



**Adult Education and Literacy
Data Specialist 101 Procedures**

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Data Specialist Role and Responsibilities

The Data Specialist team

Consists of assigned Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) provider staff, the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) Database Administrator, and the database programmer. The team will meet for training and updates quarterly. Data Specialists have specific permissions within DataWorks which provides them with the ability to make corrections and complete particular tasks. Data Specialists are trained on procedures for identifying and correcting data entry issues in order to support staff in their designated region. Data Specialists also support local staff to understand and use reports for program improvement.

Expectations

Data Specialists will act as a first line of technical assistance in the field for their assigned centers. Field staff will contact Data Specialists for data corrections, data concerns, and questions. Data Specialists will contact the AOE Database Administrator with questions and concerns that cannot be addressed in the field.

It is an expectation that a Data Specialists will possess a fundamental understanding of DataWorks including Measurable Skills Gains (MSG), Periods of Participation (Pops) Educational Functioning Level (EFL) and how they impact reporting as well as a clear understanding of all staff roles and access levels.

DataWorks Tasks/Responsibilities

- Editing a Demographic page or enrollment activation date
- Editing or deleting a student instruction or goal setting and plan management service
 - Only services with a date in the current program year can be edited or deleted.
- Editing or deleting an assessment entry or individual assessment skill or score
 - Only assessments with a date in the current program year can be edited or deleted.
- Recalculating EFL
- Inactivating student enrollments
- Co-Enrollment and Barriers to Employment updating
- Follow up Survey process
- The Data Specialists will provide input for future programming changes, however, final data programming decisions will be made by AOE staff.

Data Specialists will also act as liaisons between their AEL provider leadership staff and the AOE Database Administrator regarding data programming issues. As data programming changes may impact overall State outcomes and provider program practice, the communication between Data Specialists and their organizational leadership is crucial.

Annual File Maintenance

Barriers to employment and co-enrollment status changes and the new fiscal year (FY), which begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

- Close enrollments and activate new enrollments with updated information before entering any services for the new fiscal year.
- Barriers to employment need to be confirmed annually since the data shows they may be under reported. Barriers to employment should be tracked based on the status of the student at **program entry** if the student is new to AEL. If the student is continuing, the data should be tracked based on status at the **beginning of services in the new fiscal year**.
- If services have been entered for the new fiscal year they will need to be deleted before closing the old enrollment to update barriers to employment.

Co-Enrollment

- Co-enrollment in Vermont Department of Labor (DOL) and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) should be verified and student records updated quarterly and not just at the end of the fiscal year. If at any point during the fiscal year, the student was co-enrolled in DOL or VR, the co-enrollment should be indicated for the entire fiscal year.
- Please note that DOL and VR reported co-enrollments in DataWorks have been low in comparison to reporting from the field and as indicated in the quarterly data match performed at the AOE with VR.

Special Group Enrollment (SGE)

- ESL/ELL – ESL and ELL are both used in this document when referring to English Language Learners. When referring to skill levels, ESL is used to be consistent with the U.S. Department of Education’s language. The AOE also uses ELL. The ESL SGE should be opened prior to the entry of the initial ESL assessment; this will allow the EFL to be set with the administration of only one assessment. English Language Learners should have an open ESL SGE until they have completed ESL 6 by attaining a scaled score of 236 or higher on the CASAS Life and Work Reading assessment in order for them to be considered ready to

transition into the Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education (ABE/ASE) population. When students are no longer receiving ESL services, they should be transitioned to receiving ABE/ASE services. Once it is determined by the AEL provider student advisor and the student that the student is ready to transition, the ESL SGE must be closed with a date prior to the administration of any ABE/ASE assessments.

- High School Completion Program (HSCP) – Directs HSCP funding. See HSCP plan managers procedures for specific details.
- National Reporting System (NRS) 1 – 2 – This SGE is to be used for students with low skills (NRS 1-2). Due to the fact that students with low skills might not be ready to take assessments in all skill areas (reading, writing, and math) the NRS 1 – 2 SGE only requires assessment in one skill area to establish an EFL baseline. Once a student attains NRS 3 in any skill area the NRS 1 – 2 SGE must be inactivated **before** the NRS 3 assessment is entered into DataWorks. The NRS 1 – 2 inactivation date must be prior to the date of the new assessments.
- IET SGE – These SGEs can be added by following AOE staff creation of the program in DataWorks. See the [AEL Integrated Education and Training Approval and Documentation process](#).

Funding Sources

- Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) – Students participating under the IELCE grant need to be assigned to the IELCE funding stream on the student enrollment page, so they report correctly on federal Table 3 Program Type and Age and Table 9 Outcomes for Integrated English Language and Civics Education. Only those providers who have been awarded IELCE funds may SGE students in this category as long as the student lives within the service region of the AEL provider.

