

2018–19 PAL Candidate Assessment Handbook Updates

The PAL Candidate Assessment Handbook for the 2018–19 program year has been updated with changes to improve clarity and guidance based on input from program stakeholders, including candidates, program provider faculty, scorers, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

This table contains a summary of the significant changes from the previous handbook.

Handbook Section	Location of Change	Description of Change
Introduction	Table of Contents	Consolidated overview and annual update information in the Introduction. Removed Retake Information. This is available on the program website policy page, on candidate score reports, and in the Administrative Field Guide for Leadership Preparation Programs.
	Requirements for Principal Licensure Candidates	Updated table for 2018–19 Revised principal licensure to principal/assistant principal licensure.
	Overview of PAL Assessment Tasks	Revised first paragraph by adding words shown here in bold: ... assessing and supporting individual teacher instructional practices , and engaging families and community in improving student learning. Updated definition of priority academic area for clarity.
	PAL Work Product Submissions	Formerly called the “Collaboration, Artifacts, Documents, and Commentary,” this section was renamed and revised to include summary-level information on work products.

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	Clarifying the Candidate’s Role in the Performance Assessment	Moved the Collaboration information to this section, added clarifying language regarding disclosure requirements, and renamed to Collaboration and Required Disclosure.
	Confidentiality	Moved to Introduction from the previous Logistics of Submission section in the 2017–18 Handbook
	Administrative Review	Added section to highlight existing policies and process regarding originality.
Task 1	What Do School Leaders Need to Think About When Realizing a Vision for Student Achievement?	Expanded description of the priority academic area with examples of evidence that demonstrate the chosen subject or performance area and target student group are priorities.
	Artifacts, Documents, and Commentary	<p>Added the Confidentiality and Anonymity Form to the list of materials required for submission.</p> <p>Revised the instructions to protect anonymity by adding use of generic labels (e.g., Principal A, School B, Teacher C) – <u>not</u> aliases, pseudonyms, or first names.</p>
	Artifact #1: Priority Area and Its Context	<p>Added information about the candidate’s role in data collection and analysis in the second bullet point.</p> <p>Added “A description of your role in soliciting, analyzing, and utilizing input from a variety of stakeholders” to the bulleted list under <u>How input was solicited throughout the planning process</u>.</p>
	Artifact #2: The Plan for Action Strategies	<p>Added final bullet point:</p> <p>“Differentiation between your specific contributions to the development of this plan and the contributions of</p>

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		other individuals, group members, and/or relevant stakeholders.”
	Commentary	Revised and expanded the Commentary description to emphasize self-reflection and analysis of the candidate’s learning and leadership development.
	Task 1 PAL Evidence Chart	Included the Evidence Chart, previously posted only on the program website, in this section.
	Submission Readiness	Adapted content from the Preparing a Submission section from the Introduction of the 2017–18 Handbook and updated for each task. Added clarifying detail for blinding requirements. Added clarifying detail to the description of the analysis of leadership skills in the Commentary.
	Rubrics	Added the numeric score range that corresponds with each performance level.
Task 2	What Do School Leaders Need to Think About When Creating a Professional Learning Culture through Professional Learning Groups?	Expanded description of the priority academic area with examples of evidence that demonstrate the chosen subject or performance area and target student group are priorities.
	Artifacts, Documents, and Commentary	Added the Confidentiality and Anonymity Form to the list of materials required for submission.
	Artifact #2: Description of the Group Learning Experiences and Results	Added first bullet describing requirement to include an explanation of how the candidate supported the group’s work over time.

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		Added sub-bullets with additional detail to “A brief explanation of the nature of the group’s learning and how the learning was structured”
		Added a bullet: “A description of how you supported individuals within the group over time and the different types of support offered.”
	Artifact #3: Findings, Feedback, and Recommendations	Added two sub-bullets to the second bullet: “Evidence of what group members learning individually as well as collectively.” “How differentiated feedback is connected to the academic priority area.”
		Revised the sub-bullet “How the work addressed the selected focus within the priority academic area , and what the group members tried and learned” to add “individually and collectively.”
	Commentary	Revised and expanded the Commentary section to emphasize self-reflection and analysis of the candidate’s learning and leadership development.
	Task 2 PAL Evidence Chart	Included the Evidence Chart, previously posted only on the program website, in this section.
	Submission Readiness	Adapted content from the Preparing a Submission section from the Introduction of the 2017–18 Handbook and updated for each task. Added clarifying detail for blinding requirements.

