

Course Placement Testing Information Guide Maricopa Community College District

each question. Once you have selected “go on” you cannot return to the previous section or question. Please do not press “go on” until you have answered all the questions in a section.

- **Use logic with more difficult questions**—With the more difficult questions, try to use logic to eliminate incorrect answers to a question. Compare the choices to each other and note how they differ. Such differences may provide clues to what the question requires. Eliminate as many incorrect answers as you can, then make an educated guess from the remaining choices.
- **Review your work**--If time permits in a timed test, go back and review your work. Check to be sure that you have marked only one answer for each question. Accuplacer, COMPASS, and ALEKS are not timed but review your answers before you go on. You cannot return to a previous section or question after you go on to the next.
- **Answer every question if possible**--Your score is based on the number of questions you answer correctly; there is no penalty for guessing.

After taking course placement assessments:

Course placement assessments are generally scored immediately and a printed copy of your results will be provided. A chart relating test scores to course placement is available at

<http://www.maricopa.edu/studentaffairs/Districtwide%20Cut-Off%20Scores%20Fall%202009.pdf>.

Test scores may not be available in the Student Information System immediately, ask the Testing Center at the college of your choice for details. To view or print your test scores, go to my.maricopa.edu and log in using your MEID and password. A link to test scores appears under Academic History.

After testing you may wish to speak with an academic advisor. Your advisor will help you make decisions about courses in which to enroll.

If you are new to college, you may wish to enroll in a New Student Orientation. New Student Orientation may be required by your MCCD college as part of a Student Success or iStart Smart program. Check with the Testing Center or Academic Advising Center at your college. New Student Orientation is designed to help you navigate the college system including all the information you need to be successful in college. There is no charge for New Student Orientation.

General Information:

It is required that you take a course placement test prior to enrolling in your first English, math, and/or reading course. The course placement test is free and can be taken at any college in the district, and used to register for courses in English, math, and/or reading at any of the MCCD campuses. Course placement test scores are valid for two years. One retest per subject per year is allowed.

These course placement tests are designed to help you and your academic advisor identify your current skill levels in English, reading, and mathematics. There is generally no pass or fail score, although certain courses or programs may require a minimum score. Rather, these tests will help identify the course level in which you are most likely to be successful.

Test Instruments:

- **Accuplacer & COMPASS** are adaptive computer-based tests in an untimed multiple-choice format.
- **ALEKS** is an untimed computer-adaptive test for math
- **ASSET** is a timed paper-pencil test in a multiple-choice format.
- **CELSA**, used for placement into English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, is a timed multiple-choice format either on pencil-paper or computer.

Not all instruments or formats are available at all campuses. Testing hours may vary. Check with the Testing Center at the campus of your choice.

Test Preparation Materials: For general information regarding MCCD Course Testing Policies and links to sample questions and guides and MCCD Testing Centers go to: http://maricopa.edu/studentaffairs/empl_res/asset.php

Accuplacer: for general information and downloadable samples go to:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/>

http://www.testprepreview.com/accuplacer_practice.htm

COMPASS: online and downloadable samples can be found at:

<http://www.act.org/compass/sample/index.html>

http://www.testprepreview.com/compass_practice.htm

ASSET: A downloadable guide can be found at:

<http://www.act.org/asset/pdf/StudentGuide.pdf>

and online samples can be found at:

http://quiz.gc.maricopa.edu/qm_asset/perception.dll?name=student

ALEKS: Go to www.aleks.com, click on “Free Trial” under “Higher Education” at lower left corner, then under “Experience ALEKS as a Student” click “Try ALEKS now”

CELSA: sample test questions can be found at:

<http://maricopa.edu/studentaffairs/references/pdfs/CELSA%20Practice.pdf>

Calculator information: Personal calculators are not permitted on Accuplacer. If a calculator is permitted for a question an online calculator will be available. Certain calculators are permitted for COMPASS and for the advanced math tests in ASSET. Clicking on the “Calculator” button from the COMPASS mathematics test screen will bring up the default Windows calculator. You may also use a four-function scientific or graphing calculator except as noted below.

