



The ACTFL Language Testing Office
6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701

http://www.languagetesting.com/acad_nj_esl_bro.cfm

ACTFL CERTIFIED PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM: ORAL AND WRITING PROFICIENCY TESTING FOR STATE OF NEW JERSEY ESL TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Please Note: All relevant applications, forms, and information are available through the links below.

As part of the ESL teacher certification process, the State of New Jersey Department of Education requires applicants to take an English Oral Proficiency Interview and an English Writing Proficiency Test.

THE ACTFL ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW

The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, or ACTFL OPI is:

- A standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability,
- A face-to-face or telephonic interview between a certified ACTFL tester and an examinee
- A criterion referenced test that compares an individual's performance of specific oral communication tasks with the criteria of each of ten proficiency levels described in the ACTFL Proficiency-Guidelines-Speaking (Revised 1999).

The ACTFL OPI takes the form of a carefully structured conversation between a trained and certified interviewer and the person whose speaking proficiency is being assessed. The interview is interactive and continuously adapts to the speaking ability of the individual being tested. There is no script or prescribed set of question; the topics discussed during the interview are based on the interests and experiences of the speaker.

Through a series of personalized questions, the interviewer elicits from the test candidate examples of his or her ability to handle the communication tasks specified for each level of proficiency in order to establish a clear "floor" and "ceiling" of consistent functional ability. Often candidates are asked to take part in a role-play to prove linguistic functions not easily elicited through the conversational format.

Since the ACTFL OPI is an assessment of functional speaking ability, independent of any specific curriculum, it is irrelevant when, where, why and under what conditions the candidate acquired his/her speaking ability in the language.

The interview lasts from ten to thirty minutes. Each interview is tape recorded and assigned an initial rating by the tester. The interview is then blindly rated by a second certified tester. Under the supervision of the ACTFL Testing Office, Language Testing International, a final rating is assigned and an ACTFL OPI Certificate is issued

THE ACTFL WRITING PROFICIENCY TEST

The ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test, or ACTFL WPT is:

- A standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional writing ability,
- A test that requires the examinee to read prompts in English and compose written responses in the target language without the aid of dictionaries or grammar references.
- A criterion referenced test that compares an individual's performance of specific communication tasks with the criteria for each of ten proficiency levels described in the **ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines-Writing** revised by ACTFL in 2001

The ACTFL OPI takes the form of a carefully constructed assessment with four requests for written responses dealing with practical, social and professional topics that are encountered in informal and formal contexts. The writer is presented with tasks and contexts that represent the range of proficiency levels from Novice to Superior on the ACTFL scale. The tasks and prompts are articulated in English with the expectation that the responses be written in the target language. The prompts ask for written constructed responses of paragraph length or longer demonstrating narrative writing, informative writing and persuasive writing.

Since the ACTFL WPT is an assessment of functional writing ability independent of any specific curriculum, it irrelevant when, where, why and under what conditions the candidate acquired his/her writing ability in the language.

The examinee is given 90 minutes to read the directions and complete the test. A completed WPT is reviewed by an ACTFL certified testers to assign the ACTFL proficiency rating that best describes the proficiency demonstrated by the individual. The test is then forwarded to another ACTFL certified tester for a second independent ("blind") rating for final rating confirmation.

THE ACTFL CERTIFIED TESTERS

ACTFL OPIs are conducted and rated by ACTFL certified proficiency testers. ACTFL WPTs are also rated by ACTFL certified raters. These testers and raters are highly specialized language professionals who have completed a rigorous training process that concludes with a tester's demonstrated ability to consistently elicit ratable samples and to rate samples with a high degree of reliability. ACTFL strictly monitors all testing and rating.

ACTFL ASSESSMENT IN 59 LANGUAGES

As of the printing of this brochure, ACTFL provides certified oral proficiency testing in the 59 languages listed below. The ACTFL writing proficiency test is offered in the 12 languages that are highlighted.

Afrikaans, **Albanian**, Armenian, Amharic, **Arabic**, Armenian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Cebuano, Chavacano, Croatian, Czech, Dari, Dutch, Egyptian, **English**, Filipino, Flemish, **French**, **German**, Georgian, Modern Greek, **Haitian Creole**, Hebrew, Hilgaynon, Hindi, Hmong, Ilokano, Indonesian, **Italian**, **Japanese**, Javanese, Khmer, Korean, Malay, **Mandarin**, Norwegian, Pashto, Persian Farsi, Polish, **Portuguese**, Punjabi, Romanian, **Russian**, Samoan, Serbian, Slovak, Somali **Spanish**, Swahili, Swedish, Tamil, Tausug, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Vietnamese

FEES FOR INDIVIDUAL OPI

Individual Certified ACTFL OPI	\$134.00*
Individual Certified ACTFL WPT	\$65.00*
Rescheduling Fee	\$55.00
Missed OPI appointment/No Show	\$55.00
Express Processing Service	\$50.00

Payment may be made by credit card authorization (MasterCard, Visa or Discover Card), money order, or personal check. Payment must accompany application form(s).

