

**Academic Assessment and Placement  
Policy and Procedures**

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# Academic Assessment and Placement Policy and Procedures

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## I. Philosophy and Scope

Frederick Community College (“FCC” or the “College”) is committed to supporting student success by ensuring appropriate course placement using a series of computer-based assessment tests that measure individuals’ reading, writing, and math skills. Minimum placement scores, known as cut scores, are established through statewide agreements. These scores are used to determine college-readiness and placement into specific courses, including developmental, English language acquisition, and college-level courses. Credit courses have prerequisites that include expectations of college-readiness as reflected in the placement scores and/or other pre-established expectations. This policy and procedures outlines placement test requirements, guidelines for placement, and exemptions and exceptions to required placement testing.

## II. Definitions for the Purpose of this Policy and Procedures

- A. **“Certificate-Seeking”** refers to a category of individuals who have declared an intent to follow a sequence of specific credit courses resulting in a formal award of completion of up to 36 credits.
- B. **“Courses of Interest”** refers to a category of individuals who seek to take courses listed as credit in the FCC Academic Catalog for personal knowledge or professional development as opposed to the fulfillment of FCC program requirements.
- C. **“Degree-Seeking”** refers to a category of individuals who have declared an intent to follow a prescribed curriculum in a career or transfer program that leads to an associate degree, which is generally sixty (60) credits, unless otherwise specified.
- D. **“Developmental Courses”** refers to courses that prepare students for college-level coursework in reading, writing, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and math. Developmental education may include multiple course sequences with students progressing as skills are developed. Students are assigned to developmental courses based on their placement test scores.
- E. **“Enrollment”** refers to the status achieved when an individual has registered for classes and has either paid or made arrangements for payment of tuition and/or fees.
- F. **“Full-time Enrollment”** refers to a student enrolled in twelve (12) or more credits during the fall or spring semesters, or in a total of twelve (12) credit hours cumulatively for the summer session, not inclusive of audited courses.
- G. **“Continuously Enrolled”** refers to the requirement that a student be enrolled continuously with breaks no longer than four (4) consecutive full academic semesters (fall or spring semesters).
- H. **“Readmitted Students”** refers to individuals who have not attended FCC within the past two years and have reapplied for admission to the College.
- I. **“Transfer student”** refers to an individual who has attended another institution of higher learning after high school graduation or equivalency, and who may seek to receive credit for prior college coursework.
- J. **“Prerequisites”** refers to expectations that must be met before enrollment in a course is allowed.

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## **III. Responsible Senior Leader and Responsible Office**

Provost/Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development

## **IV. Entities Affected by this Policy and Procedures**

FCC currently enrolled and prospective students

FCC faculty, staff and administrators

## **V. Placement Testing Requirements**

A. After applying to the College, placement tests are required for:

1. Individuals who are first-time college students seeking a degree or certificate, whether they enroll full-time or part-time.
2. Individuals planning to take their first English or mathematics course.
3. Currently enrolled students seeking a degree/certificate, whether enrolled full-time or part-time, who have not been tested in the past or whose placement scores and/or exemptions have expired.
4. Transfer or readmitted individuals who have not completed a college-level math and/or English course.
5. Individuals who are designated as Courses of Interest students and wish to enroll in courses with prerequisites of reading, writing, ESOL, or mathematics.
6. Individuals who change their designation from Courses of Interest to certificate- or degree-seeking.
7. Individuals who are registering for non-credit courses with prerequisites of reading, writing, ESOL, or mathematics that are provided through contract training or offered in the Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD) course schedule.

B. Upon completion of all required placement tests, individuals are required to consult with an advisor to develop a degree, certificate, or appropriate plan for completion, including course selection. Individuals will choose courses based on their placement scores and their individual career and college goals.

C. Placement tests are not required for individuals as noted under Section VII “Exceptions and Exemptions to Required Placement Testing.”

