

ACCESS/WIDA Alternate ACCESS Irregularities

This resource addresses irregularities that may occur during the administration of the ACCESS and/or WIDA Alternate ACCESS. Irregularities are situations or misadministrations that may require action by the district, MDE, and/or DRC. While not exhaustive, a list of common irregularities and their likely outcomes are provided below as a reference for District Assessment Coordinators (DACs).

Requesting Support

Technical issues with WIDA AMS or DRC INSIGHT should be reported directly to [DRC Customer Service](#). All other questions about irregularities can be sent to MDE at mde.testing@state.mn.us or by calling 651-582-8674.

If the individual contacting MDE is EL staff, MDE will coordinate communications to include the DAC.

- When the contact is by email, MDE will copy the DAC on the email response.
- If the contact is by phone, MDE will email the DAC to inform them of the contact.

MDE will notify the district of resolution and provide direction as to how the student will resume testing, if applicable.

Regeneration vs. Invalidation

In some situations, an irregularity will require that a domain test be regenerated or invalidated.

- **Regeneration:** This action allows a student to restart a domain test. Regeneration may be an option when an irregularity significantly impeded a student's ability to participate appropriately in a specific domain test. For instance, a domain test might be regenerated to allow a student to test with the accommodations specified in an IEP or 504 plan. MDE will approve a regeneration only when there is minimal impact on test validity and the student is not provided with an unfair advantage.
- **Invalidation:** This action ends any remaining testing within a domain and results in an "INV" score code for that domain in a student's test results. Invalidation is typically required when the irregularity likely compromised test validity and/or provided the student with an unfair advantage.

Regeneration Request Process

To request a regeneration, the DAC must first inform MDE of the irregularity. If MDE determines that the irregularity warrants a regeneration, MDE will contact DRC to regenerate the domain test.

MDE requires the following information to approve regeneration requests:

- A statement that the individual is a DAC requesting a regeneration
- Sufficient details of the irregularity to indicate why a regeneration is appropriate
- The relevant domain test(s) to be regenerated
- The relevant MARSS/SSID number(s)

Test Administration Reports

Many irregularities require Test Administrators to contact the District or School Assessment Coordinator so that it can be documented in a Test Administration Report (TAR), which is available in Appendix A of the [Procedures Manual](#) and is kept on file at the district. This allows District and School Assessment Coordinators to better track how often the situation arises so guidance around scheduling and monitoring student progress can be provided as needed within the district.

If there is a security violation, the DAC must also submit a security violation in Assessment Security Records (ASR) in [Test WES](#).

Irregularities Overview

Common irregularities, typical outcomes, and rationales are included below. This table is provided for informational purposes only. The resolution is dependent on the factors and circumstances of each irregularity and may not follow the outcomes described below. **Note: Affected students should not resume testing until the irregularity has been resolved.**