Baseline Assessments

Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Calculations

1. The baseline EFL is established using the lowest level achieved in reading, writing or math via approved skill level assessment within 30 days of the first assessment for ABE/ASE students.
 - a. For ESL students there is no restriction on the number of skill areas that must be assessed. As long as at least one skill area (speaking, reading, or writing) is assessed and entered into the database an EFL baseline will be established on the date of the assessment.
 - b. If the student's most recent EFL has expired, a new 30-day period begins
 - c. A student is considered as an ESL student if special group enrolled in ESL on the date of the assessment
 - d. When a student is ready to transition from ESL to ABE/ASE (NRS 6 is attained in all ESL skill areas assessed) the ESL SGE will need to be inactivated. Then the student will need to be assessed in all three skill areas of reading, writing, and math to establish a new ABE/ASE EFL following the 30 – day rule. The date for the new assessments must be after the ESL SGE inactivation date.
 - e. If a student has an EFL set to expire only the EFL skill area needs to be progress assessed to extend the expiration date.
2. A student is considered to have “NRS Complete” status when all three ABE/ASE skills have reached NRS 6 in all three skill areas of reading, writing, and math within a period of two consecutive fiscal years. Once “completed”, no more EFLs will be generated for the student. There is no expiration for “NRS Complete” students.
3. When EFL 6 is achieved via progress assessment and the student has not attained NRS 6 in all other skill areas, a new EFL skill area will be established. DataWorks will check for level generating assessments of the same type (ESL or ABE/ASE) in the period beginning with the start date of the fiscal year immediately preceding the EFL 6 assessment date. A new baseline EFL with an effective date on the day the EFL 6 assessment date is established in the skill with the lowest level.
4. The 30-day timeline is not restricted as far as crossing a fiscal year is concerned as long as all assessment scores have been entered into the database prior to the fiscal year data lock that occurs at the end of September.

Notes about EFLs:

- The “effective date” of an EFL may be different than the date of the assessment that generated the EFL. This only happens when the student achieves NRS level

6 in the current EFL skill area via progress assessment and the system looks back to find the lowest level of the remaining skill areas to use in establishing a new EFL. The “effective date” will be the date of the level 6 assessment.

- TABE 11/12 paper and online are considered the same instrument as of 7/1/2019.
 - Use TABE 11/12 scoring guide for form L, which is only available as a paper assessment.
 - Use TABE 11/12 Online scoring guide for forms E, M, D, A
- When to recalculate and when assessments need to be deleted and re-entered.
 - When a level change is determined according to the scoring guide and the update does not happen in DataWorks the recalculation tab will need to be accessed from the NRS/ESL Skills tab. If the level change update still does not occur delete the assessment entry and re-enter it in the student record. If the EFL still does not update, contact the AOE AEL database administrator.
 - Assessments with a date prior to 7/1 of the current fiscal year are locked by the end of September and cannot be recalculated or deleted and re-entered after the previous fiscal year’s data has been locked.

Scenarios:

1. What would be the baseline EFL established under the following scenario for a new ABE/ASE student with NRS 3+ skills entered into DataWorks?
 - Student is assessed in Reading at level 4 on March 1
 - Student is assessed in Writing at level 4 on March 15
 - Student is assessed in Math at level 3 on April 5

No baseline is established since all three skill areas were not assessed within 30 days. After 30 days the reading and writing assessments would be null and void and the 30 day clock starts again with the date of the math assessment.

2. What happens when a student in the NRS 1 – 2 SGE population has a skill area that reaches NRS 3+ via a progress assessment?

The NRS 1 – 2 SGE must be closed before entering the assessment information that determined the NRS 3 skill into the database and the closed date of the SGE must be prior to the assessment date.

Once the NRS 1 – 2 SGE has been closed the student must have an assessment in all three skill areas (reading, writing, and math) within a 30 – day period to establish a new ABE/ASE Educational Functioning Level (EFL).

3. How do you transition an ESL student to the ABE/ASE populations?

Once a student has reached ESL 6 in all skill areas assessed with ESL assessment instruments the student is ready to transition to ABE/ASE and the ESL SGE must be closed.

ELL students with a closed ESL SGE are considered new ABE/ASE students and must be assessed in all three skill areas (reading, writing, and math) using the TABE 11/12 instrument within a 30 - day period to establish an ABE/ASE EFL.

