



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education

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DepEd ORDER
No. 55, s. 2016

**POLICY GUIDELINES ON THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
FOR THE K TO 12 BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

To: Undersecretaries
Regional Directors
Bureau Directors
Directors of Services, Centers and Heads of Units
Regional Directors
Schools Division Superintendents
Heads, Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Schools
All Others Concerned

1. The Department of Education (DepEd) is adopting the enclosed **Policy Guidelines on the National Assessment of Student Learning for the K to 12 Basic Education Program**.
2. Assessment is the process of measuring learners' progress in the attainment of learning standards and 21st-century skills. The results of the various forms of assessment shall be used to quantify judgments on learners' academic performance.
3. The national assessment of student learning is an integral part of DepEd's assessment framework. It aims to:
 - a. monitor the Philippine education system and schools for public accountability;
 - b. assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of education services using learning outcomes as indicators;
 - c. provide information that will guide decisions on instructional practices;
 - d. determine if learners are meeting the learning standards of the curriculum;
 - e. measure students' aptitude and occupational interest for career guidance; and
 - f. assess prior learning for placement, accreditation and equivalency.
4. Based on the aforementioned rationale of national assessment of student learning, DepEd will conduct the following assessments through the Bureau of Education Assessment:
 - a. **Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Assessment** to be administered at the end of Grade 3 as a key stage assessment to determine if students are meeting the learning standards in early language, literacy, and numeracy;
 - b. **Exit Assessments** to be administered in Grade 6, Grade 10 and Grade 12 to determine if learners are meeting the learning standards of the Elementary, Junior High School and Senior High School curriculum;

- c. **Career Assessment** to be administered in Grade 9 to determine learners' aptitudes and occupational interests for career guidance;
 - d. **Accreditation and Equivalency Assessment** to be taken by out-of-school youth and adults to certify completion of elementary and secondary education; and
 - e. **Grade Level Placement Assessment** for learners in special circumstances specified in Section 6 to determine their appropriate grade level in the formal system.
5. This DepEd Order covers the target clientele, purpose, design, test administration procedures, and utilization of results of each assessment tool administered to learners under the Philippine education system.
6. Effective **School Year (SY) 2016-2017**, the *Policy Guidelines on the National Assessment of Student Learning for the K to 12 Basic Education Program* shall be implemented in public and private elementary and secondary schools nationwide.
7. These guidelines will remain in force and in effect until **SY 2023-2024**, which is when the first K to 12 cohort completes Grade 12, unless sooner repealed, amended, or rescinded. All existing Orders and Memoranda on student learning assessment that are inconsistent with this Order are rescinded.
8. Immediate dissemination of and strict compliance with this Order is directed.



BR. ARMIN A. LUJSTRO FSC
Secretary

Encl.:

As stated

Reference:

DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015

To be indicated in the Perpetual Index
under the following subjects:

ASSESSMENT
BASIC EDUCATION
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
LEARNERS
POLICY
RULES AND REGULATIONS
SCHOOLS
SECONDARY EDUCATION
STRAND: Curriculum and Instruction
STUDENTS

**POLICY GUIDELINES ON THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING
FOR THE K TO 12 BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

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SECTION 1: Definition of Terms

For purposes of this Order, the following terms are defined/understood as follows:

1. **21st-century Skills** are abilities embedded in the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum that learners must acquire. These include:
 - a. **Communication Skills** refers to the ability to express one's self clearly and collaborate with others.
 - b. **Information, Media and Technology Skills** refers to the ability to gather, manage, evaluate, use, and synthesize information through media and technology.
 - c. **Learning and Innovation Skills** refers to the ability to think critically, analyze and solve problems, create and implement innovations, and generate functional knowledge.
 - d. **Life and Career Skills** refers to intrinsic and socialized personal values, ethics, and attitudes for life after basic education and learning within the workforce.
2. **Accreditation and Equivalency** refers to the process of assessing the learners' prior learning to certify completion of elementary and secondary education.
3. **Career Assessment** refers to the process of determining learner's aptitude and occupational interest on any of the Senior High School Tracks.
4. **Flexible Learning Options** refers to a variety of alternative means of delivering education services to learners that are unable to attend formal schooling.
5. **Instructional Practices** refers to the specific and effective teaching methods, approaches, and strategies that guide the learning process in the classroom.
6. **Learner** refers to a pupil or student in the formal system, or to a learner in the alternative learning system.
7. **Learners' Aptitude** refers to the innate ability/potential of the learner in the following areas: General Scholastic, Academic, Sports, Arts and Design, and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Tracks in Senior High School.
8. **Learners in special circumstances** refers to those who have difficulty accessing regular schooling. These include learners who are disadvantaged geographically and economically, those who are victims of abuse and/or are in conflict with the law.
9. **Learners with special needs** refers to those who require special education services and modification of school practices to access educational opportunities and the general education curriculum. They include those who have difficulty seeing,

hearing, walking or climbing steps, remembering or concentrating, and communicating.

10. **Learning standards** refers to the content standards, performance standards and learning competencies that are articulated in the curriculum.
11. **Occupational Interest** refers to the learner's preference in specific vocations/career categories.
12. **Placement** refers to the process of determining learners' grade level equivalence in the formal system based on assessment and validation of prior learning.
13. **Progressive Test Items** refers to test items that measure varying levels of skills.
14. **Public Accountability** refers to the obligation of DepEd to carry out responsibilities that affect the public. It means that decision makers across all levels will explain publicly, fully, and fairly what education outcomes they intend to bring about, for whom, and why.
15. **Stakeholders** refers to internal and external end users of the assessment results.
 - a. **Internal Stakeholders** include learners, teachers, school administrators, policy makers program managers, and learning resource developers.
 - b. **External Stakeholders** include parents/guardians, academe, community leaders, local government units, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, legislators, industries, local and foreign donors, researchers, and other government agencies.

SECTION 2: Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Assessment

Beginning School Year 2016–2017, DepEd shall conduct the Early Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Assessment (ELLNA) for Grade 3 learners.

