SDSU | San Diego State University

Test Accommodation Center (TAC) Student Handbook

Updated August 2025

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Contents of this handbook are subject to change without written notice based on operational needs of the department.

Getting Started

The Test Accommodation Center (TAC) administers and proctors exams for students who are registered with Student Disability Services (SDS) and have approved test accommodations. Administration of a test at the TAC will mirror the requirements of a classroom setting as directed by the instructor, with the addition of the student's approved accommodations.

In order to receive test accommodations, students should review the guidelines below. Please contact the Test Accommodation Center (TAC) with any questions.

Contact Information and Hours of Operation

Test Accommodation Center (TAC)
Location: Calpulli Center 3700
TAC Front Desk: (619) 594-2643
TAC Email: tac@sdsu.edu

Testing Hours:
Fall & Spring Semesters, standard weeks- 8:00 AM-6:00 PM
Fall & Spring Semesters, finals weeks- 8:00 AM- 10:00 PM
Saturday and Sunday (finals week only)- 8:00 AM-5:00 PM
January & June- 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
July & August- 8:00 AM-6:00 PM

Exam Administration: By appointment only

SDS Connect

- SDS Connect is an online operating system for SDS to convey information to users.
  - Students can:
    - View and send digital accommodation letters to instructors
    - Create and view existing exam bookings at the TAC
  - Instructors can:
    - View student accommodation letters
    - Enter course instructions, exam dates, and upload exams
    - View and download completed exams
    - View which students have requested accommodations
- **Students must schedule standard exams and quizzes at least 5 business days in advance and finals must be scheduled at least 4 weeks in advance of the 1st day of finals week.**
- Students are encouraged to schedule all exams all at the same time at the beginning of the semester to avoid missing the booking deadline.
- Students must book each exam individually. Exams given over a two-day period require two appointments.
- Instructors must provide course instructions at the beginning of each semester; students are unable to complete bookings until this is complete.

Scheduling Exams in SDS Connect

All exams administered at the TAC must be scheduled using SDS Connect. Students are responsible for scheduling their own exams.

Go to sds.sdsu.edu/connect for video and PDF tutorials on how to complete these steps

Ideally, instructors will input all exam dates into SDS Connect at the beginning of the semester. If they have done so, students can select exam dates and times from a dropdown menu of dates instructors provided.

If instructors have not inputted all exam dates, students can manually enter an exam date by selecting "The Exam I'm Scheduling is Not Listed." Students are responsible for verifying that they are scheduling on the correct day and starting at the correct time. The TAC is not responsible when/if students schedule exams incorrectly.

- All exams scheduled at the TAC must occur on the same day and at the same start time as when the professor is administering the exam to the rest of the students.
- If the class testing time is after the TAC hours, students must email professors to notify them and schedule the exam for the latest time that allows them to finish within the TAC hours on the day of the exam, or provide written approval from the instructor for an alternate time to take the exam at the TAC.
- If a student cannot take their exam synchronously with their class for a disability-related reason (ie- extended testing time creates an overlap between two exams or extended testing time will cause them to miss another class), please contact the TAC: tac@sdsu.edu.

<u>Accommodations</u>

- Students may use all or part of their approved testing accommodations, depending on the type of test. When submitting an exam request on SDS Connect, students can select which approved accommodations will be applied on each request. **Students must select all applicable accommodations while on that step. If accommodations are not requested on a student's exam request, they may not be available on the day of the exam**.

- <u>**Please note:**</u> If additional materials have been authorized by the instructor, it must be noted when they are uploading exam information. These materials may include scratch paper, a calculator, a ruler, and notes. **If additional materials are not specified by the instructor in writing, students will not be allowed to use them for the exam. TAC staff are not responsible for providing additional materials, unless specified in the accommodation letter.**

- <u>**Mobility Accommodations**</u>: The TAC attempts to assign those with mobility related accommodations to test rooms within the TAC. In order to do this, students with mobility-related accommodation should ask to have it noted by their SDS Counselor as part of their accommodation plan (i.e. separate quiet room).

SDS Connect will not accept late exam bookings. Unfortunately, the TAC is unable to accommodate late exam requests <u>unless they are due to unavoidable, disability-related circumstances</u>. Students can email the Test Accommodations Center (TAC) at tac@sdsu.edu with a brief explanation.

