GUIDE TO
EXTERNAL REVIEW OF
TESTLETS

HELP DESK

For questions regarding the KITE system or for additional assistance, please contact the Agile Technology Solutions Help Desk at 1-855-277-9751 (toll-free).

The Help Desk is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 17:00 Central Time. If you need to contact help desk after hours or over the weekend, please email: DLM_support@ku.edu.

The Help Desk provides support for a variety of situations, including problems with review management and login issues.

When contacting the Help Desk, provide as much detail as possible about the issues encountered and the system on which it occurred. Please include:

- Error messages
- Operating system and browser information
- Information about network configuration

If you have questions about your review assignment, please email: dlm.externalreview@ku.edu.

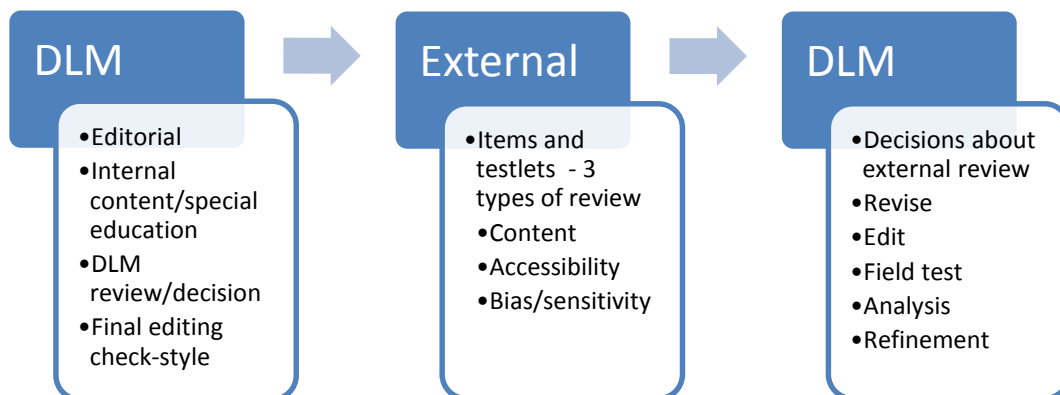# EXTERNAL REVIEW GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF REVIEW

The purpose of external review is to evaluate items and testlets developed for the Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessment. Using specific criteria provided by DLM, you will decide whether to recommend that the content be accepted, revised, or rejected. Feedback from external reviewers is used to make final decisions about assessment items before they are field tested.

OVERVIEW OF REVIEW PROCESS

As an external reviewer, your review comes between two distinct steps in the test development cycle. Before the testlets are sent to you for review, they are first reviewed internally through DLM. This initial review involves a comprehensive editorial review and an internal content review by individuals with content expertise and/or experience with severe cognitive disabilities. Based on this initial review, DLM staff make final decisions, revise as needed, and perform a final editing review. The testlet is then sent to you for external review. Once you complete your review, your ratings will be compiled with ratings from other reviewers and submitted back to DLM. DLM will make final decisions regarding whether the testlet should be rejected, accepted as is, or revised before they are sent for field testing.

DLM
- Editorial
- Internal content/special education
- DLM review/decision
- Final editing check-style

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External
- Items and testlets - 3 types of review
- Content
- Accessibility
- Bias/sensitivity

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DLM
- Decisions about external review
- Revise
- Edit
- Field test
- Analysis
- Refinement

External reviews are conducted by members of three distinct review panels: **Content, Accessibility,** or **Bias and Sensitivity.** You will be assigned to one type of review panel and use the criteria for that panel to conduct your reviews. Each time you receive a review assignment, you will evaluate **items** that are grouped together in **testlets**.

Testlets are groups of 3-5 items, bundled with instructions and engagement activities. Some are designed for the student to see directly, while others are designed to guide the teacher through the process of administering a testlet outside the system. For each item and each testlet, you will make one of three decisions: accept, critical revision required, or reject. Although you are assigned to a panel, your work is done independently. There is no discussion with other panelists.

