

**WVAdultEd Instructor Handbook  
2016-17**

**Section 13**

**Distance Education**



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**For questions or concerns related to the content of the *WVAdultEd Instructor Handbook*, contact Cathy Shank at the WV Adult Education Hotline, 1-800-642-2670, or via email at [cshank@k12.wv.us](mailto:cshank@k12.wv.us).**

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# 13

## Distance Education

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# WHAT IS DISTANCE EDUCATION?

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## Distance Education Defined

The West Virginia Adult Education program offers distance education as a learning opportunity for its adult learners. But what exactly is distance education?

According to [National Reporting System \(NRS\) Implementation Guidelines](#),

*“Distance education is formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, email, or online technologies and software.”*

The distance education program in West Virginia has evolved over the years by utilizing several of these methods—from televised programs and workbooks, to interactive programs, to self-contained online curriculum. We are proud of the distance education opportunities that have been available to non-traditional students. Now classroom students and instructors can also be involved in and benefit from West Virginia’s distance education program.

## Distance Learners Defined

*Distance Learners* are those students who utilize a WVAdultEd-approved distance education curriculum outside of the regular *Classroom Hours* as part of their plan of study. Learners from all federal functioning levels (FFLs) may be placed into appropriate distance education curricula based on their entry assessment scores. The decision can be made at intake or as the student’s goals and availability change.

When a student is categorized as a *Distance Learner* on the *Student Profile Form* in the Adult Education Management Information System (AEMIS), this allows the recording of *Proxy Hours* (attendance hours the student acquires outside of the regular adult education classroom). The student’s hours in both distance and classroom programs are included in the total number of contact hours reported in AEMIS. *Proxy Hours* are reported as a total amount only once a month, whereas *Classroom Hours* are reported on a daily basis.

## Overview of Distance Learning in West Virginia

Distance Education is available only through WVAdultEd programs that have a [certified distance education instructor](#) and use the state-approved distance education curricula.

All WVAdultEd instructors have the opportunity to complete the [Certified Distance Education Home Study Module](#) and become certified to offer distance learning to their students and to count the *Proxy Hours* in AEMIS. Instructors who become distance education certified receive a digital badge to post on their LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter accounts.

## Distance Education versus the WVAdultEd Traditional Classroom

West Virginia's distance education program makes it possible for *non-traditional* adult learners (those learners who rarely, if ever, attend the classroom for instruction), to study outside the traditional classroom by enrolling in one of the [state-approved distance education curricula](#).

Distance education appeals to many students because it removes some of the barriers preventing them from attending a classroom on a regular basis: lack of transportation or child-care, conflicting work schedules, a need for privacy, etc. However, it often removes many of the social supports a classroom instructor and other students provide; it requires distance learners to structure their time and to work independently.

For most people, learning is a social process, and the support of instructors and classmates forms an important element of the learning that occurs. Ironically, some of the most difficult aspects of supporting and motivating students in the West Virginia distance education may stem from the same components of the program that attracted them in the first place (*Handbook of Distance Education for Adult Learners*, Second Edition; November 2003). Therefore, for *non-traditional* distance education students, [certified distance education instructors](#) have a unique role and need to develop new ways to motivate and support their distance learners.

The major difference between traditional classroom instruction and distance education is the amount of face-to-face contact students have with an instructor and with other students. Students who are mainly distance learners do have some personal contact with you, the instructor, but not all contact happens within the classroom. These students may enroll in your class, be pre-assessed, and receive orientation in the use of the curricula, but then accomplish most of their learning at home or somewhere else outside your classroom. As a [certified distance education instructor](#), you and the distance learners may meet only two or three times over their entire course of study, while the remainder of the communication occurs via the phone, by email, or through online learning communities. They would only need to come to your classroom periodically for assistance and for post-assessment.

