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The ACCUPLACER™ System

Purpose of the ACCUPLACER™ Tests

The purpose of ACCUPLACER™ tests is to determine which course placements are appropriate for students and whether or not remedial work is needed. ACCUPLACER™ tests can also be used to monitor student course progress and to suggest whether remediation is still needed or if a change in course assignment is recommended. This information may be supplied to the student or to the academic adviser or faculty member to help monitor progress. Because of the “adaptive” nature of the tests, the questions presented on successive tests will vary, thereby greatly reducing the effects of repeated practice on the tests.

Scores from ACCUPLACER™ Tests are intended for use in making placement decisions. To assure fairness, placement decisions made with the aid of ACCUPLACER™ scores should be reviewed periodically, and if classroom performance indicates that students are capable of more advanced work or need further preparation, placement assignments should be changed. Also, it should be noted that placement decisions are most accurate when multiple measures are used. When possible, ACCUPLACER™ scores should be used in conjunction with other available data on student performance.

Unique Features of ACCUPLACER™ OnLine

ACCUPLACER™ OnLine uses sophisticated technology to provide accurate and efficient measurement of students’ knowledge and skills. It uses computerized-adaptive testing technology to select specific test questions that are best suited for each particular test taker. This “tailoring” of the test for each student allows for accurate diagnosis of students’ knowledge and skills using fewer items than are typically required in traditional “paper-and-pencil” tests. The computerized nature of the assessment also allows for instantaneous score reporting. As soon as a student finishes a test, her or his score is available and is immediately exportable into existing campus information systems. Instantaneous score reporting is even available for the ACCUPLACER™ WritePlacer Plus™. An extremely convenient feature of ACCUPLACER™ OnLine is that it is administered over the Internet, so schools can access the testing program whenever it is convenient for them without the attendant difficulties of installing and upgrading software.

Computerized Adaptive Testing

Computerized adaptive testing is a test administration system that uses the computer to select and deliver test items to examinees (Patelis, 2000). These tests are called adaptive because the computer selects the items to be administered to a specific examinee based, in part, on the proficiency of the examinee. Unlike many traditional tests where all examinees take a single form of an exam, the computer adapts or “tailors” the exam to each examinee. This tailoring is done by keeping track of an examinee’s performance on each test item and then using this information to select the next item to be administered. The criteria for selecting the next item to be administered to an examinee are complex. However, the primary criterion is a desire to match the difficulty of the item to the examinee’s current estimated proficiency.

All ACCUPLACER™ tests, with the exception of WritePlacer Plus™ and WritePlacer ESL™, are computerized-adaptive. Adaptive testing means that the sequence of test questions and the questions themselves will vary from student to student. The next question administered to an examinee is automatically chosen to yield the most information about the examinee based on the skill level indicated by answers to all prior questions.
ACCUPLACER™ tailors the test to each student using an item-selection algorithm. This algorithm initially administers an item of middle difficulty to each student, randomly selected from one of about five very similar items. If the response were wrong, it branches to a randomly chosen one of three extremely easy items; if the response were right, it branches to a randomly chosen one of three extremely difficult items. Items presented stay very easy or very difficult until there is at least one right or wrong answer, whereupon item selection aims for maximum information but is subject to constraints that provide for content balance. An example of how the ACCUPLACER™ computerized-adaptive testing system works is presented below in Figure 1-1.

**Figure 1-1**

As illustrated in Figure 1-1, a student’s performance on one ACCUPLACER™ test question determines the difficulty level of the next question that will be delivered. Two things determine a student’s score on an ACCUPLACER™ test: how many questions were correctly answered, and the difficulty level of the questions that were answered correctly.

Because students are tested at their individual ability levels, each student is likely to encounter a different test. This eliminates problems of students exchanging information about answers either before or during the test. Adaptive testing provides very accurate measurement over the complete range of a particular skill. Students in institutions that offer multiple levels of developmental courses will benefit most from the accuracy of adaptive testing. These tests, by personalizing the choice of successive test questions, achieve their accuracy with substantial fewer questions than conventional tests.

Although few questions (12 - 20) are presented for each ACCUPLACER™ Test, great accuracy is maintained. This process achieves several positive results. Students are tested quickly and are not frustrated or bored by questions that are too easy or too hard. The difficulty of the questions is quickly and automatically adapted to the capability of the individual student. Thus, challenging tests
corresponding to each student's skill level are always provided. Because of the untimed nature of the tests, students may work at their own pace. Both students and administration can benefit since test results may be displayed immediately.

**Timing**

ACCUPLACER™ Tests are untimed. The average time an examinee takes to complete a multiple-choice test is 30 minutes. Timing for writing essays is set by the Test Center Administrator.

**ACCUPLACER™ Tests**

The ACCUPLACER™ System includes nine computer-adaptive, multiple-choice tests. The five core tests include Reading Comprehension, Sentence Skills, Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, and College-Level Mathematics. There are four Levels of English Proficiency (LOEP) tests designed to assess the English skills of students whose first language is not English. These tests include LOEP Reading Skills, LOEP Sentence Meaning, LOEP Language Use, and LOEP Listening. In addition to these adaptive tests, there are two linear Supplementary Skills tests that can be used to gain diagnostic information on the skills of low performing students in arithmetic and elementary algebra.

A recent addition to the ACCUPLACER™ program is WritePlacer Plus™ and WritePlacer ESL™ that score student essays using the IntelliMetric™ artificial intelligence system. The essay score can be included in placement rules.

