THE GED®
PLAYBOOK

What Adult Education Programs Need to Know

GED
TESTING SERVICE®

Introduction

At GED Testing Service, we have helped over 20 million students achieve high school equivalency and pursue a brighter future.

The GED® program is more than a diploma. It's a program for students to develop skills that lead to success in higher education and career growth. We strive to empower all students to improve their lives through education.

While there are certain misconceptions associated with the GED® credential, it is our goal to help you inform your students that with commitment, preparation, practice, and study, they can become GED® grads.

This *GED® Playbook* for the Adult Education Program Directors, Managers, and Instructors is intended to assist in navigating and understanding the GED® program. We hope this will be a good starting point as you learn how to better serve your adult learner. If you have any questions, please reach out to your State GED Administrator or your GED State Relationship Manager (SRM).

History

We are GED Testing Service, the sole provider of the official GED® test. We've helped over 20 million people achieve their GED® credential. We are the only high school equivalency program that is recognized by 97% of employers and colleges nationwide.

GED Testing Service is a joint venture of the American Council on Education, which started the GED® program in 1942, and leading education company, Pearson.

Table of contents

Who should use the *GED® Playbook*?

Within this document you'll find several helpful resources and tips. Below we've outlined who this Playbook serves.

Adult Education Program Directors and Managers

- Those who oversee and manage the GED adult education programs

Teachers and Tutors

- Those who provide prepare and plan lessons and are employed by GED education programs or community-based (teachers)

- Those who work independently and provide one-on-one instruction to GED students (tutors)

The GED Testing Service organization
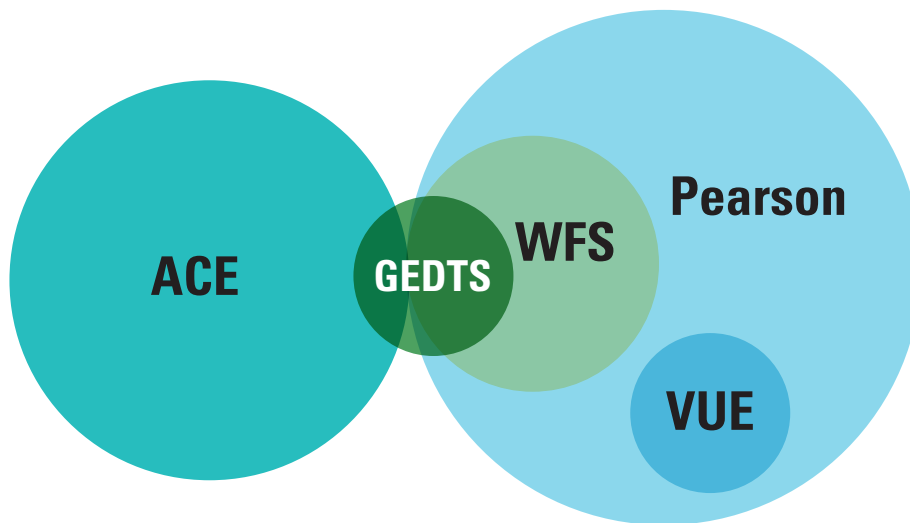
American Council on Education (ACE) – A non-profit organization that is the major coordinating body for US colleges and universities and one of the parent organizations, along with Pearson, of the GED Testing Service joint venture.

Pearson – Is an integrated business that brings together digital content, world-renowned assessments and high-quality learning service that support customers.

GED Testing Service (GEDTS) – Is the developer and owner of the GED® test, the GED® program and is organized within Pearson's Workforce Skills division.

Workforce Skills (WFS) – A business division within Pearson responsible for assessment that supports career progression, helps people unlock their talent and drives growth for our customers' businesses.

Pearson VUE – Pearson's computer-based testing business unit that provides the advanced and reliable electronic testing system for delivering the computer-based GED® test.

College Readiness

GED® grads are better prepared than ever for post-secondary education and job/career training programs. Since 2014 a higher percentage of GED® graduates are attending college programs, are enrolling more quickly, and they're succeeding thanks to GED® college readiness resources.