- Standard exams and quizzes must be scheduled at least 5 business days in advance.
- Finals must be scheduled 4 weeks in advance. Final exams should follow [SDSU's Final Exam schedule](#) that is located on SDSU's website.
- If students miss the booking deadline, they will need to take the exam in class.
- <u>**The TAC does not proctor make-up exams**</u>. Please note that allowing a make-up exam for any missed is exams should be arranged between the student and professor, and is at the professor's discretion to allow a make-up.
- Below are some alternative arrangements students may suggest to their instructor if they miss the booking window to test at the TAC:
  - Take the exam in class, but allow extended time by continuing in a separate location (e.g., the instructor's office) after class ends.
  - Take the exam at an alternate time, proctored in the instructor's or department office, supervised by a student or administrative assistant.
  - Coordinate with another instructor or student/teaching assistant to administer the exam.
  - Use Testing Services (where all other students who need to take make-up exams go), located across from the TAC in the Gateway Center. They charge a $20 fee per exam and can be contacted at 619-594-5216 or proctor@sdsu.edu.

Scheduling Exams Outside of Operating Hours

All exams must be scheduled within operating hours of M-F 8:00 AM- 6:00 PM

Exam date or time changes

Changes to a test date or time must be submitted to the TAC on the same day the changes are announced. If the change is announced more than 5 business days before the test date, students can modify their own exam request in SDS Connect. If the change is announced less than 5 business days prior to the test date, students should notify the TAC via email immediately- TAC@sdsu.edu and provide the following information:

- Student name
- Student ID Number
- The course name and number (i.e. Psy 101)
- Instructor's name
- The original date and time of the test
- The new date and time of the test
- Written authorization of the change from the instructor (this can be an email sent to the class, a posting on Canvas, or an email sent directly to tac@sdsu.edu from the instructor).

Canceling an Exam

To cancel a test, students must provide notice to the TAC 48 business hours in advance via SDS Connect, in person, by phone, or by email. Failure to do so will result in a no-show (see below). If the instructor cancels the test within 48 business hours, please provide the TAC with written notice from the instructor and it will not be considered a no-show. When canceling, students should provide the following information:

- Student name
- Student ID Number
- The course name and number (i.e. Psy 101)
- Instructor's name
- The date and time of the test being canceled

Rescheduling an Exam

Students will only be able to reschedule an exam at the TAC if they were unable to take the exam at the scheduled time due to an unavoidable, disability-related reason. The makeup date must receive written approval from the instructor. If those stipulations apply, please send an email to the TAC with the following information:

- Student name
- Student ID Number
- The course name and number (i.e. Psy 101)
- Instructor's name
- The date and time of the original exam booking
- The NEW date and time
- The unavoidable disability related reason for missing the original exam date
- A forwarded email message or screenshot from the professor giving written approval for the new exam time

Once submitted, the TAC staff will review the request and determine if the situation warrants a reschedule. Students will be notified by email whether their reschedule is approved or not.

If the request is denied, the situation is deemed a make-up exam and the TAC does not proctor make-up exams. In such situations, students will have two alternatives:

- The professor can proctor the student's make-up exam
- Students can take their make-up exam at Testing Services (where all other students who need to take make-up exams go), located across from the TAC in the Gateway Center. They charge a $20 fee per exam and can be contacted at 619-594-5216 or proctor@sdsu.edu.

Note: If this occurs frequently throughout the semester (two or more times), students will be unable to take any further exams at the TAC until they have met with the TAC Coordinator. Any subsequent issues may result in a meeting with the TAC Director. **Exams rescheduled due to a change by the instructor will not require these meetings.**

No-shows

Students that do not come to a scheduled test without proper notification (48 business hours notice), are considered a no-show.

- No-shows will be noted in a student's SDS record.
- After a student's second no-show, they will be unable to take any further exams at the TAC until they have met with the TAC Coordinator. Any subsequent issues may result in a meeting with the TAC Director.
- Any exam rescheduled as a result of a no-show is subject to professor's approval and TAC's availability. Students are responsible for initiating a reschedule.

Late Arrival for Scheduled Exam Appointments

In order to respect the academic integrity of university exams, the TAC has the following policy for anyone arriving late to an exam appointment:

- Students arriving 1-15 minutes late will lose that time from their exam duration. After 15 minutes, students will be considered a no-show and will not be permitted to take the exam at the TAC.
    - o The only exceptions are if the TAC operations are causing a delay or if there is an issue with receiving the exam from the instructor.
- The TAC does not administer make-up exams. Therefore, **unless the reason for being late or missing the exam at the TAC was unavoidable and directly disability related, students will not be able to reschedule their exam at the TAC.**
- Test time cannot be used for studying.

Note: If this frequently occurs throughout the semester (two or more times), students will be unable to schedule any further exams until speaking with the TAC Coordinator. Any subsequent issues may result in a meeting with the TAC Director.