*For tests that are proctored at **New Jersey City University**, there is an additional \$29 OPI test proctor fee and \$39 WPT test proctor fee to be paid directly to **NJCU** on the date of the test.

SCHEDULING AN ACTFL OPI

APPLICATIONS, FORMS & INFORMATION

Step 1. Complete an Application Form: [Click here for OPI Application](#)

Use an ACTFL Proficiency Assessment Application Form for NJ ESL Teachers.

Step 2. Telephonic OPI Test Site and Proctor

You may request an OPI to be taken telephonically at New Jersey City University or at your own school, if you have an appropriate, approved proctor as identified below.

Option 1. New Jersey City University (NJCU):

This is an official test site to take ACTFL assessments. Tests are regularly scheduled at **NJCU** on Monday-Thursday between 10am and 2 pm. If you select to take the test at **NJCU** you do NOT need to submit a Proctor Form with your application.

Option 2. Your school or university.

Telephonic OPI- requires the presence of a designated **Proctor** who:

- Completes and signs a Proctor agreement form: [Click here for OPI Proctor Agreements](#) (required)
- Places the call to the OPI Tester
- Introduces the test candidate to the OPI Tester
- Confirms the name and identity of the examinee
- Is free to leave after introduction

***K12 Schools and School District Proctors:**

A proctor at a K12 school or school district may **only** be a Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean, Administrative Assistant to the Principal or Dean, School District HR personnel, or Academic Chair. No other administrators or staff may act as proctors.

***University or College Proctors:**

A proctor at a college may be a Professor, Department Chair, Dept. Administrative Assistant or Teacher Education Coordinator

** If a long distance call cannot be placed from the Proctor's office telephone, the test candidate should bring a phone card to use in order to place and charge the phone call.*

Step 3. Submit Application Package

For your test request to be processed, you must submit ALL the below:

1. A completed OPI application; including a check, money order, or credit card authorization
2. The OPI Proctor Form signed by your proctor, if you are requesting an OPI to take place at your school
3. A completed Test-Taker Agreement

Incomplete application packages will NOT be processed.

Step 4. Wait for notification by Email of OPI Appointment

Once your application has been processed you will be sent an e-mail with your confirmed test date, time and other instructions. This e-mail will provide you with a unique ID and PASSWORD to access your test information and status on the LTI Test Candidate Website www.languagetesting.com/individual. Please keep this important e-mail and website information. Using this website and secure passwords, you will be able to verify the date and time of your OPI and, after the test, check the status of your test result.

On this website, you will be able print your final rating certificate. The Proctor also will also be notified of the OPI date, time and other test instructions by e-mail.

Step 5. Confirm Appointment

Finalize appointment arrangement with Proctor. All appointments are considered confirmed, unless we receive notification form the candidate or proctor.

Rescheduled or missed OPI Appointments

In the event that an appointment needs to be rescheduled: Contact the LTI Test Coordinator immediately (800-486-8444 extension 14). There is no charge for appointments that are rescheduled prior to one day before the scheduled appointment. For appointments that are cancelled or rescheduled within 24 hours of the test, there is a \$25.00 rescheduling/cancellation fee. For missed appointments there is a \$55.00 fee.

NOTIFICATION OF OPI RESULTS

Once the rating of your test is completed, you will be able to view the test result and print your ACTFL Oral Proficiency Certificate on the LTI Individual Information Center site (www.languageTesting.com/individual) using your ID and password provided in your email, as described in Step 4. Please include your ACTFL Proficiency Certificates when submitting your credentials to the New Jersey Department of Education. Each test becomes a permanent record in the ACTFL Test Archive.

ACE College Credit Recommendation for ACTFL OPI Ratings

The American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service has established college credit recommendations for Official ACTFL OPI ratings. For more information on ACE credit recommendations, visit the ACE website at www.acenet.edu/calec/corporate

SCHEDULING AN ACTFL WPT

STEP 1. Complete an Application Form: [Click here for WPT Application](#)

Use an ACTFL Proficiency Assessment Application Form or apply online for NJ ESL Teachers.