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
1	All	Student A signs in to one of Student B's domain tests that had not been started.	<p>If Student A exited immediately and did not answer any questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain for Student B. <p>If Student A started answering questions and both students are in the same grade band/tier:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student A finishes Student B's domain test. 2. The DAC contacts DRC to (1) change the demographics on the domain to Student A and (2) create a new domain for Student B. <p>If Student A started answering questions but the students are in different grade bands/tiers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student A stops taking Student B's domain. 2. The DAC contacts MDE. 3. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain for Student B. <p>The students each take their own test.</p>	TAR	The first completed attempt of a domain test should be kept.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
2	All	Student A starts Student B's domain test. After the issue is discovered, Student A retakes the domain test under their own name. Both students are in the same grade band/tier.	<p>If Student A finished Student B's domain test before retaking the domain test under their own name:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to (1) regenerate Student A's domain test to remove the second attempt, (2) switch the demographic from Student B's domain test to Student A, and (3) regenerate Student B's domain. <p>If Student A started Student's B domain but did not complete it before retaking the domain test under their own name:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate Student B's domain. 	TAR	The first completed attempt of a domain test should be kept.
3	All	A student starts one or more domain tests with ACCESS Online but should be taking the ACCESS Paper (as an accommodation based on an IEP/504 plan or because the student meets the criteria for an EL enrolled in U.S. schools for less than one year).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain(s). 3. The student is provided a test booklet and all domain tests are administered as ACCESS Paper. 	TAR	If the Test Administrator administers the incorrect mode, the correct mode must be administered. Regenerating the domain test(s) ensures only the ACCESS Paper domain test will be scored and reported.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
4	All	A student started a domain test on ACCESS Paper but should be tested in ACCESS Online.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student is administered all domain tests in ACCESS Online. 2. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the test booklet and returns it with the other test materials. <p>Note: The district should not fill out a Do Not Score code (e.g., INV) on the test booklet; the Do Not Process label is all that is needed.</p> <p>Note: If a student completes multiple domain tests on ACCESS Paper but should be tested in ACCESS Online, contact MDE for more information.</p>	TAR	If the Test Administrator administers the incorrect mode, the correct mode should be administered.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
5	All	A student is administered the wrong assessment (for example, ACCESS instead of WIDA Alternate ACCESS or vice versa).	<p>If the incorrectly administered assessment was WIDA Alternate ACCESS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student is administered all domain tests of the ACCESS. 2. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the incorrectly administered WIDA Alternate ACCESS test booklet and returns it with the other test materials. <p>Note: Do not fill out a Do Not Score code on the incorrectly administered test booklet.</p> <p>If the incorrectly administered assessment was ACCESS Online:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate all domain tests. 3. The student is administered all domain tests of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. <p>If the incorrectly administered assessment was ACCESS Paper:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student is administered all domain tests of the WIDA Alternate ACCESS. 2. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the incorrectly administered ACCESS Paper test booklet and returns it with the other test materials. <p>Note: Do not fill out a Do Not Score code on the incorrectly administered test booklet.</p>	TAR	If the Test Administrator administers the incorrect test, the correct test must be administered.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
6	All	A student who is not an English Learner starts or completes one or more domain tests.	<p>For ACCESS Online:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate all domains of the incorrectly administered assessment. <p>For WIDA Alternate ACCESS or ACCESS Paper:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the incorrectly administered test booklet and returns it with the other test materials. <p>Note: Do not fill out a Do Not Score code on the incorrectly administered test booklet.</p>	TAR	Only English learners are eligible to participate in the ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS.
7	All	After the student started testing, the Test Administrator feels that the incorrect decision was made for which assessment (ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS) or mode (ACCESS Online or ACCESS Paper) to administer and/or which accommodation(s) to use.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student must finish the assessment/mode that was started with no changes to the accommodation(s). 2. The district should reevaluate assessment mode and accommodation decisions next year. 	TAR	The decision regarding which assessment/mode to administer and/or which accommodations to use must be made before a student takes any assessment for the year.
8	All	A student is not able to finish a domain test within a single day.	In the rare case where an individual student is unable to complete a domain test in a single day for any reason, the student may still finish the domain test on another day.	TAR	When a student is unable to finish a domain test in a single day, WIDA recommends that the student still complete the domain test, as it is more valuable to have a completed domain test than an incomplete domain score (and associated composite scores).