1. Test Results Utilization

The assessment results shall be utilized to:

- a. determine if learners are meeting Grade 3 learning standards
- b. analyze patterns in language development together with other language, literacy, and numeracy assessments to develop appropriate intervention programs
- c. formulate evidence-based policies and plans for Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) instructional practices and learning environment provisions that impact learning outcomes
- d. improve MTB-MLE instruction
- e. identify teacher training needs
- f. initiate and conduct research on MTB-MLE instructional practices and learning environment provisions that impact student learning outcomes

2. Test Data Dissemination and Reporting

Test Results will be released not later than three months after the examination. To maximize information dissemination and utilization of test results, the following data shall be released to the field offices through a report card:

- a. National/Regional/Division Performance Profile by Type of School (based on current typology of schools used in the Enhanced Basic Education Information System [EBEIS])
- b. National/Regional/Division Competency/Skills Profile by Type of School (based on current typology of schools used in the Enhanced Basic Education Information System [EBEIS])
- c. National/Regional/Division Performance Profile of Learners with Special Needs
- d. National/Regional/Division Performance by School Location (based on current typology of schools used in the Geographical Information System [GIS] or EBEIS)

The dissemination of test results shall be through different modalities:

- a. Website
- b. DepEd Issuance
- c. Media (print, broadcast)
- d. Educational forums
- e. Other modes of delivery (courier)

3. Test Design

The coverage of the assessment tool for Grade 3 includes the following:

- a. Language and Literacy
 - i. Mechanical Component
 - 1. Alphabet Knowledge
 - 2. Phonics and Word Reading
 - 3. Spelling
 - ii. Meaning Component
 - 1. Book and Print Knowledge
 - 2. Vocabulary
 - 3. Grammar
 - 4. Reading Comprehension
 - 5. Listening Comprehension
 - 6. Study Skills
- b. Numeracy
 - i. Counting
 - ii. Estimating
 - iii. Calculating
 - iv. Measuring
 - v. Problem solving

The test items shall measure language skills using learning area content and numeracy skills; test format shall be multiple choice. The test design is progressive in nature wherein test items measure varying levels of skills. Moreover, English, Filipino, and Mother Tongue shall be the languages of assessment for ELLNA. The 19 Mother Tongue languages that shall be continually assessed in the national level are the following:

- a. Akeanon/Akianon
- b. Bikol
- c. Chavacano/Chabacano
- d. Hiligaynon
- e. Ibanag/Ybanag
- f. Ilokano/Iloko
- g. Ivatan
- h. Kapampangan
- i. Kinaray-a
- j. Maguindanaon
- k. Maranao
- l. Pangasinan/Pangasinense
- m. Sambal
- n. Sinugbuanong Binisaya/Cebuano
- o. Surigaonon
- p. Tagalog
- q. Tausug
- r. Waray
- s. Yakan

Other languages with approved working orthographies may be included in DepEd's roster of national assessments as per decision of the bureaus under the Curriculum and Instruction strand of the Department.

4. Test Development

The test development process for all national student learning assessments is illustrated in **Section 7**.

5. Test Administration

5.1 Target Clientele

All Grade 3 learners from the schools to be sampled will take the test including those with special needs. Provided in **Section 9** are the test accommodations for examinees with special needs.

5.2 Mode of Administration

Stratified random sampling procedure shall be used representing all types of schools and all mother tongue languages in the division and region. All regions and divisions shall be given the test but schools shall be sampled. All examinees in the school to be sampled shall take the test.

5.3 Schedule of Administration

The test shall be administered to Grade 4 learners three weeks after the first day of classes.

5.4 Number of Examinees per Testing Room

Examinees in a school must be alphabetically arranged regardless of gender. There shall be a maximum of 30 examinees per testing room who should be seated in alphabetical order. Each listed examinee should have a Learner Reference Number (LRN).

5.5 Testing Center Requirements

Public schools shall serve as testing centers. The testing center requirements are found in **Section 8**. Test accommodations for examinees with special needs as articulated in **Section 9** must be provided.

5.6 Testing Personnel

To ensure the smooth and proper administration of the test, the specific duties and responsibilities of key testing personnel are presented in **Section 10**.

5.7 Allocation, Delivery, and Retrieval of Test Materials

The scheme in the allocation, delivery, and retrieval of test materials is presented in **Section 11**.

Specific test administration procedures including different forms to be accomplished before, during, and after the test are indicated in the Examiner's Handbook that will be distributed and discussed during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop of field testing personnel to be conducted by the Bureau of Educational Assessment (BEA). Schedule and venue of said conference/consultative workshop shall be announced through a memo.

6. Test Data Processing and Interpretation

6.1 Data Processing

The answer sheets retrieved from the Schools Division Offices shall be forwarded to BEA and shall be electronically processed.

6.2 Interpretation of Test Data (Classification of Scores)

Test scores shall be reported as percentage scores. Proficiency level for each cluster of early language, literacy and numeracy skills is at least 75%.

Domains are clustered according to language and literacy and numeracy skills. Language and literacy skills have mechanical and meaning components. The mechanical component covers alphabet knowledge, phonics and word reading and spelling while the meaning component covers book and print knowledge, vocabulary, grammar, and reading and listening comprehension. Numeracy covers counting, estimating, calculating, measuring and problem solving.

Normative data using measure of standard deviations will be computed based on mean percentage score.

6.3 Data Requirements

The data shall be presented according to the Performance Profile: (a) competency skills, (b) learners with special needs, (c) school typology, and (d) school location.

SECTION 3: Exit Assessments

Beginning School Year 2017–2018, DepEd shall conduct Exit Assessments for Grades 6, 10, and 12.

1. Test Results Utilization

The exit assessment results shall be utilized to:

- a. determine if learners are meeting the learning standards
- b. help provide information to improve instructional practices
- c. assess/evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of education service delivery using learning outcomes as indicators
- d. provide empirical information as bases for curriculum, learning delivery, assessment and policy reviews, and policy formulation

Exit Assessment results is not a requirement for graduation.

2. Test Data Dissemination and Reporting

To maximize information dissemination and utilization of test results, the following data shall be released to the field offices through a report card:

- a. National/Regional/Division Performance Profile per Learning Area by Type of School (based on current typology of schools used in the Enhanced Basic Education Information System [EBEIS])
- b. National/Regional/Division Competency/Skills Profile per Learning Area by Type of School (based on current typology of schools used in the Enhanced Basic Education Information System [EBEIS])
- b. National/Regional/Division Performance Profile of Learners with Special Needs
- c. National/Regional/Division Performance by School Location (based on current typology of schools used in the Geographical Information System [GIS] or EBEIS)
- d. National/Regional/Division Performance by Tracks in Senior High School:
 - i. Academic Track
 1. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
 2. Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS)
 3. Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM)
 4. General Academic Strand (GAS)
 - ii. Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track
 1. Agri-Fishery Arts
 2. Home Economics
 3. Industrial Arts
 4. Information and Communications Technology
 - iii. Sports Track
 - iv. Arts and Design Track
 - v. Other unique or special programs
- e. National/Regional/Division Performance Profile by Alternative Delivery Modes

The dissemination of test results to the public shall be through different modalities such as the DepEd website, through DepEd issuances, conferences and forums. Requests for access to data may be done in writing through the BEA Director stating the purpose of the request and the specific data aspects required.

