

ASSESSMENT FOR COURSE PLACEMENT

1 POLICY

2 As part of its commitment to student success and in accordance with Minnesota State Policy 3.3,
3 Ridgewater College (hereinafter "the College") has developed a process to assess the reading and
4 mathematics skills of new students requiring course placement.

5 Adherence to this policy offers many benefits to students:

- 6 • Supports students' access and success by ensuring they have to develop skills to compete in
the college-level curriculum.
- 7 • Increases success in college-level courses, resulting in improvement in persistence and
graduation rates.
- 8 • Eases transfer among Minnesota State institutions since a single, portable assessment method
will be in place at all Minnesota State institutions.
- 9 • Assures the integrity of the college-level curriculum can be maintained by ensuring students
enrolled in courses have achieved the prerequisite academic skill levels.
- 10 • Allows development of seamless and successful transitions from high school to college.
Explicit benchmarks for college readiness can be connected to high school graduation
11 standards.

12 The College requires all students needing course placement to complete an incoming student assessment
13 that includes basic measures of reading comprehension and mathematics unless they meet the exemption
14 criteria. The College will use the assessment instrument and minimum course placement scores required
15 by [Minnesota State Board Policy 3.3](#).

16 The College also uses a set of screening questions to identify students who may benefit from English
17 language support. If identified by the screening process, these students are asked to complete the ESL
18 Accuplacer assessments for appropriate placement into English 1210.

19 The incoming student assessment shall not be used to make decisions related to college admission.

20 Students with Disabilities

21 Accommodation for individuals with documented disabilities is available with advanced notice to the
22 Accessibility Services Office.

23 History:

24 02.21.2007 Adopted; 05.12.2011 Revised

25 12.20.2016 Proposed; 02.13.2017 Revised

26 11.20.2017 Proposed; 02.21.2018 Revised

27 11.18.2019 Proposed; 03.30.2020 Revised

28 08.24.2021 Proposed – Reviewed and Revised for Equity Compliance

29 11.17.2021 Revised

30 10.15.2025 Proposed; 01.15.2026 Revised

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PROCEDURES

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50 Minimum Standards for Access to College-Level Courses

51 Students who score below the College's minimum test standards must successfully complete appropriate
52 developmental education through courses or other means before enrolling in selected college-level
53 courses. Retesting is allowed under certain circumstances (see Ridgewater College Test Center
54 Procedures).

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56 Students placed into developmental mathematics by their mathematics placement score who think the
57 placement is incorrect are encouraged to retake the mathematics portion of the Accuplacer placement
58 exam. They may also request an exemption by contacting an unlimited full-time mathematics faculty
59 member, who may perform an assessment of skills depending on their mathematics placement score.

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61 Criteria for Student Exemptions

62 Colleges and universities shall exempt students from course placement requirements under the criteria
63 identified below.

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65 Exemptions from Course Placement Requirements

- 66 • Students are exempted from submitting documentation of test scores from the American College
67 Test (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) or
68 from taking the Accuplacer subject area tests based on:
 - 69 ○ Enrollment exclusively in non-credit courses, or
 - 70 ○ Enrollment exclusively in a diploma or certificate program, or
 - 71 ○ Documentation of successful completion of a college-level course in the area for which the
72 course placement score is used, or
 - 73 ■ Mathematics: C- or higher in an equivalent mathematics course.
 - 74 ■ Reading: A student who presents a transcript demonstrating 24 credits or more in
75 at least two of the following three areas: history and the social and behavioral
76 sciences; humanities and fine arts; mathematical/logical reasoning or natural
77 sciences (with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher) or a C- or higher college-level
78 English course may be placed in courses that designate college-level reading
79 skills as a prerequisite
 - 80 ○ Documentation of completion of developmental coursework from a post-secondary
81 institution as follows:
 - 82 ■ Reading: C- or higher in an equivalent course.
 - 83 ■ Mathematics: C- or higher in an equivalent course.
 - 84 ○ Documentation of completion of an associate's degree, a baccalaureate degree, or higher
85 degree. If the degree includes a college-level mathematics class, all assessments will be
86 waived. If not, the student will be required to take the mathematics assessment.

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88 Exemptions from the Accuplacer

- 89 • A student who does not obtain the minimum course placement subject area scores from the ACT,
90 SAT, or MCA is required to take the Accuplacer tests for course placement purposes when a
91 course, program, or college/university policy indicates a requirement for a specific level of reading,

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writing, or mathematics skills. However, a student must be exempted from taking all or portions of the ACCUPLACER based on documentation of:

- Reading and writing subject area Accuplacer scores from any college or university, within five calendar years, inclusive of the current calendar year.
- Mathematics subject area Accuplacer scores from any college or university, within two calendar years, inclusive of the current calendar year.

A student may be exempted from taking all or portions of the Accuplacer based on documentation of placement scores from an alternate instrument, providing that placements can be determined by using the placement levels of the alternative instrument, within the validation period.

System Minimum Course Placement Scores

Colleges and universities shall develop a course placement process in which a student who obtains the minimum subject area test score from any of the acceptable measures as indicated in the following subparts and is within the acceptable measures validation period must be given a placement into the corresponding college-level course(s) when a course, program, or college/university policy indicates a requirement for a specific level of reading, writing, or mathematics skills.