Career Readiness and Workforce Development

The GED® program helps adult learners earn a meaningful high school equivalency credential and be better prepared for future career opportunities. It also helps states and local programs deliver on their Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) outcomes and metrics.

Career Readiness and Workforce Development offers individuals opportunities to be more productive and prosperous in the workplace, which benefits both the employer and the worker. Learners can grow skills and have access to tools they need for workplace success.

- **Accelerated Pathways** — Pearson Accelerated Pathways provides flexible degree and post-secondary options for students as well as strategic education benefits for corporations looking to future-proof their workforce

- **Credly** — Leading the digital credential movement, Credly is a digital badging platform that offers the most comprehensive features to design and issue badges, enterprise-class functionality to scale and manage programs.

- **TalentLens** — Pearson TalentLens offers soft skill assessment solutions for corporate recruitment and lifelong career development. Soft Skills are highly relevant to understanding a person's strengths, growth opportunities and development areas and are predictive of job fit and ultimately, performance in a role.

- **Julius Education** — *This program is currently in the pilot phase.* Julius Education provides skills that companies want and industry-recognized certifications for STEM and Green jobs, combined with personalized career discovery for learners. Instructors receive workforce related lesson plans designed to support NRS level gains & IET components.

Typical program structure

How is the typical GED® Program structured?

There are hundreds of GED® programs nationwide that provide opportunities for learners to earn a high school diploma credential but they vary from organization to organization. The typical program will have a leadership team that includes a Director or Manager. They may also have program staff consisting of intake/ registration staff, instructional coaches and instructors. Many programs may also have paid and/or volunteer tutors. Below are roles in a typical GED® program:

- Student Intake Assessment staff

- PreGED and GED instructors

- Student interventions team (counselors, advisors, etc.)

- Instructional coaches

- Coaches to help students with persistence, motivation

- Post-testing staff

- Staff to help students transition from GED® program to workforce or industry credential or post-secondary educational program

What are the duties of an Adult Education Program Manager and Program Director?

The job of a GED program director or manager is challenging. They are primarily responsible for providing leadership and planning for the educational program. Those responsibilities typically include hiring program staff and instructors, providing guidance to staff, and handling challenges and complaints. Here are ten tips to help cultivate the best program staff:

- Hire people who are enthusiastic about helping adult reach their academic goals

- When hiring instructional staff, use assessments to determine their competency

- Allow instructors to teach to their content area strengths

- Standardize instruction with a written curriculum and use a standard lesson planning template

- Use program data to make decisions about instruction, staffing, classes, etc.

- Provide support to staff, esp. teachers; listen to their concerns and take action

- Provide support to students; listen to their concerns about their learning and take action

- Assess program regularly and make changes where necessary

- Conduct student surveys regularly to assess student satisfaction

- Provide and require annual professional development in teaching strategies for academic content concepts.

National Reporting and Assessment References

NRS Educational Functioning Levels is the accountability system for Federally funded adult education programs. NRS provides technical assistance and training to States to meet the needs of State and Local programs.

Assessments such as CASAS and TABE are nationally recognized tests that measure the academic progress of adult education students in the areas of math, reading, listening, speaking, writing, etc. These assessments help programs monitor students' progress using pre and post-tests.

Below are other assessment resources for your reference.

- CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System)

- TABE (Academic Assessment Tool)

- Best Plus 2.0 (ESL)

Wraparound Services

What are wraparound services? Wraparound is often defined as a strength-based approach focused on assisting adult learners in addressing barriers to goal completion in a comprehensive, holistic, and supportive manner. Individualized services tailored to meet individual need is important.

Why provide wraparound services? Many adult learners face barriers in their lives that adversely impact their ability to complete their educational and career goals.

