



# High School Equivalency Official Practice Test Guidance

## Remote Proctoring

### Existing Guidance

#### Official Practice Testing (OPT)

An individual must provide evidence of a passing OPT score to be admitted for final HiSET® testing (pg. 31, Verification Form in the [Test Administration Manual](#)). Best practice has shown that the proctoring and administration of the OPT in accordance with official testing guidelines aid in the preparation of the test taker and leads to greater success. Under normal conditions, the proctoring and administration of the OPT is face-to-face.

### Additional Guidance

#### Types of Remote Proctoring for OPT

##### 1:1 PROCTORING

One proctor to one test taker utilizing Zoom, a popular video conferencing software tool, or another platform that has the ability to [screen share](#) and give [remote control](#) of the proctor's screen.

##### 1:2+ PROCTORING

For one proctor to multiple test takers, the recommendation is that no more than four test takers are tested at a time and that the proctor utilizes [breakout rooms](#). The proctor and test takers use Zoom (or another platform that meets the requirements to screen share, give remote control, and utilize breakout rooms).

##### 3RD PARTY VENDOR

To administer the OPT through a third party vendor, the platform must be secure and automated. At a minimum, the platform must: verify the test taker's ID by photo and scan, allow for an environmental scan, screen share, monitor the test taker's screen, record, and track completion time.

### Technical Requirements

All proctoring can be done on a variety of devices. Please see the following technical requirements for proctoring via Zoom or another video conferencing platform that has the ability to [screen share](#), give up [remote control](#), and utilize [breakout rooms](#). For third party vendors such as [Proctor U](#), [Examity](#), or [Honorlock](#), refer to their specific requirements (which might include downloads, extensions, or apps).

#### PROCTORS

Proctors must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Desktop, laptop, or tablet computer (9.7-inch screen or larger with minimum 2048 x 1536 resolution);
- Webcam or attached video camera;
- Microphone and speakers; and

- Zoom client app installed (using a paid Pro level account or higher).\* The chief examiner should ensure that the proctor is trained and able to troubleshoot issues ([Zoom tutorials](#) are available).

## TEST TAKERS

Test takers must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Laptop, desktop, or tablet computer (9.7-inch screen or larger with minimum 2048 x 1536 resolution);
- Webcam or attached video camera;
- Microphone and speakers;
- Zoom client app installed (more information is available [here](#));\* and
- Internet access with bandwidth of at least 2 megabits per second (Mbps) download speed.
  - Running a speed test is recommended ([www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net)).

\*A similar type of video conferencing software may be used but **must** have the ability to [screen share](#), give up [remote control](#), and utilize [breakout rooms](#).

## Security and Privacy

### ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

A proper environment is important to ensure that tests remain secure and reduce distractions that may invalidate OPT results. Here are some key characteristics of a proper environment for remote testing:

- Testing spaces should be in a quiet room without background noise or distractions. The room should have a closed door to ensure there are no interruptions by others. If a room with a closed door is unavailable, the test taker must ensure either that no one else is in the room (or nearby rooms) or that they will not be interrupted.
- Lighting should be bright enough for the proctor to clearly see the test taker and the testing space.
- Testing spaces (desks, tables, etc.) must be clear of extra papers, books, pens, pencils, phones, etc. Nothing but the testing device/computer may be in the space. Only one piece of scrap paper and a calculator equivalent to a Texas Instruments' TI-30XS or Casio's FX260 may be used for the Math OPT.
- Additional monitors, computers, and other electronic devices should be turned off or removed.

We recognize that it may be difficult to meet all of these requirements. Unfortunately, test takers will not be able to test remotely if these requirements are not satisfied.

### AGENCY TEST SECURITY POLICY

Agency coordinators, chief examiners, and proctors must maintain a specific test security policy that describes the proper handling and use of test materials to ensure that test materials are not compromised.

Agencies participating in OPT remote testing must sign the [Agency Remote Testing Agreement](#), which states that proctors and testing personnel will follow the privacy, test security, technology, and test administration requirements and procedures that have been outlined in this document. The Agreement should be emailed to Mike Williams at [mike.williams@iowa.gov](mailto:mike.williams@iowa.gov).

If the Iowa Department of Education determines that any agency or testing entity has violated any provision of this test security policy in any manner (purposely or otherwise), the Department reserves the right to take appropriate action to rectify the violation.

It is the responsibility of the agency and proctor to ensure that the HiSET® OPT testing instruments and test items are kept secure. Education Testing Services (ETS) continually examines and researches security concerns to maintain the integrity of the testing materials. Federal copyright law prohibits the unauthorized reproduction and use of copyrighted test materials.

## COLLECTION OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (PII)

The agency or proctor must inform the test taker of the types of PII that will be collected, how it will be used, and how it will be secured. This includes any demographic information and test item responses and scores.

The proctor must also ensure the test taker that any personal information captured through the web cam will be kept confidential. Furthermore, the proctor should communicate that the testing session will be recorded and that the recording will be kept for 12 hours to ensure that the test security and privacy regulations were not violated during the test.

After testing has completed, the proctor should destroy any PII they have gathered during the testing event. This includes any notes taken, photographs, or videos that reside on the proctor's computer. Failure to do so is a violation of test taker's privacy.

## TESTING RULES

Violation of any of the following rules may result in the immediate termination of the test. These rules include the test taker:

- Not going to any other websites, programs, or documents on their computer while testing;
- Not using any outside sources for help during the test, including help from the proctor to explain or answer any part of the test;
- Not taking breaks during the test unless they have been approved for a testing accommodation;
  - If approved for a testing accommodation, test takers should not leave the room or use other devices.
- Not being interrupted by other people during the test; and
- Not using cell phones or other electronic devices.

