

Interpretation of Test Scores for the ACCUPLACER Tests™



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The following information has been extracted from the ACCUPLACER™ Online Coordinator's Guide (dated May 2004). It is intended for use by high school, college and university counselors/advisors to assist in the interpretation of ACCUPLACER scores for tests administered as part of the El Paso (TX) Area College Readiness Initiative.

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Find it Fast List:

| Reading Comprehension | Page 1 - 2 |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Sentence Skills | Page 2 |
| Arithmetic | Page 3 |
| Elementary Algebra | Page 3 - 4 |
| College Level Math | Page 4 - 5 |
| Texas Writeplacer Essay | Page 6 |

The interpretation of test scores is one of several factors to consider in placing students into regular or remedial courses. Since placement criteria for your institution are unique, it is not possible for The College Board to provide you with definitive rules to use in your interpretation of scores and placement of students.

The Proficiency Statements below provide useful information for understanding students' skill levels. Actual placement decisions should include other variables that may contribute to an accurate assessment of a student's ability such as high school grades, background information, etc.

Reading Comprehension Proficiency Statements

Total Right Score of about 51 – 77

Students at this level are able to comprehend short passages that are characterized by uncomplicated ideas, straightforward presentation, and for the most part, subject matter that reflects everyday experience. These students are able to:

- recognize the main idea and less central ideas
- recognize the tone of the passage when questions do not require fine distinctions
- recognize relationships between sentences, such as the use of one sentence to illustrate another

Total Right Score of about 78 – 98

Students at this level are able to comprehend short passages that are characterized by moderately uncomplicated ideas and organization, and employ moderately sophisticated vocabulary. These students are able to:

- answer questions that require them to synthesize information, including gauging point of view and intended audience
- recognize organizing principles in a paragraph or passage
- identify contradictory or contrasting statements

Total Right Score of about 99 – 120

Students at this level are able to comprehend passages that, although short, are somewhat complex in terms of the ideas conveyed, and that deal with academic subject matter, often in a theoretical framework. These students are able to:

- extract points that are merely implied
- follow moderately complex arguments or speculation
- recognize tone
- analyze the logic employed by the author in making an argument

Sentence Skills Proficiency Statements

Total Right Score of about 54 – 86

Students at this level can:

- solve problems in simple subordination and coordination
- correct sentence fragments

Total Right Score of about 87- 108

Students at this level can:

- solve problems of faulty coordination and subordination in a sentence with one or two clauses
- manipulate complex verb tenses
- correct misplaced modifiers
- solve problems that combine grammar and logic

Total Right Score of about 109 or higher

Students at this level can:

- manipulate complex sentences with two or more subordinate clauses
- correct problems of syntax and repetitive diction
- recognize correct and incorrect linkages of clauses, including problems involving semicolons

Arithmetic Proficiency Statements

Total Right Score of about 38 – 64

Students at this level have minimal arithmetic skills. These students can:

- perform simple operations with whole numbers and decimals (addition, subtraction, and multiplication)
- calculate an average, given integer values
- solve simple word problems
- identify data represented by simple graphs

Total Right Score of about 65 - 92

Students at this level have basic arithmetic skills. These students can:

- perform the basic arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and mixed numbers
- make conversions among fractions, decimals, and percents

Total right score of about 93 - 109

Students at this level have adequate arithmetic skills. These students can: estimate products and squares of decimals and square roots of whole numbers and decimals

- solve simple percent problems of the form p% of q = ? and ?% of q = r
- divide whole numbers by decimals and fractions
- solve simple word problems involving fractions, ratio, percent increase and decrease, and area

Total right score of about 110 or higher

Students at this level have substantial arithmetic skills. These students can:

- find equivalent forms of fractions
- estimate computations involving fractions
- solve simple percent problems of the form p% of ? = r
- solve word problems involving the manipulation of units of measurement
- solve complex word problems involving percent, average, and proportional reasoning
- find the square root of decimal numbers
- solve simple number sentences involving a variable

Elementary Algebra Proficiency Statements

Total right score of about 28 – 43

Students at this level have minimal pre-algebra skills. These students demonstrate:

- a sense of order relationships and the relative size of signed numbers
- the ability to multiply a whole number by a binomial

Total right score of about 44 – 81

Students scoring at this level have minimal elementary algebra skills. These students can:

- perform operations with signed numbers
- combine like terms
- multiply binomials
- evaluate algebraic expressions

Total right score of about 82 – 108

Students at this level have sufficient elementary algebra skills. By this level, the skills that were beginning to emerge at a Total Right Score of 57 have been developed. Students at this level can:

- add radicals, add algebraic fractions, and evaluate algebraic expressions
- factor quadratic expressions in the form $ax^2 + bx + c$, where a = 1
- factor the difference of squares
- square binomials
- solve linear equations with integer coefficients

Total right score of about 109 or higher

Students at this level have substantial elementary algebra skills. These students can:

- simplify algebraic expressions
- factor quadratic expressions where a = 1
- solve quadratic equations
- solve linear equations with fractional and literal coefficients and linear inequalities with integer coefficients
- solve systems of equations
- identify graphical properties of equations and inequalities

College-Level Mathematics Proficiency Statements

Total Right Score of about 39 or less

These students should take the Elementary Algebra test before any placement decisions are finalized.