Barriers can be situational or institutional. Situational barriers are of particular importance. These types of barriers include but are not limited to the following: lack of or low-income, living situation, lack of reliable and affordable childcare, community setting, family responsibilities, and lack of motivation. Wraparound services are needed to help adult learners overcome barriers and continue their journey to each educational and career success.

How to implement wraparound services? It takes resources, coordination, collaboration, and commitment to provide wraparound services. Many Adult Education programs have the commitment but are not equipped to provide other wraparound supportive services. Programs should identify and partner with governmental agencies, community-based non-profits, and faith-based programs in providing wraparound services.

Examples of types of wraparound services:

- Case management (can be identified during the orientation/intake process)
- Career counseling
- Financial/Childcare/Transportation assistance (Department of Human Resources)
- Disability support (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)
- Homeless support (Shelters and agencies)

Getting to know the GED® test

What is the GED® test?

The GED® Test is an assessment measuring the enduring academic outcomes of a high school education. Taking and passing the GED® test is a vehicle to help students who have not completed a regular high school course of study to earn a high school equivalency credential, which in turn facilitates participation in postsecondary education or careers.

What are the parts of the GED® test?

The GED® test is made up of 4 separate content tests (representing the academic areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). The tests are independent and may be taken individually at any time. For an overview on each content area, visit GED.com/about_test/test_subjects/.

Data: GED Test Takers Over the Past 7 Years

Since the inception of the new GED test series

5,600,000
adults worldwide

took at least one of the four GED content area tests. Students must score at least 145 in all four content areas to earn their GED credential.

The total number of test takers is **5,604,593**. This number includes all students who have taken at least one content area of the GED test regardless of whether they completed or met the GED test passing score.

Since the inception of the new GED test series

7,747,728
total GED tests have been taken.

Since the launch of the 2014 series of the GED test

1.1 Million
have recieved a credential.

Getting started as a teacher

What are the duties of a GED teacher?

- Deliver lessons in multiple formats (in-person, online, hybrid), as needed

- Connect with students through meaningful conversations

- Use classroom management skills to maintain an interactive learning environment

- Monitor students' progress using assessments

- Provide guidance to students concerning their educational and career goals

- Complete annual professional development requirements to maintain proficiency

- Stay abreast of current technology related to remote instruction

- Conduct regular reflections to assess lesson preparation, delivery, effectiveness, etc.

- Regularly communicate with program, colleagues, students via email and/or texts

See "Teacher Checklist: Getting ready for your GED® class" in the appendix for more information.

What skills does it take to be an effective teacher?

- Enthusiasm about teaching and learning

- Background in education and training (proficiency)

- Understanding student engagement, persistence, soft skills, and upskills

- Understanding of Adult Education Theory

- Ability to teach to all different backgrounds: low skilled students, learning disabilities, students of different cultures and those with language barriers, etc.

- Ability to teach in the GED® content areas of math, reading and writing, social studies, science

- Comfortable with technology; eager to learn new technological apps and interactive practices for remote instruction

- Eager to help adults reach their educational goals

- Excellent organizational skills (required)

- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written (required)

See "Self-Assessment for Adult Education Instructors".

Program Profiles: Student orientation and recruitment.

It is highly recommended that programs offer all adult education students with a structured orientation/intake process. This process can be for Open enrollment or Managed enrollment classes.

The following is a general summary of student intake:

- Orientation

    — Prospective students receive an overview of the GED® test, an overview of the Adult Education Program, and complete a diagnostic test.

- Testing

    — Students complete mandatory assessments, complete Adult Education Program paperwork, goal setting, and advising.

In some cases, students who score high on the assessment tests can be directed to complete the GED Ready test to determine their readiness for the official GED® test.

- Development

    — Subsequently, students are placed in either a Pre GED® class or a GED® class based on their assessment scores (e.g. CASAS or TABE). Students complete an assessment with their instructors which helps the teachers determine the students' academic strengths and weaknesses.

Sample: Adult Education Orientation Process as a Best Practice

Types of Orientation:

- In-person Orientation – The GED student will attend an Orientation session with the instructor at a designated time.