3. Test Design

The Grades 6 and 10 exit assessments shall cover 21st-century Skills (Information, Media and Technology Skills, Learning and Innovation Skills, Communication Skills, and Life and Career Skills) using learning areas as content (English, Science, Mathematics, Filipino and *Araling Panlipunan*).

The Grade 12 assessment shall cover 21st-century skills and the core Senior High School learning areas of Languages, Humanities, Communication, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, and Philosophy.

The test design is progressive in nature wherein test items measure varying levels of skills. The language of the assessment tools for Grades 6, 10, and 12 will be English and Filipino. The tests shall be in multiple-choice format.

4. Test Development

The test development process for all national student learning assessments is illustrated in **Section 7**.

5. Test Administration

5.1 Target Clientele

All Grades 6, 10, and 12 learners including those with special needs from the schools to be sampled shall take the test. Test accommodations for examinees with special needs as articulated in **Section 9** must be provided.

5.2 Mode of Administration

Grades 6 and 10

Stratified random sampling procedure shall be used, representing all types of schools in the district, division and region. All regions, divisions and districts shall be given the test but schools shall be sampled. All examinees in the school to be sampled shall take the test.

Grade 12

Stratified random sampling procedure shall be used to represent all types of schools in the district, division and region. Fifty percent of the schools per track (public and private) shall be included in the sample. If there is only one school

offering a track in a region, the school shall be automatically included in the test administration.

The same sampling procedure shall apply for learners with special needs in Grades 6, 10, and 12 assessments.

5.3 Schedule of Administration

Grades 6 and 10

The test shall be administered to Grades 7 and 11 learners three weeks after the first day of classes.

Grade 12

The test shall be administered on the third week of the second semester.

5.4 Number of Examinees per Testing Room

Examinees must be alphabetically arranged in the whole school regardless of gender. There shall be a maximum of 30 examinees per testing room who should be seated in alphabetic order. Each listed examinee should have a Learner Reference Number (LRN).

5.5 Testing Center Requirements

Public and private schools shall serve as testing centers. The testing center requirements are found in **Section 8**. Test accommodations for examinees with special needs are provided in **Section 9**.

5.6 Testing Personnel

To ensure the smooth and proper administration of the test, the specific duties and responsibilities of key testing personnel are presented in **Section 10**.

5.7 Allocation, Delivery, and Retrieval of Test Materials

The scheme in the allocation, delivery, and retrieval of test materials is presented in **Section 11**.

Specific test administration procedures including different forms to be accomplished before, during, and after the test are indicated in the Examiner's Handbook that will be distributed and discussed during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop of field testing personnel to be conducted by BEA. Schedule and venue of said conference/consultative workshop shall be announced through a memo.

6. Test Data Processing and Interpretation

6.1 Data Processing

The answer sheets retrieved from the Schools Division Offices shall be forwarded to BEA and shall be electronically processed.

6.2 Interpretation of Test Data (Classification of Scores)

Test scores shall be reported as percentage scores. Competencies from each learning area are organized according to 21st-century skills. Results shall be presented by levels of progression. Proficiency level is at least 75%.

Normative data using measure of standard deviations will be computed based on mean percentage score.

6.3 Data Requirements

The Performance Profile shall be presented according to: (a) type of school, (b) competency skills, (c) learners with special needs, and (d) school location.

SECTION 4: Career Assessment

In order to guide the conduct of career guidance at the school level and to ensure the development of skills and competencies required in the world of work, DepEd shall conduct a career assessment to Grade 9 students beginning School Year 2016–2017.

The specific objectives of Career Assessment are the following:

1. To provide guidance to individual learners for their future educational and career choices; and
2. To provide a basis for profiling learners' aptitude in the four Senior High School tracks:
 - a. Academic
 - i. Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM)
 - ii. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
 - iii. Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS)
 - b. Technical-Vocational-Livelihood
 - c. Sports
 - d. Arts and Design

1. Test Results Utilization

The utilization of the career assessment results shall support the national framework on career guidance, which will be released in another issuance. Reporting and interpretation of the results shall be used in career advocacy, career guidance, and homeroom guidance.

The career assessment results shall also be used for entry assessment to the specific Senior High School (SHS) tracks/strands in all public and private schools. Prior to entering SHS, the aptitude of students in select programs shall be measured in order to ensure that they have the potential to complete the program.

There will be a required cut-off score for students who wish to enroll in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Strand. The Final Grade both in Science and Math in Grade 10 should be 85 and above. Learners should also have at least a percentile rank of 86 and above in the STEM subtest in the career assessment exam.

There will be two screenings for students who wish to enroll in the Sports and Arts and Design Tracks. The first screening will be the results of the career assessment in the corresponding subtests. Aptitude should be at least a percentile rank of 51 and above.

The second screening for the Sports Track will be done through skills-related fitness tests which will be administered by the accepting schools. For the Arts and Design Track, the second screening will be through a performance and skills assessment which will also be administered by the accepting schools.

There will be no prescribed cut-off for scholastic grades and scores in any subtest for those who desire to enter into the Humanities and Social Science (HUMSS) Strand, the Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) Strand, and the Technical-Vocational and Livelihood (TVL) Track.