REVIEW COLLECTIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Review assignments will be made at intervals throughout the year. You will receive an email each time you are given an assignment. Each assignment will consist of one or more collections. Each collection consists of several testlets. Each review assignment is expected to take 1.5 to 2 hours. In most cases you will have two weeks to complete an assignment.

TRAINING

Before reviewing testlets, you must first complete several online training modules. These modules include detailed instructions on the review process. You will also need to complete a quiz and a practice activity. This training must be completed successfully before you begin reviewing. However, you only have to complete training once for the 2014-15 cycle – not every time you receive an assignment. If you served as an external reviewer in 2013-14, you will need to complete the training again. Training may be completed in segments and takes 60 to 75 minutes, total. Training information is located at
http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/extrev/im.html

REVIEWER RESPONSIBILITIES

As an external reviewer, your primary responsibility is to review testlets using established standards and guidelines. These standards and guidelines are outlined in the remaining sections of this guide.

You are expected to complete all scheduled assignments within the allocated window of time. Deadlines will be established for you and will be made clear before the review process begins. Please ensure that all assignments are submitted by the deadline.

As a reviewer, you are expected to keep open communication with DLM at all times. Should you run into any problems or if you have a question about the process, please contact DLM using the information on the second page of this guide.

It is crucial to remember that your work as an external reviewer involves reviewing items that will be part of a secure testing system. You will be required to complete a **security agreement** before reviewing. It is important that you maintain the security of all materials at all times. In order to maintain the security of these materials:

1. Do not make paper or electronic copies of any of the contents from the items or the testlets.
2. Do not use any non-essential electronic devices (i.e., cell phones, iPads, tablets, cameras, etc.) within the proximity of the testlet review. Do not take screen shots or photos of the contents.
3. Do not complete the review process in a public, non-secure area. All reviews should be completed in private.
4. Do not talk about the specifics of DLM items or testlets with others – even with other DLM reviewers. Direct all questions or concerns to DLM.

You may feel free to talk with others about the DLM system, including how students with significant cognitive disabilities are assessed and taught. Specific features of the system, such as texts, items, and testlets, should **not** be discussed.

REVIEW CRITERIA AND DECISIONS

GENERAL REVIEW DECISIONS

No matter what type of panel you serve on, you will ask yourself this question for each item and testlet: **Does this item (testlet) meet minimal standards for acceptability based on my panel's criteria?** "Acceptability" is defined as meeting minimum standards to be ready for field testing. You will make one of three decisions based on your answer to this question: **accept**, **revise**, or **reject**. The definition of each decision is summarized below.

Decision	Definition
Accept	Item/testlet is within acceptable limits. It may not be perfect but it is worth putting through field tests and seeing how it goes.
Critical Revision Required (Revise)	Item/testlet violates one or more criteria. It has some potential merits and can be acceptable for field testing after revisions to address the criteria.
Reject	Item/testlet is fatally flawed. No revision could bring this item/testlet to within acceptable limits.

Remember that judgments about items are made separately from judgments about testlets, because different criteria are used for items and testlets. It is possible to recommend revisions or rejections to items without automatically having to recommend revision or rejection to the testlet as a whole.

RECORDING COMMENTS

If you recommend an item or testlet be accepted, no further information is needed. However, if you recommend revision or rejection, you must provide an explanation.

- If you recommend **revision**, the comment needs to **identify the problem** AND **propose a solution**.
- If you recommend **rejection**, your comment just needs to **identify the problem**. (If you have a solution, you should recommend revision instead.)

It is helpful for your comments to be constructive and concise, but detailed enough that the DLM staff will be able to understand your recommendation. For example, "*too wordy*" is not enough information. "*Text in the question needs simplification. Replace 'supermarket' with 'store'*" is a helpful recommendation.

REVIEW CRITERIA

The review criteria for each type of panel are different. All three panel types have criteria to consider for items, and other criteria to consider for testlets as a whole. Training on the criteria is provided in the online training modules and in the practice activity. The criteria are briefly listed here. They are provided again in the appendix for easy reference.