Quizzes

Quizzes are accommodated in the same manner as classroom tests. If quizzes are given at the start of class:

- Arrange to start the quiz earlier than the class to finish before the lecture starts. The TAC will need to see written approval of this arrangement.
- If the quiz is not graded or discussed immediately following its completion, request to take it at the end of the class.

Planning for Exams

Students should do the following to prepare for their exam at the TAC:

- Look over the exam request confirmation (found on their SDS Connect portal or email) to verify the exam start time
- Resolve any timing conflicts that may occur due to extended time.
- Remind the instructor 2-3 business days before the exam that they should send the exam to the TAC by then.
- If the exam is on CANVAS, remind the instructor 2-3 business days before test day to provide the TAC with the password, if applicable, and to set the time for the test according to student accommodations (for example, time and a half, double time).
- Before coming to the TAC, make sure all materials needed have been approved by the instructor (i.e., blue book, scantron, pencil, scientific/graphing calculator, dictionary, notes, etc.). The TAC does **not** provide these materials.

<u>Day of the Test</u>

- **Plan to arrive 15 minutes before the exam start time**. Also, students should allot extra time for potential traffic and/or parking issues.

- Skateboards, bikes, and recreational scooters are not allowed in the TAC lobby to maintain the area open and accessible to other students. The TAC has a limited number of locks for skateboards and foldable scooters. Bikes must be locked up at the bike racks located on the first floor of the Calpulli Center.

- When arriving at the TAC, students must present a physical, valid photo ID to check in. Accepted forms include: SDSUcard, Driver's license, & Passport. Digital copies, photocopies, or photos of the ID will not be accepted.

- Students will only be allowed the materials noted by the instructor. If the professor changes the items allowed, students will need to show written proof from their professor via a Canvas notification or email. Students will be asked to put all other items in a locker. **<u>No cell phones, smart watches, or meta glasses are allowed in the testing area</u>**. Students must turn all cell phones OFF when putting it away.

- Students will have their allotted amount of test time written on their test sheet. There will be a clock provided at their testing station.

- The TAC staff may ask students to remove their hat or jacket hood to help with proctoring. Students can talk to the TAC Coordinator with any questions or concerns.

- Students should notify staff with any concerns about errors on the test or questions they have as soon as possible. Students will be asked to continue working on other parts of their exam (if possible) until the instructor responds.

- Unless break times are an authorized academic accommodation, the time used to go to the restroom will be part of a student's test time. Students are not allowed to leave the TAC during an exam. Students must leave all test materials at their testing station before using the restroom.

- Students with an exam break accommodation during their exam will go to the front desk of the TAC and notify the staff. Students are not allowed to leave the TAC during an exam. There is a restroom in the office. Students cannot access their belongings while taking a break. Students are only allowed the allocated amount of time stated in their accommodations for their break.

- After the exam, students should wipe off their test station and clean up (i.e. collect any trash, brush off the table) and take all test materials to the TAC staff at the front desk. The staff will collect all materials that are related to the exam (notes, scratch paper, etc.). The materials will be returned to the instructor.

- Once dismissed, students may collect their belongings from the locker. Students must leave the key in the locker.

- The TAC staff will return all tests based on the instructor's return preference and TAC policies. Tests will be returned within two business days.

Understanding Testing Accommodations

SDS counselors work with students to determine which accommodation(s) are appropriate for their disability. The TAC cannot provide accommodations that are not listed in student files.

➢ Extended time (e.g. time and a half, double time):
  - Timing will be established based off of the base time for the class, as listed by the professor. For example, if the class is given 60 minutes (1 hour) to complete a test and a student has time and a half, they would be allotted 90 minutes in total (1 hour 30 minutes).

➢ Reader and/or Writer:
  - A reader or writer will only be assigned if that accommodation is selected for an exam. Students should only mark a reader or writer if it is necessary for the exam. Reader/Writer will not provide students with assistance in interpreting or rephrasing the exam. The completion of the exam is the students' responsibility.

➢ Separate, Quiet Room (SQR):
  - This accommodation is authorized on an "<u>if available</u>" condition. This means that separate rooms are not always available (especially during finals). The TAC will do its best to assign this accommodation if it is requested when the test is scheduled.