Placement Based on Accuplacer (a.k.a. Classic) and Next Generation Accuplacer (NGA) Scores

- Documentation of reading comprehension Accuplacer test scores taken with five (5) years, inclusive of the current calendar year and mathematics Accuplacer test scores taken with two (2) years, inclusive of the current calendar year:
 - Reading:
 - Students scoring a 250 or higher (NG Reading) may be placed in college-level English
 - Students with a score of 236-249 and that have a cumulative high school GPA of 2.5 or higher from within the last 10 years.
 - Mathematics:
 - Students scoring a 250 or higher (NG Mathematics) will be placed in college-level algebra.
 - Students with a score of 236-249 and that have a cumulative high school GPA of 2.7 or higher from within the last 10 years.

Placement Based on American College Test (ACT) Subject Area Test Scores

- Documentation of subject area test scores on the ACT test taken within five calendar years, inclusive of the current calendar year, for reading and mathematics. A student who obtains the following minimum scores or higher shall be placed in the corresponding college-level course(s).
- Reading:
 - A student who presents a reading subject area test score of 21 or higher may be placed in courses that designate college-level reading skills as a prerequisite.
 - A student who presents a reading ACT score of 19-20 and has a cumulative high school GPA of 2.5 or higher from within the last 10 years may be placed in courses that designate college-level reading as a prerequisite.
- Mathematics:
 - A student who presents a mathematics subject area test score of 22 or higher may be placed in any college-level mathematics course.

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137 ○ A student who presents a mathematics ACT score of 20-21 and has a cumulative high
138 school GPA of 2.7 or higher from within the last 10 years may be placed in any college-
139 level mathematics course.

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141 **Placement Based on Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Subject Area Test Scores**

142 ● Documentation of subject area test scores on the MCA assessments taken *within five calendar*
143 *years*, inclusive of the current calendar year, for reading and mathematics:

144 ○ Reading:

145 ■ The MCA Benchmark Study concluded that the MCA Reading assessment scores
146 were not an appropriate predictor of performance in college writing courses, and
147 thus, Minnesota State/Ridgewater College will not use MCA scores for writing
148 placements. A student who presents a MCA Reading assessment score of 1047
149 or higher shall be placed in courses that designate college-level reading skills as a
150 prerequisite.

151 ■ A student who presents an MCA score of 1042-1046 and has a cumulative high
152 school GPA of 2.5 or higher from within the last 10 years may be placed in
153 courses that designate college-level reading skills as a prerequisite.

154 ○ Mathematics:

155 ■ A student who presents a MCA mathematics assessment score of 1148 or higher
156 may be placed in any college-level mathematics course with the exception of
157 MATH1120 and MATH2070 (which require a MCA score of 1158 or higher).

158 ■ A student who presents an MCA Statistics score of 1148 or higher may be placed
159 in college-level statistics course. A student who presents an MCA Statistics score
160 of 1146-1147 and has a cumulative high school GPA of 2.7 or higher from within
161 the last 10 years may be placed in college-level statistics course.

162 ■ A student who presents an MCA liberal arts mathematics score of 1150 or higher
163 may be placed in a liberal arts mathematics course. A student who presents an
164 MCA liberal arts mathematics score of 1146-1149 and has a cumulative high
165 school GPA of 2.7 or higher from within the last 10 years may be placed in a
166 liberal arts mathematics course.

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168 **Placement Based on Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Subject Area Test Scores**

169 ● Documentation of subject area test scores on the SAT taken within five calendar years, inclusive of
170 the current calendar year:

171 ○ Reading:

172 ■ A student who presents an Evidence-based Reading and Writing (ERW) subject
173 area test score of 480 or higher shall be placed in courses that designate college-
174 level reading skills as a prerequisite.

175 ■ A student who presents an SAT score of 440-479 and has a cumulative high
176 school GPA of 2.5 or higher from within the last 10 years may also be placed in
177 any course with a college-level reading skills prerequisite.

178 ○ Mathematics:

179 ■ A student who presents a mathematics subject area test score of 530 or higher
180 shall be placed in any college-level mathematics course.

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181 ■ A student who presents an SAT score of 520-529 and has a cumulative high
182 school GPA of 2.7 or higher within the last 10 years may be placed in any college-
183 level mathematics course.

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Definitions

186 The following definitions are important to the interpretation of the Assessment for Course Placement Policy:

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188 **College-Level** – Courses offered by the College numbered 1000 or above (prior to summer 2018, any
189 courses numbered 100 or above in the transfer division) count toward the credit requirements of a
190 certificate, diploma or associate degree.

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192 **Developmental Education** – Courses numbered below 1000 (prior to summer 2018, any courses numbered
193 below 100) are intended for students who do not meet minimum assessment standards. These courses do
194 not count toward a certificate, diploma, or associate degree.

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197 *History:*

198 *02.21.2007 Adopted; 01.05.2008 Revised*

199 *05.12.2011 Revised*

200 *01.03.2012 Revised - Reflect system-wide adoption of ACT benchmark scores to waive Accuplacer testing.*

201 *04.15.2013 Adopted – For implementation Fall Semester 2013*

202 *02.06.2014 Revised*

203 *12.20.2016 Proposed; 02.13.2017 Revised*

204 *11.20.2017 Proposed; 02.21.2018 Revised*

205 *07.25.2019 – Revised to align document with Minnesota State Procedure 3.3.1*

206 *11.18.2019 – Proposed; 03.30.2020 Revised*

207 *08.24.2021 Proposed – Reviewed and Revised for Equity Compliance; 11.17.2021 Revised*

208 *10.15.2025 Proposed, 01.15.2026*