West Virginia's distance education program also offers the opportunity for a blended distance/classroom approach that allows you to assign "homework" to students who come to your classroom regularly but also wish to continue studying after class hours to supplement their classroom instruction. By combining classroom time with "homework" assignments, you and your students can both benefit. In part-time classes that may only meet a few hours a

week, your students have the opportunity to continue learning independently using [state-approved distance learning curricula](#), and hopefully advance more quickly. In addition, you can count these additional *Proxy Hours* to boost your class's monthly contact hours.

**Note:** It is important to keep a clear line between online work occurring during class hours (regular contact hours counted daily) and online "homework" occurring outside of class hours (*Proxy Hours* counted monthly).

## GENERAL DISTANCE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

### What curricula are approved for distance education in West Virginia?

The chart below shows the approved curricula and methods for assigning *Proxy Hours*.

Approved DE Curriculum	Type of Student	Type of Curriculum	Model for <i>Proxy Hours</i>	Method of Assigning <i>Proxy Hours</i>	Method to Document <i>Proxy Hours</i>
TASC® Academy Computer Essentials® Edgenuity® SkillsTutor™	ABE, SPOKES, or ELL	Online Software	Clock Time	1 hour of clock time = 1 <i>Proxy Hour</i>	management system print-out of hours
Burlington English®	ELL Only	Online Software	Clock Time	1 hour of clock time = 1 <i>Proxy Hour</i>	management system print-out of hours
WIN® Career Readiness System	ABE, SPOKES, or ELL	Online Software	Clock Time	1 hour of clock time = 1 <i>Proxy Hour</i> <b>**Due to software limitations, WIN must be solely used outside of the classroom to obtain proxy hours.**</b>	management system print-out of hours
Rosetta Stone®	ELL Only	Online Software	Clock Time	1 hour of clock time = 1 <i>Proxy Hour</i> <b>**Due to software limitations, Rosetta Stone must be solely used outside of the classroom to obtain proxy hours.**</b>	management system print-out of hours
Crossroads Café®	ELL Only	Video Series with Workbooks	Learner Mastery	Pass unit mastery test with at least 70% accuracy = 10 <i>Proxy Hours</i>	unit mastery test showing a score of 70% or better



USA Learns™	ELL Only	Online Software	Learner Mastery	Pass unit mastery test with at least 80% accuracy for Courses 1 and 2 = 3 <i>Proxy Hours</i> ; for Course 3 = 2 <i>Proxy Hours</i>	management system print-out of unit mastery test scores showing a score of 80% or better
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**Note:** If you have a software program that you would like to see added to this approved list of distance education curricula, please complete the request form at <https://wvabepd.wufoo.com/forms/m7s5x3/>. The software will be reviewed to see if it meets state and federal requirements for use with the WVAdultEd distance education program.

### How are contact hours measured?

All contact hours that occur in your classroom during your class time are reported as *Classroom Hours*. All contact hours that occur when the student is working outside your class time or physically outside your classroom are reported as *Proxy Hours*.

Students in distance education must have at least 12 hours of contact with the program reported in AEMIS before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. The following activities may be included in these 12 hours of contact whether they are delivered in person or at a distance:

- all face-to-face sessions dealing with intake, assessment and orientation;
- telephone calls, emails, instant messages designed to counsel students into the appropriate programs;
- technology training needed to use the distance learning curriculum;
- training in using the curriculum; and
- training in study and time managements skills.

A record of all contact with the student via telephone, email, instant messaging, etc. must be maintained in order to count this contact as *Proxy Hours*. This record must be kept in the student’s permanent folder along with a copy of the online management system report and/or the mastery test(s). See *Section 13 Appendix* for a sample [Activity Log for Reporting Distance Learning Proxy Hours](#).

