

Process for Selecting the Complexity Levels for STAAR Alternate

The ARD committee or test administrator should review the “Student Characteristics for the STAAR Alternate Complexity Levels” document to identify which box best describes the current level of performance for the student. This decision must be made separately for each subject area.

Selection of the student characteristics in a **colored box** indicates that the student is firmly working at a given complexity level.

or

Selection of the student characteristics in a **white box** indicates that the student is working between complexity levels.

Check the white indicators of progress box between the identified level and the next higher colored box. If the student is not showing evidence of the characteristics in that indicators of progress box, remain with the colored box descriptors and **select that complexity level for all tasks for that subject**. If the student is showing progress as described in the white indicators of progress box, move to that box.

When the ARD committee or test administrator feels that the student meets the definition of and exhibits the descriptors of No Response Observed, the test administrator must **plan and observe the student on one Level 1 task** per subject.

If the student is best described by the characteristics in a white indicator of progress box, the ARD committee or test administrator will select the complexity level for the tasks for that student as a **combination of the two complexity levels above and below the white box**. The test administrator will review the tasks after instruction and determine which specific level will be chosen for each essence statement. The test administrator has to choose at least one task at the higher complexity level. Assessing the student using all the higher level tasks should be the goal.

For the 2012-2013 STAAR Alternate administration, the test administrator can still select the complexity level and assessment task, proceed with planning and observing the task, and evaluate the student performances after the complexity level selection is made. However, it is recommended that the ARD committee make the decisions for the complexity level or the combination of levels that will be used.

Beginning with the 2013-2014 STAAR Alternate administration, the ARD committee, rather than the test administrator, will be required to make the decision for the complexity level or the combination of levels that will be used for the assessment. These decisions will be recorded on the “STAAR Alternate Participation Requirements” state-required form. The test administrator must abide by the complexity level decisions made by the ARD committee.

Keep in mind:

- If a student is clearly described by the characteristics in one of the colored boxes, it is inappropriate to assess that student at a lower complexity level.
- It is inappropriate to assess a student at a lower complexity level just to improve his or her score on the assessment. Students who demonstrate skills on tasks independently or with cueing should not be moved to a lower complexity level.
- If the test administrator feels the complexity level decisions determined by the ARD committee need to be revised either due to progress or regression, the ARD committee must reconvene and determine the complexity levels again based on the new student information following the same process as outlined above.