CRITERIA FOR CONTENT PANELS

Items
1. The item assesses the content of the targeted node.
2. The level of DOK required in the node matches the DOK identified for the item.
3. The content of the item is technically correct (wording and graphics).
4. Item answer options should contain only one correct answer (the key), distractors are incorrect and not misleading, and nothing in the item cues the correct response.
5. The item type is logical and appropriate for the content being assessed and the graphics contribute to the quality of the item.

Testlets
6. The testlet is instructionally relevant to students for whom it was written and is grade level appropriate.
7. Embedded items are placed within the story text at logical places and conclusion items are placed at the end (ELA only)

CRITERIA FOR ACCESSIBILITY PANELS

Items
1. The text within the item provides an appropriate level of challenge and maintains a link to grade-level content without introducing unnecessary, confusing, or distracting verbiage. The text uses clear language and minimizes the need for inferences and prior knowledge to comprehend the content.
2. Graphics are clear and do not introduce confusion. Graphics can be presented in tactile form.

Testlets
3. The testlet is instructionally relevant to students for whom it was written and is grade level appropriate.
4. The testlet does not introduce barriers for students with (a) limited working memory, (b) communication disorders dependent on spoken English

grammatical structures, or (c) limited implicit understandings of others' emotions and intentions.

CRITERIA FOR BIAS & SENSITIVITY PANELS

Items
1. Item does not require prior knowledge outside the bounds of the targeted content.
2. Where applicable, there is a fair representation of diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, disability, and family composition.
3. Stereotypes are avoided. Appropriate labels are used for groups of people. People-first language is used for individuals with disabilities.
4. Language used does not prevent nor advantage any group from demonstrating what they know about the measurement target.
5. Item does not focus on material that is likely to cause an extreme emotional response.

Testlets (sensitivity criteria)
6. Testlet is free of content that is controversial, disturbing, or likely to cause an extreme emotional response due to issues of culture, region, gender, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status, occupation, or current events.

7. The language in the testlet neither prevents nor disadvantages any regional or cultural group from demonstrating what they know about the targeted content. People first language is used for individuals with disabilities. Populations are not depicted in a stereotypical manner.

COMPLETING REVIEWS IN CONTENT BUILDER

We recommend you complete your reviews using the Firefox browser. If you do not have Firefox installed on your computer, you can download it for Mac or PC for free here: http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/all/
Many technical problems that reviewers encounter are related to their use of other browsers, especially Internet Explorer.
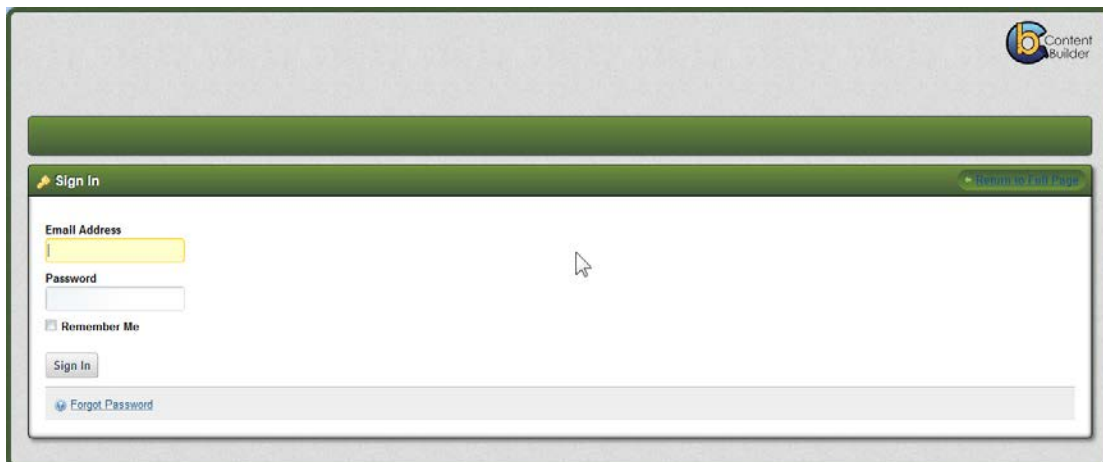
ACCESS CONTENT BUILDER

If you are a brand *new* user, you should receive an email from CETE@ku.edu providing you with initial login information. When you log in using this information, you will be prompted to reset your password and establish a security question. If you are a *return* user, your old login information should still work. If your old login information does not work, click the "Forgot Password" link at the bottom of the page.