➢ Memory Aid:
  - Students who have memory aids as an accommodation must go through the following process to use the memory aid on the exam:
    - Students must coordinate with their professor to create an approved memory aid. The memory aid cannot alter the essential requirements of the course or provide direct answers to the exam. **A memory aid is not a cheat sheet, it is a tool to help those students with significant recall issues.**
      <u>Memory Aids can include things such as:</u>
      - Formulas or equations relevant to the course (e.g., physics formulas, math equations)
      - Keywords or brief definitions to jog memory
      - Diagrams or charts that summarize concepts
      - Mnemonics or organizational outlines (e.g., steps in a process)
    - Students must send written permission from professors via email to the TAC with a photo of the approved memory aid. Instructors must respond to that email, with the TAC cc'd, giving written approval for the memory aid in that photo.
    - **Verbal approval or a professor's signature are not accepted as methods of approval for the use of the memory aid.**
    - Students must send their memory aid to the instructor at least 1 business day in advance to allow them time to consider and edit/revise as needed. **Without email approval, students will not be allowed to use it on their exam.**

- Once the instructor approves of the memory aid via their email response, students cannot make any edits to the sheet unless it is submitted for approval again.
- On the day of the exam, TAC staff will compare the student's memory aid to the memory aid in the photo from the email with the instructor's written approval.
- **If there is any new or different information on the memory aid, that content will be removed.**

➢ Accommodated Breaks:
  - Break amounts and duration will be determined by the student and their SDS counselor. Typically, it will be something like "5 minute break every 1 hour." When taking a break, students must go to the front desk to notify the TAC staff so they can pause the testing time. Multiple breaks cannot be taken together; if students do not use their 5 minute break during the 1st hour of the exam, they cannot take a 10 minute break during the 2nd hour. Students must stay within the TAC and cannot have access to any personal belongings during their break.
➢ Computer or other specialized equipment (e.g. projector):
  - Certain specialized equipment is in short supply at the TAC, so scheduling exams well in advance and indicating the equipment that will be used is important. If a class requires a specific computer program for exams, students should reach out to the TAC immediately to ensure it can be installed prior to the scheduled exam.
➢ Assistive technology (e.g. voice recognition, screen reader. etc):
  - Assistive Technology requires training from SDS's Alternative Media Department prior to use on an exam. Due to the extra time needed to process exams needing assistive technology, scheduling exams well in advance is important.
➢ Alternate Formats (e.g. Braille, enlarged text):
  - Due to the extra time needed to process exams needing alternate formats, scheduling exams well in advance is important.
➢ Music:
  - Students with an approved music accommodation must have the music pre-approved on an artist-labeled, non-writable disk, and use a TAC CD player. Students cannot use bluetooth devices for music nor streaming sites. When students check in for their exam, if they have been approved for their own CD player, TAC staff will check the CD player for any discrepancies.

Policy on Academic Dishonesty

The Test Accommodation Center at SDSU strives to maintain its credibility as a valuable SDSU resource that offers services to students with disabilities, while maintaining the academic integrity of all exams administered. At theTAC , it is expected that all students taking exams adhere to [SDSU's Student Code of Conduct](#). All exams and quizzes taken at the TAC are proctored and recorded via camera surveillance, a method which is less intrusive than having a test proctor sitting in the room.

Incidences of academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to the following:

- The use of a cell phone or other unauthorized devices
- The use of unauthorized notes or materials
- Exceeding exam time without authorization
- Misuse of restroom breaks
- Use of exam time to study
- Not turning in all indicated test materials to TAC staff

If a TAC staff member observes or suspects academic dishonesty a detailed report will be submitted to the instructor and the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, in accordance with CSU Executive Order 969. Video footage of the incident may be available upon request as part of the reporting process.

Frequently Asked Questions

➤ **I missed the deadline to schedule my exam in SDS Connect. What should I do?**
Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate late exam requests unless they are due to unavoidable, disability-related circumstances. Standard exams and quizzes must be scheduled at least 5 business days in advance. Finals must be scheduled 4 weeks in advance.

- If your situation involves an unavoidable, disability-related reason, please email the Test Accommodations Center (TAC) at tac@sdsu.edu with a brief explanation. Otherwise, you will need to take the exam in class.
- If you have already missed the exam, please speak directly with your instructor about the possibility of a make-up, as the TAC does not proctor make-up exams. Please note that allowing a make-up exam is entirely at your instructor's discretion. Below are some alternative arrangements you may suggest to your instructor to ensure you still receive your testing accommodations:
    - Take the exam in class, but allow extended time by continuing in a separate location (e.g., the instructor's office) after class ends.
    - Take the exam at an alternate time, proctored in the instructor's or department office, supervised by a student or administrative assistant.
    - Coordinate with another instructor or student/teaching assistant to administer the exam.
    - Use Testing Services, located across from the TAC in the Gateway Center. They charge a $20 fee per exam and can be contacted at 619-594-5216 or proctor@sdsu.edu.