  - The students will be completing paperwork (forms/policy agreements) at the program location or class site UNLESS they are 100% distance learning.

- Online Orientation – The GED student will attend an online orientation process for distance learning.

  - The students will complete the required forms online.

Each GED Candidate and Applicant will be contacted by phone/email and asked designated questions that will determine the type of Orientation in which to be enrolled:

- What campus location can you attend class?

- Do you need morning or evening classes?

- What program of study are you interested in?

- What type of device (Computer/smartphone/tablet) do you have?

- Have you been enrolled with our Adult Education Program within the last year?

  - If the student has been enrolled with our program within one calendar year, the student will be sent directly to the instructor.

Orientation Session Best Practices:

- Provide a clean and well-organized room that is welcoming and comfortable.

- Perform activities that will allow students to get to know each other to build a feeling of community.

- Provide a thorough program overview.

- Prepare orientation folders before the session date. Make sure you have one for each student.

- Avoid assessment testing on the first day, if possible.

- Provide each student with a certificate of completion for attending the orientation session.

Checklist for Student Enrollment

The following data is collected during the typical GED® intake session. This data can assist instructors in learning about their students, targeting their instructional needs, and identifying their goals.

Sample of student work folder checklist:

✓ Enrollment Data Form

✓ Assessment Score Report (Pre and Post)

✓ GED Ready Practice Test scores and Score Report

✓ Student's Acknowledgement of Program's Attendance and Assessment Policies

✓ Student's Goals Sheet

✓ Student's Barriers to Success

✓ Learning Styles Inventory

✓ Plan of Instruction (POI)

✓ Career Inventory/Assessment

Self-Assessment for Adult Education Instructors

Use this short assessment to help determine if becoming an Adult Education instructor is a good-fit for you. The assessment will also help you identify your strengths and weaknesses. You can also use this to help develop your personal professional plan to help you excel as an adult education instructor.

Competency	This is new to me	This is a weakness for me	I am strong in this area
Pedagogy (teaching and learning)			
Adult Learning Theory			
Planning lessons for adults: Effective lesson planning for adults			
Differentiated instruction			
Contextualize lesson			
Charting my own professional development to grow as an instructor			
Experience with current technology and ability to effectively use those technologies during instruction			

Content and Support

Areas of Instructional Focus for each Content area Test

Reasoning Through Language Arts

Assessment Guide for Educators: Reasoning Through Language Arts (RLA)

Professional Development webinars
- Reading to Learn – Strategies to Build Reading Skills for the GED® Test
- Hitting the Mark – Taking a Deeper Dive Into Reading
- Close Reading: A Key to Teaching Constructed Response
- Moving Up! Building Better Writing Skills
- What Students Need to Know GED® RLA's Extended Response
- Taking the Angst Out of Scoring the GED® RLA Extended Response
- Thinking Strategies for Crafting Constructed Response (Part 1)
- Thinking Strategies for Crafting Constructed Response: One Step at a Time (Part 2)
- Trends in Students' Knowledge and Skills Gaps - RLA, Part 1
- Trends in Students' Knowledge and Skills Gaps - RLA, Part 2 - Reading

Mathematical Reasoning

Assessment Guide for Educators: Mathematical Reasoning

Professional Development webinars
- Mathematical Reasoning What's the Problem with Inequalities
- Math Functions – Why Do I Need to Know About Them
- Mathematical Reasoning
- Improving Students' Mathematical Problem Solving Skills
- Making Mathematical Thinking Processes Visible
- Trends in Students' Knowledge and Skills Gaps - Mathematical Reasoning, Part One
- Trends in Students' Knowledge and Skills Gaps - Mathematical Reasoning, Part Two

Science

Assessment Guide for Educators: Science

Professional Development webinars
- From the Headlines! Big Ideas in Science
- How Do I Display That? Tips & Resources for the GED® Science Classroom
- Scientific Minds Want to Know: Strategies for Addressing High Impact Areas of the GED® Science Test
- Trends in Students' Knowledge and Skills Gaps - Science