To access **Content Builder,** follow these steps:

1. Access Content Builder by visiting http://cb.cete.us.
2. You will then see the login screen.

3. Enter the email address associated with your KITE account in the **Email Address** box**.**
4. Enter the password associated with your KITE account in the **Password** box**.**
5. You may choose to select the box labeled **Remember Me** if you wish to have your email address automatically associated with your login information in the future.
6. Click **Sign In**.

ACCESS ASSIGNMENTS

After logging in, you will be redirected to Content Builder's main page.
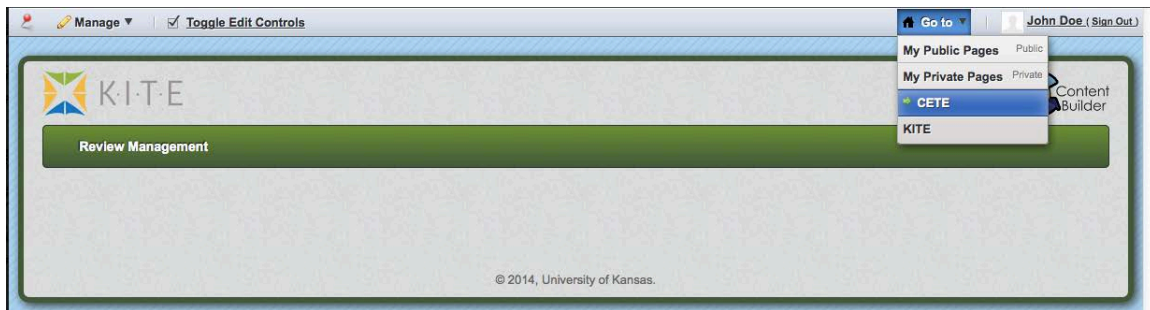
1. Click **Review Management.** If Review Management does not show up in the green bar to the left, click the **Go to** drop down at the top right of the screen and select CETE from the menu. Then click **Review Management**.
2. You will be redirected to the **Welcome Page** for external reviewers.
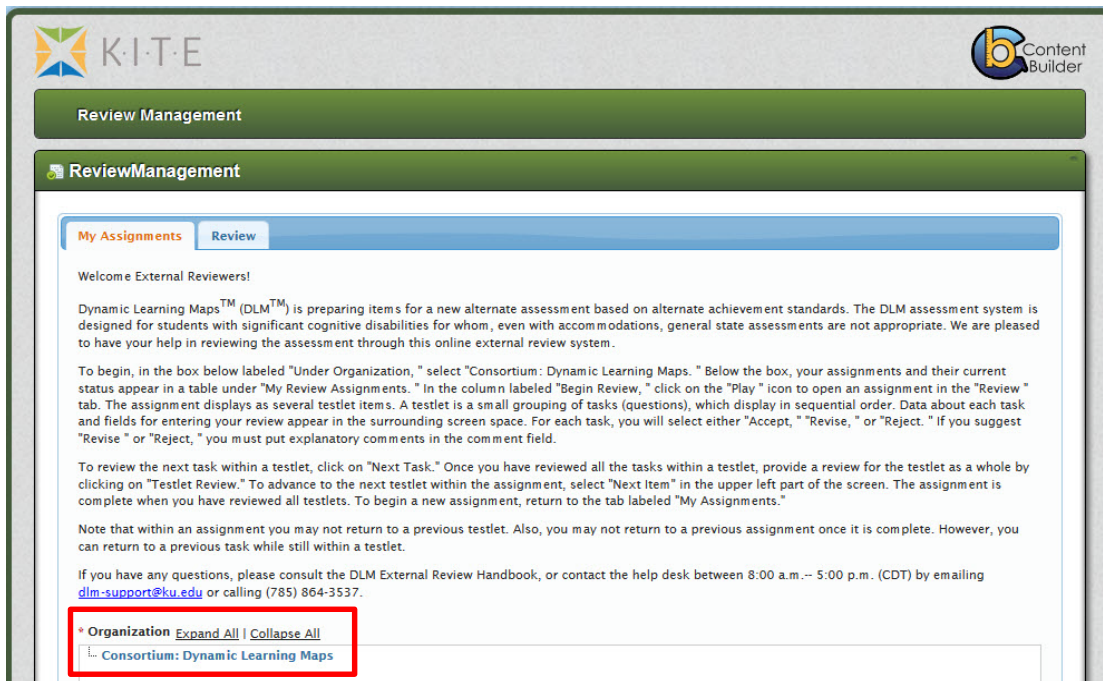
3. Review the **Welcome Page** for important information.
4. Below the welcome message, you will find a box labeled **Organization.**
5. Click the plus (**+**) symbol to expand the dropdown grid (if applicable)
6. Click on the words **Consortium: Dynamic Learning Maps**