➤ **When should I arrive for my exam?**
To ensure you have enough time to lock up your belongings and check in, **you should always plan to arrive for your exam 15 minutes early**. Also, make sure to allot extra time for potential traffic and/or parking issues.

➤ **What happens if I'm late to my exam at the TAC or I miss it?**
If you arrive 1-15 minutes late, you will lose that time from your exam duration. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will be considered a no-show and will not be permitted to take the exam at the TAC.

- The only exceptions are if the TAC operations are causing a delay or if there is an issue with receiving the exam from the instructor.
- The TAC does not administer make-up exams. Therefore, **unless your reason for being late or missing your exam at the TAC was unavoidable and directly disability related, you will not be able to reschedule your exam at the TAC.**
- It is up to each instructor's discretion whether or not they will allow make-up exams. If your instructor allows you to take a make-up exam, it is their choice to proctor it for you or send you to Testing Services, which charges $20 per exam. Testing Services can provide extra time and a distraction reduced environment for students with those testing accommodations. If a student has testing accommodations that can only be provided at the TAC, the student will make all their arrangements through Testing Services, but their accommodations may be coordinated by the TAC.

➢ **When should I take my exams?**

All exams must be scheduled at the TAC to occur on the same day and at the same start time as when the professor is administering the exam to the rest of the students. It is your responsibility to make sure your exams are scheduled accurately.

➢ **My accommodations will cause my exam to conflict with another test or class. What should I do?**

If you cannot take your exam at the same time as the rest of your class for a disability- or accommodation-related reason (ie- your extended testing time creates an overlap between two exams or your extended testing time will cause you to miss another class), please email your professor to explain the situation and ask for permission to begin your exam earlier/later in the day. Please CC tac@sdsu.edu in the email and forward their approval for the alternate time.

➢ **I'm taking an online class and/or my exam is online. Do I still need to schedule my exam at the TAC?**

If your classmates are permitted to take the online exam at home, you are as well. However, if your classmates must take the online exam in class or in an on-campus computer lab, you will need to schedule your exam at the TAC.
  ● If you are allowed to take your online exam at home and you choose to do so, you will be responsible for ensuring your accommodations are met. If you have additional testing time as an accommodation and would like to use that, it is your obligation to ask your professor to add the extra time to your exam access.
  ● If you have a Distraction Reduced Environment or Separate Private Room as a testing accommodation and would prefer to take your exam at the TAC because we offer a more ideal testing environment than you have at home, you are welcome to schedule your exam at the TAC.

➢ **My exam time will start or go past the TAC hours of operation. What should I do?**

If your class testing time is outside of the TAC hours, please schedule your exam for the latest time that allows you to finish within the TAC hours on the day of the exam with any accommodations you have applied, then email your professor to explain the situation. Alternatively, you can provide written approval from your instructor for an alternate time to take the exam at the TAC. Please send written confirmation to tac@sdsu.edu from your professor.

Following are the TAC testing hours:

Fall & Spring Semesters, standard weeks- M-F 8:00 AM-6:00 PM
Fall & Spring Semesters, finals weeks- M-F 8:00 AM- 10:00 PM, Sat. & Sun. 8:00 AM-5:00 PM
January & June- M-F 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
July & August- M-F 8:00 AM-6:00 PM

➢ **What do I need to bring with me to the TAC for my exam?**
  ● You must present a physical, valid photo ID to take your exam. Accepted forms include: SDSUcard, Driver's license, & Passport. Digital copies, photocopies, or photos on your phone will not be accepted.

- It is your responsibility to bring all exam-related materials approved by your instructor (e.g., Scantron, blue/green book, pencil, calculator, dictionary, notes). The TAC does not supply these items.

➤ **What am I NOT allowed to bring with me to the TAC?**
- Cell phones, smartwatches, meta glasses, and other electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the testing area unless explicitly approved as an SDS accommodation or permitted in writing by your instructor.
- No food or beverages other than water are permitted in the testing area unless explicitly approved as an SDS accommodation. Water must be in a bottle with a secure lid and may be subject to inspection.
- Bicycles, skateboards, and scooters are not permitted in the TAC. Bicycles can be locked at a rack on the first floor and there is a rack right outside the TAC door for skateboards and scooters. The TAC has a limited number of locks available for loan if you need one while you're testing.

➤ **What if I arrive on time but my exam is not ready?**
- If your exam is not ready due to an error on the part of the TAC or your instructor, we will work with you to make sure you can take your exam as soon as possible. We will keep you informed about the status of your exam as we work to locate it. Your amount of testing time will not be affected by this.