Social Studies

Assessment Guide for the Socials Studies

Professional Development webinars
- Enduring Issues and Making Connections in Social Studies
- Teaching Social Studies Through Political Cartoons
- Read Like a Historian: Differentiating Instruction – One Size Doesn't Fit All!
- GED Knowledge & Skill Gaps Social Studies

GED Testing Service Professional Development Initiative

Professional Development for GED instructors is continued participation in instructional and professional activities that help to advance the effectiveness of instructors and improve learner outcomes. The goal of Professional Development should always be to learn and develop new skills, increase awareness of current trends, and promote growth and advancement in the area of teaching and learning in adult basic education.

GEDTS's Professional Development Initiative delivers instructional content and teaching strategies to a wide audience of adult educators through multiple delivery formats.

The identified priorities for the Initiative, and corresponding activities are listed below:

- **Tuesdays for Teachers:**

    — https://ged.com/educators_admins/teaching/professional_development/webinars

- **GEDTS Professional Development Road Shows:**

    — These are full-day, content-rich professional development training sessions conducted by the GED State Relationship Manager and/or consultants in multiple venues across the states. The intense, hands-on sessions provide onsite teaching and learning opportunities with materials of instruction to take away for immediate use in the classroom.

- **Engagement at State and National Conferences and Events:**

    — The GED State Relationship Manager delivers workshops and attends state meetings and national conferences.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Developing an inclusive philosophy and environment for students is critical. Instructors should envision an educational system in which equity and inclusion are part of the entire framework and then structure their classrooms and practices along these principals to encourage success for learners of *all* backgrounds.

The appropriate mindset precedes anything that a student will face related to curriculum. Mindfulness should run across all components of the program to enable the discovery of external surface needs, as well as internal emotional needs. These pillars of mindfulness challenge barriers and help to foster the idea that the whole person shows up, they are included and feel as if they belong so that they can then turn their attention to their aspirations. Being inclusive does not require instructors to fully grasp the background and life experience of each of their students. However, sensitivity, curiosity, and open-mindedness can bring about a sense of belonging within the GED® classroom.

**Belongingness**   **Worthiness**   **Competence**

GED Test Prepped™ Program

*This program is currently in development.

Coming soon – Educators will learn from a one-hour Coaching Webinar about Test Mastery, the assessment, the student Profile and how to help their students with their Test Mastery.

Test Mastery Mindset

More thought has to be given to our mindset and how a positive mindset can set us up for success. Our students are no different and most would agree that a student's testing mindset has a significant impact on how they score on the GED® test. A student's mindset powers their Test Preparation and Test Readiness behaviors, and these behaviors lead to test-taking outcomes and results.

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Source: FifthTheory
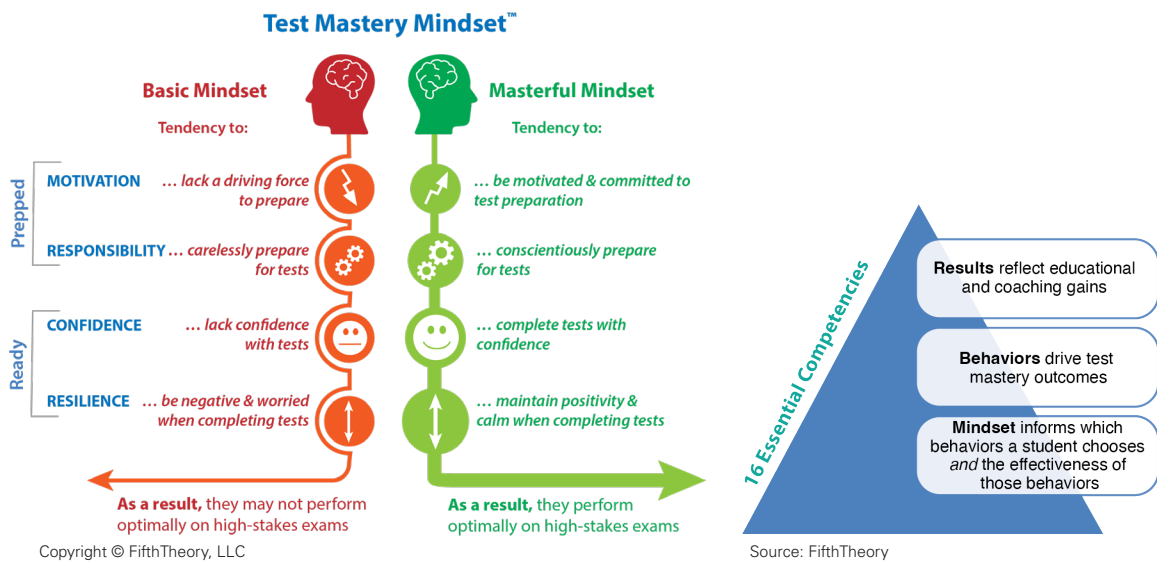
Test Mastery: Test Preparation + Test Readiness