Assessment Scoring

- There have been questions about scores entered into DataWorks that are not generating an EFL/NRS level. It is important to realize that some assessment levels have *Out of Range* scores. The TABE 11/12 assessments and the CASAS reading and math assessments have out of range scores. **Do not enter these. Contact AOE staff with any questions.** Out of range scores should not be entered in DataWorks since they will not generate an EFL/NRS level.
- The **TABE 11/12** assessment instrument has significant out of range values at the low end of the raw score scale for all skill areas of reading, writing, and math in the M, D, and A levels. This means that if a student scores low using these forms the assessment will not produce an EFL/NRS level. **The TABE Locator must be used to properly place students into the correct level prior to administering the actual assessment.** Refer to the TABE 11/12 Scoring Guide for out of range values. The assessment manufacturers provide scoring guides and conversion charts that outline the out of range scores. Prior to entering an assessment score in DataWorks check to see if the score was out of range for the level administered. In cases such as these the student must be given a lower level assessment to generate a valid EFL/NRS level.
- **CASAS Life and Work** reading assessment and **CASAS Life Skills** math assessment – Both ends of the scoring scale have out of range values meaning that if the student scores in that range, then the wrong level test was administered. The use of a locator will help assure that students are not given an incorrect level. Out of range values will not produce an EFL and are not to be entered into DataWorks. Refer to the CASAS Score Conversion Manual to familiarize yourself with the out of range values. Also, note that the CASAS Life Skills math assessment may be given as a tool to design instruction for the student, but it will not generate an EFL.

Progress Assessments

1. EFLs expire if no progress assessment is administered in the EFL skill area by the end of the fiscal year following the fiscal year of the effective date of the EFL. A progress assessment must be done in the EFL skill area prior to the expiration date for students expecting to participate in AEL the following fiscal year to extend the EFL expiration date.
2. Progress assessments should be done once a student has received at least 40 hours instruction since the baseline assessment in at least the EFL skill area.
3. Progress assessments should be the alternative form and the same level than that of the baseline assessment or the next higher level.
4. An assessment with a lower form level than the form level that established a baseline EFL will not be recognized as an approved progress assessment and the resulting score will not update the EFL.
5. The Assessment report has options to enter date ranges as well as hours of instruction filters. To view a list of students that have met the 40 hours of instruction qualification for a progress assessment enter the number 40 in the Minimum hours report filter box.
 - a. The Assessment report population will exclude students with an NRS Complete EFL/NRS level status.
 - b. The Assessment report population will include all students that have received services in the report period selected and have an EFL established on or before the report ending date AND have received the specified minimum number of service hours (Instruction, Distance Learning and Distance Learning Proxy).
6. Invalid assessments - Assessments are always given on the alternate form from the most recent form administered (i.e., if the TABE 10 was last given, then the 11 must be given next). If the same form was administered two times a row, the assessment is invalid. There are other reasons why an assessment may be deemed invalid, such as the student was unable to complete the assessment. There are two scenarios for handling invalid assessments described below, depending on whether the assessment was meant as a baseline or a progress assessment.
 - a. For baseline assessments - a new student or a returning student with expired EFL/NRS levels:
 - Do not enter the assessment into DataWorks. If it was entered, a Data Specialist may delete the entry.
 - Assess the student using the alternate form and enter that score into the database to establish baseline.
 - b. For progress assessment - a student that has active EFL/NRS levels:

- It is assumed that the invalid assessment was given on the alternate form from the last valid assessment documented in the database.
- In these cases, the database will not accept back to back assessment entries on the same form as valid progress assessments so the invalid assessment score should be entered into the database to act as a spacer so the second (assuming it is valid) progress assessment score will be accepted and the EFL/NRS level will update properly with any level changes.
- If the assessment was given on the same form, and is therefore invalid, the assessment should not be entered into the database. Proceed by giving the proper form level assessment and then enter the score.

Goals and Achievements:

Goals and achievements that impact the federal report statistical tables

Obtain a Job and Retain a Job – Do not set or change these. Goals are automatically assigned by the database based upon the employment status at entry on the enrollment page. The employment status will display under the enrollment tab on the student snapshot page. Within the enrollment tab will be an Employment History display which shows the status at entry and a history of the subsequent DOL data matches.

- User input – this should be used at entry and automatic goals will be established based on the status selected: Employed, Employed Separation Pending, Unemployed, and Not in the Labor Force.
 - Not in the Labor Force status is for students that do not intend to ever seek taxable employment. Students with this status are excluded forever from inclusion in the annual DOL match process.
 - If there is an incorrect entry that needs to be removed, contact AOE staff to request removal of the entry.
- DOL Import – This happens automatically during the annual DOL data match that AOE conducts with the Department of Labor.
- Achievements for these two employment goals should not be entered as met by AEL field staff because the DOL data match and the post-exit data added under “Employment History” will result in updates to the federal report statistical tables for the follow up data requirement.

Enter Postsecondary goal – Goal should be set by AEL provider staff if student intends to enter post-secondary.

- Achievement should be entered by AEL field staff anytime it has been verified the student has entered postsecondary education while the student is actively

receiving services or determined to have entered postsecondary through the survey follow-up procedure.