**The Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCUPLACER™ Test</th>
<th># Items Administered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Skills</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Algebra</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-Level Mathematics</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levels of English Proficiency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Skills</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Meaning</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Use</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scores**

Scores for the tests are reported on a 120-point scale and represent an estimate of the score students could expect to receive if they had taken a test of 120 questions. Scores are reported as whole numbers or as numbers with one decimal place. Test center administrators have the option of having the Total Right Score reported as a whole number or as a number with one decimal place. The Percentile Rank and the Standard Error of Measure may also be printed on Individual Student Score Reports if the test center administrator selects to have these scores reported under Testing Options.
The **Total Right Score** is calculated using a formula and is an estimate of a student’s performance with respect to all of the questions in the pool from which a test was drawn. This is the score that should be used in computing summary statistics, in correlating test performance with other information in a student’s records, and in other statistical treatments of the test data.

The **Percentile Rank** indicates student performance in relation to a normative sample of test takers. For the ACCUPLACER™ Tests the normative population was composed of college entry-level students at both two- and four-year colleges.

The **Standard Error of Measure (SEM)** corresponding to a particular score shows the accuracy of the test in assessing a student’s skills and reflects the accuracy of the measurement. Statistically, two-thirds of the examinees will have true levels within the + or – one SEM.

### Retesting

The College Board encourages each college to develop their own retest policy and to publish it with other information about placement testing. It is recommended that students be allowed to retest only after they have done a thorough review of the subject matter being tested.

### Test Content

#### Reading Comprehension Test

Each student taking this test will be presented with a series of 20 questions of two primary types. The first type consists of a reading passage followed by a question based on the text. Both short and long narratives are provided. The reading passages can also be classified according to the kind of information processing required, including explicit statements related to the main idea, explicit statements related to a secondary idea, application, and inference.

The second type of question, sentence relationships, presents two sentences followed by a question about the relationship between these two sentences. The question may ask, for example, if the statement in the second sentence supports that in the first, if it contradicts it, or if it repeats the same information.

Both reading passages and sentence relationship questions are varied according to content categories to help prevent bias because of a student's particular knowledge. These categories include social sciences, natural and physical sciences, human relations and practical affairs, and the arts. In the Reading Comprehension test, for example, each student will receive four long reading passages, eight to nine questions based on short passages, and four to five questions involving sentence relationships.

#### Sentence Skills Test
Each student receives 20 Sentence Skills questions of two types. The first type is sentence correction questions, which require an understanding of sentence structure. These questions ask students to choose the most appropriate word or phrase to substitute for the underlined portion of the sentence.

The second type is construction shift questions. These ask that a sentence be rewritten according to the criteria shown while maintaining essentially the same meaning as the original sentence. Within these two primary categories, the questions are also classified according to the skills being tested. Some questions deal with the logic of the sentence, others with whether or not the answer is a complete sentence, and still others with the relationship between coordination and subordination. In a manner similar to Reading Comprehension questions, these questions are varied according to categories to prevent bias because of a student's particular knowledge. These categories include social sciences, natural and physical sciences, human relations and practical affairs, and the arts.

**Arithmetic Test**

The 17 arithmetic questions administered by the ACCUPLACER™ Tests are divided into three types.
- Operations with whole numbers and fractions: topics included in this category are addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, recognizing equivalent fractions and mixed numbers, and estimating.
- Operations with decimals and percents: topics include addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division with decimals. Percent problems, recognition of decimals, fraction and percent equivalencies, and problems involving estimation are also given.
- Applications and problem solving: topics include rate, percent, and measurement problems, simple geometry problems, and distribution of a quantity into its fractional parts.

Questions from all three categories are always presented to the student although the number of questions from each category varies with the student's skill level. For example, if the student's responses show minimal arithmetic skills, presenting too many applications problems is pointless. On the other hand, a student exhibiting good skills with whole numbers and fractions will be presented with more of these types of problems. Thus, the proportion of questions in the various categories will automatically vary according to the student's responses. In this sense, this test and the other ACCUPLACER™ Tests are truly adaptive in nature.

**Elementary Algebra Test**

A total of 12 questions, divided into three types, are administered in this test. The first type involves operations with integers and rational numbers, and includes computation with integers and negative rationals, the use of absolute values, and ordering. These questions test minimal skill levels of the student.

A second type, which involves operations with algebraic expressions tests minimal skill levels using evaluation of simple formulas and expressions, and adding and subtracting monomials and polynomials. At all skill levels, questions are provided involving multiplying and dividing monomials and polynomials, the evaluation of positive rational roots and exponents, simplifying algebraic fractions, and factoring.

The third type of question involves the solution of equations, inequalities, and word problems. As with the Arithmetic Test, few questions from this category are presented to the student unless he or she shows skill in this area. When a high degree of competence is indicated, questions from this category include solving linear equations and inequalities, the solution of quadratic equations by factoring, solving verbal problems presented in an algebraic context, including geometric reasoning and graphing, and the translation of written phrases into algebraic expressions.
A total of 20 questions are administered in the College-Level Mathematics Test (CLM). CLM assesses proficiency in intermediate algebra through Pre-calculus. This test therefore enables institutions to place students into intermediate algebra, college algebra, Pre-calculus, and introductory calculus courses.

Questions administered in this test, representing six general categories, are as follows:

- **Algebraic Operations** including simplifying rational algebraic expressions, factoring and expanding polynomials, and manipulating roots and exponents.

- **Solutions of Equations and Inequalities** category including the solution of linear and quadratic equations and inequalities, systems of equations, and other algebraic equations.

- **Coordinate Geometry** involving plane geometry, the coordinate plane, straight lines, conics, sets of points in the plane, and graphs of algebraic functions.

- **Applications and other Algebra Topics** category including complex numbers, series and sequences, determinants, permutations and combinations, factorials, and word problems.

- **Functions** including questions involving polynomial, algebraic, exponential, and logarithmic functions.

- **Trigonometry** category including trigonometric functions.

