

**ASSESSMENT FOR COURSE PLACEMENT**

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**POLICY**

As part of its commitment to student success and in accordance with Minnesota State Policy 3.3, Ridgewater College has developed a process to assess the reading, writing, and mathematics skills of new students, to develop minimum assessment standards for access to the college-level curriculum, and to maintain a set of developmental education courses to bring students with inadequate skills to the minimum standard.

Adherence to this policy offers many benefits to students:

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

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

The College also uses a set of screening questions to identify students with possible English as a Second Language (ESL) needs. If identified by the screening process, these students are asked to complete the ESL Accuplacer assessments for appropriate placement into English 121.

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

**Students with Disabilities**

Accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities are available with advanced notice to the Disability Services Office.

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*History:*

*02.21.07 Adopted*

*05.12.11 Revised*

*12.20.16 Proposed; 02.13.17 Revised*

*11.20.17 Proposed; 02.21.18 Revised*

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**PROCEDURES****Minimum Standards for Access to College-Level Courses**

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

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

**Criteria for Student Exemptions**

Students may be exempt from all or part of the incoming student assessment based on the following criteria:

1. Documentation of Accuplacer scores if:
  - a. The test date is within three (3) years for the reading comprehension, inclusive of the current calendar year, or
  - b. The test date is within two (2) years for the mathematics assessment, inclusive of the current calendar year.
2. 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).
  - a. 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.
  - b. Mathematics: A student who presents a mathematics subject area test score of 22 or higher may be placed in any college level mathematics course.
3. Documentation of subject area test scores on the MCA assessments taken *within five calendar years*, inclusive of the current calendar year, for reading and mathematics:
  - a. Reading: The MCA Benchmark Study concluded that the MCA Reading assessment scores were not an appropriate predictor of performance in college writing courses, and thus, Minnesota State/Ridgewater College will not use MCA scores for writing placements. A student who presents a MCA Reading assessment score of 1047 or higher shall be placed in courses that designate college-level reading skills as a prerequisite.
  - b. Mathematics: A student who presents a MCA mathematics assessment score of 1148 or higher may be placed in any college-level mathematics course with the exception of 112 and 207 (which require a MCA score of 1158 or higher).

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4. Documentation of subject area test scores on the SAT taken *within five calendar years*, inclusive of the current calendar year:
  - a. Reading: A student who presents an Evidence-based Reading and Writing (ERW) subject area test score of 480 or higher shall be placed in courses that designate college-level reading skills as a prerequisite.
  - b. Mathematics: A student who presents a mathematics subject area test score of 530 or higher shall be placed in any college-level mathematics course.
  
5. Documentation of completion of college-level coursework from a post-secondary institution as follows:
  - a. Mathematics: C- or higher in an equivalent math course.
  - b. Reading: A student who presents a transcript demonstrating 24 credits or more in at least two of the following three areas: history and the social and behavioral sciences; humanities and fine arts; mathematical/logical reasoning or natural sciences (with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher) or a C- or higher College-level English course may be placed in courses that designate college-level reading skills as a prerequisite
  
6. Documentation of completion of developmental coursework from a post-secondary institution as follows:
  - a. Reading: C- or higher in an equivalent course.
  - b. Mathematics: C- or higher in an equivalent course.
  
7. Documentation of completion of a bachelor's degree or higher. If the degree includes a college-level mathematics class, all assessments will be waived. If not, the student will be required to take the mathematics assessment.
  
8. Enrollment is exclusively in non-credit courses or programs.
  
9. Enrollment is exclusively in Farm Business Management (FBM), Health Support Specialist or the Certified Nursing Assistant programs.

**Definitions**

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

College Level – Courses offered by Ridgewater College numbered 100 or above (starting with summer 2018, any courses numbered 1000 or above) in the transfer division and 1000 or above in the technical division, which count toward the credit requirements of a certificate, diploma, or associate degree.

Developmental Education – Courses numbered below 100 in the transfer division (starting with summer 2018, any courses numbered below 1000) and below 1000 in the technical division, intended for students

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who do not meet minimum assessment standards. These courses do not count toward a certificate, diploma, or associate degree.

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*History:*

*02.21.07 Adopted*

*01.05.08 Revised*

*05.12.11 Revised*

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

*04.15.13 Adopted – For implementation Fall Semester 2013*

*02.06.14 Revised*

*12.20.16 Proposed; 02.13.17 Revised*

*11.20.17 Proposed; 02.21.18 Revised*