

System Requirements for Online Testing 2017–2018

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Section I. Introduction

This document contains basic technology requirements for online testing using American Institutes for Research's (AIR) systems for the 2017–2018 test administration.

Organization of this Manual

This document contains the following sections:

- [Supported Operating Systems for Student Testing](#)
- [Supported Web Browsers for Online Systems](#)
- [Requirements for Peripheral Equipment](#)

Other Resources

The following publications provide additional information:

- For information about installing secure browsers, refer to the *Secure Browser Installation Manual*.
- For information about network and Internet requirements, general peripheral and software requirements, and configuring text-to-speech settings, see the *Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing*.
- For information about securing a computer before a test session, see the *TDS User Guide*.

The above resources, as well as secure browsers and user guides for other systems, are available on the Iowa ELPA21 portal (<http://iowaelpa21.portal.airast.org>).

Section II. Supported Operating Systems for Student Testing

This section describes the supported operating systems for online testing. For optimal performance, AIR expects all systems to have the latest minor updates and patches installed. Major updates to the operating systems, including new versions, require review and testing by AIR.



Warning: Support for New Desktop Operating Systems

Operating systems that become available but do not appear in the following tables are not supported. Do not upgrade to new operating systems on computers that will be used to administer online assessments without ensuring the updates meet the required specifications.

Desktops and Laptops

[Table 1](#) lists the operating systems and hardware required for student testing. Online testing functions effectively with the minimum requirements listed. However, the recommended specifications provide improved performance.

Table 1. Supported Desktop Operating Systems

Supported Operating Systems	Minimum Requirements	Recommended Specifications
Windows 7 (Professional and Enterprise) 8 (Professional and Enterprise) 8.1 (Professional and Enterprise) 10 (Professional, Educational, and Enterprise) Server 2008 R2, 2012 R2, 2016 R2 (thin client)	1.1 GHZ Processor 512 MB of RAM 200 MB hard drive space	1.4 GHZ Processor 2 or more GB RAM 16 or more GB hard drive space
Mac OS 10.7–10.1310.13 ^a	1.1 GHZ Processor 512 MB of RAM 200 MB hard drive space	1.4 GHZ Processor 2 or more GB RAM 16 or more GB hard drive

Linux Fedora 25-26 ^a LTS (Gnome) Ubuntu 14.04, 16.04 LTS (Gnome)	1.1 GHZ Processor 512 MB of RAM 200 MB hard drive space Required libraries/packages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GTK+ 2.18 or higher • GLib 2.22 or higher • Pango 1.14 or higher • X.Org 1.0 or higher (1.7+ recommended) • libstdc++ 4.3 or higher • libreadline6:i386 (required for Ubuntu only) • GNOME 2.16 or higher 	1.4 GHZ Processor 2 or more GB RAM 16 or more GB hard drive space Recommended libraries/packages: In addition to the required libraries listed under minimum requirements, the following should be installed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NetworkManager 0.7 or higher • DBus 1.0 or higher • HAL 0.5.8 or higher
^a Support for this version is anticipated upon the completion of testing following its release.		

Tablets

[Table 2](#) lists the supported tablets, operating systems, and related requirements. See the *Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing* for information about configuring these devices for online testing.

Table 2. Supported Tablets and Operating Systems

Supported Operating Systems	Supported Tablets
iOS (iPads) 8.4 ^a 9.3, 10.3, 11 ^b	iPad 2 iPad 3 4 th Generation (Retina Display) 5 th Generation (Retina Display) iPad Air iPad Air 2
Windows 8 (Professional and Enterprise) 8.1 (Professional and Enterprise) 10 (Professional, Educational, and Enterprise)	AIR supports any tablet running these versions of Windows, but has done extensive testing only on Surface Pro, Surface Pro 3, Asus Transformer, and Dell Venue.
^a Support for this version will end upon the release and completion of testing for iOS 11.	
^b Support for this version is anticipated upon the completion of testing following its release.	

Chromebooks and Chromebases

[Table 3](#) lists the supported operating systems for Chromebooks and Chromebases.