A summary of the criteria for entry to the SHS tracks/strands are shown in the table below:

Table 1. Criteria for entry to senior high school (SHS) tracks/strands

Criteria	SHS Tracks/Strands						
	Academic Track				Sports Track	Arts and Design Track	Technical Vocational Livelihood Track
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Strand	Accountancy, Business and Management Strand	Humanities and Social Science Strand	General Academic Strand				
Scholastic Grades at Grade 10	Final Grade no lower than 85 both in Math and Science	None	None	None	None	None	None
Career Examination Results	Percentile rank of 86 and above in the STEM subtest	None	None	None	Percentile rank of 51 and above in the corresponding career subtests		None
Alternative Entry Requirements	Writeup of scientific inquiry process, draft experiment, and other such summative assessments	Simple business concept/ idea, marketing ideas, and other such summative assessments	Essay on current social issues, short story or articles, book/movie reviews, and other such summative assessments	Essay on a project of interest, project plan, and other such summative assessments	Skills-related fitness tests administered by the accepting schools	Performance and skills assessment administered by the accepting schools	Livelihood project idea/s, and other such summative assessments

Accepting schools shall administer alternative entry requirements as needed. Schools may also opt to have other alternative assessments aside from those in the table above. These assessments should be in line with their chosen track/strand.

2. Test Data Dissemination and Reporting

Test results will be released not more than three months after the examination. Specific test data shall be disseminated to different stakeholders as specified below:

2.1 Internal stakeholders

a. Learners

They shall receive individual Certificate of Rating (COR) that contains the obtained test scores in the domains and level of preferences in the occupational fields.

- b. School/Schools Division/Region
A report on the Institutional Performance Profile (IPP) or summary of test results by domain shall be released to these offices.
- c. Policy makers, program managers, and learning resource developers
A report on the national test results by specific variable shall be provided.

2.2 External stakeholders

- a. Parents/Guardians
An orientation/forum shall be conducted by the guidance counselor to inform them of the test results and the in-demand and hard-to-fill occupations by industry per region, to guide them in the track or course for senior high school.
- b. Academe, community leaders, local government units, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations, legislators, industries, local and foreign donors, researchers, and other government agencies

Test results by specific scope (municipal/congressional and school year) and variable (gender, type of school, etc.) shall be provided upon request.

The procedure on the releasing of test results and guidelines on the utilization of national examination results are discussed in **Section 14**.

3. Test Design

The Career Assessment covers the following domains:

- a. General Scholastic Aptitude (GSA)
The GSA is the average of the standard scores in these areas: Scientific Ability, Reading Comprehension, Verbal Ability, Mathematical Ability, and Logical Reasoning Ability.
- b. Occupational Interest Inventory (OII)
The OII is an inventory/checklist of occupational interests which provides an assessment on inclinations/preferences for comprehensive career guidance. A profile chart of the student's occupational inclinations and preferences through the identified cluster occupations is provided.
- c. Aptitude for Senior High School (SHS) Tracks
The Aptitude Test for SHS Tracks measures the innate ability or potential of a student to succeed in the SHS tracks, namely: (1) Academic, which includes Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM); (2) Technical-Vocational-Livelihood; (3) Sports; and (4) Arts and Design.

The test design shall be applicable for both regular learners and learners with special needs.

4. Test Development

The test development process for all national student learning assessments is illustrated in **Section 7**.

5. Test Administration

5.1 Target Clientele

The test shall be administered to all Grade 9 learners who are currently enrolled in public schools and private schools with a government permit or recognition. Learners with special needs may also be assessed provided that test accommodations as articulated in **Section 9** are met.

5.2 Mode of Administration

Census will be the mode of administration.

5.3 Schedule of Administration

The test shall be administered annually every last Wednesday and Thursday of August.

5.4 Test Administration Scheme

The test shall be administered in two days following the administration scheme shown below.

Table 2. Career assessment test administration scheme

Day	Booklet Number	Test Domain
1	1	General Scholastic Aptitude
		Technical-Vocational-Livelihood
		Sports
2	2	Academic
		Occupational Interest
		Arts and Design

5.5 Number of Examinees per Testing Room

Examinees in a school must be alphabetically arranged regardless of gender. There shall be a maximum of 30 examinees per testing room who should be seated in alphabetical order. Each listed examinee should have a Learner Reference Number (LRN).

5.6 Testing Center Requirements

All schools shall serve as testing centers. The testing center requirements are found in **Section 8**. Test accommodations for examinees with special needs are provided in **Section 9**.

5.7 Testing Personnel

The specific duties and responsibilities of the aforementioned testing personnel are presented in **Section 10**.

5.8 Allocation, Delivery, and Retrieval of Test Materials

The scheme in the allocation, delivery, and retrieval of test materials is presented in **Section 11**.

Specific test administration procedures including different forms to be accomplished before, during and after the test are indicated in the Examiner's Handbook that will be distributed and discussed during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop of field testing personnel to be conducted by BEA. Schedule and venue of said conference/consultative workshop shall be announced through a memo.

6. Test Data Processing and Interpretation

6.1 Data Processing

The answer sheets retrieved from the Schools Division Offices shall be forwarded to BEA and shall be electronically processed.

6.2 Test Interpretation

The career assessment results shall be recommendatory. No cut-off score shall be prescribed by DepEd. The career choice of the student based on his/her aptitude and occupational interest shall prevail as facilitated by the guidance counselor/guidance teacher and as guided by the trends in the labor market. Specifically, the Certificate of Ratings shall include a report on the students' General Scholastic Aptitude, occupational interest (with first and second preferences), and the track they opt to pursue vis-à-vis their aptitude in the SHS tracks. Results shall be reported in Standard Scores and Percentile Ranks.

SECTION 5: Accreditation and Equivalency Assessment

The Accreditation and Equivalency Tests (A&E Tests) are nationally administered tests that aim to measure the competencies and life skills of those who have not attended or finished the formal elementary or secondary education. These assessments will allow the learners to obtain certification of completion at different exits in Basic Education, which may be used to access further education, job promotion, entry to job training, and employment.

1. Test Results Utilization

A&E Tests provide an alternative means of certification of basic education for learners in ALS and flexible learning options.

The assessment results shall be utilized to:

- a. determine if learners are meeting the learning standards for specific exit points in the educational system
- b. help provide information to improve instructional practices
- c. assess/evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of education service delivery using learning outcomes as indicators
- d. provide empirical information as bases for curriculum, learning delivery, assessment and policy reviews, and policy formulation

2. Test Data Dissemination and Reporting

The results of the A&E Tests for examinees who took the regular examination, shall be released not more than 3 months from the date of examination. For walk-in examinees, it shall be released after two weeks from the date of examination. Certificates may be claimed from Schools Division Offices.