Test Preparation competencies are associated with how thoroughly and effectively one will prepare for the GED® test. Test Readiness competencies are associated with how a test taker will behave on the day of the test. The Test Preparation is comprised of Motivation and Responsibility dimensions. The Test Readiness is comprised of Confidence and Resiliency dimensions. Each of these dimensions' further breakdown to 16 discrete competencies.

MOTIVATION: Committed, Studious, Productive & Energetic.

RESPONSIBILITY: Organized, Time-Efficient, Self-Disciplined & Assertive.

CONFIDENCE: Mentally Tough, Self-Assured, Internally Controlled & Attentive.

RESILIENCY: Optimistic, Centered, Composed & Quality-Oriented.

Source: Fifth Theory

GED READY® Practice Test

The GED Ready is the official GED® practice test. The score received on the GED Ready predicts the likelihood of passing the GED® official test. If the score is "Likely to Pass", then encourage your student to take the GED® test within the next two weeks in order to pass the GED® test. The questions are created in the same method as those on the GED® test and use the same format. GED Ready scores fall into one of three categories, helps to discover areas of improvement, and the GED Ready score report is a study plan that identifies the skills needed to study to pass the GED® test.

Not Likely to Pass	Too Close to Call	Likely to Pass
100–133	134–144	145–200

If the score is "Not Likely to Pass", then encourage your student to keep studying, use the resources available under the study tab in their GED.com student account, and attempt to retake the GED Ready test.

Resources of GED.com

GED Marketplace™—Offering More High School Equivalency Test Preparation

GED Marketplace™ offers educators and test-takers an online store full of study guides, practice tests, and other preparation materials created by some of the best GED® test prep companies.

GED Marketplace™ features:

- Online courses
- GED test vouchers
- Test prep and study books
- Prep packages
- GED Ready

- Corrections specific prep materials
- Teacher resources
- Computer skills training
- College readiness resources
- Workplace training

GED Marketplace provides a one-stop shop for preparation materials, all on a safe and secure place to start GED test-takers on the road to success. Sixteen publishers are currently featured on GED® Marketplace, and this number will only increase. The materials are available in English and Spanish, and adult learners can pick from a variety of modes, including online curricula, traditional textbooks, and practice tests. A list of publishers that have test preparation materials for the GED® test can be found at https://ged.com/educators_admins/teaching/prep_products.

GED Direct™ (The GED Ready® Practice Test – GED)

GED Direct is a GED Ready managing tool only available to educators that have access to GED Manager*. With access; you can assign GED Ready practice tests directly to your students. Buy all the GED Ready tests you need for your program and share them with your fellow educators so each of you can assign a test as soon as your student is ready. No voucher codes to manage or hand out

to your students. Once assigned, the student will see the GED Ready in their account and can take it immediately.

Not all GED Manager users have permission to use this tool. If you are interested, please contact the State GED Administrator to find out if you are eligible to participate.