## **VI. Placement Guidelines**

A. Unless otherwise indicated, placement scores are determined using Accuplacer academic assessments.

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- B. Placement scores will be valid for two years after the date of taking the placement tests.
- C. Minimum cut scores have been determined for college-readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- D. Students, whose first language is not English, will take Accuplacer ESL tests to determine reading and writing placement scores when less than four (4) years of English as a Second Language high school coursework were completed.
- E. Individuals with documented disabilities as verified by the Disability Access Services Office will receive reasonable accommodations while completing the required placement tests.
- F. Individuals are permitted to retest once per Accuplacer Next Generation assessment, no sooner than twenty-four (24) hours after the initial assessment.
- G. Students who are continuously enrolled will not be permitted to retest once they have started attending developmental or English language acquisition course(s).
- H. Readmitted students must either retest or complete the developmental or English language acquisition course(s) as stipulated in the current FCC Academic Catalog.
- I. Individuals who demonstrate college-readiness as stipulated in Section VII “Exceptions and Exemptions to Required Placement Testing” will be eligible to enroll in the appropriate credit-level courses according to their specific college-readiness scores.

### **VII. Exceptions and Exemptions to Required Placement Testing**

- A. Individuals transferring from an accredited U.S. institution of higher education who present unofficial and/or official transcripts indicating successful completion (cumulative 2.00 GPA or higher) of the equivalent of at least twelve (12) college credits will be exempted from the reading placement test, if six (6) credits are general education courses.
- B. Individuals will be exempted from the reading and writing placement tests if they provide evidence of successfully completing one or more of the following:
  - 1. The equivalent of FCC course ENGL101 or the first college-level English composition course at an accredited U.S. institution or credit through College-Level Examination Program (CLEP).
  - 2. The Advanced Placement (AP) test with a score of 3 or higher in English Language and Composition or English Literature and Composition. For the purpose of placement test exemption, AP test scores are valid for five years from the test date.
  - 3. The International Baccalaureate (IB) full diploma or exams with a grade of 4 or above in one or more of the following exams: Language A Literature SL or HL, and/or Language A: Language & Literature SL or HL. IB test scores are valid for five years from the test date.
  - 4. The Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) at AS-Level or A-Level coursework. Exam scores of e(e) or E(e) or higher in

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- English Language or Language & Literature. For the purpose of placement test exemption, Cambridge AICE grades are valid for five years.
5. English 10 or 11 PARCC/MCAP score of Level 4 or 5. For the purpose of placement test exemption, this score is valid for one year after an individual's date of high school graduation.
  6. The GED Reasoning Through Language Arts test with a score of 165 or higher. GED scores are valid for one year from the test date.
- C. Individuals will be exempted from the math placement tests if they provide evidence of successfully completing one or more of the following:
1. A general education math course, at the college level, at an accredited U.S. institution or credit through DSST or CLEP.
  2. The Advanced Placement (AP) test with a score of 3 or higher in Calculus AB, Calculus BC, or Statistics. For the purpose of placement test exemption, AP test scores are valid for five years from the test date.
  3. The International Baccalaureate (IB) exams with a grade of 4 or above on one or more of the following exams: Mathematical Studies, Mathematics SL or HL and/or Further Math. For the purpose of placement test exemption, IB test scores are valid for five years from the test date.
  4. The Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) at AS-Level or A-Level coursework. Exam scores of e(e) or E(e) or higher in Mathematics. For the purpose of placement test exemption, Cambridge AICE grades are valid for five years.
  5. Algebra II or Geometry PARCC/MCAP score of Level 4 or 5. This score is valid for one year after an individual's date of high school graduation.
  6. The GED Mathematical Reasoning test with a score of 165 or higher. GED scores are valid for one year from the test date.
- D. Individuals from Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) who successfully completed the following math courses are exempt from taking the math placement tests. This exemption is valid for one year after the individual's date of high school graduation.
1. Algebra II with an A or B, or Advanced Algebra with Trigonometry with an A or B or C, completed within the past two years, are eligible to enroll in courses up to and including FCC course MATH145.
  2. Intermediate Transitional Algebra with an A or B and earning the designated score on an FCC-approved college-readiness exam are eligible to enroll in non-STEM, FCC course MATH101 or MATH120.
  3. Pre-Calculus or higher-level math course with an A, B, or C are eligible to enroll in the equivalent college-level credit-bearing course.
  4. Designated transition math modules and earning the designated score on an FCC-approved college-readiness exam are eligible to enroll in non-STEM FCC course MATH101 or MATH120.