3. Test Design

The tests shall cover 21st-century skills based on the Alternative Learning System Strands listed below:

1. Communication Skills
2. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
3. Sustainable Use of Resources and Productivity
4. Development of Self and a Sense of Community
5. Expanding One's World Vision

The test design is progressive in nature wherein test items measure varying levels of skills. A&E learners may also take the career assessment to determine their aptitude in the following domains: General Scholastic Aptitude, Technical-Vocational Aptitude, SHS Track/Strand Aptitude as well as Occupational Fields of Interest. The career assessment results shall provide guidance for learners' future educational and career choices.

For test passers of elementary and junior high school levels, certificates for Grades 6 and 10 shall be given.

A&E final assessment rating shall be determined by 50% written assessment results and 50% portfolio content. The portfolio will contain work samples and projects with corresponding rubrics. Work samples will have a weight of 40% while projects will have a weight of 60%.

The test design shall be applicable for both regular learners and learners with special needs.

4. Test Development

The test development process for all national student learning assessments is illustrated in **Section 7**.

5. Test Administration

5.1 Target Clientele

These tests may be administered to learners in the alternative learning system and nonformal education programs. They may also be administered to out-of-school children and youth who are prepared for assessment as well as adults seeking certification of learning. The minimum age for taking the Elementary exam is 12. The minimum age for taking the High School exam is 16.

Learners with special needs may also be assessed provided that test accommodations as articulated in **Section 9** are met.

5.2 Mode of Administration

The A&E is a paper-and-pencil test. Additional/equivalent alternative assessments may also be administered.

5.3 Schedule of Administration

Field Office Administration. The test shall be administered yearly by BEA every first Sunday of October for the Luzon cluster, and every second Sunday of October for the Visayas and Mindanao clusters at designated testing centers in Schools Division Offices.

Walk-in Administration. The test shall also be administered at BEA to accommodate walk-in clients. They shall be accommodated immediately after the test administration at field offices in October.

5.4 Number of Examinees per Testing Room

There shall be 30 examinees per testing room.

5.5 Testing Center Requirements

The testing center must be located near the Division Office and accessible to the examinees. The testing center must be available on Sunday in addition to requirements found in **Section 8**. Test accommodations for examinees with special needs are provided in **Section 9**.

5.6 Testing Personnel

The specific duties and responsibilities of the aforementioned testing personnel are presented in **Section 10**.

5.7 Allocation, Delivery, and Retrieval of Test Materials

The scheme in the allocation, delivery, and retrieval of test materials is presented in **Section 11**.

Specific test administration procedures including different forms to be accomplished before, during, and after the test are indicated in the Examiner's Handbook that will be distributed and discussed during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop of field testing personnel to be conducted by BEA. Schedule and venue of said conference/consultative workshop shall be announced through a memorandum.

6. Statistical Test Data Processing and Interpretation

6.1 Data Processing

The answer sheets retrieved from the Division Offices shall be forwarded to BEA and shall be electronically processed.

6.2 Interpretation of Test Data

An examinee should score at least 75% to pass the test. Examinees who failed the test may be allowed to retake it in the next cycle of administration.

3. Data Requirements

The data requirements would include the different types of learners such as overaged in-school learners, adult learners, learners in difficult/special circumstances, and learners with intervention.

SECTION 6: Grade Level Placement Assessment

1. Test Results Utilization

The Philippine Education Placement Test (PEPT) is a nationally administered assessment for learners in special circumstances. The result of this assessment will allow these learners to: a) access or resume schooling and/or b) obtain certification of completion by grade level in the DepEd formal system. Specifically, it aims to fulfill the following purposes:

1. To establish that students have met learning standards for specific grade levels
2. To determine the appropriate grade level of learners in special circumstances in the formal school system
3. To assess competencies in academic areas gained through informal and non-formal means for entry or reentry into formal school
4. To assess competencies in academic areas for entry or reentry to formal school

The test must not be used for grade-level acceleration but for the aforementioned purposes only. For grade-level acceleration, kindly refer to DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2002, “Accelerated Learning Program for Public Elementary Schools”.

2. Test Data Dissemination and Reporting

Field Office Administration. The Certificate of Rating (COR) of examinees who took the test in November shall be released to Division Offices not later than three months after the date of examination.

Walk-in and Special Administration. The COR of examinees in walk-in and special administrations shall be released after two weeks from the date of examination.

Effectivity of Grade-level Placement of PEPT Qualifiers. In reference to DepEd Order No. 49, s. 2013, the guidelines on the effectivity of the grade level placement of PEPT qualifiers are as follows:

- a. The placement of PEPT qualifiers who took the test during the field office, walk-in, and special administrations shall take effect in the next or subsequent school year, not during the current school year when the test was administered.
- b. The placement of the PEPT qualifiers who took the test during the special administration in celebration of the Philippine Independence Day (June 12) shall take effect in the same or current school year when the test was administered.

Moreover, the following data are to be indicated in Forms 137 and 138 of the PEPT qualifiers should they enroll in school:

“Placed/Reclassified in _____ (<i>Grade Level</i>) _____ on the basis of the PEPT results dated _____ (<i>Date of Examination</i>) _____ with Examinee No. _____.”
--

In addition, the PEPT Certificate of Ratings (COR) should be attached to Forms 137 and 138 of the PEPT qualifiers for reference.

3. Test Design

The test is a Multiple-choice type assessing 21st-century skills based on content learning areas (English, Filipino, Science, Mathematics and *Araling Panlipunan*). The Table of Specifications by subject area is prepared by BEA in consultation with the Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD).

The test design shall be applicable for both regular learners and learners with special needs.

4. Test Development

The test development process for all national student learning assessments is illustrated in **Section 7**.

5. Test Administration

5.1 Target Clientele

The test may be administered to the following:

- a. Learners from schools without a government permit
- b. Learners from nonformal and informal education programs
- c. Learners who have incomplete or no record of formal schooling
- d. Learners with back subjects
- e. Learners who need grade level standards assessment
- f. Learners who are overage for their grade levels

Learners with special needs may also be assessed provided that test accommodations as articulated in **Section 9** are met.

5.2 Testing Centers and Test Administration Schedule

National Testing Center. BEA shall serve as a registration and testing center for walk-in examinees all year round.

Regional Testing Center. Test administration under special arrangements should be coordinated with BEA. Placement exam will be administered when requested at the same time as other national assessments.

