

# Memorandum

United States Department of Education  
Institute of Education Sciences  
National Center for Education Statistics

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**Date:** April 18, 2018  
**To:** Robert Sivinski, OMB  
**From:** Lisa Hudson and Sharon Boivin, NCES  
**Through:** Kashka Kubzdela, NCES  
**Re:** 2021 Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) Cognitive Interviews – First Round Update (OMB# 1850-0803 v.228)

Attached please find a revised request to conduct the Spring 2018 cognitive interviews for ATES:2021. The original request was approved in March 2018 (OMB #1850-0803 v. 227), but an unexpected contractual issue delayed the start of the requested cognitive interviews which, in turn, provided us time to make further revisions to survey items. No items were added or deleted, and no item topics were changed. All changes are editorial in nature, to improve item wording and/or to make item wording more consistent with the National Science Foundation's (NSF) National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG). Details of the changes made and their locations are listed below.

1. In Volume 1, revised “March” to “April” in: “The project schedule calls for recruitment to begin in ~~March~~ [April](#) 2018, as soon as OMB approval is received.”
2. No revisions were made in Attachment 1 (Communication Materials and Consent Form) or Attachment 2 (Recruitment Screener).
3. Items to be tested were revised in Attachment 4 (Cognitive Interview Instrument) as follows, with corresponding revisions to the item wording in the cognitive interview protocol in Attachment 3:
  - a. Added a probe (Was this question clear or confusing in any way?) about item I5 in the protocol (Attachment 3, p.12).
  - b. Changed from using “February 1” reference date for jobs to “current” jobs in items: D1-D4, E1-E10, F1-F2, F4-F6, G1, G2, and I2 (Protocol for D1 also changed to reflect change in reference date);
  - c. Changed wording in D2, D4, and E6-E8 to be more consistent with NSCG; and
  - d. Other editorial changes/corrections:
    - i. C5: omitted “for this degree” because some respondents will not have a degree;
    - ii. D1: added the parenthetical instructions used in ATES:2016: “If you are temporarily absent from a job ([on vacation](#), [temporary illness](#), [maternity leave](#), [etc.](#)), answer “Yes”.”;
    - iii. F9 and G6: put “complete” in all capitals. In F9, added “program” after “degree” to be consistent with G6; and
    - iv. F11b, F11c, G8b, and G8c: changed “other” to “another.”
    - v. H4 and I2: added “current” to read “for your current main job.”
    - vi. I2: added “completed” to I2 to read “LAST COMPLETED work experience program.”
    - vii. I3: revised “your LAST” to “this last”.