### Summary Of Test Specifications For Core Tests

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<tr>
<th>ACCUPLACER™ Tests</th>
<th>Approximate Percentage of Test</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Comprehension</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying Main Ideas</td>
<td>12-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Statements/Secondary Ideas</td>
<td>12-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferences</td>
<td>12-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications</td>
<td>12-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Relationships</td>
<td>24-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing Complete Sentences</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination/Subordination</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Sentence Logic</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arithmetic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Numbers and Fractions</td>
<td>31-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decimals and Percents</td>
<td>31-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications and Problem Solving</td>
<td>25-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elementary Algebra</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed Numbers and Rationals</td>
<td>8-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebraic Expressions</td>
<td>42-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equations, Inequalities, and Word Problems</td>
<td>17-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College-Level Mathematics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebraic Operations</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions of Equations and Inequalities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate Geometry</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of Calculators

In February 2004, new items were added to the Arithmetic and Elementary Algebra test item pools. Some of these new items have pop-up calculators for students to use when answering the question. The new items were written so that the use of a calculator will not help the student answer the question, it is simply provided as a tool for the student to use. For example, if a student is asked to calculate the area of a rectangle, (s)he must know the formula (length times width) for calculating the area. The calculator is available in this case as a tool for multiplying the length times the width. It does will not help the student who does not know the formula.

Calculators are not available for all items. For example, if a student is asked to estimate the value of 9.755 times 5.688, the calculator is not available, because the question is asking the student to round 9.755 to 10, and 5.688 to 6 and multiple 10 times 6 in their head. The use of the calculator would “help” the student answer this type of question; therefore, it is not available.

In Setup ACCUPLACER™ it is possible to turn the pop-up calculator off. It is recommended that students be provided with the pop-up calculator because item difficulty levels were calculated from data where students were using the pop-up calculators.

If the pop-up calculator is turned off, caution should be used when interpreting student scores, and adjustments may be necessary to the required cut scores for placement into various math courses.

Levels of English Proficiency Tests

The Levels of English Proficiency Test (LOEP) assesses the English skills of students who have learned English as a second language or who are native English speakers with limited proficiency.

Performance is expressed on the same scale as is used for other tests in the ACCUPLACER™ battery, here ranging from a score of about 23, representing chance-level performance, to one of 120, representing the score that would be obtained if the examinee answered correctly all the questions in the pool. Mean scores for those represented in the calibration sample are 79, 83, and 78, respectively, for Reading Skills, Sentence Meaning, and Language Use, in each case just a few points above the middle of the range of possible score values for the test.

Note that these results do not suggest that students are more proficient on average in the skills required by Sentence Meaning than in those required by Reading Skills. For each part of the test, the score represents performance relative to perfect performance on the set of questions that make up that part of the test. Comparisons based on percentile norms, which will be distributed with the test, suggest that Sentence Meaning is a slightly easier test than Reading Skills and Language Use, and that the latter two are very similar in difficulty. Median performance for the sample, for example, is a Total Right Score of 88 for Sentence Meaning and of 82 for each of the others. The level of difficulty is appropriate for students who graduated high school but who have second language interference.
LOEP Reading Skills

The Reading Skills part of LOEP tests the student's comprehension of short passages. The sub-test contains brief passages of 50 words or less and moderate length passages of 50 to 90 words. There is a variety of passage content such as the arts, human relationships, physical science, history/social sciences and practical situations. Half of the Reading Skills sub-test contains straightforward comprehension items (paraphrase, locating information, vocabulary on a phrase level, and pronoun reference). The other half assesses inference skills (main idea, fact vs. opinion, cause/effect logic, identifying irrelevant information, author's point of view, and applying the author's logic to another situation).

LOEP Language Use

The Language Use sub-test measures grammar and usage. It contains questions in two formats: completing a sentence by filling in a blank with the word or phrase from the choices given, and choosing a sentence that best combines two discrete sentences that are given. The skills covered are subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, forms of irregular verbs, appropriate verb forms in structures, noun-noun agreement, noun forms, pronouns, modifiers, comparatives, prepositions, connectives, parallelism, and sentence fragments/run-ons.

LOEP Sentence Meaning

Sentence Meaning assesses the understanding of word meanings in one- or two-sentence contexts. The sentences are drawn from the content areas of natural science, history/social studies, arts/humanities, psychology/human relations, and practical situations. The areas tested are: particle verbs (or phrasal verbs), basic and important idioms, adverb/adjective phrases, basic nouns, verbs and adjectives (particularly terms of beauty, age, greatness, size), adverbs of frequency, sequence of adverbs (before, after, during), prepositions of direction and place (from, to, at, for, etc), comparatives, connectives, and commands.

Levels of English Proficiency (LOEP) Listening Test

LOEP Listening is a direct measure of the listening skills of non-native English speaking students and is offered as part of the College Board’s ACCUPLACER™ Program. The test measures the ability to listen to and understand one or more people speaking in English. The conversations take place in academic environments such as lecture halls, study sessions, a computer lab, the library, the gymnasium, and the like; and in everyday environments such as at home, shopping, at a restaurant, at a dentist’s office, listening to the radio, reading the newspaper, and performing tasks at work.

First the student listens to the conversation or lecture and the question that follows, while looking at pictures of the speakers. Below this are four answer choices, either written on the screen or with a drawing next to each choice. The student chooses the best answer to the question that was asked, and clicks on the button next to his choice. The student can click on the appropriate PLAY button if the student wants to listen again to the conversation, the question, or any of the choices. Each of these can be heard only two more times after the initial reading.
Development of the LOEP Listening Test

A committee of college faculty and other educators defined the listening skills considered important for entry-level college students. Both literal comprehension and implied meaning were included, and seven listening skills were identified. Multiple-choice items were developed to measure the listening skills.