### What is the difference between Classroom Hours and Proxy Hours?

*Classroom Hours* are the attendance hours the student acquires while working in the regular ABE classroom during regular class hours. This could include registration, assessment, introduction to online curricula, or other instructions

*Proxy Hours* are attendance hours the student acquires outside of class time using a state-approved DE curriculum or receiving help and assistance from the instructor with this curriculum while the student is not physically in the classroom. Only [certified distance](#)

[education instructors](#) who have completed the [Certified Distance Education Home Study Module](#) may use the option to count *Proxy Hours*. Hours may not be counted for completion of other ‘homework’ type activities—only for using of the state-approved DE curricula.

**No double counting of contact hours may occur.** For example, if a student is in your classroom during class hours and is using an online curriculum (such as Edgenuity) during class time, these hours must be counted as *Classroom Hours*; they may not be counted as *Proxy Hours*.

Records of *Classroom Hours* and *Proxy Hours* must be maintained separately. *Classroom Hours* are based on class sign-in sheets. *Proxy Hours* are based on software management system reports, the [Activity Log for Reporting Distance Learning Proxy Hours](#), and/or copies of the Mastery Tests for each instructional unit. These must be maintained in the permanent file to verify total *Proxy Hours* entered.

On the *log attendance screen* in AEMIS, the total daily *Classroom Hours* are entered for the appropriate day(s). *Proxy Hours* are entered for the entire month in one area of the *log attendance screen*.

### How will *Proxy Hours* be determined?

In West Virginia, the models used to assign *Proxy Hours* include:

- **Clock Time Model**, which assigns contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to, or engaged in, an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time.
- **Learner Mastery Model**, which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the learner passing a test on the content of each lesson. Learners work with the curriculum and materials, and when they feel they have mastered the material, take a test.

The manner in which *Proxy Hours* are determined varies depending upon the curricula used. For learners using TASC Academy®, Computer Essentials®, Edgenuity®, Burlington English®, and SkillsTutor™ the **clock time model** is used to track the time the student interacts with the curricula. One hour of clock time is reported as one *Proxy Hour*. WIN® and Rosetta Stone® also use the clock time model, but *due to software limitations, proxy hours can only be obtained in WIN and Rosetta Stone by exclusively using the software outside of class*.

For Crossroads Café™ and USA Learns®, the **learner mastery model** of determining is used. Learners are required to take mastery tests at the completion of each instructional unit. A set number of *Proxy Hours* are awarded for each test the student passes at or better than the specified percentage rate. (See the chart of [Approved DE Curricula](#) for methods of assigning *Proxy Hours*.)

### How are distance learners assessed?

Distance learners must be assessed under the same guidelines as all adult learners in the state. (See *General Assessment Protocols* in [Section 6](#) of this *Handbook* for more information.)

During each program year, a parallel form of the standardized assessment used for pre-assessment must be administered as a post-assessment. The interim assessment must be given to students prior to 100 hours of instruction. **(This 100 hour maximum includes the total of all Classroom Hours and Proxy Hours.)** For distance learners who are acquiring hours both in the classroom as well as at a distance, assessment will be scheduled as part of the *Classroom Hours* for the course.

If possible, a final assessment should be given at the end of the program year or prior to a student's withdrawal. Use the publisher's guidelines to determine the *minimum* number of hours between specific assessments. (The minimum varies depending on the assessment.) For details, see the *Publisher Assessment Guidelines*, [Section 6 Appendix](#).

All standardized assessment must occur in secure, proctored settings. For example, you may not send a TABE or CASAS home with a student to complete outside of the learning center. However, it is permissible to arrange for remote testing locations (i.e., volunteer literacy programs, testing sessions conducted by an Adult Education assessment specialist) that are more convenient for distance learners as long as all state requirements concerning assessment are met. (See [Section 6](#) for more information on assessments.)

# CERTIFIED DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTRUCTOR

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## What is a Certified Distance Education Instructor?

Certified distance education instructors have completed training in the specific distance education curriculum their students are using **and** have also completed the [Certified Distance Education Instructor Home Study Module](#) to assure that they understand reporting and documentation procedures for distance education students.