Customer Service for Examinees

Registration and scheduling customer service options:

- Email: Test-takers can email help@GED.com with questions or to request help in signing up, scheduling, or changing test appointments.

- Customer Support Center: Test-takers can sign up for and schedule their GED® tests by calling 1-877-EXAM-GED (392-6433). The toll-free test-taker assistance call center hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Useful Links

Request GED Manager access:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/ged_manager/ged_manager_request_form/

Access Guide:

- https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/gedmanager_access_guide_.pdf

About the Test:

- Test Content areas

- Price & State Rules

- Test Scores

- Scheduling

- Online Testing

Study Resources:

- GED® Classes

- Online Classes

- Practice Test

- Practice Questions

- Test Previews

- Shop Tutorials

Test Admin Policies:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/policies/

Testing in Corrections:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/corrections/

Test Admin Certification and Training:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/manage_your_center/

Becoming a Test Center:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/become_a_center/

Support Lines:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/support/

Educator Handbook:

- https://ged.com/wp-content/uploads/educator_handbook.pdf

In Session:

- [Monthly electronic newsletter](#) for educators and state administrators. Free to subscribe.

GED® Partnering Publishers:

- https://ged.com/educators_admins/teaching/prep_products/

Request form if you would like a Prep Center to be added, edited or removed from GED® website:

- https://ged.com/prep_center_request_form/

Request GED® Transcript:

- [Request Your GED Transcript & Diploma Online | GED®](#)

Accommodations:

- https://ged.com/about_test/accommodations/

- Information on how to apply, the appeal process, guides on how to change the screen color, how to highlight on the test, and how to change the font size is outlined here. Additionally, you will find information about lower cost testing clinics and the personal items and modifications list can be found here as well.

GED Option™:

- [GED Option™](#) is an integral component of a high school curriculum that provides an alternative way to attain a High School Credential for students still enrolled in high school. These students are at risk of dropping out of school or are so far behind in credits that their ability to graduate on time with their class is jeopardized. GED Option™ provides these students with the opportunity to stay in school and acquire the necessary high school level knowledge and skills to pass the GED® test and earn a High School Credential during the same graduation year as their peers.

Appendix

Teacher Checklist: Getting ready for your GED® class

Consistently prepared teachers have good lessons and good instructional results. Here are a few tips to keep you organized.

- ✓ Review your lesson objective
- ✓ Use a complete lesson plan template
- ✓ Prepare your lesson with the objective and student needs in mind
- ✓ Include "essential questions" in your lesson
- ✓ Make the lesson interactive
- ✓ Minimize reliance on worksheets
- ✓ Always create a class agenda to stay on track (for in-person or remote classes)
- ✓ Make sure your resources are within reach; be organized
- ✓ Always track attendance
- ✓ Deliver lesson thoroughly but minimize "teacher talk"
- ✓ Use students' name to build rapport
- ✓ Engage all students; avoid calling on the same students
- ✓ Pause regularly to check for understanding
- ✓ Leave plenty of time for practice (both guided and independent practice)
- ✓ Only give homework if feedback will be provided
- ✓ Leave time to discuss what students learned
- ✓ Give a meaningful exit activity

✓ After the class, reflect. What worked? What didn't work? Make adjustments.

✓ Relax

Sample: Student Work Folder Check List

Student Name: _____   **Enrollment Date:** _____

✓ Instructional Study Plan

✓ Diagnostic Progress Report

✓ Learning Styles Inventory

✓ Career Interest Inventory

✓ Daily Work Log/Summary Report

✓ Instructional Materials/Work Sheets

✓ GED Ready Score Report

GED Ready – Completion:

✓ Math   Date Completed: _____

✓ RLA   Date Completed: _____

✓ Science   Date Completed: _____

✓ Social Studies   Date Completed: _____

GED® Test – Completion:

✓ Math   Date Completed: _____

✓ RLA   Date Completed: _____

✓ Science   Date Completed: _____

✓ Social Studies   Date Completed: _____

References

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