Earn Reportable Industry Recognized Credential (IRC)– Goal is set by AEL field staff for all students seeking a reportable IRC.

- Achievement is entered into DataWorks by AEL field staff once the student has earned a reportable IRC while actively receiving services or determined through the survey follow-up procedure.

*****Employment, Enter Postsecondary and Earn Reportable Industry Recognized Credential are all factored in the Follow-up survey requirement detailed in the last section of this document.**

Earn Secondary School Diploma or Earn GED Certificate– Goal is set by AEL field staff, marked as “achieved” by AOE staff.

- The target date for this goal should be set for the end of the fiscal year in which the student is expected to graduate. For example, 6/30/2022 would be the target date for a student expected to graduate in FY22.
 - If a student will not be able to meet this target either because they’ve disengaged or their graduation is delayed, this target date must be updated as soon as possible.
 - The target date will anchor the student into the cohort of the fiscal year of that date. For example, if a student’s target date is 6/30/2023, that will anchor the student into the FY23 cohort.
- Beginning in FY22, all those achieving a secondary diploma or GED will earn an MSG.
- Graduation lists must be provided to the AOE at least quarterly and earned secondary school diploma achievements are entered by AOE staff once a file audit has been completed.
- Graduation date submitted must be on or before the last service date in the latest PoP for an MSG to be awarded.

Improve Educational Functioning Level to ASE – Goal is set by field staff for ABE/ASE AEL students entered into DataWorks. This is an important task to complete so students are reported in the correct cohorts on the federal report statistical tables.

- Achievement is entered into DataWorks by AEL field staff if the baseline assessments determine the student has NRS 5+ skills or once a progress assessment has determined NRS 5+ skills.

Achievement to Goal Mapping

The following table displays the connection between specific goals and achievements.

Goal	Achievement	Set By	Marked Achieved By	Applies to which student group(s)
Obtain a job	Obtained a job	Automatic	Automatic	Unemployed
Retain current job	Retained current job	Automatic	Automatic	Employed
Achieve work-based project learner goal	Completed standards based learning project	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	Any student planning a work based project
Improve Educational Functioning Level to ASE	Attained ASE skills	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	ABE/ASE students with NRS 4 or below in any skill areas
Earn secondary school diploma	Earned secondary school diploma	AEL field staff	AOE staff	All HSCP students, any students who wish to attain this
Earn GED Certificate	Achieved GED certificate	AEL field staff	AOE staff	Any AEL students who wish to attain this
Enter post-secondary education or job training	Entered post-secondary education or training	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	Any AEL students who wish to attain this
Obtain citizenship skills	Attained skills needed for U.S. citizenship	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	Those students who are New Americans, whether official U.S. citizens currently or not
Achieve U.S. Citizenship	Passed U.S. citizenship exam	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	Those students who are not yet U.S. citizens but

Goal	Achievement	Set By	Marked Achieved By	Applies to which student group(s)
				are planning to become citizens
Achieve WorkKeys Certificate	Earned WorkKeys certificate	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	Those students who want the national work readiness certificate or would like to demonstrate work readiness skills
Obtain IRC (Tier I)	Obtained IRC (Tier I)	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	AEL students seeking an IRC in Tier I
Obtain Reportable IRC (Tier II)	Obtained Reportable IRC (Tier II)	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	AEL students seeking a reportable IRC in Tier II
Complete ESL Advanced Level	Completed ESL Advanced Level	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	AEL ESL students
Personal Goal	Achieved Personal Goal	AEL field staff	AEL field staff	Any AEL students with a specific personal goal

Career Services Tracking

Data Specialists need to be prepared to answer questions in the field about tracking career services. Refer to the [Career Services Tracking Instructions](#) on the Agency of Education website.

Survey Follow Up Data Collection and Entry into DataWorks

For Federal reports, we need to collect information on employment status and attendance and for entering/completing post-secondary education after students exit our programs.

For students with a Social Security Number (SSN) in DataWorks, employment information is obtained through a data match with Vermont Department of Labor records. For students who have an alternative ID instead of an SSN, we need to conduct surveys to gather this information at 2 quarters and 4 quarters after they exit the program.

Students who have a goal of earning an IRC or of entering post-secondary education and have not met that goal when they exit the program will need to be surveyed 4 quarters after they exit.

Data Specialists are responsible for assisting their AEL provider with running the reports in DataWorks that will generate lists of students that need to be surveyed for each of these pieces.

For more information see the [AEL Survey Follow Up Data Collection and Entry into DataWorks](#) and [AEL Post-Exit Survey Purpose, Tips and Survey Questions](#) on the AOE website. Additional information regarding when to conduct the survey for which cohorts is provided below.