If you would like to increase your student contact hours, you may decide to become a certified distance education instructor to students who wish to enroll in distance learning, either as *non-traditional* distance learners or as *traditional* learners who want to supplement their classroom work via distance learning.

As a certified distance education instructor, you can receive credit for contact hours (*Proxy Hours*) acquired by students using one of the state-approved curricula outside of the classroom.

**Note:** No other “after-classroom hours” assignments given to students can be counted—only hours spent on one of the state-approved curricula can be considered for contact hour credit.

As a certified distance education instructor you will be responsible for everything—orientation, assessment, instruction, *and* all achievements acquired by any distance learner—just as you are with any traditional learner who enrolls in your AdultEd program.

## Characteristics of a Successful Certified Distance Education Instructor

It has been proven that the instructor is an essential part of the distance education process—for the *non-traditional* distance learner *and* for the *traditional* student who wants to supplement classroom curriculum with “homework”.

Experience suggests that instructors most likely to succeed are those who:

- are comfortable with technology;
- see distance education as another delivery method and not as a threat to the traditional classroom;
- are willing to take on additional challenges and responsibilities;
- are flexible—can adapt to changes in routine; and/or
- are organized—can manage time wisely.

## Things to Consider When Making Your Decision to Become a Certified Distance Education Instructor

When deciding whether or not to become a certified distance education instructor, ask yourself the following questions.

### Student-based issues:

- Do I have a retention problem in my classroom? Have some of my students reached their “plateau of learning” and need an extra incentive?
- Do I need additional contact hours?
- Do I have any students who have the computer skills necessary to work outside the classroom? Will they have access to computers outside my classroom?
- Do I have any students who are motivated to work outside the classroom?
- For online curricula (TASC Academy®, Computer Essentials®, Edgenuity®, Burlington English®, SkillsTutor™, WIN®, Rosetta Stone®, or USA Learns®), do students have access to the Internet?
- For Crossroads Café™, do students have access to a VCR or DVD player?

### • Teacher-based issues:

- Do I think online instruction is an effective method of delivery?
- Do I want to learn more about distance education?
- Do I want to take on another reporting responsibility?
- Do I want to take the required training necessary to learn the new software program?
- Do I want to go through the required *Certified Distance Education Instructor Home Study Module*?

## How to Become a Certified Distance Education Instructor?

If you choose to become a certified distance education instructor, you must complete:

- the required training for the software in which you wish to become certified; **and**
- the [\*Certified Distance Education Home Study Module\*](#) for elective professional development credit. This module consists of a series of questions that are aligned with the section of the *Handbook*.
  - This home study must be completed successfully **prior** to your being approved as a certified distance education instructor.
  - You must complete all questions and submit the form electronically.
  - Notify Rebecca Metzger at 1-800-642-2670 or [rmetzger@k12.wv.us](mailto:rmetzger@k12.wv.us) when the home study has been submitted.
  - Your answers and/or activities will be evaluated by the distance education coordinator.
  - You will be notified when this has been successfully completed, and your professional development record in AEMIS will be updated with one hour of elective credit. A digital badge will be awarded for becoming distance education certified; the digital badge may be shared via the LinkedIn, Twitter, or Facebook of the instructor.

Once your home study module has been reviewed and accepted as complete, you will be able to select the “Distance Learner” checkbox in the demographic area on the *Student Profile Form* in AEMIS, which will allow you to record *Proxy Hours* on the *log attendance screen*. This allows you to capture the *Proxy Hours* your students spend working outside of the classroom on the software in which you have been certified. **Note:** You will not be able to record *Proxy Hours* in AEMIS until you have completed your home study module and the required training.

