

## edTPA Guidelines for Acceptable Candidate Support Revised September 2016

edTPA is a summative, subject-specific portfolio-based assessment of teaching performance, completed during a preparation program within a clinical field experience. edTPA is designed to assess a teaching candidate's readiness to teach. This document outlines guidelines for supporting candidates during their completion of edTPA. These guidelines apply to all edTPA support – from faculty, supervisors, cooperating teachers, peers, and other support providers (e.g., a writing center or tutor).

Consistent with research on student learning,<sup>1</sup> programs are encouraged to help candidates examine expectations for performance evaluated by edTPA in meaningful ways and discuss how they will demonstrate their performance in relation to those expectations. Given the placement of edTPA within an educational program, professional conversations about teaching and learning associated with the outcomes assessed in edTPA are expected and encouraged. Faculty, supervisors and cooperating teachers may take time to examine the language, structure and progression of the edTPA rubrics during formative experiences throughout the program. For example, one highly effective way to clarify what edTPA requires AND prepare candidates to teach well is to closely examine the rubrics.

Throughout an educational preparation program, candidates receive a variety of support during their coursework and fieldwork that aligns with assessed elements of edTPA. For example, methods courses often include assignments related to curriculum and lesson design, and educational psychology courses likely include assignments related to analyzing student assessment data: both courses could help support the candidate's thinking about how to design lessons and understand assessment in relationship to the expectations identified in edTPA. During field experiences, candidates are trying out what they have learned, and they receive feedback on their performance from supervisors, cooperating teachers, and other support providers. These activities and formative experiences provide opportunities for candidates to “practice the activities of edTPA” and to synthesize their learning from the program. In addition, instructors typically provide feedback to candidates relative to the teaching standards of their field and any state standards for teaching performance addressed within the coursework and assignments. Preparation for edTPA offers many collegial opportunities for candidates to share and discuss their experiences as well as to share and discuss responses to practice activities.

Although many program activities and experiences provide acceptable forms of support for candidates within the edTPA process, other activities are not acceptable within a summative assessment process that is intended to determine whether each candidate individually demonstrates mastery of state/program standards and should be recommended for an initial license. This document clarifies what are acceptable forms of support for candidates during the edTPA process and what are unacceptable forms of support. This support could be provided by faculty, cooperating teachers and other support providers, or by peers. This version replaces earlier versions posted at <http://edtpa.aacte.org/> and <https://www.edtpa.com/>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*. Retrieved from <https://www.measuredprogress.org/documents/10157/15653/InsideBlackBox.pdf>

## Acceptable Forms of Support for Candidates within the edTPA Process

### Acceptable Support Prior to Beginning Official edTPA Drafts Includes:

- Providing candidates with access to handbooks and other explanatory materials about edTPA and expectations for candidate performance on the assessment
- Explaining edTPA tasks and scoring rubrics and guiding discussions about them
- Providing and discussing support documents such as *Making Good Choices* and *Understanding Rubric Level Progressions*
- Examining lessons or examples of effective teaching using edTPA rubrics or support documents
- Discussing samples of previously completed edTPA portfolio materials (where appropriate permissions have been granted)
- Engaging candidates in formative experiences aligned with edTPA (e.g., assignments analyzing their instruction, developing curriculum units, or assessing student work)
- Referring students to a writing center for assistance in improving their writing for course assignments
- Recommending and/or providing specific assistance to improve performance in areas in which the candidate has demonstrated a weakness, e.g., analytic writing, designing lessons, engaging students
- Explaining scoring rubrics, and using these rubrics in formative exercises or assignments<sup>2</sup>
- Relating expectations in edTPA tasks and scoring rubrics to earlier assignments or experiences in the program
- Using rubric constructs or rubric language to evaluate and debrief observations made by field supervisors or cooperating teachers as part of the clinical supervision process
- Offering candidate seminars focusing on the skills and abilities identified in edTPA, such as an Academic Language seminar

### Acceptable Support During edTPA Drafting Process (including Planning) Includes:

- Providing a schedule/timeline for completion of sections of the edTPA submission
- Co-planning a learning segment with a cooperating teacher or a peer, as long as each candidate provides his/her own justification for planning decisions and analyses of the teaching and student learning in the commentaries
- Answering common questions in a group setting
- Candidates with a documented disability are eligible to receive relevant accommodations they have received for coursework and program assessments OR to apply to Pearson for approval of accommodations.
  - Not all accommodations are relevant, e.g., additional time (since the candidate can adjust the submission date) or accommodations related to the knowledge and skills being

---

<sup>2</sup> Note: If candidates, peers, or instructors use rubrics in formative exercises or assignments, they must be aware that such local scoring cannot be assumed to be comparable to the scoring conducted by trained evaluators who have met calibrated scoring standards.

measured.

- For applying directly to Pearson for accommodations, click [here](#).
- In addition, candidates who routinely receive support from a writing center or writing tutor may also receive support while drafting edTPA submission materials, but support must not include direct edits or advice related to the content of the submission.
- Providing access to translations of instructional materials in languages other than English
- Providing a graphic organizer or checklists to record evidence needed for an edTPA task
- Paraphrasing or answering questions about the content of a handbook prompt, rubric, direction, or support document such as Making Good Choices to clarify what the prompt or direction is requesting
- Asking probing questions about candidates' draft edTPA responses or videorecordings, without providing direct edits of the candidate's writing or providing candidates with specific answers to edTPA prompts. Examples of acceptable probing questions are:
  - Have you compared your responses to the prompts to be sure that every part of the prompt has been addressed?
  - Have you provided sufficient context information so that scorers will understand how you have matched specific strategies and actions to your students?
  - (If candidate asks for advice in justifying decisions through research or theory) What have you learned in your coursework or reading about research or theories that make you think that these strategies would be successful?
- Providing references to relevant articles or sections of a text to address questions about effective teaching strategies
- In contexts where a candidate is unable to access the IEP, the cooperating teacher may provide relevant information about IEP goals, modifications, and accommodations in the IEP. This is subject to approval by the principal or official designee.
- Flagging instances where identifying information still needs to be removed from an edTPA draft to ensure confidentiality
- Assisting candidates in understanding how to use the electronic platforms for models/programs using electronic uploading of candidate responses
- Arranging technical assistance for the video portion of the assessment

## **Unacceptable Forms of Candidate Support during the edTPA Process**

### Unacceptable Support During edTPA Drafting Process (including Planning) Includes:

- Editing a candidate's edTPA drafts prior to submission
- Offering critique of candidate edTPA drafts prior to submission for official scoring that provides specific, alternative responses
- Telling candidates which video clips or work samples to select for submission
- Uploading candidate edTPA responses (written responses or videotape entries) on public access social media websites or uploading them to the scoring platform for the candidate.