About Chrome OS and Automatic Updates

While AIR actively works to support new versions of the Chrome operating system as they come out, we recommend disabling automatic updates until new versions are listed as supported. Disabling automatic updates allows AIR to review changes and address any updates that pose a potential risk to student testing.

Automatic update settings are configured in Google's admin console.

Table 3. Supported Chromebooks

Supported Operating Systems	Supported Chromebooks
Chrome OS 60+	AIR will support any device that Google actively supports for auto-update. AIR will not support any device that Google does not support for auto-update. Information on Google's auto-update policy, including currently supported devices, can be found at https://support.google.com/edu/android/answer/6220366 .

Thin Clients: NComputing and Terminal Servers for Windows

NComputing

[Table 4](#) lists the supported hardware and software for NComputing solutions.

Table 4. Supported NComputing solutions

Supported Server Host	Supported Server Software	Supported Terminal
Windows Server 2008 R2	vSpace Server 8.4	L300, firmware version 1.11.xx
Windows Server 2012 R2	vSpace PRO 10	
Windows Server 2016 R2		
Windows 10		

Terminal Servers

[Table 5](#) lists the supported terminal servers for use with a thin client machine.

Table 5. Supported terminal servers

Supported Terminal Servers	Supported Thin Client
Windows Server 2008 R2, 2012 R2, 2016 R2	Any thin client that supports a Windows Server.



Warning: Security Issues with Terminal Services or Remote Desktop Connections to Servers

Using a terminal services or remote desktop connection to access a Windows Server or workstation that has the secure browser installed is typically not a secure test environment.

Section III. Supported Web Browsers for Online Systems

This section lists the supported web browsers for the 2017–2018 test year. It also addresses AIR’s secure browsers for student testing.

Supported Web Browsers by Operating System

[Table 6](#) lists the supported operating systems and corresponding web browsers for each AIR application. AIR recommends using recent versions of supported web browsers. Each application requires disabling pop-up blocking software and enabling JavaScript. Be sure to use the correct combination of operating system and web browser. For example, Windows 10 requires Internet Explorer 11 or Edge.

Table 6. Supported Web Browsers by Operating System

Operating Systems	Browsers	TA Sites	Student Practice Tests, DEI	TIDE, ORS
Windows				
7 (Professional and Enterprise)	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 52+	✓	✓	✓
	Internet Explorer 11	✓		✓
8.0 (Professional and Enterprise) 8.1 (Professional and Enterprise)	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 52+	✓	✓	✓
	Internet Explorer 11	✓		✓
8.0 RT	Internet Explorer 11	✓		
10 (Professional, Educational, and Enterprise)	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 52+	✓	✓	✓
	Internet Explorer 11, Edge	✓		✓
Mac OS				
10.7–10.8	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 45+	✓	✓	✓
	Safari 7+	✓		✓
10.9–10.13 ^a	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 52+	✓	✓	✓
	Safari 7+	✓		✓

Operating Systems	Browsers	TA Sites	Student Practice Tests, DEI	TIDE, ORS
Linux				
Fedora 25–26 ^a LTS (Gnome)	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 52+	✓	✓	✓
Ubuntu 14.04, 16.04 LTS (Gnome)	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	✓
	Firefox 52+	✓	✓	✓
iOS				
8.4 ^b	Safari 8	✓		
9.3	Safari 9	✓		
10.3	Safari 10	✓		
11 ^a	Safari 11 ^a	✓		
Chrome OS				
60+	Chrome 60+	✓	✓	
^a Support for this version is anticipated upon the completion of testing following its release. ^b Support for this version will end upon the release and completion of testing for iOS 11.				

Secure Browsers for Online Testing

[Table 7](#) lists the AIR secure browsers for each operating system. A secure browser must be downloaded and installed on each computer used for student testing. Districts that installed a secure browser with a version older than the versions listed below must uninstall it before installing the secure browser for the 2017–2018 school year. For instructions on downloading and installing the secure browsers, refer to the *Secure Browser Installation Manual*.