The test contains 20 questions. Each of the test questions consists of:
- A spoken conversation or lecture,
- Pictures of the speaker or speakers,
- A spoken question about the conversation or lecture, and
- Several answer choices that are spoken and presented in writing or as a picture.

These items were field tested with a large sample of entry-level students at colleges and universities around the country. The items were evaluated based on the field test results and a final set of items was selected.

Summary Of Test Specifications For Levels of English Proficiency Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOEP™ Reading Skills</th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief Passages</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Passages</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inference Skills</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context of passages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts/Humanities</td>
<td>15% – 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>15% – 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/Social Science</td>
<td>15% – 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Situations Narrative</td>
<td>15% – 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology/Human Relations</td>
<td>15% – 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOEP Sentence Meaning</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Completion</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Comprehension</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrasal Verbs, Prepositions of Direction</td>
<td>14% - 19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Idioms</td>
<td>19% – 29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs, Adjectives Connectives</td>
<td>29% -39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Nouns, Verbs</td>
<td>8% – 13%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOEP Language Use</th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Completion</td>
<td>70% - 95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Combination</td>
<td>5% - 30%</td>
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</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOEP Listening</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literal Comprehension</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied Meaning</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WritePlacer Plus™

WritePlacer Plus™ is a direct measure of student writing skills offered as part of the College Board’s ACCUPLACER™ Program. Examinees are asked to provide a writing sample in response to a specific
prompt. This assessment measures writing skill at the level expected of an entering level college student.

**WritePlacer Plus™ Development**

The writing skills considered important for a committee of college faculty and other educators defined entry-level college students. These skills were then reviewed and further validated by several hundred faculty members. Writing prompts were developed to measure the writing skills identified. These writing prompts were field tested with a sample of entry-level students at several colleges and universities. The prompts were evaluated based on the field test results and a final set of prompts was selected for use in the WritePlacer Plus™ program.

**WritePlacer Plus™ Scoring**

Writing samples for WritePlacer Plus™ are scored using a modified holistic scoring, a procedure used to evaluate the overall quality of writing based on the features of writing identified below. Holistic scoring is used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the writing sample as evidenced by how well a piece of writing communicates a whole message. Each writing sample is evaluated based on its overall impression, not on the basis of the individual writing characteristics in isolation.

Each response is evaluated based on the following features of writing:

- Focus,
- Organization,
- Development and Support
- Sentence Structure and Usage
- Mechanical Conventions.

Scores are reported on a scale from 2-12 reflecting the sum of two readers' scores or the IntelliMetric model of the two readers' scores. If the two readers disagree by more than one point, a third reader evaluates the writing. A score of zero indicates that the essay was off topic, in a language other than English, too short to be evaluated, or in some other way not able to be scored. Descriptions of each score are shown below.

**WritePlacer Plus™ Score Descriptors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>This writing sample shows little evidence of mastery of organization, development, focus, sentence structure, usage, and conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This writing sample 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 development and there are many errors in mechanical conventions of usage, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>This writing sample attempts to address the topic, with little success. There is often no clear statement of a 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. There are many errors in mechanical conventions of usage, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>This writing sample addresses the topic with limited success. There is some evidence of a main idea or point of view, but there is difficulty in articulation. An attempt at organization is made, but meets with limited success. There are significant errors in mechanical conventions of usage, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A limited writing sample in which the characteristics of effective written communication are only partially
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Formed. Statement of purpose is not totally clear and although a main idea or point of view may be stated, 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. The response may exhibit distracting errors or poor precision in the use of grammatical conventions including poor sentence structure, poor word choice, poor usage, poor spelling and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A restricted writing sample that only partially communicates a message to the specified 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>An adequate writing sample that competently communicates a message to a specified audience. Though the purpose of the writing sample may be clear, the development of supporting details may not be fully realized. The writer's organization of ideas is evident but may lack specificity, be incomplete or not developed in effective sequence. There is evidence of control in the use of mechanical conventions such as sentence structure, usage, spelling and punctuation, though minor errors in the use of conventions may be present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A very good writing sample that substantially communicates a whole message to a specified audience. A purpose and focus is established, but only partially 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A strong writing sample that effectively communicates a whole message to a specified audience. The writer establishes a purpose and maintains focus throughout the writing sample. The writer exhibits strong control in the development of ideas and clearly specifies the supporting detail. There is evidence of mastery of mechanical conventions such as sentence structure, usage, spelling and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>An excellent writing sample that very effectively at communicating a whole message to a specified audience. The writer establishes a clear purpose and focus is effectively maintained throughout the writing sample. Ideas are well developed and well supported. The writer clearly demonstrates mastery of sentence structure, usage, spelling and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>An outstanding writing sample that is very effective at communicating a whole message to a specified audience. The response is well organized and maintains a clear central focus with a clearly stated purpose. The writer exhibits superior control in the development and support of ideas. The writer demonstrates superior facility with mechanical conventions such as sentence structure, usage, spelling and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Texas WritePlacer Plus™**

Writing samples for Texas WritePlacer Plus™ are scored using a modified holistic scoring method, a procedure used to evaluate the overall quality of writing based on the features of writing identified below. Holistic scoring is used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the writing sample as evidenced by how well a piece of writing communicates a whole message. Each writing sample is evaluated based on its overall impression, not on the basis of the individual writing characteristics in isolation.

Each response is evaluated based on the following features of writing:

- Focus,
- Organization,
- Development and Support
- Sentence Structure and Usage
- Mechanical Conventions.