STEP 2. WPT Test Site and Proctor

You may request a WPT to taken telephonically at New Jersey City University or at your own school if you have an appropriate, approved proctor as defined below.

Option 1. New Jersey City University (NJCU):

This is an official test site to take ACTFL assessments. Tests are regularly scheduled at **NJCU** on Monday-Thursday between 10am and 2 pm. If you select to take the test at **NJCU** you do NOT need to submit a Proctor Form with your application.

Option 2. Your school or university.

A WPT must be administered and proctored by an approved **Proctor*** who:

- Complete Proctor Form: [Click here for WPT Proctor Agreements \(required\)](#)
- Follows test proctor instructions for internet administration of the test.
- Confirms the identity of the candidate by checking picture ID on the test date. Places the candidate at a quiet computer terminal with Internet access. (Internet Testing is only available in English, French, German and Spanish only. Other languages are administered only at NJCU in booklet form.)
- Proctor the test for the 90-minute duration of the test.

***K12 Schools and School District Proctors:**

A proctor at a K12 school or school district may **only** be a Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean, Administrative Assistant to the Principal or Dean, School District HR personnel, or Academic Chair. No other administrators or staff may act as proctors.

***University or College Proctors:**

A proctor at a college may be a Professor, Department Chair, Dept. Administrative Assistant or Teacher Education Coordinator. No other administrators or staff may act as proctors.

STEP 3. Submit Application Package.

For your test request to be processed, you must submit ALL the items below:

- A completed WPT application; including a check, money order, or credit card authorization
- The Internet WPT Proctor Form signed by your proctor, if you are requesting an internet WPT to take place at your school
- A completed Test-Taker Agreement

Incomplete application packages will NOT be processed for scheduling.

STEP 4. Wait for notification a WPT assignment

NJCU site:

Once your application has been processed, you will be sent an e-mail with information to schedule your WPT at **NJCU**. The same e-mail will provide a unique ID and PASSWORD for you to use on the LTI Test Candidate website: www.languagetesting.com to be able to access your test status and results.

At your school or university:

Once your application has been processed, you will be sent an e-mail your WPT may be scheduled with your proctor. The same e-mail will provide a unique ID and PASSWORD for you to use on the LTI Test Candidate website: www.languagetesting.com to be able to access your test status and results.

Your WPT proctor will also receive an e-mail with WPT instructions. You will then need to determine with your proctor the week day and time (between 8am and 5pm Eastern Time) for the proctor to administer the WPT to you by computer in his or her office. If you or WPT proctor have any questions regarding the administration of the WPT, please write us as testing@languagetesting.com

NOTIFICATION WPT TEST RESULTS

Once the rating of your test is completed, you will be able to view the test result and print your ACTFL Oral Proficiency Certificate on the LTI Individual Information Center site (www.languagetesting.com/individual) using your ID and password. Please include your ACTFL Proficiency Certificates when submitting your credentials to the New Jersey Department of Education. Each test becomes a permanent record in the ACTFL Test Archive.

PREPARING FOR AN OPI AND WPT

To prepare, make opportunities to speak the target language, making sure to tell stories (in as much detail as possible) about personal and professional experiences that have happened, are happening and will happen. Do the same thing in writing by writing essays about personal and professional experiences that have happened, are happening and will happen, making sure to give much background information as well as details of the experience.

TEST TAKING TIPS FOR AN OPI AND WPT

When taking the oral proficiency interview, listen carefully to the questions asked by the interviewer before answering. When answering, give as detailed a response as possible. Saying little to avoid making mistakes will not improve your rating. If you do not know a specific term in the test language, describe it in the test language and try not resort to English, Spanglish, Portuguese or making up words. (If you do use an English or slang term, do not be surprised if the interviewer asks you to describe what that word means.) Demonstrating how well you can explain in the test language terms that you do not know in Spanish is communication task that is looked for at the Intermediate High level.)

When taking the writing test, read the directions for each of the four prompts carefully. Make sure that your written response addresses the tasks and specifications outlined in the prompt. For example, if the prompt asks you describe a specific work experience you have had, be sure to recount the details of a specific work experience and not just give a general description of your work experience. It is also very important that you follow the time allocation specified for each prompt. If a prompt asks you to give a brief description of a paragraph in length that should not take more than ten minutes to write, do not respond to that prompt by writing five paragraphs and taking twenty-five minutes. If you do this, you will not have enough time to address later prompts fully.

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[▶Back to LTI Home](#)