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
9	All	A student becomes ill and damages paper test materials with bodily fluids (for example, vomit or blood).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The district transfers any student responses to a new test booklet. If the answers cannot be transferred, the student may retake part or all of the assessment in a new test booklet. 2. The district securely disposes of the damaged test materials (such as shredding or incineration). 3. The district reports the security number(s) of the destroyed test materials to DRC. 4. The incident, including the name of the staff person reporting it, must be included on a TAR. 	TAR	The best outcome is for a student to complete all domain tests and receive valid scores.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
10	All	A student is administered one or more domain tests in an incorrect grade-level cluster (for example, a student in grade 1 is administered the grades 2–3 Listening test).	<p>If the student is taking the ACCESS Online:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain(s). 3. The DAC changes the student’s grade in WIDA AMS. 4. The student is administered all domain tests in the correct grade-level cluster. 5. The DAC ensures the student’s grade is correct in MARSS. <p>If the student is taking the ACCESS Paper or WIDA Alternate ACCESS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student is administered all domain tests in the correct grade-level cluster. 2. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the incorrectly administered test booklet and returns it with the other test materials. 3. The DAC ensures the grade is correct in MARSS. <p>Note: Do not fill out a Do Not Score code on the incorrectly administered test booklet.</p>	TAR	<p>If the Test Administrator administers one or more domain tests in an incorrect grade-level cluster, the correct domain test(s) must be administered.</p> <p>Note: If the student’s grade is incorrect in WIDA AMS but the student was administered a domain test in the correct grade-level cluster, the district should update the student’s grade in WIDA AMS so it is scored correctly.</p>
11	All	District EL staff and the IEP team want to indicate Special Education Deferred (SPD) on three or four domain tests.	The DAC emails MDE for guidance at mde.testing@state.mn.us . The email must contain the reasons why the student is not able to access more than two domain tests of the ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS with appropriate accommodations.	TAR	This situation must be reviewed by MDE to ensure that all appropriate options are considered. SPD cannot be used to exempt a student from taking a test.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
12	All	A student was administered the incorrect tier of one or more domains in a test booklet.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student is administered the domain(s) in the correct tier 2. The district completes the demographic information on the new test booklet using a number 2 pencil as described in Chapter 8 of the Procedures Manual and affixes a School/District label. 3. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the incorrect test booklet and returns it with the other test materials. <p>Note: Do not fill out a Do Not Score code on the incorrectly administered test booklet.</p>	TAR	Students must be administered the Speaking and Writing test domains in the correct tier.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
13	All	A district wants to know if a student has already tested in a previous district in Minnesota.	<p>If the student is taking the ACCESS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The new district contacts the previous district to verify which domain tests, if any, were completed and whether the student was administered the ACCESS Online or ACCESS Paper. 2. If the student started but did not finish testing in the previous district, the new district (1) completes the Student Transfer Form in WIDA AMS, (2) adds the student to WIDA AMS, and (3) administers any remaining domain tests. <p>If the student is taking the Kindergarten ACCESS or WIDA Alternate ACCESS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The new district contacts the previous district to verify whether the assessment was completed or the page number where testing stopped. The previous district returns the first test booklet to DRC with other test materials. 2. If the student started but did not finish testing in the previous district, the new district (1) completes the Student Transfer Form in WIDA AMS and (2) administers the remainder of the assessment. 3. The new district completes the demographic information on the new test booklet, and affixes a School/District label on the new booklet. 	None	Students should finish started assessments and not retake domain tests that were previously administered.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
14	All	A student rapidly clicks through and/or does not respond to items in one or more domain tests.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MDE will not approve a domain regeneration except as described in scenario 15. 2. Any test booklets are returned as-is by the district. 	TAR	<p>If a student clicked through an entire test and/or did not respond to items, it does not warrant a regeneration. The student would have had to select an answer (reading, listening), select record, and stop for each speaking prompt to make the “Next” button active (speaking), or move through all tasks using the “Next” button and, for typed responses, entering at least one keystroke (writing).</p> <p>Districts are required to ensure students are prepared to successfully take the test, which includes understanding that each task should be carefully completed before moving on.</p>
15	Writing (hand-writing)	A student in grades 4–12 starts or completes a handwriting session without the Writing Response Booklet (for example, the Test Administrator forgot that students need a booklet for written responses and thought the students were keyboarding). The student clicks through one or more prompts since there were no text boxes to keyboard their responses.	<p>If the test is not complete:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student should be provided with a Writing Response Booklet to complete testing. There is no need to regenerate the domain. The student can still answer all the items once they get their Writing Response Booklet. <p>If the test is complete:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE. 2. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain. 	TAR	The student could not keyboard any writing response and should be administered the Writing domain test with the Writing Response Booklet to handwrite their responses.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
			3. The student retakes the test with the Writing Response Booklet.		
16	Writing	A student in grades 4–12 was placed in an incorrect Writing test session (keyboarding vs. handwriting or vice versa).	<p>If the student started or completed the domain in <i>keyboarding</i> and should have <i>handwritten</i> their response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student exits the test in the keyboarding session. 2. The DAC contacts MDE. 3. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain test. 4. The DAC moves the student into a handwriting (HW) session and provides the student with a Writing Response Booklet. 5. The student restarts the test. <p>If the student started or completed the test in <i>handwriting</i> and they should <i>keyboard</i> their response:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student exits the test in the handwriting (HW) session. 2. The DAC contacts MDE. 3. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the test. 4. The DAC moves the student into a keyboarding session and applies a Do Not Process label to the Writing Response Booklet. 5. The student restarts the test. 	TAR	<p>The student should be administered the test with the correct response mode.</p> <p>The scored prompts are the same for online writing, whether the student is handwriting or keyboarding their response.</p>