7. The assignment list will display one or more collections. Each collection contains several testlets. Select the **icon** in the "begin review" category to start reviewing a collection. In the Content Builder system, a "collection item" is a testlet.

REVIEW ITEMS

You will be redirected to the **Review** tab, where you will see the first item within the first testlet for review.

All panels will need to preview the testlet. Between the metadata table and the limited visual of the item, you will notice three buttons: **Key, Media,** and **Preview.** To view the testlet as it approximately[1] appears to students or educators, select **Preview.**

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[1] Technology-enhanced items, such as those used for matching or sorting, will not be fully functional in the preview. The contents should still be visible.

Depending on your computer's settings, the preview window may need to be resized for you to see the whole window. The **Back** and **Next** buttons allow you to navigate forward and backward in the testlet to evaluate all items before returning to evaluate the items individually. Close the window when you are ready to return and evaluate an item.

At the top of the screen, you will see information about the item. Each panel type will require different information in order to make decisions about their specific criteria.

This panel…	…needs this information
Content	Preview, target node, depth of knowledge (cognitive category), key
Accessibility	Preview, target node

Bias & Sensitivity	Preview, target node

The labels in Content Builder are not always the same as DLM's terminology.

Target Node lists the specific node that an item was written to be aligned to.

Cognitive Category indicates the Depth of Knowledge (DOK).

Although this screen also contains **Item Statistics,** the **Context Media ID,** and **Media IDs Used,** all of this information is unrelated to the review process and can be ignored.

Remember, ACCESSIBILITY and BIAS & SENSITIVITY reviewers will only need to look at the Target Node. CONTENT reviewers will need to examine the Cognitive Category and the Target Node.

Below the metadata table, you will see a limited visual of the item.

Reviewers on CONTENT panels will also need to select the **Key** button to look at the correct answer to the item.

A popup box will appear and display the answer key.

After you have previewed the testlet and reviewed the information needed for your type of panel, make a decision about the item using your panel's criteria. Three options appear: **Accept, Revise,** and **Reject.**

If the item is acceptable as-is, select **Accept** and then click **Save**. You are not required to leave comments. If the item needs revision or should be rejected, select either **Revise** or **Reject** accordingly**.** You are required to leave comments explaining your evaluation. After providing comments, click **Save.**

Each testlet is unique and contains multiple tasks. After you **Save** your rating for an item, you will notice four navigation buttons at the bottom of the screen: **First Task, Previous Task, Next Task,** and **Testlet Review.**

Click **Next Task** to view the next task.

> **Hint**: In each collection, you will review testlets one by one. Within a testlet, you will review the assessment items first and then the testlet. Each element has to be reviewed in order. The system will let you revisit previously rated items within a testlet, but will not allow you to skip ahead or revisit testlets already completed. When options become available to you to move forward, the text on the button will become darker.

