

Implementing Exam Accommodations

A Guide for Instructors & Students

*Student Accessibility Services
Iowa State University*

Options for Proctoring Exams with Accommodations

Below are several options for proctoring exams that can work for both students and instructors.

Providing Accommodations Within Your Department

Instructors may choose to implement accommodations directly within their department rather than using a Testing Center or the Exam Accommodations Center. When doing so, instructors are responsible for identifying a suitable testing environment and ensuring approved accommodations are implemented appropriately.

If you have questions about implementing an accommodation or would like assistance identifying possible solutions, contact Student Accessibility Services.

ISU Testing Centers – Canvas Exams

Many commonly used testing accommodations can now be implemented through the regular ISU Testing Centers for Canvas exams without additional action from the instructor.*

Accommodations Available at Regular ISU Testing Centers

- **Timing**
 - *Extended time (any length)
 - *Instructors must still adjust Canvas exam settings to provide extended time*
- **Testing Environment**
 - Low-distraction location (Carver 0060 & Hixson-Lied 2242)
 - Reader Software
 - Use of earplugs/noise-canceling headset
 - Option to leave and return without penalty
- **Testing Materials & Resources**
 - Calculator on exams
 - Access to a formula sheet
 - Allow typed note when handwritten notes are required
- **Medical & Accessibility Supports**
 - Access to a personal device to monitor medical conditions
 - Allow access to medication, food, or beverages
 - Allow tinted glasses or sunglasses

What This Means for Implementation

- Some Canvas exams that previously required EAC referral can now be administered through the ISU Testing Centers.
- Instructors are responsible for adjusting Canvas time settings for students approved for extended time. The Testing Centers cannot modify Canvas time limits.
- Paper-based exams requiring accommodations must still be referred to the EAC or arranged in their department by the instructor.
- Canvas exams requiring accommodations beyond those available through the Testing Centers (listed above) must still be referred to the EAC or arranged by the instructor.

If you are unsure whether a student's accommodations can be implemented through a regular Testing Center, contact Student Accessibility Services before referring the exam.

Exam Accommodations Center (EAC)

The EAC is fully equipped to proctor both written and Canvas exams and can provide any type of accommodation a student requires. This is the best option for students with complex accommodation needs. If a student's needs exceed what the ISU Testing Centers or your department can offer, please refer the exam to the EAC or consider providing accommodations within your department.

If you plan to use the EAC for your exams, review all [EAC referral policies](#) to help ensure your exams are accepted.

Take-Home Exams

Students should typically manage their location and technology for take-home exams to meet most accommodation needs. However, if a student has extended time accommodations, instructors must manually adjust the exam time in Canvas to ensure the additional time is reflected.

Common Exam Accommodations: Department Implementation Examples

Many exam accommodations can be implemented directly within a department. The examples below describe common accommodations and ways instructors may choose to implement them.

Extended Time

Instructors can provide extended time for exams by scheduling exams in a way that allows students to remain in the exam room beyond the standard time. This can be done by arranging the exam earlier or later in the day to avoid scheduling conflicts or by reserving additional time in their department's testing spaces if available.

Low Distraction Location

A low-distraction environment can be created by designating a quiet area within a department, such as an unused office, small classroom (30 students or less), or conference room, for the student to take their exams. It's important that this space is free from interruptions, loud noises, and heavy foot traffic. Instructors can also allow noise-canceling earplugs and use dividers to further minimize both visual and auditory distractions, creating a more focused testing environment for the student.

Private room

For students requiring a private room, instructors can coordinate with department staff to reserve a small classroom, office, or another quiet space where the student can take their exam alone. If available, spaces like these can be booked for the duration of the exam to ensure privacy and a controlled environment.

Text-to-Speech Software

Text-to-speech accommodations can also be provided by having a staff member or TA read the exam to the student in a private room. This approach ensures the student can access and understand the exam content, meeting the same need as text-to-speech software while offering an alternative to the software that is provided in the EAC.

Leave and Return Exams Without Penalty

Instructors may choose to implement this accommodation if they believe it can be monitored effectively for exam integrity. Confirm how breaks will be handled during the exam, such as checking in with the proctor or TA, and where to go, like a restroom or quiet area.

Reschedule Exams

If a student needs to reschedule an exam, instructors can work with them to find an alternative date or time. This could involve offering the exam earlier or later than originally planned and providing an alternative location where they can be proctored by you or a TA, allowing flexibility without

compromising the integrity of the exam. This accommodation may not be needed for every exam. Discuss and agree on how the student should notify the instructor when they need to use it.

Access to Medication, Food, or Beverages

Students approved to access medication, food, or beverages during an exam can be given permission to bring these items into the regular testing room. Instructors may inspect the items before the student enters the testing room.

Access to Medical Devices

For students needing access to medical devices (e.g., insulin pumps, hearing aids, phones to monitor health, etc.), instructors can opt to allow the student to have the device with them during the exam. If the device requires occasional adjustments or monitoring, instructors can offer a brief break or simply allow the student to manage the device without interruption of the exam, provided it doesn't interfere with the testing environment.

No Scantron/Typing/Alternative Answering Methods for Exams

Instructors can offer alternative methods for students to complete exams based on their accommodation needs. This may include allowing students to handwrite answers instead of using Scantron, type responses on a monitored computer, or mark answers directly on the exam. Instructors can discuss with the students which method works best and adjust the exam format accordingly to ensure they can demonstrate their knowledge effectively.

Other Accommodations

There are additional, less common exam accommodations that instructors may be able to implement if desired. Consider discussing implementation options directly with the student or contacting the SAS team for guidance and ideas. If implementing the accommodation within your department isn't feasible, don't hesitate to refer the student to the ISU Testing Centers or Exam Accommodations Center for support.

Questions or Concerns about Exam Accommodations?

Contact our offices immediately if you have any concerns about implementing exam accommodations. We are here to help!

<i>Office</i>	Student Accessibility Services (SAS)	Exam Accommodations Center (EAC)
<i>Contact</i>	515-294-7220 accessibility@iastate.edu	515-294-5197 eacmain@iastate.edu
<i>Location</i>	1060 Hixson-Lied Student Success Center	1200 Hixson-Lied Student Success Center
<i>Instructor Support Services</i>	• Questions about implementing accommodations correctly • Support for instructors in implementing exam accommodations in the classroom • Support for other academic accommodations • Schedule a meeting or phone call	• General questions about exams at the EAC • How to use the EAC • Support for instructors referring to the EAC • Policies & procedures
<i>Student Support Services</i>	• Help notifying instructors of accommodations • Accommodations implementation questions or concerns • Accommodation request process • Schedule a meeting	• General questions about exams at the EAC • How to schedule at the EAC • Policies and procedures