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
17	Writing (hand-writing)	A student writes their response underneath the wrong heading in the Writing Response Booklet.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The district transcribes the student's writing to a new test booklet using one of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District staff transcribe the student's writing exactly as written into a new Writing Response Booklet. A second staff member should also read it over to make sure it matches exactly. • The student does the transcription in a new Writing Response Booklet. The Test Administrator should confirm nothing is changed in the transcription process. 2. The district complete the demographic information on the new test booklet using a number 2 pencil as described in Chapter 8 of the Procedures Manual and affixes a School/District label. 3. The district applies a Do Not Process label to the incorrect test booklet and return it with the other test materials. <p>Note: Do not fill out a Do Not Score code on the incorrectly administered test booklet.</p>	TAR	Transcription is allowed to ensure the student's test is scored correctly.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
18	Writing (hand-writing)	A student uses an ACCESS Paper Listening, Reading, and Writing Test Booklet to take the Writing domain test instead of an ACCESS Online Writing Test Booklet (grades 1–3) or Writing Response Booklet (grades 4–5).	Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance.	TAR	This is considered mixed-mode testing and mixed-mode testing is not allowed by WIDA.
19	Listening or Speaking	A student’s headphones/headset were not working for part or all of a Listening or Speaking domain test.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC contacts MDE 2. MDE approves for DRC to regenerate the domain. 	TAR	Since the student was not able to hear and/or respond to all the prompts, they are allowed to restart the test.
20	Listening	A student intentionally paused and replayed prompts in the Listening domain test.	The Listening domain test is invalidated.	TAR	Students may only listen to the prompt one time per item unless they have the repeat audio accommodation that allows them to repeat the listening prompt.
21	Reading	A student took the Reading domain test without headphones or the student’s headphones were not working.	The domain is not regenerated.	TAR	There are only directions read aloud at the beginning of the Reading domain test; there is no modeling or read aloud of the test items so the headphones are not required to complete the domain.
22	Writing	A student took the Writing domain without headphones (grades 4–12 only).	The domain is not regenerated.	TAR	The student’s test is not regenerated. While the prompts are intended to be multimodal (so the student can hear and read the prompts), the inability to hear the prompt does not disadvantage the student.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
23	Writing or Speaking	The Test Administrator thinks the online tier placement (for either Writing or Speaking) is not appropriate and requests a tier override.	MDE does not override tier placements unless the Reading and Listening domains could not be completed.	TAR	The student must take the writing tier that was assigned based on their performance on the Listening and Reading domains. The tier placement protocol has been created by WIDA.
24	Writing or Speaking	An incomplete domain was submitted for Listening or Reading because of the student's disability or an irregularity, and the tier placement (for either Writing or Speaking) needs to be overridden.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DAC verifies which tier the Test Administrator would recommend based on knowledge of the student to determine the tier placement 2. The DAC contacts MDE and provides a description of the tier override request. 3. If appropriate, MDE contacts DRC for a tier override for speaking and/or writing. There are only two tier options: A and B/C. 	TAR	The tier assignment was based on the score from reading and listening. If either domain is not completed, it may not be a valid tier placement and a tier override may be appropriate.
25	Listening, Writing, or Speaking	<p>A student should have been provided with one or more of following accommodations as indicated in an IEP/504 plan, but the student started or completed the domain without it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat Audio (RA) • Manual Control (MC) • In-person reader (IR) • Repeat in-person reader (HR) • Extended Speaking Response time (ES, only applies to Speaking domain) 	<p>It does not matter how many items have been completed; the district has the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student logs out (no matter how much of the domain has been completed), and the DAC contacts MDE. MDE contacts DRC to regenerate the domain. Once the domain is regenerated, the accommodation is indicated in WIDA AMS and the student retakes the entire domain. • The student completes the domain without the accommodation. This requires an ASR. 	TAR or ASR	The district must consider how far the student is in the test and if the test is still a valid measure without the accommodation. This decision should be based on what is most appropriate for an individual student, and, if applicable, in conjunction with the IEP, 504 plan, and/or EL teams.

	Domain	Scenario	Typical Steps/Outcome	Form Required	Rationale
26	Listening, Writing, or Speaking	A student was provided an accommodation that is not indicated in an IEP or 504 plan. The student started or completed the domain with the unindicated accommodation(s).	The student completes the domain with the accommodation.	TAR	Regeneration is not provided because the validity of the test is not compromised.
27	Speaking	A student is selectively mute.	<p>If specified in the student's IEP or 504 plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Test Administrator may choose to administer the ACCESS Paper, which would allow them to administer the Speaking domain test in a one-on-one setting. 2. The Test Administrator must score at least one item for the domain test to be considered attempted. <p>If the student does not have an IEP or 504 plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student must take the ACCESS Online. 2. The record button must be clicked for one scored item for the domain to be considered attempted. 3. If the student does not complete the domain, the DAC will submit an incomplete domain. 	TAR	The district must attempt to administer the domain.
28	Speaking	A student used scratch paper during the Speaking domain test.	Contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for guidance.	ASR	Scratch paper is not allowed for the Speaking domain test.