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		Added clarifying detail to the description of the analysis of leadership skills in the Commentary.
	Rubrics	Added the numeric score range that corresponds with each performance level.
	Rubric 2.b.2 Group learning and work	Added to the Meeting column: “Employs different strategies, meetings, and other interventions to meet the diverse needs of each group member.” “...and as a collaborative group and how this learning...”
	Rubric 2.c.2 Assessment of leadership skills and practices	Added to the Beginning column: “Does not evaluate relevant leadership skills.”
		Revised first sentence in the Developing column to include “only.”
		Replaced first sentence in the Meeting column with: “Draws on specific learning experiences to evaluate his or her leadership skills and practices relevant to this task. “
		Revised content in Exceeding column with additional clarifying detail.
Task 3	What Do School Leaders Need to Think About When Improving Teacher Effectiveness?	Expanded description of the priority academic area with examples of evidence that demonstrate the chosen subject or student learning area and target student group are priorities.

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	What Do You Need to Complete This Task?	<p>Added “Collect” to the first bulleted item.</p> <p>Removed “a content” from the second bulleted item.</p> <p>Added “similar to the one selected for this task” to the fourth bulleted item.</p> <p>Added “common instructional practices” and replaced “Identify” with “Agree upon the” areas of focus in the fifth bulleted item.</p> <p>Added “unedited” to the sixth bulleted item.</p> <p>Revised the seventh bulleted item to include “school,” replace standards with “protocol” and added a hyperlink to the Massachusetts Model System Educator Evaluation: Teacher Rubric.</p> <p>Added “continuous, unedited” to the ninth bulleted item.</p>
	What Do You Need to Consider to Complete This Task?	<p>Added “and (if applicable) targeted student subgroups” to the first bulleted item.</p> <p>Added “and other measures” to the last sentence in the blue box.</p>
	Candidate Confidentiality Guidelines for Video Recording	<p>Moved the location from the end of the Task 3 section to precede The Components of the Task section.</p> <p>Revised instructions in the following to clarify requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before Making Video Recordings • While Making Video Recordings • Before Submitting Video Recordings
	Component 1: Investigate	Revised first paragraph to replace “student learning indicators” with

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		<p>“student performance,” added “goals in addition to priorities, and expanded description of “instructional focus areas.”</p> <p>In the second paragraph, inserted “pre-observation” before investigation.</p>
	Component 2: Prepare	<p>Various revisions for clarification, and:</p> <p>In the section beginning with “Next, schedule a pre-observation meeting...”</p> <p>combined first two bullets and added detail to the bases for identifying areas of focus.</p> <p>Changed conference to “meeting” in the third bullet.</p>
	Component 3: Act	<p>In the second paragraph, added “unedited.”</p> <p>Revised the instructions for the memo to include notes detailing evidence of instructional practices and student learning aligned with the selected standards.</p> <p>Clarified the components of the post-observation meeting and feedback session.</p>
	Artifacts, Documents, and Commentary	<p>Added the Confidentiality and Anonymity Form to the list of materials required for submission.</p> <p>In the blue box, revised the recommendations for protecting the anonymity to the use of generic labels and <u>not</u> aliases, pseudonyms, or last names.</p>
	Artifact #1: Pre-Observation Template	<p>Revised the instructions for the completion of this template to include “pre-observation investigation and planning,” the “context” of the</p>

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		classroom and students, “articulates the priority academic area,” include information on “student performance data,” and priorities discussed with the teacher “during the pre-observation meeting.”
	Pre-Observation Template	Revised the Pre-Observation Template for clarification and added to the Candidate Assessment Handbook.
	Artifact #3: Post-Observation Meeting Video Recording	Provided additional detail on the content requirements for post-observation feedback video recording.
	Artifact #5: Analysis and Implications of the Feedback...	Added a set of questions to solicit information from the observed teacher about the candidate’s observation and feedback skills.
	Commentary	Revised and expanded the Commentary section to emphasize self-reflection and analysis of the candidate’s learning and leadership development.
	Task 3 PAL Evidence Chart	Included the Evidence Chart, previously posted only on the program website, in this section.
	Submission Readiness	Adapted content from the Preparing a Submission section from the Introduction of the 2017-18 Handbook and updated for each task. Added clarifying detail for blinding requirements. Added clarifying detail to the description of the analysis of leadership skills in the Commentary.
	How Will the Evidence of Your Leadership Practice be Assessed	Added the numeric score range that corresponds with each performance level.

