the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) the Writing Essay and Critical Thinking tests will be administered. If you choose to administer additional CAAP objective tests students may take different sets of tests in one large administration. The latter approach requires the institution to “spiral” the test booklets. Spiraling the tests means that students seated adjacent to one another are given different CAAP modules in an intentional, prescribed manner. Spiraling is one of the easiest ways to randomly assign students to test modules and to reduce the risk of cheating. There are directions for spiraling in the *CAAP Test Administration Manual*.

### Security of Test Materials

CAAP materials are secure items. You must provide locked storage for test materials and maintain **all aspects** of test security as defined in the *CAAP Test Administration Manual*. Please be sure that all staff involved with CAAP testing are aware of security requirements.

### Sample Size

- Cross-Sectional. For VSA purposes, ACT recommends at least 200 freshmen and 200 seniors tested for each module. For the most accurate results, students should be randomly selected. However, this is not always possible, and convenience sampling that captures the best possible representative sample of your population will be acceptable. You will need to determine what constitutes a representative sample for your institution.
- Longitudinal. In the future, your institution may consider a longitudinal study. If this is a possibility, consider the minimum number of records needed at the time of post-testing and then calculate back to establish the number to be tested in this study. This number will vary depending upon the local attrition rates, but ACT recommends that you pretest 3 to 4 times the post-test number.

### Motivation Question

To help institutions obtain the best results possible, a motivation question is asked of each student for each objective test taken (i.e., “How hard did you try to do your best work...?”) Individual student responses are summarized on the institution’s summary report and are also provided on a CD that is available for a nominal fee.

### Special Feature

An “Additional Questions” block on the objective answer document allows institutions to:

- identify a specific population within your testing group (e.g., transfer, non-transfer),
- receive a more refined majors classification (e.g., a break-down of health professions into RNs and LPNs), or
- ask up to nine locally developed questions with ten possible responses (e.g., How many hours outside of class do you spend each day doing school work?).

When the frequency of a response is 25 or greater (and the response is indicated in Column A in the “Additional Questions” block), that item response may be identified as a subgroup for a supplemental report. For more information, call CAAP Customer Services at 319/337-1576.

### Participation Agreement Form/Ordering

Institutions must complete a CAAP VSA Participation Agreement annually, in September, or when submitting the first order of the year. Orders should arrive at ACT at least two weeks before the beginning of the two-week test period. ACT will ship test materials to arrive seven days before the beginning of the test period; if materials are not received within this time frame, please call 319/337-1576.

## Research Plans

To ensure the best research design and enhance the validity of CAAP results, institutions may submit their assessment plans to ACT for review and comment. Although plans *are not required* in order to use CAAP, this no-fee service can be very beneficial to an institution in obtaining the best data. For information, call 319/337-1531.

## Test Inspection

Institutions may review actual test booklets before ordering. Review copies must remain secure during the entire inspection process. To request this service, complete and submit the *CAAP Request for Secure Inspection of Test Booklets* form, located in the *CAAP Planning and Forms Manual*.

## Retention of Test Materials

**ALL test materials must be returned to ACT by a traceable method within two weeks of the two-week test administration period.** All extensions **must be approved** by ACT.

## Fee Schedule

Institutions are billed for the scoring of exams. ***The scoring fees listed on the CAAP Fee Schedule are applicable at the time scoring occurs. Any answer documents received by ACT during the effective dates of the order form will be billed at the rates shown.*** Institutions are responsible for the costs to return test materials to ACT by a traceable means.

## Scoring

Objective tests are normally scored by ACT within 10 working days of receipt of the answer folders. Essay tests rated by ACT are normally scored within 20 working days of receipt of answer booklets. If your institution wishes to evaluate the essays locally, in addition to ACT evaluation, ***you must photocopy the essay answers before sending the originals to ACT for scoring.***

## Standard Reporting

Standard reports include two copies of each student's score report, a *Certificate of Achievement* for all students who have earned scores at or above the national mean, a Student Roster Report, and an Institutional Summary Report. When fewer than 25 student records are available in a single subject, no Institutional Summary Report is generated. The Institutional Summary Report provides descriptive statistics and frequency distributions for your entire group of examinees as well as general comparative information.

## Supplemental Reporting

Subgroup reports may be ordered for a nominal fee, and a CD of institutional data may also be purchased for one test date or for multiple test dates. A set-up fee is assessed for reporting services requested after scoring has been completed. You may request a CD or subgroup reporting on the *Scoring and Reporting Service Request* form included with your test materials. Also available at an additional charge are research reports. Linkage Reports (ACT-CAAP or COMPASS-CAAP) and Content Analysis Report order forms are available on the ACT web site.

## Next Steps

1. (Optional) Submit your research plans to ACT for feedback (See Research Plans above).
2. Contact CAAP Customer Services if you have questions about ordering CAAP materials.
3. Complete the CAAP Participation Agreement and order form. Submit the forms to ACT by fax or mail to the address listed below.
4. *If you plan to administer additional CAAP tests (other than the Writing Essay and Critical Thinking), complete the back of the CAAP-VSA Order Form. You will only receive one billing.*

**ACT CAAP Customer Services (70)**

**P.O. Box 1008**

**Iowa City, IA 52243-1008**

**Telephone 319/337-1576**

**Fax 319/337-1467**

