



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Act 478 AR Civics Exam Policy Document

### General Guidance for the AR Civics Exam

[Act 478 of 2017](#) requires all students seeking a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma to pass the Arkansas Civics Exam with a score of 60% or better. This requirement begins with the 2018-2019 school year. The Arkansas State Board of Education has determined the following policies will be implemented by Arkansas public schools who are required to administer the Arkansas Civics Exam.

- **Who must test?** Students enrolled in Arkansas public schools or state entities who are seeking an Arkansas high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma starting with those graduating in 2018-2019.
- **Are there any exclusions?** A student may be excluded based on their IEP if the IEP team determines there are not sufficient accommodations for the student to access the assessment, if the student attends school in the Correctional School System under AR Code Ann 12-29-301 et seq., or is over 18 and seeking a high school equivalency diploma.
- **Do students enrolled in home or private school have to take the exam?** Students in a home school or private school are not subject to ADE graduation requirements. If a student transfers to a public school prior to graduation, they will need a passing score on the AR Civics Exam to receive a high school diploma.
- **When can a student take the exam?** Students in grades 9-12 who are currently enrolled or have taken Civics may take the exam. The AR Civics Exam should take approximately 60-90 minutes to complete if taken in one sitting. It is a district decision whether to administer the exam in sections or all at once and when it would be most beneficial for students to take the AR Civics Exam (e.g., during or following the Civics course, U.S. History).

### **Exam Design and Format**

The AR Civics Exam will be an online multiple choice exam taken through the Moodle platform. Students are allowed to take the exam as many times as necessary to receive a passing score (60%). State reporting and transcript updates will be completed according to records within Moodle.

- **Are districts required to utilize the online assessment provided by ADE?** Yes - beginning February 2018 districts must utilize the online assessment provided by the ADE to administer the civics exam.
- **What should a district do if a student has already completed the civics exam prior to the release of the online system?** If a student has completed the exam prior to February 2018 districts need to ensure the questions are similar to the questions presented in the online test. If the questions are closely aligned then the district should follow directions found within the registration portal for manually entering the student's scores.
- **How do schools indicate a student has completed the assessment with a score of 60% or better thus meeting the graduation requirement outlined in the law?** ADE will utilize a data file produced from Moodle quarterly to update Triand transcripts for Arkansas students. Once a student has successfully scored a 60% or better within the Moodle platform their transcript within Triand will be updated by ADE.

### **Procedures for AR Civics Exam Test Administration**

The AR Civics Exam is an individual exam to be administered during the school day. It is a district decision as to when (date, time, specific course) and where (e.g., classroom, computer lab) the exam will be administered.

The exam is to be administered in the order in which it is organized on the Moodle platform. Once students log in they will be taken through an introductory section and key for symbols used to identify different sections of the exam. If an incorrect response is recorded, students will be taken to a detour. Detours consist of texts providing additional information related to the topic in order to further students' content knowledge. Students will then be able to return to the incorrectly answered question and select another answer. If the correct answer is selected they will proceed to the next question. If an incorrect response is selected after the detour that item will be scored as incorrect. If a student does not receive a passing score (60%), they will be able to retake the exam as many times as necessary to pass.

- **Can students utilize scratch paper during the exam?** Yes, any used scratch paper should be collected and disposed of after the exam is complete.

- **Can a teacher help the students answer questions during the exam?** No, the exam is to be taken independently by the student. Teachers may not help or assist students with answering questions.
- **Does the exam have to be taken during the school day?** Yes, the exam must be taken during the school day; however, the school will decide when and where the exam is taken. Students who are attaining a high school equivalency diploma may test at night in their program of study.
- **Who can serve as a test administrator?** Any district employee may be designated as the test administrator in Moodle. Please see documentation in the registration portal for directions on identifying the test administrator in Moodle.
- **What training must test administrators complete prior to administering the exam?** Teachers will have access to Moodle prior to the exam being administered and should read the Teacher Administration Manual.

### **AR Civics Exam Accommodations**

Test accommodations listed in a student's IEP, LPAC, or 504 plan and which are used regularly in the classroom may be utilized during the civics exam.

The accommodations listed in the table below are available within the Moodle platform for the AR Civics Exam:

ACCOMMODATION	DETAILS / INFORMATION
Expandable Passages	Allows stem/item to take up entire screen.
Browser Zoom magnification	Integrated part of the local computer browser to enlarge or reduce size of everything on the page.
Increase/Decrease Size of Text/Graphics	Computers, laptops, and tablets provide zoom-in and zoom-out functions. Projection systems, video magnifiers, and smart boards may be used to increase the size of text and graphics. The zoom feature found in web browsers may also be used to reduce the size of text or graphics in order to view more item information on one page.
Line Reader	The embedded Line Reader tool allows the entire item to be shaded, and allows attention to be focused on one line or a few lines at a time. This can be adjusted by the student; assists with student's visual tracking of text being read.
Text-to-Speech	The words on the screen are read by the device.

**If a student requires the following accommodations, they may be provided locally.**

- Read aloud – the exam questions and responses could be read if students were tested with other students receiving the same accommodation.
- Limited response choices – The AR Civics Exam can be printed. Test administrators could omit one answer choice, have student take exam, then have the student enter responses online.
- Small group testing – ADE does not determine what constitutes a small group. This is an individual exam and can be administered to a class, partial class, during a course, in sections, over a number of days, weeks, or a semester.
- Extended time is not necessary since the AR Civics Exam is not timed and can be administered in sections during more than one sitting. A student has at least two chances to answer a question and may retake the test as many times as necessary to receive a passing score.
- Paper pencil option is available; however, a test administrator will need to follow directions within the portal for manually entering the student's score.
- Any other accommodations regularly used in the classroom setting may be utilized on the AR Civics Exam and may be provided locally.