A score of zero indicates that the essay was off topic, in a language other than English, too short to be evaluated, or in some other way not able to be scored. Descriptions of each score are shown below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Score Point Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>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 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>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 development and there are many errors in mechanical conventions of usage, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A partially developed writing sample in which the characteristics of effective written 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A writing sample that only partially communicates a message to the specified 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>An adequately formed writing sample that attempts to communicate a message to a 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>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 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A well-formed writing sample that effectively communicates a whole message to a 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 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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WritePlacer ESL™ (English as a Second Language) is offered with the Level of English Proficiency (LOEP) tests. It provides a direct measure of the writing skills of students who are not native speakers of English. Because Vocabulary and Sentence Structure are skill areas that non-native speakers need to develop, those dimensions of writing are included in addition to three rhetorical dimensions of writing that apply to both native and non-native writers.

In this test, a specific prompt is provided and examinees are asked to provide a writing sample that responds to the prompt. The test measures whether a student needs to be placed in an ESL class before beginning regular college work, and what level of ESL class the student should be placed in.

**WritePlacer ESL™ Development**

A committee of respected ESL experts from around the country, including ESL faculty and administrators responsible for ESL testing, was assembled to work on developing two new ESL tests, WritePlacer ESL™ and LOEP Listening. Since WritePlacer Plus™ provided a framework that was appropriate in many respects to assessing ESL students’ writing skill, the committee’s WritePlacer ESL™ effort concentrated on three aspects of the test: developing new prompts appropriate for English Language Learners, developing new rubrics appropriate for scoring ESL writing samples, and deciding on the range of skill levels that would be covered by the test.

1. ESL prompt development included several steps. First a group of ESL experts wrote the prompts. Then a local committee of ESL faculty and ESL test development experts reviewed and improved them. And finally our national committee reviewed them carefully and critically. The surviving prompts all satisfied the following criteria:

   - The prompt referred to the American educational process or American culture so it was reasonable to expect that test takers would have had access to the material in the prompt.
   - The prompt had to be of interest to students and be capable of generating a 300 to 600-word essay.
   - The prompt had to be clearly stated and unambiguous and it had to comply with rules of grammar and usage and spelling.
   - The prompt had to contain no language that reinforced stereotypes. It could not imply that one ethnic group is superior or inferior to another.
   - The content of the prompt could not be judged to be offensive to members of any group.

2. The rubric development process started with assembling many ESL writing rubrics already in use, such as the CATESOL rubric (California Test of English as a Second Language), ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, ACT scoring scale, TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and TWE (the Test of Written English) rubrics, NAFSA Association of International Educators, the CUNY Proficiency Exam, the CUNY Writing Sample, the Florida Department of Education Statewide System, and others. The list of ESL writing dimensions was simplified to include only ESL Writing dimensions that appeared in two or more of the tests. When dimensions had similar or identical names, and similar or identical content, they were treated as the same dimension. Sometimes highly related dimensions were collapsed into one dimension. The rubric that emerged from all these sources was reviewed by individual committee members, who made many changes until a final rubric was agreed upon.
3. The committee’s decision about skill levels was to test students who fell in the CATESOL range of Mid Novice to Advanced.

WritePlacer - ESL Score Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No holistic score - This essay has not been given a holistic score or the five dimensional scores because it is either a blank page, incoherent, insufficient (too short to assess), in a foreign language, or off topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>This writing sample attempts to address the topic, but is not effective. There appears to be no pattern of organization of the essay. There is little or no evidence of a main idea, and therefore not enough development and support. While the essay may contain familiar words written correctly, as a whole it contains a limited vocabulary with many errors in usage. The writing sample may be confusing due to errors in sentence structure, word usage, grammar, and mechanics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Although this writing sample responds to the topic, the main idea is incomplete or hard to understand. The organization contains errors in logic and may not present an effective sequence of ideas. There are few or no details provided to support or develop the topic. The vocabulary used in the essay is simple, familiar, and may be inappropriate. The writing sample typically contains simple sentences possibly with short, familiar phrases. The sentences contain frequent errors in structure, word usage, grammar, and mechanics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This writing sample may respond to the topic by stating the main idea, and the main idea may be partially developed using lists and generalizations. Some organization is present although there are occasional errors in logic and little relationship within and between paragraphs. The vocabulary used in the essay is simple and familiar but may be inappropriate. Typically the writing sample will contain some original simple sentences, however there are significant errors in sentence structure, word usage, syntax, and mechanics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>An adequate writing sample. A main idea is evident, and there is some evidence of development of this idea. The organization of ideas is adequate. The writer’s vocabulary is adequate, even though the vocabulary used may be simple and sometimes inappropriate. There is evidence of some control of word usage and grammar as well as sentence structure. The writing sample typically shows reasonably accurate spelling, punctuation, and capitalization although there may be some errors in mechanics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A strong writing sample. The writing sample states a main idea and provides some specific details and examples to support the main idea. Typically the organization is clear and logical, and contains relationships within and between paragraphs that are usually clearly signaled. The choice of vocabulary is sometimes inappropriate. The essay generally shows clarity of expression and provides evidence that the writer can write original sentences and can control most kinds of sentence structure and word forms. Spelling and punctuation are usually correct, although there are occasional errors in mechanics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A very strong writing sample. The topic is effectively addressed and the main idea is apparent. The writing sample maintains a central focus. The essay is effectively organized with a logical sequence of ideas that is typically sustained within and across paragraphs. The writing sample provides specific details and examples to develop the main idea. The vocabulary used is generally well suited to what is expressed, and any errors in choice of words do not confuse the reader. The essay typically contains a variety of sentence structures, correct word usage, and correct grammatical forms. The writing sample is generally free of mechanical errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supplementary Skills Modules
There are two Supplementary Skills modules designed to provide additional information on students who score low on either the Arithmetic or Elementary Algebra tests. These modules consist of eighteen (18) items that are delivered in a linear (non-adaptive) sequence.