## Training Requirements for Certified Distance Education Instructors

In addition to completing the [Certified Distance Education Home Study Module](#), instructors who wish to become certified distance education instructors must also verify that they have completed appropriate training for the curriculum in which they are being certified. After completing the required training, contact the appropriate individual to receive access information:

- **Edgenuity®**, **TASC Academy®**, **Computer Essentials®**, **WIN® Career Readiness System**, **Burlington English®**, and **Rosetta Stone®**
  - Provide verification of completion of a publisher-sponsored webinar or regional/conference face-to-face training
  - Contact Rebecca Metzger to receive access information, [rmetzger@k12.wv.us](mailto:rmetzger@k12.wv.us), 1-800-257-3723 ext. 202
  
- **Crossroads Café™**, **SkillsTutor™**, and **USA Learns®**
  - Provide verification of completion of a publisher-sponsored webinar or regional/conference face-to-face training
  - Contact Cathy Shank at [cshank@k12.wv.us](mailto:cshank@k12.wv.us); 1-800-257-3723 ext. 112

## HOW DOES DISTANCE EDUCATION WORK?

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### How can certified distance education instructors and their students be involved?

West Virginia's distance education program targets two types of students.

- **Non-traditional distance education learners** go through orientation and assessment testing at your class site but **rarely, if ever, attend your classroom for instruction**. Your role with *non-traditional* distance education learners is to assign modules, monitor progress, and communicate with these students on a regular basis to help them navigate through the curriculum. You are also responsible for these students' achievements, instruction, and progress.
- **Traditional classroom learners** are those **within your classroom** whom you determine would benefit by working on their own after class hours—students who are always asking for homework.

### How can I determine if a student would be a good candidate for the distance education program?

When determining if a particular student could benefit from distance learning, it is important to **consider the student's goals**. Experience suggests that students who are most likely to succeed are those who:

- have definite and short-term goals; and/or
- are employed, looking for work; or
- have a desire for specific training.

Distance education requires that students **make a commitment to the program** and **set aside uninterrupted time for studying** each day. Students with **good organizational and time-management skills**, who **can work independently**, and who are **self-disciplined** and **self-motivated** also have a greater chance at success than those who need constant guidance and reassurance.

Even though it is more difficult to quickly assess if someone is self-motivated than it is to assess their reading ability, being self-motivated is crucial for a successful distance education student.

Another very important component to consider when assessing students' potential as distance learners is their level of computer skills (if they are enrolling in an online program). **Basic computer skills** are required for any distance education student enrolling in an online curriculum. (See the WVAdultEd LiveBinder at [www.tinyurl.com/wvabe](http://www.tinyurl.com/wvabe) for resources relating to computer literacy.)

## ORIENTATION AND INTAKE PROCEDURES FOR DISTANCE LEARNERS

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### **How is orientation and intake different for distance learners?**

Distance education students follow the same general orientation and intake procedures as regular WVAdultEd students ([Section 4](#)). In addition, it is important that students have basic computer skills when enrolling in an online study program. Note: For a [list of websites](#) that teach the basic skills needed for computer-based testing, click on the Computer Literacy tab located on the WVAdultEd LiveBinder ([www.tinyurl.com/wvabe](http://www.tinyurl.com/wvabe)).



# AEMIS MANAGEMENT FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

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## AEMIS Management for Certified Distance Education Instructors

### Directions for entering students

When **entering students** into AEMIS, the following guidelines apply:

- In the KEY INFORMATION section, **you MUST check the Distance Learner box.** (You will be unable to record Proxy Hours until this box has been checked.)

### Directions for recording Proxy Hours and Classroom Hours

When **recording contact hours**, the following guidelines apply:

- On the log attendance screen, enter the total of all *Classroom Hours* on the appropriate day(s). *Proxy Hours* will be entered as one total for the month on the log attendance screen in the area designated “*Proxy Hours*”.

