

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has put together this quick reference sheet for our customers to highlight key points and areas of focus as BEST Plus 2.0 is launched on July 1, 2016. We hope you find this helpful, and please contact CAL with any questions you may have. We're here to help.

## **Original *BEST Plus Test Administrator Guide* and *BEST Plus 2.0 Test Administrator Guide***

The *BEST Plus 2.0 Test Administrator Guide* (BEST Plus 2.0 TAG) has been enhanced based on feedback from our customers and learning from CAL, undergoing a thorough review and editing process designed to make it even more user-friendly.

CAL recommends, but does not require, that programs purchase the BEST Plus 2.0 TAG for all test administrators to ensure a smooth transition on July 1, 2016.

As a convenience for customers who wish to provide new TAGs for their test administrators, we are making the BEST Plus 2.0 TAGs available for purchase at a discounted rate of \$15 plus shipping from May 16, 2016, through December 31, 2016. Visit the CAL Store at [calstore.cal.org](http://calstore.cal.org).

**Here is information and guidance for customers who will continue to use the original *BEST Plus Test Administrator Guide*:**

### **What's the same?**

- The scoring rubric. You can use the same rubric as before.
- Test administration procedures. They are outlined in Section II of both the original BEST Plus TAG and the BEST Plus 2.0 TAG.

### **What's different?**

- Score ranges corresponding to the NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels have been updated for BEST Plus 2.0. See the table below for the new score ranges, which can also be found in Section III of the BEST Plus 2.0 TAG and online at [www.cal.org/bp2](http://www.cal.org/bp2).
- Once the BEST Plus 2.0 software has been installed on a computer, administrator rights are no longer needed to run it. See Section IV of the BEST Plus 2.0 TAG.
- Instructions for using the score management software have been edited for clarity and moved to Section IV of the BEST Plus 2.0 TAG. These instructions replace the *Score Management Software User Guide*.
- You will notice new wording related to purchasing and activating BEST Plus 2.0 computer-adaptive test administrations:
  - *Activation Key* replaces *Registration Key*
  - *Activation Code* replaces *Purchase Code*
- In response to recommendations from our customers, the BEST Plus software is no longer included with the TAG. The BEST Plus 2.0 test administration, test transfer, score management, and practice software are available on a USB that can be purchased through the CAL Store.

- CAL’s contact information has been updated. Send your e-mails to one address at [AEA@cal.org](mailto:AEA@cal.org).

**What do I do with my original BEST Plus TAG?**

- For programs that continue to use the original BEST Plus TAG, ensure that your test administrators have the updated NRS score ranges in Section III. See below. You can also download a copy of the new score ranges from the BEST Plus 2.0 web page.
- Recycle or discard the original BEST Plus software—including red and black CDs and the original BEST Plus USB sticks—on July 1, 2016.

**BEST Plus 2.0 Score Ranges Corresponding to the National Reporting System (NRS) ESL Educational Functioning Levels**

CAL has published new BEST Plus 2.0 score ranges corresponding to the NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels that will go into effect with the launch of BEST Plus 2.0 on July 1, 2016.

- **Original BEST Plus**

For the current program year ending on June 30, 2016, programs should use the original BEST Plus score ranges for the NRS levels as shown in Table 2 on page 9 of Section III in the original BEST Plus TAG. The BEST Plus score ranges corresponding to the Student Performance Levels (SLPs) will remain the same. (See Table 1, Section III, page 8, of the original BEST Plus TAG.)

- **BEST Plus 2.0**

The table below provides the new score ranges corresponding to the NRS levels effective with the launch of BEST Plus 2.0 on July 1, 2016. These new ranges are based on the results of standard setting studies that took place at CAL in 2012 and 2013 using experts from the field, including state directors, program coordinators, and BEST Plus trainers.

<b>BEST Plus 2.0 Score Ranges for Each NRS Level</b>	
<b>NRS ESL Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>BEST Plus 2.0 Score Range</b>
Beginning ESL Literacy	88 to 361
Low Beginning ESL	362 to 427
High Beginning ESL	428 to 452
Low Intermediate ESL	453 to 484
High Intermediate ESL	485 to 524
Advanced ESL	525 to 564
Exit criteria from NRS	565 and higher

## Pre- and Posttesting

It is important to remember that you cannot pretest with the original BEST Plus and posttest with BEST Plus 2.0 for NRS reporting.

- Starting July 1, 2016, programs must use BEST Plus 2.0 for pre- and posttesting for NRS reporting. This means that scores from the original BEST Plus cannot carry over into the new program year.
- Returning students will need to be retested with BEST Plus 2.0 per NRS guidelines. Programs should follow policies set by states and OCTAE.
- If your program does not report scores to the NRS, please check your funder's assessment guidelines and policies and also review CAL's webinar for non-NRS users from February 18, 2016, at [www.cal.org/bp2](http://www.cal.org/bp2).

## Instructional Hours

CAL has revised guidance for instructional hours for BEST Plus 2.0 and BEST Literacy as outlined below. Guidance on instructional hours is also posted on the BEST Plus 2.0 web page.

- CAL recommends re-testing students at the end of their period of instruction, with 60 hours minimum (80–100 hours recommended) of instruction prior to re-testing.
- In instances where a student does not have 60 hours, programs should follow state assessment policies and NRS Guidelines when re-testing at the end of the instructional period.
- If students receive more than 60 hours of instruction, CAL does not recommend re-testing students at the 60-hour mark; rather, students should be tested at the end of the instructional period to avoid over-testing.

CAL recommends that states work with programs to review program assessment policies and reference the current OCTAE "[NRS Implementation Guidelines](#)" dated February 2015 in their entirety where necessary.

Visit [www.cal.org/bp2](http://www.cal.org/bp2) to learn more and read the frequently asked questions.

Contact CAL with questions  
Email : [aea@cal.org](mailto:aea@cal.org)  
1-866-845-2378 (toll free)  
Monday–Friday 10AM–6PM Eastern Time

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