The Supplementary Skills modules augment the ACCUPLACER™ tests. The student’s report shows the question topic, the student’s response, and whether that response was correct. The results of the Supplementary Skills modules are displayed as the number correct for each skill assessed. There are three questions asked about each of the six skill areas listed below.

**Arithmetic Supplementary Skills**
- Multiplication/Division-Whole Numbers
- Addition/Subtraction-Decimals
- Multiplication/Division-Decimals
- Addition/Subtraction-Fractions
- Multiplication-Fractions
- Division-Fractions

**Elementary Algebra Supplementary Skills**
- Ordering of Signed Numbers
- Addition/Subtraction-Signed Numbers
- Multiplication/Division-Signed Numbers
- Simplification of Complex Fractions
- Concept of a Variable
- Operations-Algebraic Expressions
Interpretation of Test Scores

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 for all ACCUPLACER™ tests 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
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 $a x^2 + bx + c$, 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.

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**Levels of English Proficiency Tests**
The Levels of English Proficiency Test (LOEP) assesses the English skills of students who have learned English as a second language or who are native English speakers with limited proficiency.

**LOEP Language Use Proficiency Statements**

The Language Use test contains two types of questions: sentence completions, in which students fill in a blank with a word or phrase from the choices given, and those for which students select the sentence that best combines two discrete given sentences.

**Total Right Score of about 55 - 81**

Students scoring at this level can choose correct grammatical forms when they are controlled by the basic rules of grammar. For example, in simple sentences, they can recognize basic grammatical structures such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun case and form, noun forms (including recognizing subject, case, and number), and verb forms. They can handle questions involving word order, prepositional phrases, and simple clauses.

**Total Right Score of about 82 - 99**

Students scoring at this level can handle a variety of complex structures such as comparatives at the phrase level such as "so tall that," relative clauses, structures at the clause level such as "not only...but also," simple subordination, function at the whole-sentence level.

**Total Right Score of about 100 or higher**

Students scoring at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:
- Recognize the following: irregular verb forms such as "draw/drawn", fairly unusual idioms such as "couldn't get over it", and indirect object structures such as "gave her one"
- Handle questions involving: transformations of declarative sentences into questions, the conditional mood, and parallelism
- Choose appropriate structures to state complex ideas, often in complex sentences using subordination or coordination

**LOEP Sentence Meaning Proficiency Statements**

The Sentence Meaning test assesses English vocabulary knowledge within the context of sentences drawn from the content areas of natural science, history/social studies, arts/humanities, psychology/human relations, and practical situations. Areas tested include particle verbs, basic and important idioms, adverb/adjective phrases, basic nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs of frequency, sequence of adverbs, prepositions of direction and place, comparatives, connectives, and commands.

**Total Right Score of about 61 - 87**

Students at this level can demonstrate the following skills:
- handle sentences with simple structures characterized by everyday subjects and simple vocabulary, including common nouns, adjectives, and verbs
- select the appropriate vocabulary in sentences that provide multiple contextual clues

**Total Right Score of about 88 - 105**

Students at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:
• handle vocabulary in sentences that have compound or complex structures, or present more complex situations than the sentences at the 20th percentile level
• handle the following kinds of vocabulary:
  - two-word verbs
  - adverbs of comparison
  - more extended idiomatic expressions
  - longer descriptions
• select appropriate vocabulary in sentences that provide a single contextual clue

**Total Right Score of about 106 or higher**

Students at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:
• handle vocabulary in sentences with complex structures that are characterized by abstract statements or idiomatic expressions
• demonstrate knowledge of idioms that are two-word verbs or the use of idioms to express the appropriate meaning
• deduce the appropriate vocabulary from an entire sentence rather than from specific contextual clues, often in situations where grammar and vocabulary intersect

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**LOEP Reading Skills Proficiency Statements**

The Reading Skills test measures comprehension of short passages. The subtest contains brief passages of 50 words or less and moderate length passages of 50 to 90 words.

**Total Right Score of about 57 - 81**

Students at this level can demonstrate the following skills:
• locate information in a passage by answering literal comprehension questions on even the longest passages, if the question posed and the answer to that question are in the same sentence or in close proximity to each other
• answer questions in which the wording in the answer is very similar to the wording in the passage or uses minimal paraphrasing
• answer some questions requiring small inferences (including questions asking for the main idea of the passage) if the options do not require fine distinctions
• answer questions based on maps and charts

**Total Right Score of about 82 - 101**

Students at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:
• answer questions that require:
  - drawing conclusions on the basis of the information presented in the passage
  - making inferences from the information presented
• recognize the main idea of a passage even when presented with wrong answer choices mentioned in the passage as supporting information.

**Total Right Score of about 102 or higher**

Students at this level can demonstrate the following additional skills:
• answer questions that require dealing with a passage as a whole or manipulating the information presented in the passage
• make generalizations on the basis of the information in the passage, recognize what was implied, and answer questions about the author's tone and purpose
LOEP Listening Proficiency Statements

LOEP Listening is a direct measure of the listening skills of non-native English speaking students. The test measures the ability to listen to and understand one or more people speaking in English. The conversations take place in academic environments such as lecture halls, study sessions, a computer lab, the library, the gymnasium, and the like; and in everyday environments such as at home, shopping, at a restaurant, at a dentist’s office, listening to the radio, reading the newspaper, and performing tasks at work.

**Total Right Score of about 50 - 69**
Students at this level may show reasonable proficiency in literal comprehension, but are likely to encounter difficulty following instructions and may find it difficult to draw inferences. While they may show proficiency in understanding common everyday situations and simple academic situations, they are likely to have difficulty comprehending more complex life situations and many academic situations. Students at this level have a relatively small vocabulary of basic words, but may have difficulty beyond that level.