Calculators are not required for COMPASS or ASSET and all mathematics problems can be solved without a calculator. If you regularly use a calculator you may want to bring it to the test. Calculators must be on the ACT approved list and the test center will not be responsible for any malfunctions.

Types of calculators not approved:

- Pocket organizers
- Handheld or laptop computers
- Electronic writing pads or pen input devices
- Models with any QWERTY keypads
- Models with any built-in capability to simplify algebraic expressions:
 - Casio CFX-9970G
 - Casio Algebra fx2
 - Casio Classpad 300
 - Hewlett Packard HP-40G
 - Hewlett Packard HP-48GII
 - Hewlett Packard HP-49
 - Texas Instruments TI-89
 - Texas Instruments TI-92

Preparing for Test Day: Although what you know will determine how well you do on the placement assessment, your attitudes, emotions and physical state may also influence your performance. The following will help you to do your best:

- Complete and submit a Student Information Form prior to arriving at the Testing Center either in person or online at my.maricopa.edu
- Bring photo ID to the testing session. The ID presented must be original, not a photocopy or reproduction.

Acceptable photo ID includes:

- Driver’s license or state ID
- School ID
- Employer ID
- Passport
- Military ID
- Tribal ID
- Naturalization Card
- Official school transcript with photo, official seal must cover part of photo

Unacceptable ID includes:

- Charge, bank, credit, or check cashing card
- Photo ID issued for promotional purposes (e.g. amusement park)
- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- Organization membership card
- Child Find ID Card
- Police report of stolen wallet or purse
- Parent’s photo ID
- Graduation photo
- Fishing or hunting license
- Web page with photo
- If you do not have a high school diploma or GED and are planning on applying for financial aid, you must take the Writing, Reading and

Basic Math assessments on the same form and in the same testing session. ALEKS is not approved for this purpose.

- If you are a new to college degree-seeking student you must complete all three portions of the test prior to registration but do not have to take them at the same time.
- Be confident in your ability to do well. YOU CAN!!!!
- Be prepared to work hard.
- Know what to expect on the test day. Familiarize yourself with the information in this booklet. Review the practice tests so you will feel comfortable with the test you are taking.
- Prepare well in advance for the test.
- Get plenty of rest the night before and do not test on an empty stomach. Be in good physical condition.
- Arrive in plenty of time to complete all necessary paper work before testing and have enough time to complete testing before the center closes.
- Take some deep breaths, RELAX!

Test-taking Strategies:

- **Pace yourself--**The time limit set for the ASSET and CELSA tests gives nearly everyone enough time to finish all the questions. It is important to pace yourself so you will not spend too much time on one question. The Accuplacer, COMPASS, and ALEKS tests are not timed and you may spend as much time as you need.
- **Read the directions for each test carefully--**Before you begin taking any test, read the directions carefully. Sometimes the directions will ask for the “best” or “correct” answer. Do not respond as soon as you identify a correct answer. Read and consider all of the answer choices and choose the answer that is appropriate for the question. Some tests ask for the “correct” answer. Read each question carefully to make sure you understand the type of answer required. On the math tests you may want to compute the answer and look for it among the choices given. If your answer is not among the choices provided, re-compute the answer before you choose “not given” if that is one of your choices. With the ALEKS math placement you may click “I do not know” if you have never seen the material before, otherwise attempt to answer.
- **Read each question carefully--**It is important that you understand what each question is asking. Some questions will require you to go through several steps to find a correct answer, while others can be answered quickly on the basis of your acquired knowledge.
- **Answer the easy questions first--**The best strategy for taking the timed tests is to answer the easy questions and skip the questions you find more difficult. After answering all of the easy questions, go back and answer the more difficult questions. Accuplacer, COMPASS, and ALEKS are untimed and you may spend as much time as you need on