**Note:** *Classroom Hours* and *Proxy Hours* must be maintained separately.

### Documentation required in the student’s permanent folder

For **verification** during data quality audits, the following must be placed within the student’s permanent folder to verify total Proxy Hours reported in AEMIS:

- **For TASC Academy<sup>®</sup>, Computer Essentials<sup>®</sup>, Edgenuity<sup>®</sup>, Burlington English<sup>®</sup>, Rosetta Stone<sup>®</sup>, SkillsTutor<sup>™</sup>, and WIN<sup>®</sup>,** a copy of the management system report indicating time of day and length of time spent on task (one *Proxy Hour* for each clock hour completed).
- **For Crossroads Café<sup>™</sup>,** a copy of the mastery test(s) indicating a score of 70% or better. (Ten *Proxy Hours* are awarded for each unit test the student passes with a score of 70% or better.)
- **For USA Learns<sup>®</sup>,** a print-out of “Student Scores” record from the management system for each completed unit showing a score of 80% or better on the “Review and Quiz”. (Three *Proxy Hours/unit* are awarded for Courses 1 and 2 and two *Proxy Hours/unit* are awarded for Course 3 with a score of 80% or better).
- A copy of the [Activity Log for Reporting Distance Learning Proxy Hours](#) listing students’ contact hours that are reported for distance learning activities which cannot be verified via a management system report, mastery test, or sign-in sheet. (For more information and/or for a list of approved activities which may be counted toward a student’s distance learning contact hours, see [General Distance Learning Requirements](#) in this section of the *Handbook*.)

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# APPENDIX

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## Section 13 Distance Education

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# CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

*Issued by Computer Essentials Online*



## QUICK AND EASY REFERENCE GUIDE TO HOW DISTANCE EDUCATION WORKS IN WV

Who?	Does What?
Potential Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls the Adult Education Hotline or the Adult Education Program to setup an appointment for enrollment</li> </ul>
Distance Education Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sends student information to the nearest adult education program for Orientation</li> </ul>
Classroom Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedules a date for Orientation</li> <li>• Notifies student(s) of the date, time, and location of Orientation</li> </ul> <p><b>During Orientation, the instructor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducts academic assessment</li> <li>• Determines student’s learning style(s)</li> <li>• Screens student for special learning needs</li> <li>• Explains the <i>Release of Information Form</i></li> <li>• Assists student in setting goals</li> <li>• Ensures that the student has the basic computer skills necessary for an online study program</li> </ul> <p><b>After the Orientation process has been completed, the instructor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolls student in the distance education study program</li> <li>• Gives student the appropriate materials (if applicable) for the distance curriculum in which enrolled (e.g., <i>Student Handbook</i>, <i>Crossroads Café™</i> videos and texts, etc.)</li> </ul>
Reporting Procedures	
Certified Distance Education Instructor	<p><b>Completes AEMIS as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>When entering students:</b> In the KEY INFORMATION section, <b>you MUST check the Distance Learner box</b></li> <li>○ <b>When recording contact hours:</b> On the log attendance screen, enter the total of all <i>Classroom Hours</i> on the appropriate day(s). <i>Proxy Hours</i> will be entered as one total for the month on the log attendance screen in the area designated “<i>Proxy Hours</i>” <b>Note:</b> <i>Classroom Hours</i> and <i>Proxy Hours</i> must be maintained separately.</li> <li>• <b>Documentation required in the student’s permanent folder:</b> <u>For TASC Academy®</u>, <u>Computer Essentials®</u>, <u>Edgenuity®</u>, <u>Burlington English®</u>, <u>Rosetta Stone®</u>, <u>SkillsTutor™</u>, and <u>WIN®</u>, a copy of the management system report indicating time of day and length of time spent on task (One <i>Proxy Hour</i> for each clock hour completed). <u>For Crossroads Café™</u>, a copy of the mastery test(s) indicating a score of 70% or better (Ten <i>Proxy Hours</i> for each unit test the student passes with a score of 70% or better). For <u>USA Learns®</u>, a print-out of “Student Scores” record from the management system for each completed unit showing a score of 80% or better on the “Review and Quiz” (Three <i>Proxy Hours</i>/unit for Courses 1 and 2 and two <i>Proxy Hours</i>/unit for Course 3 with a score of 80% or better).</li> <li>• <b>When exiting students:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete the same as other students</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