**Total Right Score of about 70 - 89**
Students at this level typically are skilled in literal comprehension and can make the more direct inferences, but may lack the ability to make more complex inferences and to follow instructions. While they may show proficiency in understanding most everyday situations and common academic situations, they may have difficulty comprehending more complex academic situations, including lectures. Students at this level have a working vocabulary to handle many everyday situations, but will have difficulty with more complex or infrequently used words.

**Total Right Score of about 90 or higher**
Students at this level are able to comprehend both literal and inferential meaning of spoken material. They typically show proficiency in understanding everyday situations and all types of academic situations. Students at this level can understand a large number of words and can handle more complex vocabulary.
ACCUPLACER Background Questions

Shown below are the ACCUPLACER background questions. Titles in bold are used on Score Reports if answers to background questions are selected.

**Sex**
What is your sex?
- Female
- Male
- I choose not to answer

**Self Description**
How do you describe yourself?
- Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native
- Black or African American
- Mexican American
- Puerto Rican
- Other Hispanic, Latino, Central American, or South American
- Asian or Pacific American
- White (Non-Hispanic) or Caucasian
- Other
- I choose not to answer

**Major Field of Study**
Select your major from the list below. If you are undecided or are unsure of your major, choose Omitted. (Colleges must add their own list of majors using the

**Disabling Condition**
What documented disabling condition do you have, if any, that might affect the usefulness of your test scores as measures of your skills?
- None
- Hearing Impairment
- Speech Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Emotional (Psychological) Impairment
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Learning Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Omit

**English First Language**
Is English the first language you learned?
- Yes
- No
- Omit

**Years studied mathematics in high school**
What is the total number of years you studied mathematics in high school (grades 9-12)? Count less than a full year of mathematics as a full year, but do not count a repeated year of the same course as an additional year of study.

1 year
2 years
3 years
4 years
More than 4 years
None
Omit

Studied Algebra in High School
Did you study algebra for at least one semester in high school?

Yes
No
Omit

Years since last mathematics Course
How long has it been since you have taken a mathematics course or other formal mathematics training?

Less than 1 year
1 to 3 years
4 to 6 years
7 or more years
Omit

Years Studied English in High School
What is the total number of years you studied English in high school (grades 9-12)? Count less than a full year of English as a full year, but do not count a repeated year of the same course as an additional year of study.

1 year
2 years
3 years
4 years
More than 4 years
None
Omit

Father's Education
What is the highest level of education completed by your father or male guardian?

Grade school or less
Some high school
High school diploma or equivalent
Business or trade school
Some college
Associate degree
Bachelor's degree
Some graduate or professional school
Completed graduate or professional school
Omit

**Mother’s Education**
What is the highest level of education completed by your mother or female guardian?
- Grade school or less
- Some high school
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Business or trade school
- Some college
- Associate degree
- Bachelor’s degree
- Some graduate or professional school
- Completed graduate or professional school
- Omit

GED Certificate
Are you a high school graduate or do you hold a GED certificate?
- Yes
- No
- I am still in high school
- I choose not to answer

Federal Financial Aid
Do you intend to apply for Federal financial aid?
- Yes
- No
- I choose not to answer
Approved to Show Ability to Benefit

The ACCUPLACER™ tests have been approved for use as a measure of a student’s “Ability to Benefit.” Ability to Benefit legislation regulates the approval and administration of tests that may be used to determine a student’s eligibility for assistance under the student financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (Title IV, HEA programs), if the student does not have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent. The regulations also propose a passing score for each approved test.

ATB Testing Procedures

For assessment in the verbal area, institutions should administer the Reading Comprehension and Sentence Skills tests, and the Arithmetic test for mathematics. Shown below are the required passing scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCUPLACER™ Tests</th>
<th>Approved Scores*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Skills</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arithmetic</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Federal Register / Vol.67, No. 76/ Friday, April 19, 2002 / Notices

For ease in identifying the candidates for ATB determination, institutions should turn on the two background questions that ask if the test taker is a high school graduate or holds a G.E.D. holder, and if the test taker intends to apply Federal financial assistance. The addition of these questions will make it easy to find ATB candidates within the database.

ATB Re-testing Policy

Because ACCUPLACER™ is a computer-adaptive test the number of different forms (i.e., sequences of test items in a session) is very large. The College Board recommends that within any three-month period, ATB candidates be permitted an initial test and one retest. The retest should occur after a two-week waiting period. Students should be encouraged to review test material before retesting.

If the candidate petitions the institution for a third (and or subsequent) attempt(s) it should be permitted only if the candidate can provide evidence of some instructional intervention that would suggest that score improvement would be possible. Documentation of such evidence would be at the institution’s discretion.

For more information concerning Ability to Benefit Testing see Federal Register/Vol. 60, December 1, 1995 (60 FR 61830-8184) and Federal Register/Vol. 61, Friday, October 25, 1996 (61 FR 55542-55543.)
Guidelines for a Suitable Testing Environment

Before administering ACCUPLACER™, you will want to plan your facilities and procedures to ensure a comfortable, positive, and efficient testing environment. Your plans should include provisions for accommodating students with disabilities. Uniform procedures are essential in a standardized testing program. The scores of all students tested are comparable only if all test administrators follow the same testing procedures.

Facilities, Comfort and Environment

The success of any test administration depends on the suitability of the test site. Students cannot do their best if distracted by conditions such as noise, poor lighting, inadequate writing surfaces, or extreme temperatures. Although some adverse conditions may be beyond your control, you should make every effort to minimize the possibility of such distractions through careful planning.