Field Office Administration. All examinees who register for the November examination shall take the test in designated testing centers in Schools Division

Offices. Division Testing Centers only administer the placement test once a year. The test shall be administered yearly by BEA every third Sunday of November (for the Luzon Cluster) and every fourth Sunday of November (for the Visayas and Mindanao Clusters) at designated division testing centers.

Walk-in Administration. BEA shall serve as a testing center for walk-in examinees. The test shall be open for registration to walk-in registrants all year round.

Special Administration. In some cases, the test may be administered at the school site provided expenses shall be shouldered by the requesting party. Such request should be endorsed by the Regional Office. The test may also be administered in juvenile centers, rehabilitation centers, jail facilities or wherever learning activities are conducted based on learners' needs. The test schedule for special test administration shall be determined by BEA and the requesting party.

5.3 Number of Examinees per Testing Room

There shall be 20 examinees per testing room.

5.4 Testing Center Requirements

The testing center must be located near the Division Office and accessible to the examinees. The testing center requirements are found in **Section 8**. Test accommodations for examinees with special needs are provided in **Section 9**.

5.5 Testing Personnel

The specific duties and responsibilities of the aforementioned testing personnel are presented in **Section 10**.

5.6 Allocation, Delivery, and Retrieval of Test Materials

The scheme in the allocation, delivery, and retrieval of test materials is presented in **Section 11**.

Specific test administration procedures including different forms to be accomplished before, during, and after the test are indicated in the Examiner's Handbook that will be distributed and discussed during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop of field testing personnel to be conducted by BEA. Schedule and venue of said conference/consultative workshop shall be announced through a memo.

6. Statistical Test Data Processing and Interpretation

6.1 Data Processing

The answer sheets retrieved from the Schools Division Offices shall be forwarded to BEA and shall be electronically processed.

6.2 Interpretation of Test Data

The interpretation of scores shall be done through a conversion table of percentage scores that are based on the norms. The passing rate per subject area is 75%.

Examinees whose test score in one subject is lower than 75% may be allowed to retake the failed subtest within six months.

SECTION 7: Test Development Process

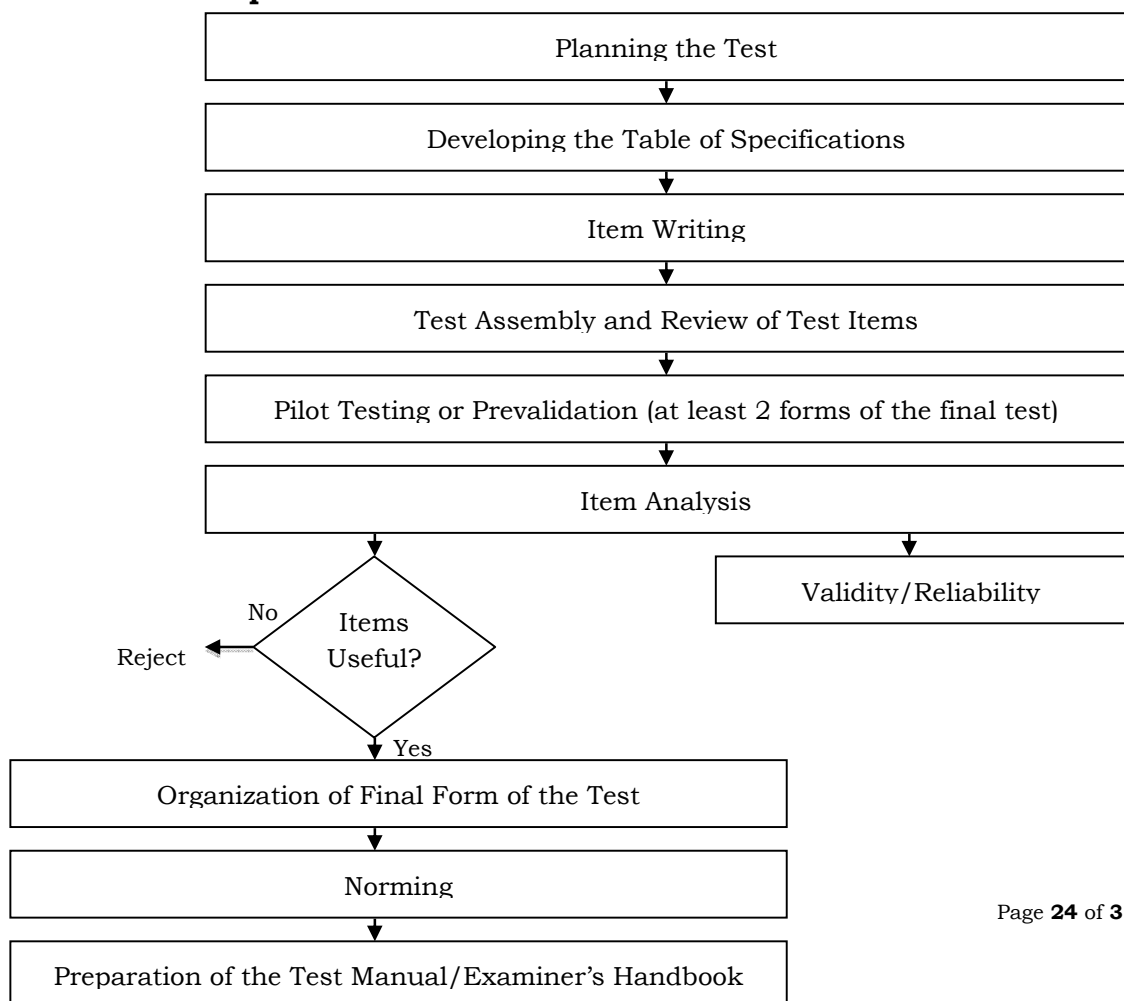
The test development process begins with the planning stage, including the theoretical framework on which the test design is anchored. Based on the test design, the table of specifications shall be formulated by BEA and BCD. Consultants from the academe by domain and related government agencies shall review and revise, if necessary, the Table of Specifications.

Workshops shall be conducted for the construction of test items. Test construction shall be done by a pool of item writers including specialists from BEA, BCD, and field personnel. The items shall be organized by domain/competency for content and language review of consultants from the academe. After approval, prevalidation of **two to three** test forms shall be administered in select sample public and private secondary schools.

Prevalidation results shall be processed to obtain the validity and reliability of the test. Acceptable items shall be stored in the item bank for the organization of the final form. The final form shall be subjected to validation and norming. The organized final form shall be reviewed by the consultants from the academe vis-à-vis the psychometric properties. The last stage of the test development process is the preparation of the camera-ready form, the test manual, and examiner's handbook for reproduction.