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	Rubric 3.a.1 Observation focus selection	In the Beginning column, inserted “needs” after student. In the Exceeding column, inserted “based on thorough analysis of common instructional practices and student and teacher needs...”
	Rubric 3.b.2 Description of observations	Each performance level column contains additional detail for each performance level, referring to alignment to the priority area and instructional focus.
Task 4	What Do School Leaders Need to Think about When Promoting Family Engagement and Community Involvement?	In the first paragraph, added: “If selecting a social-emotional or student health issue, the candidate must make clear connections between the focus area and students’ academic achievement either through available data and/or research.”
		In the second paragraph, expanded description of the priority academic area with examples of evidence that demonstrate the chosen subject or student learning area and target student group are priorities.
		In the second paragraph, added: “Throughout Task 4, the candidate should emphasize a collaborative approach to determining the priority areas which impacts student learning, devising a plan to address the priority area, and implementing the strategy.”
	What Do You Need to Complete This Task?	Revised the second bullet to clarify “2-3” family and community members “(individuals who represent family and/or community groups)”

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	The Components of the Task	In Figure 4.1, removed “student learning” from the “priority area” question under Assess existing family and community involvement.
	Component 1: Investigate	Added to the second paragraph: “Please note: category 2 representation must be individuals not employed within the school.”
		Revised the description of the group’s role from advisory to: “The group should be collaborative in determining the priority area which affects student learning, co-constructing the proposed plan and implementing one of the plan’s strategies.”
	Artifacts, Documents, and Commentary	Added the Confidentiality and Anonymity Form to the list of materials required for submission.
	Artifact #1: Analysis of the Data, Priority Area, and Plan	Revised the first bullet to change student learning priority to “priority academic area.”
	Artifact #2: Implementation of One Strategy	Revised the first bullet to include “detailed description” and add to the priority area “which affects student learning.”
		Revised second bullet to add to the description of the candidate’s role in the implementation process: “including your role in supporting group members’ research and work on the priority area which affects student learning.”
	Artifact #3: Feedback	Added to the first bullet: “As you explain feedback, differentiate it by group or individual.”

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		Added a fourth bullet describing the summary analysis and interpretation of feedback pertaining to the candidate’s leadership skills.
	Commentary	Revised and expanded the Commentary section to emphasize self-reflection and analysis of the candidate’s learning and leadership development.
	Task 4 PAL Evidence Chart	Included the Evidence Chart, previously posted only on the program website, to this section.
	Submission Readiness	<p>Adapted content from the Preparing a Submission section from the Introduction of the 2017-18 Handbook and updated for each task.</p> <p>Added clarifying detail for blinding requirements.</p> <p>Added clarifying detail to the description of the analysis of leadership skills in the Commentary.</p>
	How Will the Evidence of Your Leadership Practice be Assessed	Added the numeric score range that corresponds with each performance level.
	Rubric 4.a.1 Investigation of the priority area	Throughout each performance level, replaced student learning priority with “a priority area that impacts student learning.”
	Rubric 4.a.2 Investigation of a work group engagement	In the Developing and Meeting performance level columns, reordered the text to align descriptions across the four levels.
	Rubric 4.c.2 Assessment of leadership skills and practices	In the Beginning performance level description, added “Does not evaluate relevant leadership skills.”

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		In the Developing performance level description, changed “Recaps” to “Identifies.”
		In the Meeting performance level description, made minor revisions to the wording of the first paragraph and added “learning”: “Draws on specific learning experiences to evaluate his or her leadership skills.”
		In the Exceeding performance level description, revised the performance level description to include drawing on specific learning experiences and adjusting leadership practices throughout the task based on experiences. Removed the last paragraph from the previous handbook that referenced what worked well and what could have been differently.
Candidate Score Reporting and Guidance		Moved this section from the Introduction of the previous handbook to follow the Task descriptions.
Submission Requirements and Condition Codes		Added this section to the Handbook. Submission Requirements and Condition Codes are also posted on the program website. Changes to the 2018–19 Condition Codes: A – Work is not blinded – will be not be assigned effective with the 2018–19 program year. Candidates are still required to blind their submissions.

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		<p>C – revised the last reason to “Confidentiality and Anonymity Form has not been completed or is missing.”</p> <p>D – added “15 minutes” to references to the length of video recordings.</p> <p>D – added the reason “Video is edited and is not a continuous segment.”</p>
Assessment Policies		Added this section to the Handbook. A complete list of policies and detailed descriptions are posted on the program website.
Glossary		Combined the Definitions and Glossary sections of the previous handbook into one Glossary section and made minor editorial revisions.