Guidelines are presented below:

- The testing room should be appropriately heated or cooled, adequately ventilated, and free from distractions.

- Lighting should enable all examinees to read the computer screen in comfort. It should not produce shadows or glare on the computer screen or writing surface.

- The testing room should not contain maps, periodic tables, posters, charts, or any other materials related to the subject matter of the test.

- The testing room should comfortably accommodate the number of testing stations placed in it. It is recommended that each computer workstation be approximately five feet apart, or provide sound and light absorbing privacy dividers. Place computer stations in a formation restricting the visibility of other computer screens.

- At each test station, position the computer monitor, keyboard, and mouse properly for ease of use without strain. Provide a comfortable chair with a back.

- Testing rooms must be quiet throughout all test administrations. When testing is scheduled, or is in progress, other activities should not be conducted that would disrupt the standardized testing environment.

- The building, testing rooms, and restrooms should be accessible to people with disabilities including wheelchair access.

- Restrooms should be located near the testing room and should be easy to find. Post directional signs if necessary.

Accommodating Students With Special Needs

According to the 1992 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) legislation, any private entity that offers examinations or courses related to applications or credential for secondary or post-secondary education is required to offer examinations in a place or manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements comparable to those provided for non-disabled individuals including
testing at an individual’s home with a proctor and offer examinations at equally convenient locations as often and in as timely a manner as are other examinations.

It is recommended that institutions have an overall plan for testing people with disabilities or document reasons why such a plan would be inappropriate because of significant difficulties, undue burden, or expense.

The College Board encourages institutions to offer nonstandard test administrations to students who have emotional, hearing, learning, and physical or visual disabilities and who cannot perform to the best of their abilities under standard testing conditions.

According to the ADA, modifications of standard testing environments and auxiliary aids may include the following:
- Interpreters, qualified readers, or transcribers,
- Screen display enlargement,
- Use of a calculator,
- Other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments.

Note: Test agencies must bear the costs of these modifications or aids unless these aids or modifications alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge that the test purports to measure or results in an undue burden for those responsible for administering or overseeing testing.

Students with disabilities may be required by the test center to provide advance notice and/or appropriate documentation of their disability and/or any modifications or aids that would be required during testing.

Note: Deadlines for documentation of disabilities and/or requests for modifications and aids should be the same as the deadlines for all other students and requests for documentation of disabilities, although permissible, must be reasonable and limited to the need for the modification or aid requested.

**Checklist**

Following is a checklist for test administrators testing students with disabilities who need special accommodations. It will help you identify things you may need to consider and discuss with the student before the test is administered.

| 1. Is there a map showing the location of the test center that includes the room number? |
| 2. Do the arrivals and departures for the bus, cab, or train accommodate the test center schedule? |
| 3. Is adequate handicapped parking readily available? |
| 4. Are buildings clearly marked? Once inside the building, is the test center easy to find? |
| 5. Are there weather conditions (e.g., ice or snow) that may make the designated entrance hazardous or inaccessible? |
| 6. Are the entrances well lighted? |
| 7. Will the entrance doors be unlocked if the student arranges to arrive early? |
| 8. Are personnel available to meet and help the student (e.g., enter the building, hold open heavy doors, find the elevator, find the rest room, find the test room) as is needed? |
| 9. Will the student be able to find the elevator, the rest room, and the test room? |
10. Will the student be able to operate the elevator without assistance?

11. Are the restrooms and water fountains located near the test room?

12. Are the restrooms accessible to students in wheelchairs?

13. Is there an accessible telephone available?

14. If there is an emergency, is there a plan for assisting handicapped students in exiting the building safely?

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**Special Accommodations**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>If there is a separate testing room, does it have proper lighting? Is it free of unnecessary noise? Are desks or tables of adequate size?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Has the student had a chance to communicate with the recorder, reader, or signer prior to the test administration on how to work best together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Before the test begins, has anyone discussed with the student the need to take periodic breaks, the total test time, arrangements for lunch, and any special problems or arrangements?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with physical, visual, perceptual, emotional, or learning disabilities may require special aids and services. Students with special needs may be requested the following aids or modifications:

- Taped tests.
- Calculators
- Interpreters qualified readers, or transcribers.
- Other methods of making orally or visually delivered materials available to individuals with hearing or visual impairments.

ACCUPLACER™ COMPANION Tests are available in large print, Braille, and cassette formats for students with visual disabilities. A conversion chart is available to convert COMPANION raw scores to ACCUPLACER™ scores. For more information about COMPANION Tests, please call (800) 486-8497.

If a student with a temporary physical disability (e.g., broken leg, eye injury, etc.) unexpectedly reports to a testing room with a valid reason for being tested immediately, you may do so at your discretion using the following guidelines:

- A student who is able to be tested without special assistance, but because of the nature of the disability needs more seating space, should be seated in a special section of the testing room and should follow routine procedures.

- A student whose disability prevents him or her from using the keyboard may be tested in a separate room with the assistance of an amanuensis.

- A student with an eye injury may be tested in a separate room with the use of a reader/amanuensis.
Other Devices for Assisting Students with Disabilities

The following special equipment may be used when administering the ACCUPLACER™ Tests to examinees who use the devices as a standard accommodation for their lifestyle. This ensures that the examinee will have prior knowledge about the use of the device before entering a testing situation.

- **Intellikeys Keyboard** and **Intellimount System (Mounting Plate and Arm)** by IntelliTools—allows an examinee with limited use of the hands to operate the keyboard.
- **HeadMaster Plus** (by Prentke-Romick) and **Magic Arm and Super Clamp**—mouse operated by head movements.
- **Kensington Expert Mouse** (by Kensington)—trackball mouse.
- Screen Magnification Options.