A Special Note About Teacher Administered Items

Teacher administered items are configured in Content Builder so the teacher's instruction or question to the student appears on a page before the answer options. To external reviewers, it may appear as though the item has answer options and no stem or question. It also may look like several items in a testlet are identical. While the answer options may be identical, the teacher's instructions or question to the student will be different across tasks. Use the **Preview** option to review the testlet and make sure you see the difference in the questions being asked within the testlet.

REVIEW TESTLET

After you complete reviews for all items, click **Testlet Review** and the review page will appear.

The testlet review screen does not contain any new information. You may preview the entire testlet again if you wish. Otherwise, you record your rating and comments (if applicable) for the testlet as a whole and click **Save.**

GO TO THE NEXT TESTLET

After you complete the **Testlet Review,** click the **next item button** just above the progress bar next to the drop down menu. This will move you to the next testlet within the collection. The text will darken when this option is available

Note that within an assignment, you will review testlets one by one. Within a testlet, you will review the assessment items first and then the testlet. Each element has to be reviewed in order. The system will let you revisit previously rated items within a testlet, but will not allow you to skip ahead or revisit testlets already completed. The system will ask you to confirm that you are finished with that collection item (testlet).

COMPLETE THE ASSIGNMENT

An assignment is complete when all collection items have been reviewed and rated. When one or more collection items have been reviewed, but not all, the **Status** tab in the assignments table will read **In Progress,** indicating the need for additional review work**.** When all testlets in the collection have been rated, the **Status** tab in the assignments table will read **Complete.**

SAVING AND RETURNING LATER

You may log out of Content Builder at any time without losing the work you have saved. When you log back in, locate the collection that is still marked **In Progress.** Select the icon in the Begin Review area again to resume your work.

AFTER COMPLETING AN ASSIGNMENT

After each assignment, monitor your email for notification about the next assignment.

Near the end of the 2014-15 external review cycle, you will be asked to complete a brief survey evaluating your experience as an external reviewer. This is an important step in the external review process and we hope you will participate.

GLOSSARY

This glossary compiles definitions relevant to the external review process for the Dynamic Learning Maps alternate assessment.

conclusion items Items presented at the conclusion of a text in English language arts. These items focus on assessing a representation of the entire text. Examples of conclusion items include questions about theme, structure or comparisons of multiple texts.

embedded items Items that are presented within a reading of a text in ELA. Embedded items focus on measuring cognitive processes as they occur during reading. In order to reduce cognitive load for students, these items are presented during a reading of a text near the relevant informational content from the text, rather than at the conclusion of the text.

engagement activity An activity that precedes a testlet that describes a scenario, taps prior knowledge or experience, and/or introduces the concept to be addressed. In English language arts, the text being read often serves as the engagement activity. In math, the engagement activity provides context for the items and activates prior knowledge.

Essential Elements Specific statements of knowledge and skills linked to the grade-level expectations identified in the college and career readiness standards. Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements (EEs) build a bridge from the content in the college and career readiness standards to academic expectations for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

testlet A group of 3–8 items and an engagement activity.

APPENDIX

Guide to Excluded Topics for Bias and Sensitivity Reviews
Content to Avoid

Some content is extremely controversial and is often judged by parents, teachers, and communities to be inappropriate for students. These topics should not be included in testlets used in any DLM assessment. Content that is likely to cause an *extreme emotional response* such as disgust, rage, fear, hatred, or despair should not be used.

- Abortion
- Alcohol abuse
- Deportation of immigrants
- Drug abuse
- Euthanasia
- Experimentation on people or animals that is dangerous or painful
- Gambling
- Malicious criminal activities by protagonists
- Negative labeling of groups
- Physical violence
- Political affiliation
- Prayer in school
- Religion
- Sexual intercourse
- Sexual violence
- Smoking
- Stereotyping cultural or ethnic groups
- Suicide
- Torture
- Violence using weapons