This process is depicted in the flowchart below.

Figure 1. Test Development Process



SECTION 8: Testing Center Requirements

Listed below are the testing center requirements:

1. There must be a distribution room for the test materials to ensure the security and confidentiality of the test. It must be accessible to all testing rooms to facilitate the release and retrieval of test materials.
2. There must be enough testing rooms to accommodate the examinees.
3. The testing rooms must be well-ventilated and well-lighted, and free from any kind of noise that may distract the examinees while taking the test.
4. The List of Actual Examinees should be posted in each testing room the day before the exam. The list should be in alphabetical order, regardless of gender.
5. The first and last rows of seats should be close to the classroom walls to ensure enough spacing in between rows.
6. Seats of absentees should be left vacant.
7. There must be a comfort room accessible to the examinees and testing personnel in the area.
8. Instructional materials/aids posted on the classroom walls should be covered.
9. Each testing room should have the following materials:
 - a. Test materials enough for all examinees in the room in sealed boxes/packs
 - b. Table and chair for the Room Examiner
 - c. Enough seats for the examinees
 - d. Name grid
 - e. Board work
 - f. Pencils
 - g. Extra sheet of paper for computation
10. Other requirements are stated in detail in the Examiner's Handbook, which will be released during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop to be scheduled by BEA.
11. Test accommodations for learners with special needs must be provided as indicated in **Section 9**.

SECTION 9: Test Accommodations for Learners with Special Needs

The inclusion of learners with special needs in national assessments aims to measure their progress in the attainment of learning standards of the curriculum. Given their specific needs, the following test accommodations are prescribed:

1. Separate, accessible testing room situated at the ground floor near clean and accessible restrooms. They must be grouped according to difficulty as:
 - a. Learners who have difficulty seeing
 - b. Learners who have difficulty hearing
 - c. Learners who have difficulty remembering/concentrating
 - d. Learners who have difficulty walking/moving/climbing steps
 - e. Learners who have difficulty communicating
2. Double the time to take the exam. This is to give them ample time to read and answer the test.
3. Flexible rules such as allowing test takers to stand up once in a while or get out of the room for those who have difficulty concentrating
4. Personal assistant to help those with difficulty walking/moving/climbing steps.
5. Qualified sign language interpreter who shall ensure that all spoken instructions during testing are adequately interpreted to those who have difficulty hearing
6. Alternative test formats (Braille, large print, audio, electronic)
7. For examinees with difficulty seeing, alternative response formats can be used, such as oral type wherein an examiner reads the test items to the examinee and a scribe shades the answers in the scannable Answer Sheet. These alternative formats may also be used by other learners as needed.
8. Appropriate test furniture (table, chair)

SECTION 10: Testing Personnel

The following are the testing personnel involved in the administration of national examinations.

1. **Schools Division Superintendent (SDS).** The SDS shall oversee the test administration and shall be responsible for the smooth conduct of the test in the Division. He/she shall also designate the Education Program Supervisors who shall serve as Division Testing Coordinator and Private School Supervisor.
2. **Regional Testing Coordinator (RTC).** He/she shall provide Division Offices the list of private schools operating with permit that are to be included in the test administration. He/she shall also prepare a team to monitor the test in the whole region.
3. **Division Testing Coordinator (DTC).** He/she shall supervise the administration of the test in public schools.
4. **Private School Supervisor (PSS) or Division Testing Coordinator Assistant (DTCA).** He/she shall supervise the administration of the test in private schools.
5. **Chief Examiner (CE).** The School Head shall serve as the Chief Examiner and shall oversee the conduct of the test in the school.
6. **School Testing Coordinator (STC).** The Guidance Counselor/Department Head shall serve as the School Testing Coordinator whose task is to assist the Chief Examiner in the overall conduct of the test.
7. **Room Supervisor (RS).** Teachers from other schools shall serve as Room Supervisors. They shall monitor and supervise in the rooms assigned to them. There must be 1 RS assigned in every 10 testing rooms if there are 20 examinees per room. On the other hand, there must be 1 RS in every 5 rooms if there are 30 examinees per room. They shall conduct ocular inspection the day before the test to familiarize themselves with the layout of the school.
8. **Room Examiner (RE).** Teachers from other schools shall serve as Room Examiners. They shall conduct the test in accordance with the standardized test administration guidelines. RSs and REs must not come from the same school. Transportation and other incidental expenses shall be charged to their school's Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE)/local funds.
9. **Support Staff (SS).** Administrative support staff shall provide any test-related assistance to the School Head, such as preparation of testing rooms.

A national conference shall be conducted by cluster to prepare for the yearly administration of the test and to ensure the standardized system of test administration. It shall also provide an avenue for feedback to and from the field. The details of the Examiner's Handbook shall also be discussed during the national conference. In addition, the constitutional right of the testing personnel as well as the examinees to free exercise of religion is in **Section 12**.

SECTION 11: Allocation, Delivery, and Retrieval of Test Materials

1. Allocation of Test Materials

The test materials are composed of answer sheets, test booklets, and nonclassified materials.

The allocation of test materials shall depend on the submitted enrolment data/ number of test registrants duly signed by the SDS. During the national conference, DTCs and PSSs shall submit to BEA the enrolment data as of cut-off date of the present school year. The enrolment data by school shall serve as basis for the allocation of test materials and budget estimates.

Language, Literacy, Numeracy, Exit, and Career Assessments. The RTC shall provide the PSSs the list of private schools that are qualified to take the test. The test materials shall be packed by school and by municipality.

Accreditation, Equivalency, and Grade-level Placement Assessments. The DTC shall submit to BEA the number of test takers per testing center. Likewise, the test materials shall be packed by testing center.

2. Delivery and Retrieval of Test Materials

The Division Testing Coordinator or an authorized designate such as the Property Custodian shall be responsible in receiving and releasing test materials from BEA or its forwarder.

Language, Literacy, Numeracy, Exit, and Career Assessments. The test materials shall be delivered and retrieved through a forwarder. Test materials shall be delivered to Schools Division Offices by priority based on geographic location. Test Materials must be delivered to the Schools Division Offices at least a week before the exam date. Test materials must then be distributed to schools at least two days before the exam date. For schools in the city, they will be delivered on the day itself.