## PROCTOR'S ROLE

The proctor must check that the technological and environmental requirements are met and that the test taker understands the testing process. The proctor must explain all of the steps in the remote testing process and that the testing session will be recorded.

Testing personnel must follow all test administration directions as directed in the following [OPT Administration Directions section](#) and the appropriate Test Administration Manual (TAM). The same testing accommodations allowed by ETS can be made for remote testing. Please refer to the [TAM](#) for more information on these accommodations. At a minimum, the following are expectations for a proctor:

- The proctor must watch the student throughout the entire test checking for:
  - Actions that may indicate the test taker is cheating (e.g., eyes looking at something off screen, hands doing something out of view, etc.)
  - Signs of test taker anxiety leading to the test taker guessing often, choosing the same answer throughout the text, moving too quickly through the test, or not taking the test.
  - Technical problems that arise (e.g., frozen computer, slow internet, etc.)
- The proctor is not allowed to take breaks and step away from the computer while the test taker is taking the test.
- The proctor should end the test if there are signs of cheating or if any technical issues arise that cannot be quickly resolved.
  - A new testing time will need to be discussed with the test taker.
- An individual must provide evidence of a passing OPT score to be admitted for final HiSET® testing (pg. 31, Verification Form in the [TAM](#)). Best practice has shown that the proctoring and administration of the OPT in accordance with official testing guidelines aid in the preparation of the test taker and leads to greater success. Under normal conditions, the proctoring and administration of the OPT is face-to-face.

## OPT Administration Directions

### SCHEDULING AN OPT SESSION

Schedule a Zoom meeting at an agreed-upon day and time that is convenient for both proctor and test taker. Send a meeting invitation to the test taker's email address that includes the meeting number and URL for access.

- The proctor needs to password protect the session by choosing the option "Require meeting password" when scheduling the Zoom meeting.
- The proctor must change the Video options for Host and Participants both to "On."
- The proctor must change the Audio option to "Computer Audio" because telephones and third party audio should not be used.
- Under Advanced Options, the proctor needs to check "Automatically record meeting" and choose "In the cloud."

At the designated time, the proctor and test taker both access the meeting using the Zoom URL/link. After the meeting starts, the proctor should click the "Security" button and then disable the "Allow participants to rename themselves" option.

Once the test taker is online, the proctor should welcome the test taker.

### IDENTIFYING ELIGIBLE TEST TAKER(S) AND REQUIRED AGREEMENTS

Proctors must verify the test taker's identity at the start of each meeting.

The proctor should ask the test taker to hold up an acceptable form of identification, as listed in the [TAM](#).

The proctor or third party vendor must explain all of the steps in the remote testing, the testing rules, and the privacy and security associated with remote testing. They can do this by receiving a number of verbal confirmations or electronic assurances.

The proctor must:

- Inform the test taker that the test will be recorded;
- Ensure that the test taker is alone in the room and that the work the test taker submits will be their own;
- Ask the test taker to confirm that they will not share test items;
- Inform the test taker that at this point no breaks will be given (unless the test taker has been approved for testing accommodations); and
- Inform the test taker that cell phones must be turned off and outside of reach.

If the test taker does not understand or agree to any of the above agreements, the test taker cannot take the assessment remotely and the session will need to end.

### TECHNOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT REVIEW

The proctor needs to ensure that the test taker has met all of the technological and environmental requirements prior to testing.<sup>1</sup> It is recommended that the proctor helps the test taker run a speed test ([www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net)).

The proctor then must scan the test taker's testing area (e.g., desk, kitchen table, etc.) via webcam. If there is any part of the testing area that the proctor cannot adequately see, due to shadow or angle of the camera,

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<sup>1</sup> BEST PRACTICE: Technology and Environment Review can be done prior to testing to practice and troubleshoot potential issues.

the proctor must ask the test taker to pan to the left or right of an area to ensure there are no open materials or resources within reach.

The test taker will now need to share their entire screen for the proctor to verify that there are no other tabs or applications open except Zoom.<sup>2</sup> This process varies on different computer platforms (see [Zoom's Help Page](#) for troubleshooting).

The proctor then has the test taker end screen sharing. The proctor then shares their own screen and gives control of their mouse and keyboard to the test taker through Zoom.

#### LAUNCHING AND FINALIZING THE TEST

Depending on the test delivery method, the proctor will either assign test takers to breakout rooms to launch the specific subject OPT when serving one to many or will launch the automated third party vendor. The proctor will open the appropriate test with a fillable answer sheet for the test taker to mark through the proctor's computer.

The proctor should not move the mouse or press keyboard keys during the test. The proctor clicks "Stop Video" in the Zoom toolbar so that the test taker does not see them anymore. Leave video disabled until the test form is completed, so as not to disturb the test taker. The proctor needs to mute their microphone, so they do not disturb the test taker. The proctor should unmute only if there is a problem that needs to be resolved.

During the test, the proctor should closely monitor the test taker for any behaviors that would violate the testing rules, to help the test taker resolve any technical issues, and to encourage the test taker to continue through the entire test.

When the test taker indicates that they have finished, the proctor will end the recording and stop the screen share with the test taker. Verify that the testing event and all of the test taker's answers were recorded successfully and save the answer sheet (FirstName Initial\_LastName\_Date).

The proctor should thank the test taker and address any additional questions. The proctor will make arrangements for communicating the score of the test and will comply with the removal of personal information collected during the session.

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<sup>2</sup> NOTE: The test taker must share the entire screen; it is possible, but not allowed, to share only one application window at a time. The proctor must verify the entire screen is shared before continuing. One quick check is to make sure the toolbar on computers running Windows can be seen.