Table 7. Secure Browsers by Operating System

Operating Systems	Secure Browser
Windows 7 (Professional and Enterprise) 8 (Professional and Enterprise) 8.1 (Professional and Enterprise) 10 (Professional, Educational, and Enterprise) Server 2008 R2, 2012 R2, 2016 R2 (thin client)	10.0 will be available by 12/1/17 10.0 will be required starting 1/1/18.
Mac OS 10.7–10.8 ^c 10.9–10.13 ^a	9.5 ^c 10.0 will be available by 12/1/17 and supported at that time. 10.0 will be required starting 1/1/18.
Linux Fedora 25–26 ^a LTS (Gnome) Ubuntu 14.04, 16.04 LTS (Gnome)	10.1 until 1/1/18 10.0 will be available by 9/15/17 and supported at that time. 10.0 will be required starting 1/1/18.
iOS (iPads) 8.4 ^b 9.3 10.3 11 ^a	AIRSecureTest Mobile Secure Browser
Chrome OS 60+	AIRSecureTest kiosk application
^a Support for this version is anticipated upon the completion of testing following its release. ^b Support for this version will end upon the release and completion of testing for iOS 11. ^c Secure Browser version 9.5 will be available to support Mac OS X 10.7-10.8 only.	

Delaying Firefox Updates

AIR conducts quality assurance on the most recent Firefox versions for each system except the Student Testing Site (which requires the secure browser). You should wait before installing new versions of Firefox, which could impact system performance. Delaying updates allows AIR time to review changes and verify each system works correctly with the new version.

To learn how to disable auto-updates for Firefox, see <https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/forum-response-turning-auto-update>. You may need to disable auto-updates again after installing a newer version.

Available Audio Settings by Browser

Some test items play audio files, the student should be able to adjust the audio settings for those items. Table 8 lists the browsers and their associated capability to modify such settings. Use Table 8 to ensure that you deploy a browser with the required capability.

Table 8. Available Audio Settings by Browser

Operating System	Browser	System Volume	Pause	Resume
Windows	Secure browser	Y	Y	Y
	IE 11	N	N	N
	Edge	N	N	N
	Chrome ^a	Y	N	N
	Firefox	N	N	N
OS	Secure browser	Y	Y	Y
	Safari	N	N	N
	Chrome ^a	Y	N	N
Linux	Secure browser	Y	Y	Y
	Firefox	N	N	N
	Chrome ^a	Y	N	N
iOS	Mobile secure browser	N	N	N
	Safari	N	N	N
Chromebook	Secure browser	N	N	N
	Chrome ^a	Y	N	N

Section IV. Requirements for Peripheral Equipment

This section describes the requirements for peripheral equipment: monitors, screens, keyboards, and headphones.

Monitors and Screen Display Requirements

All supported computers, laptops, netbooks, and tablets must meet the following requirements.

Screen Dimensions

Screen dimensions must be 10" or larger (iPads with a 9.7" display are included). This means the following devices are **not** supported:

- Apple iPad Mini
- Netbooks with screen dimensions smaller than 10"

Screen Resolution

All devices must meet the following minimum resolution. Larger resolutions can be applied as appropriate for the monitor or screen being used.

- Desktops, laptops, and tablets: 1024 × 768
- Netbooks: 1024 × 600

Depending on the screen size, students may need to use vertical or horizontal scroll bars to view all test-related information. Students may also use the Zoom tool in the online test to enlarge the content on the screen.

Keyboards

External keyboards are strongly recommended for tablets used for testing, and some states require external keyboards for such devices. Students may use mechanical, manual, and Bluetooth-based keyboards. Some external keyboards have additional “shortcut” buttons that can create security issues. These buttons may allow students to open another application or the tablet’s default on-screen keyboard. AIR strongly cautions against using keyboards that have these shortcut buttons.

Headsets and Headphones

Students may need headphones to listen to audio in online assessments, and may use headsets to record answers to tests. Below are some scenarios that require headphones or headsets.