The forwarder shall retrieve the test materials the day after the exam date and return the test materials to the Central Office for test data processing. Schools Division Offices who fail to follow the prescribed retrieval timeline shall shoulder the shipment cost of test materials to the Central Office.

Accreditation, Equivalency, and Grade-level Placement Assessments. The test materials shall be delivered and retrieved by a BEA personnel/forwarder. Specific guidelines shall be discussed during the national conference of testing personnel.

Security measures must be observed in the delivery and retrieval of test materials.

SECTION 12: Reiterating the Constitutional Right of DepEd Testing Personnel and Examinees to Free Exercise of Religion in the Conduct of National Assessments

The religious rights of DepEd testing personnel and examinees should be considered in scheduling special examinations and any assessment-related activities such as seminars and test orientations as per DepEd Order No. 105, s. 2010, *“Reiterating the Constitutional Right of DepEd Personnel and Students to Free Exercise of Religion.”*

Specifically, DepEd testing personnel and examinees belonging to the Seventh-Day Adventist Church should not be required to attend examinations, seminars, test orientations, pretest and posttest activities and any assessment-related activities held on a Saturday, which is their day of rest or church day, in accordance with their religious beliefs. A special arrangement should be made by the concerned testing personnel/examinee with the school/Division Office/Regional Office to comply whatever the requirement is, without prejudice to their right to free exercise of religion.

In addition to the provisions in DepEd Order No. 105, s. 2010, considerations shall be provided for other religious faiths as necessary.

SECTION 13: Breach of Security in National Examinations and Corresponding Sanctions

The security and integrity of test materials shall be upheld in the whole process of test administration. This Order rescinds DECS Order No. 85, s. 1999, "*Breach of Security in National Examinations and Corresponding Sanctions*" and DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2015, "*Inclusion of Acts as Violations to National Examinations.*" The following acts are deemed as violation/infractions of security pertaining to national examinations in addition to:

1. Reading of test booklets other than by the examinee
2. Supplying answers to examinees
3. Cheating
4. Plagiarizing
5. Loss of test booklets
6. Photocopying of test booklets
7. Capturing test items through electronic gadgets
8. Distribution and posting of photos of the test booklet in any form of media
9. Opening the test materials prior to testing schedule
10. Late submission of test booklets and/or answer sheets
11. Tampering of examinees' answer sheets
12. Infringement of copyright
13. Allowing impostors and substitute examinees
14. Misrepresentation with regard to age, residence, and status
15. Failure to closely monitor test procedures resulting in test irregularities

Any or all of the following sanctions will be imposed on any or all of the aforementioned violations committed by those involved:

1. Examinees

The degree of violation and corresponding sanction shall be determined by the Chief Examiner.

- a. First and second offenses: reprimand
- b. Third offense: Cancellation of test papers / invalidation of test results

2. Testing Personnel

The degree of violation and corresponding sanction shall be determined by the Schools Division Superintendent.

- a. Suspension of salaries and incentives/benefits of those concerned for one to three months
- b. Work suspension
- c. In the case of infringement of copyright, legal remedies will be considered.

SECTION 14: Guidelines on Assessment Data Utilization

National assessment data can be released to and utilized by both internal and external stakeholders (identified in **Section 1**). The following guidelines and requirements are issued to regulate the use of assessment data as per DepEd Order No. 91, s. 2009, “*Prescribing Guidelines and Requirements Regulating the Use of National Examination Results.*”

1. Internal

BEA shall release the assessment results/data reports to the Region and Division Offices. The Division Office will then forward the documents to the schools. For career assessment in Grade 9, original copies of the COR must be given to the learners.

These results should not be used to rank schools and schools divisions. The Institutional Performance Profile shall be posted in the DepEd/BEA website and can be downloaded by individual schools, divisions, and regions. The site has restricted access because it contains information that may be accessed only by authorized users. BEA shall provide usernames and passwords to authorized personnel in regions, division, districts or schools so they can access the data uploaded in the website.

BEA shall present the national assessment results to the Office of the Secretary and different bureaus in the Central Office.

2. External

External stakeholders may be provided with the assessment results. To safeguard and prevent the misuse, mishandling, misinterpretation, exploitation, and manipulation of these assessment results, they must submit a letter specifying the purpose of their request and the data being requested (year of administration, scope, variables). A corresponding amount shall be charged by BEA for the processing of the requested data.

For *student-researchers*, the following must also be presented:

- a. School ID to show proof that he/she is enrolled in a higher education institution
- b. Copy of his/her approved thesis/ dissertation proposal signed by the Adviser
- c. Endorsement letter signed by the school Dean

Both individual and institutional stakeholders shall sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with BEA, agreeing to the provision that they shall not compare regions, divisions, schools, and examinees without taking into consideration other variables that may have a substantial effect on the outcome of the assessments and that they shall furnish DepEd a copy of the completed research/study.

Requests for reports or data may be communicated through fax or e-mail; the requesting party may also visit BEA personally.

Finally, BEA shall only provide and release to external stakeholders the assessment data for 10% of the actual number of examinees per year. Individual test results with names shall not be released unless the “*data subject agrees to the collection and processing of personal information about and/or relating to him/her*” per Section 3 of Republic Act 10173 or Data Privacy Act of 2012.

SECTION 15: Monitoring and Evaluation of Test Administration

The national test administration shall be monitored and evaluated in levels: by the Central Office through BEA and by the Regional and Schools Division Offices and schools through their field personnel. For the Placement/Accreditation/Equivalency Tests, the test administration shall also be monitored and evaluated by the Bureau of Learning Delivery aside from the personnel aforementioned above.

The Regional and Division Offices shall form a committee to monitor and evaluate the processes done before, during, and after the conduct of the test using a monitoring tool. A monitoring tool is provided to every test monitor to ensure that the standard procedures are followed.

The Regional Office committee shall be composed of personnel from the Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD) and Quality Assurance Division (QAD), while the Schools Division Office committee shall be composed of personnel from the Curriculum and Instruction Division (CID) and the School Governance and Operations Division (SGOD).

The monitoring and evaluation to be conducted in random schools in select divisions shall be part of the research on the effectiveness of the test administration scheme and utilization of data.

Monitoring Forms will be distributed during the National Conference/Consultative Workshop of field testing personnel to be conducted by BEA. Schedule and venue of said conference/consultative workshop shall be announced through a memorandum.

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