Total Right Score of about 40 - 62

Students scoring at this level can:

- identify common factors
- factor binomials and trinomials
- manipulate factors to simplify complex fractions.

These students should be considered for placement into intermediate algebra. For further guidance in placement, have these students take the Elementary Algebra test.

Total Right Score of about 63 - 85

Students scoring at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:

- work with algebraic expressions involving real number exponents
- factor polynomial expressions
- simplify and perform arithmetic operations with rational expressions, including complex fractions
- solve and graph linear equations and inequalities
- solve absolute value equations
- solve quadratic equations by factoring
- graph simple parabolas
- understand function notation, such as determining the value of a function for a specific number in the domain
- a limited understanding of the concept of function on a more sophisticated level, such as determining the value of the composition of two functions
- a rudimentary understanding of coordinate geometry and trigonometry

These students should be considered for placement into college algebra or a credit-bearing course immediately preceding calculus.

Total Right Score of about 86 - 102

Students scoring at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:

- understand polynomial functions
- evaluate and simplify expressions involving functional notation, including composition of functions
- solve simple equations involving:

trigonometric functions logarithmic functions exponential functions

These students can be considered for a Pre-calculus course or a non-rigorous course in beginning calculus.

Total Right Score of about 103 or higher

Students scoring at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:

- perform algebraic operations and solve equations with complex numbers
- understand the relationship between exponents and logarithms and the rules that govern the manipulation of logarithms and exponents
- understand trigonometric functions and their inverses
- solve trigonometric equations
- manipulate trigonometric identities
- solve right-triangle problems
- recognize graphic properties of functions such as absolute value, quadratic, and logarithmic

These students should be considered for placement into calculus.

Texas WritePlacer *Plus*[™] *Score* **Descriptors**

| | Score Point Description | |
|-------|---|--|
| 0 | | |
| Score | | |
| | | |
| | The writer attempts to address the topic, but language and style are inappropriate for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. There is often no clear statement of a | |
| 2 | main idea or point of view and there is confusion found in the writer's efforts in | |
| | presenting supporting detail. Any organization that is present fails to present an | |
| | effective sequence of ideas. The sentence structure, when presented in paragraph | |
| | form, is ineffective and few sentences are free of errors. Adding to the confusion is | |
| | the writer's inability or lack of care in making word choices. There are many errors in | |
| | mechanical conventions of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. | |
| 3 | The writer is largely unsuccessful at communicating a main idea or point of view, and there is little evidence of an organizational structure. Ideas lack focus and | |
| 3 | development and there are many errors in mechanical conventions of usage, | |
| | sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. | |
| | A partially developed writing sample in which the characteristics of effective written | |
| 4 | communication are only partially formed. Statement of purpose is not totally clear | |
| | and although a main idea or point of view may be announced, continued focus on the | |
| | main idea is not evident. Development of ideas by the use of specific supporting detail and sequencing of ideas may be present, but is incomplete or unclear. | |
| | Paragraphs are composed of sentences poorly structured with contain noticeable and | |
| | distracting errors. The writer also exhibits poor precision in the use of grammatical | |
| | conventions including poor word choice, poor usage, poor spelling and punctuation. | |
| _ | A writing sample that only partially communicates a message to the specified | |
| 5 | audience. The purpose may be evident but only partially formed. Focus on the main idea is only partially evident. The main idea is only partially developed with limited | |
| | supporting details. While there is some evidence of control in the use of mechanical | |
| | conventions such as sentence structure, usage, spelling and punctuation, some | |
| | distracting errors may be present. | |
| _ | An adequately formed writing sample that attempts to communicate a message to a | |
| 6 | specified audience. Though the purpose of the writing sample may be clear, the writer's attempts to develop details may not be fully realized. The writer's | |
| | organization of ideas may be characterized by a lack of specificity and/or incomplete | |
| | development of ideas in effective sequence. Sentence structure within paragraphs is | |
| | adequate though minor errors in sentence structure, usage, and word choice are | |
| | evident. There are also errors found in the use of mechanical conventions such as | |
| | spelling and punctuation. | |
| - | A very good writing sample that substantially communicates a whole message to a specified audience. A purpose and focus is established, but may only be partially | |
| 7 | developed. An organizational pattern is evident, but is only partially fulfilled. The | |
| | writer competently handles mechanical conventions such as sentence structure, | |
| | usage, spelling and punctuation, though very minor errors in the use of conventions | |
| | may be present. | |
| | A well-formed writing sample that effectively communicates a whole message to a | |
| 8 | specified audience. The writer maintains unity of a developed topic throughout the writing sample, and the writer establishes a focus by clearly stating a purpose. The | |
| | writing sample, and the writer establishes a focus by clearly stating a purpose. The writer exhibits control in the development of ideas and clearly specifies the supporting | |
| | detail. The sentence structure is effective and free of errors. There is precision and | |
| | care reflected in usage and choice of words as well as evidence of mastery of | |
| | mechanical conventions such as spelling and punctuation. | |