- Students with the text-to-speech accommodation can use headphones to listen to stimuli or to test items being read aloud.
- Students with the enhanced accessibility accommodation can use headphones along with Job Access with Speech (JAWS®) or other screen reading software to complete online tests.
- Each NComputing terminal must have a USB headphone or headset when used for tests that require students to record or listen to audio.
- Students participating in ELPA21 must have a headset (with a microphone) to record responses to speaking items.

Test Coordinators should determine how many students will need headphones to ensure that there are enough available at the time of a test.

Table 9 lists the supported headphones and headsets.

Table 9. Supported Headphones and Headsets

Model	Connector	Microphone Included	Hardware
Logitech 390	USB (wired)	Yes	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with USB port.
Panasonic RP-HT21	XBS	No	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with XBS port.
Logitech analog	3.5 mm	No	iOS
Plantronics 326	3.5 mm*	Yes	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with 3.5 mm port—except NComputing terminals.

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Sennheiser PC 151	3.5 mm*	Yes	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with 3.5 mm port—except NComputing terminals.
Plantronics 355	3.5 mm*	Yes	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with 3.5 mm port—except NComputing terminals.
Generic headphones	3.5 mm	No	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with 3.5 mm port—except NComputing terminals.
Generic headphones	USB (wired)	No	All supported desktops, laptops, and Chromebases with USB port.

*These models have two connectors, one each for headphone and microphone. They require a 3.5 mm headphone splitter when used with a computer having a single speaker-microphone port.

Mice

Mice on mobile devices are not supported. Wireless or wired two- or three-buttoned mice that are compatible with the operating system on desktops and laptops are supported.

No other mice should be used, especially mice equipped with a “browser back” button that could potentially kick users out of a test.

Appendix A. Change Log

This Change Log can be used to identify specific changes that are made to any of the information included in the original document throughout the current school year.

Location	Change	Date
Appendix A	Added Change Log	8/1/17
Table 1	Rebranded Windows "8.0" to "8"	8/1/17
Table 1	Added "R2" to Windows Servers 2008, 2012, and 2016	8/1/17
Table 1	Removed "a Support for this version will begin upon its release." footnote	8/1/17
Table 1	Changed footnote for Fedora 26	8/1/17
Table 2	Added iOS 8.4 with footnote. Removed iOS 9.2. Changed iOS "10" to "10.3." Changed footnote for iOS 11	8/1/17
Table 2	Removed Android 5.0. Changed "7.0 (Nougat)" to "7.1"	8/1/17
Chromebooks and Chromebases	Changed text under heading	8/1/17
Table 3	Changed Related Requirements to Supported Chromebooks	8/1/17
Table 3	Changed Chrome OS 60 to 59+	8/1/17
Table 5	Added "R2" to Windows Servers 2008, 2012, and 2016	8/1/17
Table 6	Added macOS 10.13 with footnote	8/1/17
Table 6	Added iOS 8.4 with footnote. Removed 9.2. Changed "10.0, 10.2" to "10.3." Changed footnote for iOS 11.	8/1/17
Table 6	Removed Android 5.0. Changed "7.0 (Nougat)" to "7.1"	8/1/17
Table 6	Changed Chrome OS 60 to 59+	8/1/17
Table 7	Added "R2" to Windows Servers 2008, 2012, and 2016	8/1/17
Table 7	Added macOS 10.13 with footnote	8/1/17
Table 7	Changed footnote for Fedora 26	8/1/17

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Location	Change	Date
Table 7	Added iOS 8.4 with footnote. Removed 9.2. Changed "10.0, 10.2" to "10.3." Changed footnote for iOS 11	8/1/17
Table 7	Removed Android 5.0. Changed "7.0 (Nougat)" to "7.1"	8/1/17
Table 7	Changed Chrome OS 60 to 59+	8/1/17
Table 7	Changed Secure Browser 10.0 availability for Linux to 9/15/17	8/31/17
Throughout	Removed support for Android	9/1/17
Tables 1, 6, & 7	Removed support for Red Hat Enterprise 6.5	9/1/17
Table 7	Added Secure Browser 9.5 support for Mac OS X 10.7–10.8	9/26/17