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- E. Individuals from FCPS who successfully completed English 12 with a reading comprehension Lexile Score of 1050 or higher and earn a final letter grade of A or B will be exempted from the reading and writing placement tests. They will be deemed college-ready in reading and writing and will be eligible to enroll in FCC course ENGL101. This exemption is valid for one year after the individual's date of high school graduation.
- F. Individuals from FCPS, whose first language is not English, will be exempted from the Accuplacer ESL placement tests and may concurrently enroll in FCC course ESOL100 while in high school, if they provide evidence of successfully completing EL English 10 with final letter grade of A or B. This exemption is valid only for rising juniors.
- G. Individuals who have provided a copy of their SAT/ACT scores that meet the exemption criteria set by statewide agreements will be exempted from individual placement tests. SAT and ACT scores are valid for five years from the test date.
  - 1. Individuals with an SAT Mathematics score of 500 or higher when taken **before** 8/1/17 or 530 or higher when taken after 8/1/17 are exempted from math placement testing.
  - 2. Individuals with an ACT Mathematics score of 21 or higher are exempted from math placement testing.
  - 3. Individuals with an SAT Critical Reading score of 500 or higher when taken **before** 8/1/17 or an Evidence-based Reading & Writing score of 480 or higher when taken **after** 8/1/17 are exempted from reading and writing placement testing.
  - 4. Individuals with an average ACT score of 21 or higher on the English & Reading Tests are exempted from reading and writing placement testing.
- H. Individuals who provide an official copy of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score transcript and who score a 575 or higher on the paper-based test, or a score of 90 or higher on the internet-based test are exempted from the reading, writing, and ESL placement tests. TOEFL scores are valid for two years from the test date.
- I. Individuals who provide a copy of their official Accuplacer or alternative placement test score(s), and meet the FCC placement criteria that exempts them from developmental reading, writing, and/or mathematics, will also be exempt from the corresponding FCC placement tests. These scores are valid for two years from the test date. The Associate Vice President for the Center for Teaching and Learning or their designee will evaluate the scores and assign course placement(s) based on FCC standards.
- J. Individuals who provide an unofficial transcript indicating satisfactory completion (at a C or better) of the highest-level developmental course work in reading, writing, and/or mathematics at another Maryland community college or University System of Maryland college/university are exempted from corresponding placement tests. There is no expiration for this exemption regarding the age of the transfer course. Reading and writing placement exemptions do not apply to ESL course work.

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- K. Visiting students from other institutions of higher learning who present a “Permission to Enroll” form will have prerequisites waived for the courses certified by the sending institutions. No placement exemption will be entered. complete the [Visiting Student Form](#).
- L. Individuals who have provided an official transcript indicating they have been awarded an associate degree or higher from an accredited U.S. institution will be exempted from placement testing.
- M. Students who have successfully completed an FCC-approved academic intervention will be permitted one additional retest for a total of three placement test attempts, unless otherwise permitted by a specific FCC program.
- N. Individuals enrolled in FCPS or another school with a dual enrollment agreement with the College who wish to participate in dual enrollment may take the placement tests twice. Individuals may retake the placement test a third time within six months of high school graduation, with an unofficial transcript or report card indicating successful completion of grade 12 English and/or math, and verification of their placement testing records by the Testing Center.
- O. Individuals who have completed their junior year or graduated from a Maryland Public High School and present a transcript that verifies a cumulative, unweighted high school GPA of 3.0 or better will be exempt from taking the reading, writing, and mathematics placement testing. This measure does not apply to grades earned in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. This GPA exemption will be valid for five years after the date of the individual’s high school graduation.
- P. Individuals who are otherwise exempted by the Associate Vice President for the Center for Teaching and Learning or their designee.

### **VIII. Related Policies and Procedures**

[Academic Standards](#)